

**League of Women Voters Ohio**  
**Statehouse Day 2019**  
**“Closing the Gender Gap” Panel Discussion**  
**March 27, 2019**

Panelists

- Urvi Patel (Panel Moderator), Director of Strategic Communications, The Women’s Fund of Central Ohio
- Shadia Jallaq, Program Manager, Ohio Women Empowered to Represent (POWER)
- Joan Lawrence, Ohio House of Representatives, 1983 – 1999, numerous roles on state and local committees
- Elissa Schneider, Executive Director, Matriots PAC

Ms. Patel

- Per 2018 worldwide statistics, at the current progress, it will take women 108 years to reach gender parity and 200 years to reach economic parity.
- Less than 25% of the Ohio legislature is women.

Ms. Jallaq

- Women do not run for office in the same numbers as men due to the Confidence Gap – they feel less qualified to run for office and, therefore, do not run.
- There are only two “qualifications” required to run for office: residency and age.
- Men are recruited to run for office; women have to be pushed and persuaded.
- When women do run, they are equally likely to be elected as men.
- When women are elected, they bring more money to their districts, they collaborate with others more often, and their legislation is more important to their districts.
- Women give less money to candidates.
- Discover your own personal political voice: run, support, lobby, and/or invest in women running for office. Ask women to run for office and then support and encourage them.

Ms. Lawrence

- When running for office, very important to establish a base that will support you.
- Establish your base by working at the local community level: work on local issues, get appointed or join local government commissions and/or run for local office. This local base will be very important as you run for higher office.
- She found that her LWV membership gave her much credibility with the public when running for office.

Ms. Schneider

- Matriots PAC has a goal of having 50% of all elected officials in Ohio to be held by women.
- There are 17,616 elected officials in Ohio; 5,108 of these officials are women or 29%.
- The more constituents and the higher the budget an office claims, the less likely a woman will hold that office.