

Emerge Wisconsin: Hires Madison Common Council Vice President Arvina Martin as executive director

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MADISON, WI — Emerge Wisconsin, the state's premier organization that recruits and trains Democratic women to run for office, announced today that Arvina Martin will serve as the organization's next executive director. In this role, Martin will oversee the strategy and operations of Emerge Wisconsin: recruiting for and running Emerge Virginia's signature training program, supporting alumnae running for office, and helping ensure women from the New American Majority across Wisconsin are ready to step into leadership.

"I'm honored to join the Emerge Wisconsin team and serve as the next executive director to lead our state," said Martin. "Despite making up half of our state's population, women only represent 27% of the Wisconsin Legislature, the 27th lowest in the nation. We're feeling that in our public offices and institutions who desperately need the voices of women from communities across Wisconsin to help guide them. Fortunately, we're seeing Democratic women stand up and make those voices heard, and Emerge is playing our role in preparing them to lead the way. We're excited to train the next generation of Democratic women to run for office and continue to demonstrate the necessity of more women serving in public office."

"I am incredibly excited to have Arvina Martin join us as the next Executive Director of Emerge Wisconsin," said A'shanti F. Gholar, President of Emerge. "Arvina's political acumen, electoral success, and work with Native and New American Majority communities across Wisconsin has already shown her dedication to seeing Democratic women elected and will provide new leadership and continued growth for this trailblazing organization. Through her efforts, Emerge will help reach thousands more women of the New American Majority—women of color, Black,

Brown and Indigenous women, young, LGBTQ+ and unmarried women—repower political structures, and foster a lift as you climb culture as we reach for our 2035 goals. We are proud to add her to our amazing team and know she will be a perfect leader for Emerge Wisconsin.”

Martin’s headshot and full bio can be found below:



Arvina Martin (Hohapjikere, The lightning in the distance that lights up the sky like daylight) is the first Native person ever elected to Madison Wisconsin’s Common Council, and was elected Vice President in 2020 by her peers. Arvina is an enrolled member of the Ho-Chunk Nation, and is Stockbridge-Munsee, and has worked with Native communities throughout her entire career. She has worked with Native youth, encouraging them to think about their post-high school education, and has worked with tribes to support transportation and employment goals with all levels of government. Arvina has also worked on political campaigns, including three presidential campaigns. She has experience creating grassroots networks, particularly in Native communities, as well as putting together virtual events during the pandemic. She cares deeply about engaging those who are new to politics in the process, and connecting them to people, organizations, and information to make sure they make their voices heard.. She uses her background to work on city programs, like access to housing, mental health care, transportation, sustainability, and the ballot box with an equity and forward thinking lens. Arvina lives in Madison, WI, with her mother and daughter, and enjoys playing roller derby, and working on beadwork in her free time.

Emerge Wisconsin has a proven track record for getting Democratic women elected. Since the organization launched in 2008, the program has equipped 349 women with the skills needed to bring change to their communities. 85 alumnae currently serve in office in Wisconsin with 11 alumnae serving in the Wisconsin Legislature. The organization is committed to reaching 100,000 women of the New American Majority, empowering political structures, and fostering a lift as you climb culture over the next 15 years. Nationwide, there are currently 27 state affiliates, and the organization has impacted a total of 45 states, Washington, D.C. and territories.

Arvina Martin officially starts at Emerge Wisconsin on February 22nd. For further information or press and media requests, contact Kaleb Harmon at kaleb@emergeamerica.org.