TECHNICAL VERSUS ADAPTIVE TRAINING: MOBILIZING WOMEN POLITICAL CANDIDATES TO THRIVE ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

By

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Abstract

Although women make up more than 50% of the current U.S. population, they hold less than 25% of elected offices nationwide (Dittmar, 2017). To address this issue, the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) established Ready to Run, "a national network of non-partisan campaign training programs committed to electing more women to public office" (CAWP, 2016), which leads the field in providing campaign training to women. Despite the availability of Ready to Run and similar training programs, the number of women who hold elected office has remained stagnant for more than two decades. Using Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky's (2009) theory of adaptive leadership, this mixed-methods study evaluates the content and delivery of the Ready to Run program. Based on a thematic analysis (Owens, 1984), I conclude that Ready to Run relies on technical methods to the adaptive challenge of recruiting and training women to run for elected office. Ready to Run should, instead, incorporate more adaptive methods to better mobilize women to run for office and help them thrive on the campaign trail.

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Finally, I want to acknowledge and thank Hillary Rodham Clinton. Her campaign, while it did not shatter the glass ceiling, was groundbreaking, and the loss was heartbreaking. I find solace in the fact that her loss, exacerbated by Donald Trump's win, has inspired so many women to step up and run for office. I hope my research will improve the ways in which organizations recruit, train, and support women in this process.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

"If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair." –Shirley Chisholm

If you want to know why the number of women in elected office remains so low, you need to consider one fact: women are less likely to run for elected office than men are (Lawless & Fox, 2005). This is not because women are less likely to *win* election to public office than are men, because they're not; when women run, women can and do win (Newman & Leighton, 1997). Instead, the more systemic problem is that women run for office at lower rates than do men. In response to this challenge, several programs at the national, state, and local levels have been developed to recruit women and provide them with the tools and support they need to run for office. However, despite the presence of these training programs, the number of women in politics has grown only incrementally over the course of the last 25 years (CAWP, 2017). This continuing gap in representation means that it is time to reexamine, and perhaps re-conceptualize, the content and delivery of the training programs.

Training Programs for Women

Numerous programs operate throughout the U.S. that provide training for women who want to run for political office. Major programs such as Emerge America, Emily's List Political Opportunity Program, the Center for American Women and Politics' Ready to Run program, Running Start, the She Should Run program operated by the Women's Campaign Fund, American University's Women and Politics Institute's WeLead program, and the Women's Campaign School at Yale University each offer women training to help them succeed in politics. Although their core constituent is the same—women—and their missions are similar—to elect more women—the programs differ in terms of the types of women they target and the types of

training provided. Some programs are partisan in nature, and others are ideologically driven. Some programs accept women from across the country, and others operate in particular states or regions. Additionally, some programs seek to engage young women, and others aim to increase the number of women of color in politics.

For example, of the programs that have strong ties to political parties, Emerge America and the National Federation of Republican Women's Campaign Management School, each provide training only to Democratic and Republican women, respectively. Although each of these programs is interested in electing more women, both are more concerned with party affiliation than they are with gender. Their priority is to elect more *Democratic* women or more *Republican* women, not just more women.

In addition to limiting participation based on party affiliation, other programs are ideological in nature and focus on single issues, the most common being reproductive rights. For example, Emily's List Political Opportunity Program (POP) recruits and trains pro-choice Democratic women to run for office at the state and local levels, and the She Should Run program that is operated by the Women's Campaign Fund is "dedicated to dramatically increasing the number of women in elected office who support reproductive health choices for all" (Women's Campaign Fund, 2011). As with the partisan programs, these single-issue organizations are interested in electing more women, but only women who share their position on key issues.

Although some of the programs do restrict the women they accept based on party affiliation or an issue litmus test, many of the training programs are nonpartisan or bipartisan and open to women candidates from both the Republican and Democratic Parties. For example,

the Women's Campaign School at Yale is a nonpartisan, issue-neutral political campaign-training program, as are the WeLead program that is run by the Women & Politics Institute at American University and the Center for American Women and Politics' Ready to Run program. These nonpartisan programs share the goal of electing more women regardless of political party affiliation and without a policy litmus test.

Programs also differ based on where they operate. Some programs conduct trainings exclusively in specific states, although other programs accept women from across the country or even travel around the nation. The Center for American Women and Politics' Ready to Run program has network partners operating in 20 states, and Emerge America operates in 14 states. In contrast, the Women's Campaign School at Yale University brings women from across the U.S. together for training in New Haven, Connecticut and WeLead and Running Start both provide training sessions in Washington, DC. During the 2011-2012 election cycle, Emily's List Political Opportunity Program provided training in 17 states and 35 cities to more than 1,300 women (Emily's List, 2014c). Interestingly, some training programs operate exclusively online. The Women's Campaign Fund She Should Run program provides information on the status of women in elected office and mobilizes women to take action by providing an online tool to formally ask a woman to consider running for political office. The website also provides a list of local resources in each state and an "action companion notebook." The notebook was developed based on feedback from program participants and breaks down the decision to run for office into small and practical steps (She Should Run, 2011a). Access to a political training program, both geographically and financially, is significant, as women must find a training program nearby or be able to afford to travel to another location.

Programs that target particular demographic groups are increasing in number. For example, a number of programs, including WeLead and Running Start, target young women, and Ready to Run has developed a diversity initiative to attract more women of color to the electoral process. WeLead, operated by the Women & Politics Institute at American University, is a bipartisan training program that targets women between the ages of 21 and 27 and seeks to "empower young women, ignite their passions and prepare them to succeed in politics and public service" (WeLead, 2014). Running Start has programs that target both high school and college women based on the assumption that "With an earlier start in politics, women will climb higher on the leadership ladder, allowing more women to share in the decision-making power in this country" (Running Start, 2014). Ready to Run's diversity initiative seeks to increase the representation of women of color in elected office and offers separate programs for African American women, Asian American women, and Latinas. Although women make up more than 50% of the population in the U.S., it is equally important to expand the representation of other underrepresented groups in elected office. Programs that seek to be both diverse and inclusive help districts to have representation that reflects the voters.

