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VIEW

Vermont Information Exchange for Women

Newsletter



August 26th, 2020

News & Resources

Marking the Suffrage Centennial | Vermont Suffrage Centennial Alliance (VSCA)

Today, Wednesday August 26th is the 100th anniversary of the adoption of the [19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution](#), which states, "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." This was a long-fought, hard-won but incomplete victory, as many, including Black, Indigenous, Asian, and Latinx people continued to be excluded from the ballot box for more than four decades after 1920, and voter disenfranchisement continues to this day.

The Vermont Suffrage Centennial Alliance (VSCA) is marking this important milestone today with the following:

Listen to VPR'S Vermont Edition | Wednesday, August 26, noon to 1 p.m.

Guests: VSCA director Sue Racanelli, and members Rachel Onuf (Vermont Historical Records Program) and Tabitha Moore (Rutland Area NAACP)

Tune in and participate with questions or comments:

- Call 1-800-639-2211 to join the live discussion at noon
- Send an email to vermontedition@vpr.net
- Comment on the [Vermont Edition webpage](#)
- Comment on [VPR's Facebook posts](#) or Tweet [@vermontedition](#)

Listen to yesterday's [Dave Gram Show podcast](#) with guests: VSCA director Sue Racanelli, and members Rachel Onuf (Vermont Historical Records Program) and Tabitha Moore (Rutland Area NAACP)

[Read the press release](#) with reflections from Governor Kunin, Senator Leahy, Senator Sanders, Congressman Welch, Governor Scott, Lt. Governor Zuckerman, Xusana Davis, Kesha Ram, and Cary Brown on the significance of the 19th amendment.

The press release has links to the following suffrage centennial themed documents/video:

- Governor Phil Scott's [two-minute video commentary](#) and [Women's Equality Day proclamation](#)
- Senator Bernie Sanders' [Congressional Record statement](#)
- Congressman Peter Welch's [Congressional Record statement](#)

[Read Seven Days article *Vermont Commemorates Victories and Inequities of the 19th Amendment*](#). The same issue sports a full-page ad from VSCA.

Join public gatherings Barre, Bennington, Brattleboro, Burlington, Montpelier, Norwich, St. Albans, St. Johnsbury, Vergennes, and Worcester.

VSCA members invite Vermonters to gather, observing protocols of social distancing and face coverings, to commemorate the historic passage of the 19th amendment. Non-partisan, non-political signs, hats or "Votes for Women" sashes encouraged. Burlington's event at 11 a.m. in front of City Hall will feature speakers including Vermont Commission on Women's Chair, Lisa Senecal read [Burlington event's press release here](#); Montpelier's encourages strolling, from 11 am to 3 pm with stops near City Hall, and Pavilion area where there's a photo opportunity banner displayed on the lawn next to the building. **For more information, please contact organizer Dell McDonough.**

VCW Releases Series of COVID-19 & Women Publications

VCW's Education & Human Development Committee has created [three new one-page publications](#) covering the facts about Vermont women, COVID-19, child care, parenting, and Vermont's economic recovery.

- [COVID-19, Child care and Vermont's Economic Recovery](#)
- [COVID-19, Parenthood, and Vermont's Economic Recovery](#)
- [COVID-19, Women and Vermont's Economic Recovery](#)

Ashley Messier of Jericho Appointed to Vermont Commission on Women

[Speaker of the House, Mitzi Johnson has appointed Ashley Messier of Jericho to serve a four-year term](#) on the Vermont Commission on Women (VCW), the state's non-partisan commission working to advance rights and opportunities for women and girls.



COMMISSION ON WOMEN

Welcomes New Commissioner
ASHLEY MESSIER

Commenting on the appointment, Speaker Johnson said, "Ashley Messier immediately impressed me with her dedication to giving a voice to women, girls, transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming people impacted by systems of oppression. The Vermont Commission on Women is the only entity in Vermont that expressly considers the broader implications of state policy and budget priorities for women. Ashley's background in combating systemic oppression aligns with the work of the Commission. Her perspective is an important addition as we aim to include more perspectives at the

table."

Messier is the executive director of the Women's Justice and Freedom Initiative. The Initiative supports and advocates for women, girls, transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming people impacted by systems of oppression and is expressly committed to prison abolition. Messier's years of community organizing, advocacy and direct experience with the criminal legal system inform her passionate and powerful approach to advocacy and abolition. She was previously incarcerated at the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility.

