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## IGNITE Program Harnessing Increased Political Activism of Women Gen Z and Women Millennials

*IGNITE will train 10,000 young women ages 14 - 22 across party lines by the end of this academic year, tripling its participation since 2016*

OAKLAND, CA -- There is significant focus on how women across America will vote in the 2018 midterms and their influence on the election. But what about the younger generation of women?

Younger generations now make up the majority of eligible voters, according to the [Pew Research Center](#). Eight million more members of Gen Z will be eligible to cast ballots in the 2018 midterm elections than were able to vote in the 2016 midterms. A [poll](#) released on October 29 by the Institute of Politics at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government found that 40 percent of young voters plan to vote in the midterms, and early numbers are showing significantly increased turnout of young voters in Texas and Georgia.

With their growing numbers, younger voters could swing the midterms and are poised to have significant impacts on our political process for generations to come. But will they?

Dr. Anne Moses, who founded the nonpartisan organization IGNITE to work with girls in high school and college to become civic and political leaders, is seeing increased activism among women.

Participation in the IGNITE program has jumped from 2500 women in 2016 to 10,000 women in the 2018-2019 academic year. IGNITE's largest membership is comprised of Latinas (33%), followed closely by African American girls and women (22%).

"Young women in communities across the country are mobilized to lead. They are at the forefront of policy change, they are championing political change and they are going to heal our democracy," said Dr. Moses.

Recent data underscores a gender gap among members of Gen Z of those willing to stand up and lead, with young women showing higher levels of engagement:

- According to the [National Society of High School Scholars' \(NSHSS\) 2018 Survey](#), the majority of Gen Z participants showed a willingness to advocate for social justice issues,

with women leading the charge - 81 percent compared to 66 percent of men. The gender gap continues as respondents discuss social justice issues that have personally affected them. Bullying and violence are the leading issues respondents face, followed by gender inequality and racial inequality -- instances where women are more likely than men to be affected.

- A report issued in January 2018 by the nonpartisan opinion research organization PRRI found that 48 percent of 15- to 24-year-old women say they have signed an online petition, compared to only 39 percent of men in the same age group. They were 23 percent more likely to say they had volunteered for a group or cause they cared about and 39 percent more likely to say they had donated money to a campaign or a cause.

IGNITE is harnessing this activism. The organization provides sustained, community-based training and support to young girls and women across party lines to own their political power.

IGNITE starts young. The organization provides curricula for youth in K through 12th grade that is offered in high schools in California and Texas, as well as discussion guides for parents to talk with their daughters about how to help build their civic and political leadership. IGNITE also recruits college-age Fellows who are on the path to becoming the next generation of political leaders. The Fellows create regional college councils on their campuses, now on 80 campuses throughout the country.

The organization also launches viral campaigns to champion young women's civic engagement and leadership in order to shift culture around women and political ambition.

Through IGNITE's high school and college programs as well as regional conferences across the country, young women get an early introduction to politics so they are prepared to run when they are eligible to run - in their schools today, in their communities tomorrow. Young women who go through the IGNITE process serve on the front-lines of campaigns and voter registration efforts to get first-hand experience for their future campaigns.

Data collected by IGNITE on the program shows it is having an impact:

- 90% of eligible IGNITE women voted in 2016, compared to 59% nationally, as reported by the Center for American Women in Politics
- 37% of IGNITE women ran for office on their campus, and 79% of those who ran for office won their elections
- 93% of IGNITE women feel driven to run for office
- 10 IGNITE women are running for elected office this campaign cycle, from the Oakland City Council to Justice of the Peace in Collin County, TX to County Commissioner in Rockwall County, TX.

Dr. Moses will hold a webinar on Thursday, November 8th at 4:00 p.m. PST discuss the impact of the elections. To join the webinar:

<https://ignitenational.clickmeeting.com/673879532/register>

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*About IGNITE:*

*IGNITE is building a national movement of young women who are ready and eager to become the next generation of political leaders. As a nonpartisan 501c3, IGNITE builds political ambition in high school and college-aged young women in their own communities. IGNITE provides civic education, exposure to women in political leadership, hands on training, work opportunities, and a peer network of women who support and nurture each other's aspirations for civic and political leadership. [www.ignitenational.org](http://www.ignitenational.org)*