Just as the types of candidates admitted to the various programs are different, so too are the types of training provided. Emerge America provides 70 hours of in-depth training over a seven-month period (Emerge America, 2011b). Participants receive training on the Democratic Party platform, labor issues, public speaking and communication, fundraising, media and messaging, networking, campaign strategy, field operations, technology and new media, diversity and cultural competency, and ethical leadership (Emerge America, 2011c). Similarly, the Women's Campaign School at Yale is a five-day program offered each summer

that puts participants through “an intense political immersion program designed to teach campaign skills, strategic assessment, and improvisation” (Women’s Campaign School, 2013a). The curriculum at the Women’s Campaign School is unique because it was specifically designed by and for women to “address the particular cultural challenges faced by women in politics” (Women’s Campaign School, 2013). Emily’s List holds daylong trainings across the country that help women candidates devise winning strategies, write and execute fundraising plans, develop effective communications strategies, forge key alliances, and build grassroots networks for future campaigns. WeLead offers monthly workshops with a curriculum that focuses on campaigns, communications, professional development, fundraising, and public policy, but the program also offers a variety of networking and mentoring opportunities (WeLead, 2014). The quantity, in addition to the quality, of the training, may contribute to the success of a candidate’s campaign or at the very least feelings of competence, and therefore studying the content and the outcomes from these trainings is important.

Although each program operates differently, the missions and visions of the various organizations are very similar. They each share the goal of helping women become major players in American politics by training women to run for elected office successfully. For example, Emily’s List’s vision is to “balance the voice of power” and to “elect leaders who ignite change” (Emily’s List, 2014a). For that reason, the organization’s Political Opportunity Program focuses on building a pipeline of strong candidates up and down the ballot” (Emily’s List, 2014b). Likewise, the mission of the Women’s Campaign School at Yale University is to “increase the number and influence of women in elected and appointed office.” She Should Run’s mission is to dramatically increase the number of women in public leadership positions by

eliminating and overcoming barriers to success (She Should Run, 2011c). She Should Run also expresses a dedication to helping achieve equal representation for women in elected positions because, they assert, "it is essential to the health and future of our country that 50% of our population have equal power and leadership" (She Should Run, 2011b).

The need for more women in public office is often expressed by citing statistics about the number of women currently serving at the local, state, national, and international levels. For example, in the U.S. women make up 24% of state legislatures and hold only 18% of the seats in Congress (She Should Run, 2011b). Programs also point to the barriers that women face when running for office. She Should Run, for instance, cites a study published by Lawless and Fox (2005) that concludes that "women are 50% less likely than men to consider running for office, less likely than men to actually run for office, and far less likely to run for higher office" (She Should Run, 2011b). Programs also highlight the positive influence of women in elected office, such as women's unique leadership style when it comes to collaboration and decision-making (She Should Run, 2011b).

There are many contributing factors to the stagnation of women's representation. But what if one of them is that we have been trying to overcome the barriers in all the wrong ways? What if we have been treating the lack of women in elected office as a technical problem rather than an adaptive challenge? What if the training and resources that we have provided women candidates have been exclusively technical in nature and therefore ineffective at addressing the real underlying problems women encounter as candidates? I posit that challenging long-held beliefs demands a new way of doing things.

Ready to Run

Using Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky's (2009) theory of adaptive leadership and the iterative process of observation, interpretation, and intervention, I will evaluate the Ready to Run program. Ready to Run is a national network of candidate recruitment and training programs committed to electing more women to public office. The Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) at the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers created the nonpartisan Ready to Run program. The program recruits and trains women to run for elected office, helps women position themselves for appointed office, and encourages women to work on political campaigns or get involved in public life in other ways. Although multiple programs in the country recruit and train women to run for office, I selected Ready to Run for this case study because it is a successful program and one of the longest-running in the nation, and operates in multiple states. Additionally, Ready to Run is nonpartisan, and many other programs target exclusively Democratic or Republican women.

The Center for American Women and Politics (2014) argues that America needs more women in public office because they "make government more transparent, inclusive and accessible;" "bring different priorities and experiences to public life, including perspectives that have been largely absent in public policymaking;" and "change the way government works." Furthermore, the group asserts, "their voices are needed in legislative chambers around the country." To help women prepare to run for elective office, Ready to Run offers two-day training programs. Ready to Run's model curriculum covers fundraising, positioning oneself for elected office, navigating the political party structure, media training, the nuts and bolts of organizing a campaign, mobilizing voters, and crafting a message. Local campaign experts, who are familiar with the political culture and climate of the state or region, deliver the training.

According to CAWP, “the program demystifies the process of running for elected office, encourages more women to mount campaigns, and introduces them to elected and appointed leaders, campaign consultants, and party officials in their state to whom they can turn as they get ready to run” (CAWP, 2014).

The Center for American Women and Politics initially created the Ready to Run program in 1998 in New Jersey. Since that time, more than 1,700 women have attended trainings (CAWP, 2014). More than a quarter of the Ready to Run participants have run for office, and of those who ran, 70% won their races (CAWP, 2014). In fact, New Jersey has moved from being ranked 39th in the nation for women serving in the state legislature to 10th (CAWP, 2014). Although Ready to Run originally began operating in New Jersey, the Center for American Women and Politics developed a training network to help other states replicate the program. Ready to Run has now established the program in 14 states: Alabama, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Vermont (CAWP, 2014). In addition to receiving ongoing support, Ready to Run states that the program participants also “gain insight from each other’s successes, build connections, exchange ideas for best practices, and discover new approaches to recruiting and training women for public life” (CAWP, 2014).

Purpose

My interest in Ready to Run and other training programs for women candidates is grounded in my personal experience working for more than a decade as a political operative and as a candidate for the Kansas State Legislature in 2014. Both before and after running for office, I worked closely with more than one hundred men and women running for office at all

levels, from city council to the U.S. Senate. I witnessed firsthand the underrepresentation of women as political candidates, gender differences in how men and women approached the campaign process, and the ways in which women operated more inclusively and effectively once elected. I was compelled to run for office in part because of the dismal political environment in Kansas, and because I believe that I can positively shape the future of our state. I also believe that increasing the number of women in politics is critical to changing the state's political, social, and economic trajectory.

This study, in addition to being informed and inspired by my personal and professional involvement in politics, is also influenced by my experience as a communication scholar. If communication were as simple as a standard transmission model suggests, evaluating the sender, receiver, and channel of a message would be easy. However, the transmission model neglects to incorporate the feedback that naturally occurs in human communication and the failure of a message to be satisfactorily delivered, both of which are present in what is known as an interaction model (Shannon & Weaver, 1949). Yet we must look to an even more robust model, the transaction model, to understand the importance of context and an individual's field of experience if we are to understand the complexity of human communication. Analyzing the process by which Ready to Run's message is constructed and communicated to women candidates, judging the effectiveness of the message as delivered within the context of a given political environment and ultimately investigating how candidates utilize the message to address situational constraints are critical.

