

Emerge: Launching judicial candidate training program in Wisconsin

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Emerge, the nation's premier organization that recruits and trains Democratic women to run for office, announced today that it is launching a Judicial Candidate Training, a comprehensive program for women seeking to run for judgeships as the organization looks to increase representation in courts. The program was created following Emerge's overwhelming success with training judicial candidates. The organization has more than 45 alums running for judge on the November ballot and more than 60 alums currently serving in judgeships at all levels including two state Supreme Court justices and a Federal Magistrate judge.

The pilot program is centered around women interested in running for judgeships in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Applications will be open from now until January 5 with the training being held virtually beginning on January 28. The application can be found [here](#).

"Emerge's Judicial Candidate Training Program is an important step in expanding representation in our courts and reempowering our judicial system," said A'shanti F. Gholar, president of Emerge. "Now, more than ever, we're feeling the effects of a judiciary that lacks women's voices. By empowering women jurists, and especially women of the New American Majority-Black, Brown and Indigenous women and women of color, as well as LGBTQ+, young, and unmarried women-to run for judge, Emerge is building a pipeline of women judges to change the face of our courts. We have always fought for our seat at the table. Now we're preparing the next generation to fight for our seat on the bench too."

Women who take part in the boot camp will receive cutting edge training and education on how to run for judgeships, including the unique ways that judicial candidates need to message, campaign, and be compliant when running. They will

leave the training with the tools they need to run and strategies they need to win. The instructors for the program are top tier consultants, staff and advisors from across the country who have been a part of some of the most exciting and effective campaigns in recent election cycles. Attendees will receive critical training from these experts on essential elements of running a successful campaign, such as: public speaking, fundraising, campaign strategy, media and messaging, voter contact and others tailored specifically to judicial campaigns. Boot camp participants will also convene and interact with a range of powerful women who hold influential positions, as well as elected and appointed office and will become part of a supportive network, which includes a national association of Emerge alums serving at nearly every level of public office.

This groundbreaking program is part of Emerge's efforts to repower the country's judicial and legal systems. Currently, women make up [only 34% of judges](#) nationwide. This disparity is even greater for women of color who hold [only 7% of state Supreme Court seats](#) with no representation on these benches in 27 states. This comes at a time when women and especially women of color, are disproportionately impacted by the judicial system. Black women are nearly [three times more likely](#) to be incarcerated than white women and experience longer, more severe sentencing for the same crime as white women and on average, women are [less likely to win lawsuits](#) and [awarded less in damages](#) from lawsuits than men. To combat this disparity, Emerge is building a pipeline of women jurists to both run for judge and increase equity in these positions.

Once elected to judgeships, women have an outsized impact on the judicial system. Women judges [write as many opinions](#) as male judges, are cited just as often, and are just as likely to dissent from the majority opinion, even if the majority opinion is written by their own party. Women judges are also [more likely to rule with the victim](#) in sex-based, gender-based, and sexual orientation-based discrimination or harassment cases. Their lived experiences allow them to view the case in a different light than their male counterparts. And studies also find women prioritize [rehabilitation over retribution](#) in their sentences. Overall, women judges have a reforming and equitable approach to the law giving them a proven ability to repower and reform the country's judicial system.