

News Release

Board of Commissioners recognizes Women's Equality Day, closes celebration of Women's Suffrage

Vice Chairwoman Gershenson introduces resolution honoring Women's Suffrage with commemorative event, historical marker

August 26, 2020, OAKLAND COUNTY, MI. – To honor the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, which guaranteed women the right to vote, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners is recognizing August 26 as Women's Equality Day. The Board unanimously adopted a resolution to honor the ratification of the 19th Amendment and place a historical marker honoring local suffragettes on the Oakland County campus. The resolution is part of the Board's celebration honoring the historic anniversary.

"Remembering the fight for suffrage has been extremely rewarding and inspiring," Commissioner **Marcia Gershenson** (D-Bloomfield Hills) said. "We provided numerous opportunities for our community to learn about suffragettes from diverse ethnic backgrounds. We will continue advocating for all aspects of equity for women."

The resolution, adopted on August 20, stated that the Board will place a historical marker on the Oakland County campus. The plaque will honor the Oakland County Equal Suffrage Association, which was organized at the Oakland County courthouse in Pontiac on May 9, 1912.

"It's been a pleasure to come together this year and participate in this celebration," Commissioner **Tom Kuhn** (R-Troy) said. "This plaque will remind visitors to our campus that Oakland County had an active role in the fight for women's suffrage and connect the current generation to our rich local history."

In March 2019, the Board established the Celebration of Women's Suffrage Ad Hoc Committee in honor of the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Gershenson serves as chair of the Celebration of Women's Suffrage Ad Hoc Committee, which also includes Commissioners **Angela Powell** (D-Pontiac) and Kuhn.

"The committee has been committed to including all ages, races, genders and backgrounds as we celebrate the 19th Amendment," Powell said.

The Celebration of Women's Suffrage Ad Hoc Committee partnered with numerous community organizations including Oakland Schools, the Patriot Week Foundation, the League of Women Voters Oakland Area, Oakland University and Oakland Community College. The committee included subject matter experts to ensure all events and initiatives were rewarding for Oakland County residents.

"As a historian, nothing is more rewarding than being able to investigate the history of your own local community," Carol Bacak-Egbo, historian and Oakland University special lecturer, said.

"This project allowed me to discover the stories of over fifty Oakland County women who were actively involved in the struggle for women's suffrage. It was an honor to be part of this project."

For a complete list of past initiatives and programming, visit

<http://bit.ly/WomensSuffrageAdHocCommittee>.

"We were happy to partner with the Board of Commissioners to honor the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment," Gerri Rinschler, vice president of League of Women Voters Oakland Area, said. "A number of the founders of the League of Women Voters were suffragists and key players of our organization when it was formed in 1919. We are so grateful to these trailblazing women from across Michigan including Oakland County who fought courageously for the right for women to vote."

For more information, please contact the Board of Commissioners at 248-858-0100 or visit its website at www.oakgov.com/boc.

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