Thus, the purpose of this study is two-fold. First, I seek to understand whether the Ready to Run program addresses the deficiency of women in elected office as a technical

problem or an adaptive challenge. Second, I seek to understand whether the Ready to Run program provides technical or adaptive resources to women candidates through training, and then how those candidates utilize the resources on the campaign trail. In determining the approach to the problem, the resources delivered, and their use, I hope to discover what discursive strategies are effective and ineffective in meeting the unique needs of women candidates and allowing women to thrive in the electoral arena. Ultimately, I hope to develop recommendations that can be adopted by Ready to Run and other organizations to recruit, train, and support women in the process of running for political office successfully. Therefore, this study is designed, analyzed, and written from an applied perspective. The immediate goal for these findings is to develop white papers that can assist organizations in adopting more adaptive approaches to recruiting, training, and supporting women candidates in the process of running for office..

Although the number of training programs targeting women candidates has grown substantially over the past twenty years—while the number of women in elected office has remained nearly stagnant during the same period—little academic research has been done on the availability and effectiveness of political training programs in general and even less on programs designed for women. Without additional research in these areas, very little development can be done to create programs that are of genuine service to those who participate in them and, in turn, to the larger democracy.

The increase in the number of training programs over the last 20 years indicates a growing desire among political organizations and campaign operators to prepare candidates better to run for office by equipping them with the tools and skills necessary to win. One of the

reasons for the increased demand for training is the rapidly changing nature of political campaigns. The rise of new technologies has changed the modern campaign, requiring a more sophisticated approach to running for office not just at the national level but at the state and local levels as well. Trainings now regularly include sessions about using social media to engage constituents in the political process, developing micro-targeting strategies to identify voters and issues of specific concern to them, and using the internet to develop a network of small-dollar donors to raise money across the country.

Not only have campaigns become increasingly complicated and more reliant on technology, they have also become more expensive. In 1992, the average Congressional campaign cost approximately $500,000 (Campaign Finance Institute, 2015). Today, the average candidate for Congress will raise and spend upwards of $1.5 million, not to mention the flow of money from super PACs and other outside entities (Campaign Finance Institute, 2015). Previously, candidates often relied on their personal networks to raise the money necessary to fund their campaigns. Today, however, that is not enough. Candidates regularly spend much of the day in the call room, dialing for dollars. They must also cultivate relationships with donors large and small across the country to raise the money necessary to fund their campaigns. Training sessions provide a wide range of foundation to develop skills, relationships, and networks that can position them for success.

In many ways, training programs demystify the process of running for office, helping candidates navigate the complicated political process and meet the growing demands of modern campaigning. Additionally, attending a training is often a first or early step that potential candidates take when exploring a run for office. The training is thus a first opportunity

for a participant to envision herself as a candidate and understand what it will take to wage a winning campaign. The role that the training plays in cementing or suppressing a candidate's political ambition is important to explore. Equally important is how candidates utilize the information gained in the training on the campaign trail and whether the materials provided and information learned were relevant.

To this end, chapter two begins with a summary of relevant literature on women in politics, explains the theory of adaptive leadership and its applicability, and concludes with the research questions to be addressed in this study. The method for data collection and analysis is included in chapter three. The findings will be presented in chapters four, five, and six. Chapter four presents data and analysis in response to RQ1, chapter five presents data and analysis in response to RQ2 and RQ3, and chapter six presents data and analysis in response to RQ4. A discussion of the implications and limitations of the research is included in chapter seven.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

"Exercising adaptive leadership is about giving meaning to your life beyond your own ambition."

–Ron Heifetz

History of Women and Elected Office

In 1872, Victoria Woodhull became the first woman to run for president. The nominee of the Equal Rights Party, at the age of 34 she was too young to serve, and as a woman she was not allowed to vote (Gutgold, 2006). Despite her electoral failure, women slowly followed Woodhull into the public sphere. Susanna Salter became the first woman elected to any political office in the U.S. when she was elected mayor of Argonia, Kansas in 1887 (KSHS, 2013). In 1917—three years prior to the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which granted American women the right to vote—Jeannette Rankin, a Republican from Montana, became the first women ever elected to Congress. Upon her election, Rankin observed: "I may be the first woman member of Congress, but I won't be the last" (Mallon, 1917). And she was right: women continued to make slow but steady gains until 1992. The 1992 election brought dramatic change to the gender makeup of the U.S. Congress. Four new women were elected to the Senate, bringing the total to seven. In the House, more women won more seats in that single election than they had in the last two decades combined (Carroll, 1994).

It has been more than 125 years since Salter was elected, almost 100 years since women earned the right to vote, and nearly 25 years since women made dramatic electoral gains in 1992. Yet women today still hold less than 20% of the seats in Congress, meaning men hold over 80% (CAWP, 2017). The numbers are slightly better at the state level; nearly 25% of state legislators nationwide are women, but the proportionality of women representatives for any

given state varies substantially (CAWP, 2017). In Colorado, for example, 39% of state legislators are women, although in Wyoming women make up only 11% of the state legislature (CAWP, 2017). Additionally, women are substantially less likely to be elected to executive-level positions; only six of governors in the U.S. are women, and women serve as mayor in only 20% of major American cities (CAWP, 2017).

Although these statistics alone are alarming, what's even more disheartening is that these numbers have been relatively stagnant over the course of the last decade and have actually declined following the 2010 election (CAWP, 2017). If women continue to make gains at the same slow rate, parity in Congress will not be achieved until 2121 (Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2013). Parity at all levels of elected office, across every geographic area, and in both major political parties is projected to be even farther in the future. According to an analysis conducted by Representation 2020, it will take nearly 500 years, at the current rate of progress, for women to achieve equal representation (Hill, 2014).

When Women Run

Since 1937, Gallop has been polling Americans' responses to the following question: "If your party nominated a woman for president, would you vote for her if she were qualified for the job?" Initially, only about 30% of voters said they would vote for a women candidate; by contrast, today, that number now tops 90%. However, as researchers have proven, the lack of women in public office is not a result of women's failure to win their races. In fact, a candidate's sex or gender has no effect on his or her chances of winning an election: "When women run, women win … as often as men do" (Seltzer, Newman, & Leighton, 1997, p. 79).