Messier also serves as the Vermont Organizer for the National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls. The Council is a network of formerly and currently incarcerated women and girls committed to reimagining communities and creating the shift from a criminal legal system to community-led human justice. Messier served as a consultant and then as lead Organizer for the American Civil Liberties Union of Vermont's Smart Justice, a campaign fighting in the legislatures, the courts, in the voting booth, and in the streets to end mass incarceration by addressing sentencing, bail and prosecutorial reform, as well as parole, release and re-entry reforms.

Messier is a member of Vermont's Human Trafficking Task Force and participates on its Housing sub-committee. Her related work includes an active role in an Act 146 work group exploring using restorative justice in domestic and sexual violence and stalking cases.

VCW's Lisa Ryan Interviewed on the Vermont Conversation: DNC delegates voice hope and 'terror' about 2020 election

VCW Commissioner Lisa Ryan served as a delegate for Bernie Sanders and was [interviewed on VT Digger's Vermont Conversation podcast with David Goodman](#). In her interview, Lisa addresses Michelle Obama's remarkable speech and Kamala Harris.

Vermont Women's Fund's 100-for-100 Campaign

The Vermont Women's Fund, the state's largest and first philanthropic resource dedicated to women and girls, is in full-swing with its 100-for-100 Campaign, to recognize the women in our past who spoke out to demand voting rights—and for today's women who have had their lives upended by the pandemic. The 100-for-100

Campaign will support a unique grant round aimed at aiding Vermont nonprofits that serve women and girls put at risk by eviction, lack of childcare, healthcare costs, food insecurity, and other challenges associated with the pandemic. Learn more, or contribute at vermontcf.org/VWFGive.

Vermont Conversation: A century of struggle for women's suffrage

On August 18, 1920, Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution, thus giving women the right to vote. This was the culmination of a suffrage movement that was launched in 1848 at the Seneca Falls Convention in New York, which was also attended by leading abolitionists such as Frederick Douglass. An effort to secure women's suffrage failed at the US Supreme Court, leading to the movement to win the vote by a constitutional amendment. Enactment of women's suffrage in 1920 was historic, but it did not end discrimination against African American women, who continued to be denied the vote due to Jim Crow racial discrimination laws until passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. [Marlboro College Professor Emerita Meg Mott discusses the suffrage movement](#), the racial divisions within it, enduring discrimination faced by African American and LGBTQIA+ women, and parallels to modern efforts at voter suppression.

New State Initiatives to Support Child Care Availability | Vermont Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance

In a press conference on Tuesday, August 18, the state [announced](#) three new strategies to increase the capacity of the child care system in Vermont to support school reopening needs. Home-based providers will be able to be reimbursed for more than four hours of care of school-aged children on school days, a change that will add about 3,000 spots to help parents who are navigating different school schedules for in-person learning. The state is also earmarking \$7 million in federal funds to develop regional child care hubs in business and municipal spaces for school-aged children on remote learning days. This is expected to create about 7,000 slots. CDD will also be relaxing regulations for newly registered child care providers, with more use of provisional licenses. Details on all of these initiatives are still preliminary. Look for more information in the coming days on the Department for Children and Families [website](#).

Foster Care in Vermont & Barre's New Clothing Closet | Vermont Department for Children and Families

As families prepare for going back to school, remember the children and youth who are in foster care. While it's a hectic time for everyone, it can be particularly unsettling for children and youth who are not able to return to their birth or adoptive families. The Department for Children and Families seeks Vermonters to step forward and offer foster, kin, or occasional respite care.

[DCF spotlights Barre's new clothing closet in this blog post.](#) "Sometimes a child is moved very suddenly and there really isn't time to gather their belongings. This makes it a little less stressful on the child and helps the foster care provider be ready when a child comes to them.' Alona Tate further explains that teens are especially vulnerable. 'Just because you're sixteen, doesn't mean you want to wear uncool clothes.'" All sizes from petite to Men's and Women's XX are needed. "We have a lot more baby clothes than we do items for older preteen and teenagers,' she explains."

