

# Wisconsin Women in Government: Announces 2020 Legacy and Rising Star awards

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MADISON – Wisconsin Women in Government (WWIG), a statewide, bipartisan, non-profit organization, is pleased to announce the 2020 recipients of WWIG’s Legacy and Rising Star Awards. The awards are given to women in careers connected to public service and are historically presented at WWIG’s Annual Gala, which was canceled this year due to the pandemic. WWIG will honor all 2020 and 2021 recipients at next year’s event.

WWIG awards and professional development programming are funded through membership and event revenue. WWIG is grateful for the support it has received, especially during this challenging year. You, too, can support WWIG, its awards and programming by becoming a member.

Legacy  Award

*The “Legacy Award” honors a woman who has made significant professional contributions throughout her career to local, state, and/or national government. WWIG is thrilled to present this year’s Legacy Award to:*

**TINA VIRGIL**

*Department of Justice Division of Law Enforcement Administrator*

Tina Virgil serves as the Administrator of the Division of Law Enforcement Services at the Wisconsin Department of Justice. She was appointed to the position in January 2019, but has worked in a variety of roles under five attorneys general at DOJ for the past 28 years. In 2016, she was made director of the newly created Bureau of Special Investigations, which made her responsible for overseeing the

critical-incident response for officer-involved shootings for the Division of Criminal Investigation. Tina is also a sworn law enforcement officer with Wisconsin's State Capitol Police Department.

Tina has been active in a variety of statewide and national initiatives, including serving as the chapter president for the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE). She is also a member of the State Council on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse, the National Court Appointed Special Advocates Association, and the National Association of Women in Law Enforcement Executives. Tina received her bachelor's degree in criminal justice and psychology from Edgewood College. She also graduated from the Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command as well as the Wisconsin Command College.

"I am honored and privileged to receive the WWIG 2020 Legacy Award. When I look at the achievements by women in their professional careers within government, and especially the dedication of women in law enforcement I am humbled to be the one chosen. Receiving this award only motivates me to work harder and continue to mentor other women as they pursue or continue to strive in careers dedicated to government service."



*The "Rising Star Award" honors a woman who has been in her profession for 10 years or less, but has demonstrated excellence by making an extraordinary impact in her profession relative to her years of service. WWIG is thrilled to present this year's Rising Star Award to:*

**MAKDA FESSAHAYE**

*Wisconsin Department of Corrections Division of Adult Institutions Administrator* Makda Fessahaye serves as the Administrator for the Wisconsin Department of Corrections' Division of Adult Institutions. As Administrator, Makda is responsible for the day-to-day division operations, which includes 36 correctional facilities as well as offices and bureaus. Prior to her role as administrator, Makda served as legal counsel for the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. Makda also serves in leadership positions for several organizations. She is the immediate past president of the Wisconsin Association of African American Lawyers. She also serves on the Marquette University Law School Diversity Recruitment Committee. She is a member of Women in Focus, Inc., and is a

supervising attorney for the Madison Unemployment Appeals Clinic. In 2017, Makda was recognized at The Business Forum's ATHENA Young Professional Awards, and the next year was among Marquette University Law School's "Rising Stars." In 2019, her high school selected her as the Young Alumni of the Year, and the Wisconsin Law Journal named her one of its Up and Coming Lawyers. She is a 2017 alumna of the Wisconsin Women in Government Leadership Seminar.

Makda received her undergraduate degree from Northwestern University in communication studies with a minor in political science. She earned her juris doctor from the Marquette University Law School.