Instead, the lack of women in public office can be attributed to the scarcity of women candidates—that is, women simply do not put their names on the ballots as often as men do (Carroll, 1994). From 1972 to 1994, women were only 7.8% of candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives, 7.9% of candidates for the U.S. Senate, and 6.6% of gubernatorial candidates (Seltzer et al., 1997). Although only two percent of Americans will ever run for office, only one in four candidates at all levels will be a woman (Motel, 2014). In more recent years, the Democratic and Republican Parties fielded women candidates in only a third of Congressional races (Lawless & Fox, 2012).

One of the most powerful advantages that a candidate can have when seeking political office is the power of incumbency. However, access to the power of incumbency is a significant institutional barrier for increasing the number of women in public office (Carroll & Sanbonmatsu, 2013). Most incumbents seek reelection, and most incumbents win reelection—traditionally at rates of 90% or higher—thanks in part to higher name recognition and fundraising advantages (Open Secrets, 2014). At one time, an argument could have been made that term limits might serve as a solution to the incumbent (dis)advantage; yet, even term limits have proven ineffective in increasing the number of women legislators (Carroll & Jenkins, 2001). Again, even if a seat is opened through an institutional policy such as term limits, the policy only helps if women—in greater numbers than currently is the case—choose to run for office.

Ultimately, of course, if women are not putting their names on the ballots, they do not have the chance to win and, ultimately, run as an incumbent. Therefore, given that the majority of incumbents are men, any increase in women's representation in the near future promises to

be incremental at best. Perhaps most frustrating in the research is not only that when women run they win (Newman & Leighton, 1997), but also that when they are elected at the same percentages, and when the power of incumbency is taken into account, men and women candidates can expect equal levels of support from voters (Burrell, 1994; Darcy & Schramm, 1977; Seltzer et al., 1997). Nevertheless, the question remains as to why women do not seek political office at the same rate as men.

Why Women Do Not Run

As Joseph Schlesinger observed in his book *Ambition and Politics: Political Careers in the United States* (1966), "ambition lies at the heart of politics" (p. 1). In this book, however, Schlesinger was referring exclusively to men. In fact, women were referenced only once:

> In the United States, opportunities to advance have been best for white Anglo-Saxon Protestant males. Before assigning progressive ambitions to the particular officeholder, therefore, we should consider the restrictions facing women and Jews and Negros and Puerto Ricans. Women's ambitions are most realistically directed at the House of Representatives, and more realistically directed at the Senate than the Presidency. (pp. 172-173)

Granted, progress has been made since Schlesinger wrote his book in the late 1960s, but a gender gap in political ambition remains, even if it is less pronounced than it was 50 years ago. Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox (2005 & 2010) have explored why women do not run for office and how political ambition plays into that decision. Based on a survey of 3,800 eligible candidates conducted in 2001, Lawless and Fox (2005) found that women were 16% less likely

to demonstrate ambition and express a willingness to run in the future. In a follow-up survey in 2008, that number shrank slightly to 14% (Lawless & Fox, 2010).

In addition to demonstrating lower levels of political ambition and being less likely to consider running for office, scholars report that women are less likely than men are to be recruited as candidates (Lawless & Fox, 2005; Lawless & Fox, 2010; Sanbonmatsu, 2006). Based on an analysis of the Citizen Political Ambition Study, Fox and Lawless (2012) found that men are 25% more likely to be recruited to run. Thus, recruitment is also a critical variable when understanding women's representation. Carroll (1994) reported that political parties more often recruit women for low-prestige offices—such as for school board rather than state senate—and in districts where the opposition party's candidate is more likely to win. In these contexts, women run as "sacrificial lambs."

If women are recruited to run for office, they may need to be asked on average at least three times before they will seriously consider running (Lawless & Fox, 2013). This is because they are less likely than men to consider themselves qualified to seek elected office (Lawless & Fox, 2005; Lawless & Fox, 2010). Men are 60% more likely than women to rate themselves as "very qualified" to run for office, although women are more than twice as likely as me to rate themselves as "not at all qualified" (Lawless & Fox, 2012). Importantly however, self-perception of qualifications to run for office is not necessarily based in reality. Men and women have similar levels of exposure to the political arena and the experience and skills necessary to run for elected office.

Why We Need More Women to Run

Understanding why women are underrepresented is critical to correcting the problem and achieving equal gender representation, but why do we need more women in elected office? First and foremost, we need women in elected office because in a representative democracy the representatives should reflect the diversity of the electorate. When making suggestions about the establishment of a new nation and the drafting of a constitution in North Carolina, Founding Father John Adams (1776) wrote in *Thoughts on Government*, "The principal difficulty lies, and the greatest care should be employed in constituting this representative assembly. It should be in miniature an exact portrait of the people at large. It should think, feel, reason and act like them" (p. 205). The underrepresentation of women raises fundamental concerns about the legitimacy of our democracy, where women make up half of the population and more than 50% of voters.

A second reason that we need more women in politics is that policymakers have often ignored issues of unique concern to women (Caiazza, 2002). In comparison to their colleagues who are men, women officeholders have the ability to reshape the public policy agenda by prioritizing so called “women’s issues” such as education and health care (CAWP, 1991). In fact, research conducted by the Women’s Policy Research Institute (2002) found a “very strong” relationship between women’s representation and women-friendly policies in states across the country. Women elected officials are not only concerned about women’s issues, they also have been shown to be more concerned about other marginalized groups such as other minorities, the economically disadvantaged, and vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly, and the disabled (Walsh, 2002). In addition to widening the political debate to address the needs of groups traditionally ignored by men politicians, women can also change the way government

works. They often do so by bringing more citizens into the governing process—making government more transparent—and by being more responsive to constituent needs (CAWP, 1991).

Additionally, research indicates that women are more effective lawmakers because they are better at compromising, building consensus, and working across the aisle (Volden, Wiseman, & Wittmer, 2013). In 2013, a group of 20 women senators—four Republicans and 16 Democrats—came together to increase the debt ceiling and end the government shutdown.