Vermont Needs Assessment and Strategic Vision | Building Bright Futures

Building Bright Futures presented the birth to age five systems needs assessment to early childhood leaders by exploring key themes and data. The presentation drew alignment between needs assessment themes and integrated strategies in the Early Childhood Action Plan to inform sound policy development and strategic decision making in response to gaps facing Vermont's children, families and early childhood system.

[Watch the webinar recording.](#)

Grant applicants say software snafu has left them worse off than before | VTDigger

["Forty-eight people were told their grant applications had been approved, but didn't get checks, said Ted Brady, deputy secretary of the ACCD.](#) He said the incident was caused by the program ACCD uses to review grant applications and pay checks. The program 'didn't turn off when we hit \$2.5 million in women-owned sole proprietors, and so the program allowed us to approve more applications than we had funding for,' said Brady. The program has funded 340 women-owned sole proprietors, with the average grant amount around \$7,000. 'Our goal is to not allow this to occur again. We recognize this has put a hardship on these folks,' said Brady. 'Our intention is to find funding to fund their applications because we want to help businesses; we made a commitment to these

people in a way; and we think it's the right thing to do.'

COVID-19's Impact on Women of Color: August Update | Women's eNews

"The COVID-19 pandemic has been claiming countless lives across the United States, regardless of age, race, or social status. Yet people of color have been shown to be disproportionately impacted ever since coronavirus cases and deaths began to surge in mid-March. Now, five months later, not much has changed. [This is particularly problematic for women of color, who often play a crucial role in maintaining the economic stability of their families.](#) According to the Center for American Progress, 67.5% of African American mothers and 41.4% of Latina mothers are the primary breadwinners in their families, compared to only 37% of white mothers."

State police traffic stop data shows racial disparities remain | VTDigger

"[Vermont State Police traffic stop data for last year shows that Black and Hispanic drivers who were pulled over were more likely to be searched and ticketed than white drivers.](#) Tabitha Moore, president of the Rutland Area NAACP said, 'The report is similar to what we've seen in the past, disparities continue to exist...As we move forward, one of the things that we need to look at is the metric that we're using to identify how systemic racism or bias are playing a role in creating these statistics.' The search rate for the 1,611 black drivers who were pulled over was 0.89% in 2019, more than four times the search rate for white drivers. According to the report, the 'hit' rate, or the percent of time finding contraband during a search, was higher in 2019 for white drivers."

A Herculean Task: Meet Xusana Davis | Vermont Business Magazine

"A little over a year ago, Xusana Davis was hired by the State of Vermont to do something that more than a few people have called 'humanly impossible.' [Davis, 31, is the state's first executive director of racial equity.](#) In a state that is approximately 94 percent white, her job is not to undo 400 years of racism; it is not even to bring more diversity to state government. Instead, it is to bring our state government closer to equity — so all Vermonters have equal access to state services. And that alone is a daunting task." – Joyce Marcel for Vermont Business Magazine

Corrections chief tells lawmakers of shocking ‘level of sexualization’ in workforce | VTDigger

[“The head of the Vermont Department of Corrections told lawmakers Thursday that he was ‘shocked at the level of sexualization’ among the staff he oversees. ‘I’m just going to be candid because that’s what I tend to be,’ James Baker, the interim commissioner, said during a video meeting of the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee as he talked about efforts to enhance standards and accountability in the department he took over in January. ‘I’m shocked at the level sexualization inside the workplace in corrections – shocked,’ he told the panel that includes a mix of House and Senate members.”](#)

Rhianna Kendrick: We cannot allow HUD to remove protections for trans people experiencing homelessness | VTDigger Commentary

[“In a shocking move, during a time of crisis in our country, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\), announced a plan beginning July 24 to roll back protections for transgender people that were put into place in 2016. The proposed modification is reconsidering the protections that allowed transgender people to access shelter space based upon their gender identity, and not their biologically determined sex. The removal of this protection would allow for shelters to establish policies that place and accommodate individuals on the basis of their biological sex, without regard for their gender identity.”](#)

Sex and gender: modifiers of health, disease, and medicine | The Lancet

Clinicians can encounter sex and gender disparities in diagnostic and therapeutic responses. These disparities are noted in epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, disease progression, and response to treatment. [This Review discusses the fundamental influences of sex and gender as modifiers of the major causes of death and morbidity.](#) It articulates how the genetic, epigenetic, and hormonal influences of biological sex influence physiology and disease, and how the social constructs of gender affect the behavior of the community, clinicians, and patients in the health-care system and interact with pathobiology. The review aims to guide clinicians and researchers to consider sex and gender in their approach to diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of diseases as a necessary and fundamental step towards precision medicine, which will

benefit men's and women's health.