> Susan Collins (Maine, Republican): "I ask my Democratic and Republican colleagues to come together. We can do it. We can legislate responsibly and in good faith."
>
> Barbara Mikulski (Maryland, Democrat): "Let's get to it. Let's get the job done. I am willing to negotiate. I am willing to compromise."
>
> Lisa Murkowski (Alaska, Republican): "I am pleased to stand with my friend from Maine, Senator Collins, as she has described a plan which I think is pretty reasonable. I think it is pretty sensible." (Newton-Small, 2013)

In addition to this anecdotal evidence, a recent study found that Republican women are more likely to be bipartisan than Democratic women, particularly when it comes to traditional women's issues like health, education, and social welfare (Gagliarducci & Paserman, 2016). The authors hypothesized that women tend to represent the more liberal wings of their respective parties, creating more opportunities for moderate Republican women to cooperate with centrist Democrats in contrast to progressive Democratic women.

Another potential reason that women are more collaborative than men is that women have been shown to value results above status. In a study of elected officials, Rosenthal (2002)

found that the most common reason that women gave for running for office was to effect change in society; in contrast, the most common reason that men gave for running of office was the desire to be a politician. Thus, it should not come as a surprise that not only do women sponsor and co-sponsor more bills than men, but also more of those bills pass (Klein, 2015).

Clearly, there are a number of tangible reasons that we need more women in politics, but we cannot afford to ignore the fact that electing more women to office is symbolically important as well. Women in elected office serve as role models, inspiring other women to run for office, and research indicates that the more women in elected office, the more women engage in politics (Carroll, 1985; Wolbrecht & Campbell, 2007). Our representative democracy works if everyone has a seat at the table, and as Shirley Chisholm—the first African American woman elected to Congress, first woman to run for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination, and the first African American woman to run for president—said, "If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair."

Increasing the number of women who run for office is key to obtaining more seats at the table. Programs like Ready to Run were designed to encourage and train women to run for public office, but the lack of progress presents the question of whether the effort has been enough. Is the program effective at mobilizing women to tackle the tough challenge of running for office and to thrive in the process, or is it time to change tactics? Adaptive leadership theory provides the lens through which to evaluate Ready to Run.

Adaptive Leadership Theory

The reason for using a leadership theory as a lens through which to study Ready to Run may not be immediately clear to those unfamiliar with adaptive leadership. Traditional

leadership theories such as the great man theory, trait theory, and transformational leadership are all focused on how a person becomes a "leader" and operates from a position of power, title, and authority. Adaptive leadership is different insofar as it is not just a theory but a *process* and a *practice*; it presents an opportunity to apply theory to everyday problems. Ronald Heifetz (1994) developed the conceptual framework for the theory of adaptive leadership, with the understanding that it could be translated into tools and tactics for leading change on some of the most difficult challenges facing our society, such as the underrepresentation of women in politics.

Adaptive leadership is defined as "the ability to mobilize people to tackle tough challenges and thrive" (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 14). Because the number of women running for office is significantly lower than the number of men who run, the question remains as to whether women have been mobilized to pursue elected office? Furthermore, the stagnant rate of women in elected office calls into question whether women are thriving in the electoral arena. Exploring further the underlying assumptions of adaptive leadership can help us understand these problems and explore potential solutions.

With the publication of *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (1994), author Ron Heifetz outlined a new model of leadership. Adaptive leadership as it was termed was intended as a practical approach to leadership. Heifetz suggested the problems facing society were not in fact a result of a crisis in leadership, but the misattribution of problems to those in positions of power and authority. In times of crisis, he said, we erroneously look for a leader with a simple, painless solution. Instead, should we truly desire to make progress on the problems plaguing society, we must work to change our attitudes, behaviors, and values. This requires not just

learning new ways of doing things, but also re-conceptualizing leadership and our expectations of leaders.

In 2002, Heifetz teamed with Harvard colleague Marty Linsky to write *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive Through the Dangers of Leading*. *Leadership on the Line*, which builds on the theoretical concepts introduced in *Leadership Without Easy Answers* to explore the practice of engaging in leadership. In this later book, Heifetz and Linsky argue that leadership is inherently a risky proposition because it surfaces conflict, challenges strongly held and deeply seated beliefs, and requires a new way of doing things. They argue that people are resistant to this type of change because it generally involves some sort of loss. Loss comes in many forms. Examples include disrupting the status quo, threatening someone's status or reputation, or challenging a personal value related to independence. Leaders who place themselves on the line by telling people what they need to hear instead of what they want to hear risk literal and figurative assassination. Although literal assassination does occur (e.g., as with Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr.), figurative assassination is a much greater risk and can involve being silenced, ignored, marginalized, or fired. Thus, adaptive leadership offers strategies for leading and staying alive through the dangers of change.

Drawing on decades of study and practice, Heifetz, Alexander Grashow, and Linsky published *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tool and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World* (2009). *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* was in essence a field guide for how to meet the challenges of leadership effectively and to make successful progress on the toughest problems. By including not just stories and examples, but also activities and

techniques, the book helps individuals develop the skills necessary to engage more effectively and powerfully in the process of leadership.

Combined, these three books outline the theoretical framework for adaptive leadership, explore the practical basis for engagement, and identify the tools and tactics necessary to bring about meaningful change. As an empirical theory derived from engagement with real problems, adaptive leadership theory invites further research and analysis to test and contribute to existing knowledge in the field of leadership. Thus, my study will not simply utilize adaptive leadership to provide an explanation of the problem, but it will also utilize adaptive leadership to make progress on addressing the problem. I will go beyond the traditional academic approach of using a theory to explain a problem and intentionally engage with Ready to Run program staff and participants in the process of adaptive leadership. In embracing the adaptive challenge, through this study, I will identify a problem, illuminate the gaps, use the theory to understand the disconnect, and develop solutions for the problem.

Distinguishing between technical problems and adaptive challenges. Adaptive leadership theory is based on a number of assumptions. Two crucial distinctions are critical to understanding the theory: the difference between technical problems and adaptive challenges and the difference between leadership and authority. First, adaptive leadership requires a distinction between technical problems and adaptive challenges. Technical problems are routine problems with known solutions that can be solved by an expert or an authority figure. This is not to say that technical problems are simple or unimportant, only that there is already a standard operating procedure in place to fix the problem. For example, if a woman were interested in running for office but did not know how to get her name on the ballot, that would

be a technical problem. A party leader (authority figure) or election clerk (expert) would know how to help her file to run for office. There is a standard operating procedure in place: complete a form, collect petition signatures or pay a fee by a given deadline, and your name will be placed on the ballot. In fact, this process is so technical that it is outlined in states' statutes.

In contrast to technical problems, adaptive challenges have no known solutions. Instead, adaptive challenges require learning and innovation, stakeholder involvement, and ultimately a shift in values, beliefs, or behaviors. The issue of electing more women is an adaptive challenge. It requires learning about why women historically have not been elected. It requires involving stakeholders in the political process, including voters, current elected officials, and potential candidates. And it requires bringing conflicting values to the surface as well as changing beliefs and behaviors about what it takes to recruit, train, and support women running for office.

Of course, many if not most of the problems that we face include both technical and adaptive elements. According to Heifetz et al. (2009), "the most common cause of failure in leadership is produced by treating adaptive challenges as if they were technical problems" (p. 19). Instituting quotas would be a direct method of creating parity between the number of men and the number of women serving in elected office. Many countries around the world have tried this approach. In Iraq for example, 25% of seats in parliament are reserved for women (Coleman, 2012). Without the quota system, less than 10% of the women elected would have earned enough votes to defeat their opponents who are men. Such a structural reform, however, is merely a technical solution that does not address the underlying problems. Many of the women who were elected in Iraq were the daughters and wives of prominent politicians,

and they were allowed to run only to fulfill the legal requirement for women representation. Once elected, the women faced hostility and resentment from colleagues. Additionally, they had relatively little effect on public policy, often relegated to work exclusively on "women's issues." An adaptive approach is necessary for women's effective and meaningful participation. In addition to distinguishing between technical problems and adaptive challenges, the theory of adaptive leadership also distinguishes between leadership and authority.

Distinguishing between leadership and authority. Leadership is often conflated with authority, power, and influence. In exchange for the title of "leader," authority figures are often asked to identify and solve our problems, granting them three primary responsibilities: to provide direction, protection, and order (Heifetz, 1994). In providing *direction*, we expect authority figures to offer a vision and set goals and then lay out strategies and techniques for achievement. From authority figures we also expect *protection* from external threats, which includes mobilizing a response. Finally, we expect authority figures to provide *order,* which includes orienting people to their roles, controlling conflict, and maintaining norms (Heifetz, 1994). Authority and its corresponding hierarchy are essential to the function of society, especially when it comes to solving technical problems. But to "habitually seek solutions from people in authority is maladaptive," because it excludes some of our most effective human resources from engaging collectively in the work of adaptive leadership (Heifetz, 1994, p. 73).

Thus, it is helpful to think of leadership as a practice. For hundreds of years, women in the U.S. have been denied positions of authority. That is not to say, however, that they have not exercised leadership; rather, they have engaged in leadership without formal authority, relying instead on respect, trust, and moral persuasion. For example, Susan B. Anthony and

Elizabeth Cady Stanton led the suffrage movement based solely on informal authority, ultimately earning women the right to vote. In fact, leadership is about the activity one engages in—unrelated to positions of formal authority—which makes it ideal for addressing issues such as why women remain underrepresented in politics.

Establishing a purpose. Doing the work of adaptive leadership is not only difficult and dangerous; it can be overwhelming and all-consuming at times. Establishing a *sense of purpose* can provide orientation and the inspiration necessary to engage in the process of leadership. Heifetz (1994) distinguishes between a sense of purpose and a defined purpose. A sense of purpose is an overarching or a higher, orienting purpose that is based on values and that guides our actions. Alternatively, defined purposes are generated in specific contexts and derived from a more generalized sense of purpose. As strategies, objectives, or individual tasks are approached in daily activities, they should align with a sense of purpose. Ready to Run has a clearly articulated sense of purpose: to increase women's participation in politics. As Heifetz states, "A sense of purpose provides the ongoing capacity to generate new possibilities" (1994, p. 75). Thus, in this study, I will explore whether the defined purposes are in line with the overarching sense of purpose and what new possibilities are possible.

Heifetz et al. (2009) point to the need to examine *the story we tell ourselves* as a way to articulate our purpose. The story we tell ourselves is our explanation of why things happen and the assignment of meaning. It is easy to make interpretative leaps and or leave out important details: "People don't live in reality—we live in the stories we tell ourselves about reality," Heifetz et al. write (2009, p. 228). Understanding the stories Ready to Run and other training programs tell about why women are still only a small percentage of elected officials is

important to testing the underlying assumptions, revising interventions, and ultimately retelling the story. By remaining open to multiple interpretations one can more clearly see the surrounding dynamics, which opens more courses of actions related to revising the training to help women succeed in greater numbers.

In addition to exploring the story Ready to Run tells about why we need to elect more women, it is equally important to explore the purpose of the women who attend the trainings. Although women candidates most certainly have a sense of purpose when running for office, it is unlikely to be the same as that that of Ready to Run. Few women run for elected office because they believe we need more women in politics. That is not to say, however, that they do not support the purpose of Ready to Run only that it is not a motivating factor in running. Heifetz et al. (2009) write that the ability to negotiate purpose among stakeholders is important. Thus, it will be interesting to explore how Ready to Run engages women in the program and inspires them to run for office.

Engaging in the process. The adaptive leadership process involves three key activities: observation, interpretation, and intervention (Heifetz et al., 2009). In this process, the act of *observing* events and patterns should be done in an objective manner. To illustrate this principle, a metaphor of a dancefloor and a balcony have been used. The person on the dancefloor is caught up in the music, concentrating on his or her partner, thinking about the next dance move. For a sense of the bigger picture of who is dancing with whom and who's not dancing at all, the dancer must move from the dancefloor to the balcony. Thus, alternating between participating and observing is important to maintaining perspective.

The next step in the adaptive leadership process is to *interpret* what is being observing. At best, an interpretation is a guess and different people may make different interpretations; thus, it is recommended to entertain multiple interpretations simultaneously. Finally, an *intervention* is designed based on what has been observed and interpreted. The best interventions are framed as an experiment—namely, by reflecting a hypothesis of the problem—and are offered as a means to make progress for a shared purpose. There are no easy answers to adaptive challenges, and so an experimental mindset is key to this iterative process.

I highlight this three-part process not because I believe Ready to Run and women political candidates are knowingly engaging in observation, interpretation, and intervention. I highlight it because the reflexive process is key to answering the research questions and developing the research method, both of which are expounded upon in the next sections. Engagement and communication surrounding the process and content are key aspects of this study, and thus will need to be understood through an adaptive lens.