Vermonters get an unexpected shoutout from actress and former student Kerry Washington

Kicking off the televised Democratic National Convention proceedings, Kerry Washington began by telling [viewers an anecdote about her middle school experience memorizing the preamble to the U.S. Constitution](#). "I've never forgotten it," Washington said. The teacher of the class Washington referenced was Tiff Bluemle, founding director of our initiative Change The Story VT, a partnership of the VT Women's Fund, VT Commission on Women, and VT Works for Women. [The message of "teacher love" has since gone viral and is a national news item!](#) It's great to see Tiff (and teachers) acknowledged and thanked for the heart and soul they bring to their work.

Employment Opportunities

Clarina Howard Nichols Center seeks advocate

The Clarina Howard Nichols Center is seeking an Advocate for 30-40 hours/week to provide services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence in our shelter and the community. To apply, send cover letter and resume to Becky Gonyea via email to bgonyea@clarina.org or mail to Clarina Howard Nichols Center PO Box 517 Morrisville, VT 05661. Read the [full job description](#).

Funding Opportunities

USDA accepting applications to help cover costs for organic certification

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that organic producers and handlers can apply for federal funds to assist with the cost of receiving and maintaining organic certification through the [Organic Certification Cost Share Program \(OCCSP\)](#). Applications for eligible certification expenses paid between Oct. 1, 2019, and Sept. 30, 2020, are due Oct. 31, 2020.

Vermont Works for Women employment services for those whose employment has been impacted by COVID-19

Do you need assistance navigating the resources (unemployment insurance, benefits) available to support Vermonters during this time? Are you looking for a new job and need help with the search, writing a resume/cover letter, or practicing interviewing? Do you need help overcoming obstacles or barriers to employment? [Get support from VWW.](#)

Upcoming Events

Toast to Tenacity | Women 100

[Wednesday, August 26, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.](#)

Rightfully Hers: American Women and the Vote, Virtual Series | National Archives Family Program

["National Archives Family Program" Wednesday, August 26, 1:00 p.m.](#)

["Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers" Wednesday, August 26, 5:00 p.m.](#)

["Ida B. Wells Program and Discussion" Thursday, August 27, 1:00 p.m.](#)

["100 Years Later: Women in Charge of the Ballot Box", Thursday, August 27, 5:00 p.m.](#)

A Militant Suffragist: The Story of Louisine Waldron Elder Havemeyer's Role in the Women's Suffrage Movement

[Wednesday, August 26, 1:00 p.m.](#)

Student and Youth-Led School Reopening Forum | Voices for VT's Children

[Inequality and Inequity in Vermont's Public Education System before COVID \(students only\), Wednesday, August 26, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.](#)

[Processing the Impacts of the Stay-At-Home-Order and Remote Learning Experience, Thursday, August 27, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.](#)

[Racially Reconstructing Public Education in Vermont to Meet Universal Needs, Friday, August 28, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.](#)

Women's Equality Day: 100 Years of Representation in Government and Labor | Department of Labor, Women's Bureau

[Wednesday, August 26, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.](#)

Historian Marilyn Blackwell to Present on Women's Suffrage in Vermont | Enosburgh Historical Society

[Thursday, August 27, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.](#)

Make Noise. Vote. A concert & rally on the centennial of the 19th amendment | Women Take the Stage

[Wednesday, August 26 at 7:30 p.m.,](#)

Teaching Racial Justice in PK - 12 Schools - A Virtual Learning Series | Vermont Higher Education Collaborative

[Tuesdays, September 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, 7:00 – 8:15 p.m.](#)



We choose events for VIEW from our [statewide events calendar](#) for women and girls. **If you'd like your event featured in the VIEW, make sure you [add it](#).**

Looking for more? You'll find many more events for women & girls in Vermont on the [calendar](#).



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The Vermont Commission on Women (VCW) is a non-partisan state agency advancing rights and opportunities for women and girls. Sixteen volunteer commissioners, along with representatives from organizations concerned with women's issues, guide VCW's public education, coalition building, and advocacy efforts. For more information, please visit us at <http://women.vermont.gov>.

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