Research Questions

Despite extensive research about the success of women running for office, the reasons that women do not run for office, and why we need more women in office, questions remain regarding why electoral parity for women remains so elusive. Over the last decade, training programs for women candidates have increased in scope, size, and accessibility, and yet the number of women in elected office has increased only incrementally. Looking at the training programs through the lens of adaptive leadership will increase our understanding of why the

number of women in elected office remains stagnant. Thus, this study is guided by the following research questions:

RQ 1: Does Ready to Run approach the process of recruiting and training women to run for political office as a technical problem or an adaptive challenge?

RQ 2: What types of technical and adaptive resources does Ready to Run use to recruit, train, and support women in the process of running for office?

RQ 3: How do women candidates utilize the resources provided by Ready to Run when on the campaign trail and are they effective?

RQ 4: What types of technical and adaptive resources could be developed by Ready to Run to mobilize women to run for political office at higher rates and to allow them to thrive in the process of a campaign?

Understanding the way organizations and programs approach the process of recruiting and training women political candidates, and whether they approach it as a technical problem or an adaptive challenge, may help explain why the number of women in politics has increased at such an incremental pace. It may also inform the ways in which the process can be modified to produce improved results. For example, if the lack of women running for office has been approached as a technical problem, then shifting to consider it to be an adaptive challenge could provide the lens that allows women to make more meaningful progress in the electoral arena.

Likewise, even if the organizations and programs have been approaching the lack of women political candidates as an adaptive challenge, if they are delivering technical resources rather than adaptive resources to candidates, then the candidates would be less likely to thrive

on the campaign trail. Take for example, the issue of fundraising. Most candidates, men and women alike, abhor fundraising. Therefore, if training programs provide exclusively technical resources such as how to research potential donors and structure call time, women candidates may struggle to engage in the process. Providing adaptive resources—such as modeling how to overcome the psychological barrier of asking a stranger for $1,000—may allow women to feel more comfortable.

In addition to needing to understand what technical and adaptive resources are being provided to women candidates, we need to understand how women are using the resources and whether they view these resources as effective and the training overall as useful. Once we have a clearer understanding of how the training programs conceptualize the challenge, whether technical or adaptive resources are being delivered and then how they are being utilized by candidates, we can design interventions that will better meet the needs of women candidates. Such resources will increase the likelihood that women will run for office and thrive on the campaign trail.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

"Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose." –Zora Neale Hurston

This mixed-method study used the CAWP's Ready to Run as a case study to explore how similar organizations and programs used technical and adaptive resources to recruit and train women to run for political office. As a representative of such organizations and training, Ready to Run is an exemplar, though other programs with their own unique foci exist. Data for this case study consisted of text from the Ready to Run website, training materials and field notes from a participant observation, survey data from program participants, and transcripts from interviews with staff and participants. Data collection and analysis took place concurrently in four stages according to a constant comparison method, so that the process was circular, iterative, and reflexive (Glaser & Straus, 1967; Tracy, 2013). As initial findings emerged from the data, they were confirmed through the collection of new data. Likewise, I verified new ideas in data already collected. To produce robust results that neither a quantitative nor qualitative analysis alone could produce, I employed a pluralistic approach in this study as a research strategy. This triangulation of data enhanced validity (Denzin, 1978; Tracy, 2013).

Phase I – Pre-Existing Data

The initial stage of data collection involved accessing material that was publicly available on Ready to Run's website. At the time this study was conducted, the Ready to Run program did not have its own website or domain. Instead, it comprised three pages on the Center for American Women and Politics website under the "Education and Training" tab. Ready to Run's homepage contained an overview of the program, including a section about why more women are needed in office. It also included links to upcoming training sessions offered by network

programs that were available around the country. The second page focused on Ready to Run New Jersey and included information about the three diversity initiatives that Ready to Run has created to attract more women of color to the political process. The third webpage provided information about becoming a network partner, including information about launching a Ready to Run program, electing more women in "your state," network benefits, and how to apply.

I analyzed the data manually using Owens' (1984) method of thematic analysis. Boyatzis (1998) defined *theme* as used in this analytic method "a pattern found in the information that at a minimum describes and organizes possible observations or at a maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon" (p. 4). Thematic analysis provides rich insight into communication phenomena through the observation of themes, which then become the categories of analysis. Three criteria must be present to authenticate a theme: recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness (Owens, 1984). Recurrence is observed when shared meaning is identified across multiple subjects or occurrences but different words are used. Repetition refers to the identification of common language, such as a keyword, phrase, or sentence that is repeated. In verbal delivery, forcefulness is observed in emphasis through inflection, volume, or dramatic pauses. In print, forcefulness is identified as the underlining or bolding of words or phrases, the use of all capital letters or a larger font, or otherwise drawing the readers' attention to an element of the text through some form of added emphasis to clarify its importance.

Coding was an iterative process in which I alternated between inductive and deductive approaches. The inductive or emic approach involved first observing specific interactions, followed by identifying general patterns based on initial observations. After my initial findings, I re-examined the findings within the broader context of the data before drawing conclusions

and building theories, following the method established by Tracy (2013.) In contrast, the deductive or etic approach for this study began with the development of a hypothesis that was grounded in existing literature or based on a general theory. I then collected additional research to test the initial hypothesis and verify or reject the original theory (Tracy, 2013).

Phase II – Participant Observation

During the second research phase, I collected data through participant observation. I attended a two-day Ready to Run training in New Jersey during March 2015. The first day of the program included a welcome session and a plenary session about internet strategies for candidates, campaigns, and advocates, as well as an evening networking reception. Training on the second day opened with a plenary session about what women candidates need to know. After that, the training was broken into two tracks: "Track One: I'm ready to run, now what?" and "Track Two: I'm not ready to run yet, but…" Track One included sessions about launching a campaign and navigating New Jersey's political parties as a potential candidate. Track Two included sessions about political parties, appointments, and advocacy, including tools and tips for getting started and laying the groundwork for public life. The participants came back together for a luncheon plenary session on conquering the camera—an interactive media training—and the day concluded with a plenary session about fundraising for success. Generally, the plenary sessions featured a single speaker who was an expert on the given subject, and the breakout sessions included a moderator and a panel of two to four women. (A copy of the complete agenda is included in Appendix D.)

During the participant observation, I collected copies of all training materials, including PowerPoint presentations and handouts. In total, I collected 13 documents, which amounted to

97 pages. Ready to Run also provided participants with a flash drive that included the following additional documents: About the Center for American Women and Politics, Launching Your Campaign, Introduction to New Jersey Politics and Advocacy, Conquering the Camera, Navigating the Political Parties and Laying the Groundwork for Public Life, Fundraising for Success, and CAWP Resources. These 24 documents accounted for 329 pages. I also took 28 pages of field notes during the training sessions.

The data were analyzed using the same method of thematic analysis as described in phase one. In fact, because qualitative analysis is an iterative and reflexive process, in phase two I returned and reanalyzed the data collected in phase one. Likewise, the data collected in phase two, were constantly compared to and analyzed in conjunction with the new data collected in phases three and four.

Phase III – Participant Survey

Approximately one month after the 2016 general election, I began the third research phase. In this phase, I surveyed Ready to Run participants about the training that they received and their personal experience with running for office. Of the 225 women who registered to attend Ready to Run in March 2015, 173 provided email addresses. An email was sent to all 173 participants inviting them to take a 20- to 30-minute survey online through Qualtrics. Of the 173 emails sent, 92% (*n* = 159) were successfully delivered. Although 41 recipients (27%) opened the email, only nine individuals completed the survey (six percent). Six weeks later, I re-sent the email to the 118 participants who had not opened the first email. Twenty-nine participants (24%) opened the second email, and six women completed the survey (five percent). Finally, a week later I sent a reminder email to everyone who had not yet completed

the survey (*n* = 158) regardless of whether they had previously opened the emails. The final email was opened by 43 participants (27%), and three women (two percent) completed the survey. In general, the email open rate of 24.5% and the click rate of 3.5% were strong in comparison to the industry average of 18% and 0.9%, respectively, for political emails (MailChimp). However, only 11% of participants (*n* = 18) ultimately completed the survey.

The survey (Appendix B) included 102 questions and was divided into eight sections. In part one, basic demographic information such as age, race, and marital status was collected from participants. For part two, participants were asked questions about their political backgrounds, including party affiliations and experience running for office. Part three included questions about how participants selected the Ready to Run program. In part four, participants were asked to rate their prior knowledge of campaigning, communications, digital, and field (i.e., how a candidate identifies, assesses, and approaches voters strategically), fundraising, media and public speaking, and networking prior to attending the training. In part five, participants were asked to evaluate the program broadly. Part six measured participants knowledge of campaigning, communications, digital, and field, fundraising, media and public speaking, and networking after the training. Part seven explored how they applied these skills in their campaigns. The concluding section included broad questions about any additional information that the participants might have felt that they would like to share.

Phase IV – Staff and Participant Interviews

In the fourth and final phase of the research, I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with program staff and participants. I began by interviewing the Ready to Run director, Jean Sinzdak, in December 2016 (for a copy of the interview protocol, see Appendix A).

Sinzdak was selected for the interview through a process of purposeful sampling; she had knowledge of the research topic and was in the best position to explain the problem of the lack of women serving in elected office and to answer my research questions (Creswell, 2009). The interview with Sinzdak lasted 72 minutes and provided 22 pages of data about the technical and adaptive approaches and the resources developed and delivered by Ready to Run in the recruitment and training of women candidates. Numerous attempts were made to interview Debbie Walsh, the director of CAWP, but phone calls and emails were not returned. Additionally, I had planned to interview the program coordinator, Nisa Sheikh, but Sinzdak indicated that she was new to Ready to Run and unlikely to be a productive source of information.

Initially, I intended to conduct follow-up interviews with women who had completed the participant survey; however, only two of the 18 women who filled out the survey agreed to be interviewed. So in addition to following up with those two women, I used the participant list provided by Ready to Run to reach out to individuals via phone and email to request an interview. Of the 221 participants, I had phone numbers for 53% and email addresses for 95%. I started by removing presenters from the list as well as the women who had opened the survey emails, but chose not to respond or declined to be interviewed. I also prioritized women who had run for office as they would be most useful in answering my research questions. From there I went alphabetically, initially making 21 phone calls and sending 68 emails.

Given the low survey response rate and concerns about women's willingness to participate, I revised the interview protocol (Appendix C) substantially to a concise set of ten questions, which allowed me to request a mere 10-15 minutes of the interviewees' time. I

continued to conduct interviews until I reached saturation. Corbin and Strauss (2008) define *saturation* as the point "when no new data are emerging" (p. 143) and "the point in the research when all the concepts are well defined and explained" (p. 145). Ultimately, I conducted fourteen interviews between April 11, 2017 and May 5, 2017, as data collection was occurring concurrently with data analysis. A total of 184 minutes of data were generated from the interviews, for a total of 102 pages of transcripts.

Table 1

Ready to Run Participants Interviewed

Pseudonym	Age	Marital Status	Kids	Education	Race	Party
Eleanor	33	Married	None	Master's	Caucasian	None
Jessica	31	Married	None	Doctorate	Caucasian	Republican
Kate	25	Single	None	Bachelor's	Caucasian	Democrat
Carrie	54	Divorced	One (adult)	Some college	Caucasian	Republican
Mary	53	Single	None	Bachelor's	Caucasian	Democrat
Anna	34	Married	None	Master's	Asian	None
Kesha	31	Single	None	Master's	African American	None
Thalia	37	Married	Two (10 & 14)	Doctorate	Latina	Democrat
Rosa	38	Divorced	Three (13, 16 & 17)	Master's	African American	Democrat
Robin	26	Single	None	Bachelor's	African American	Democrat
Betsy	36	Single	None	Juris Doctorate	Caucasian	Democrat
Dynah	32	Married	One (baby)	Bachelor's	Latina/Greek	Democrat
Melissa	33	Divorced	None	Bachelor's	Caucasian	Democrat
Jenny	46	Married	Two (10 & 12)	Bachelor's	Asian	Democrat

Prior to beginning the coding process, interview recordings were transcribed by a professional transcriptionist. After I verified the transcripts, I then sorted, organized, and cleaned the data. I began the analysis by immersing myself in the data, reading and re-reading it. During this process, I attempted to keep open-ended questions such as "What is happening here?" (Creswell, 2009) and "What is the story here?" (Weick, 2001) at the forefront of my mind. Following the data immersion, I proceeded with first- and second-level coding. Line-by-line open coding, also known as primary cycle coding, is descriptive and involves the identification of discrete concepts, which are then labeled and sorted. "Good codes" are those that capture the qualitative richness of the phenomenon (Boyatzis, 1998, p.31). Axial coding, also known as second cycle coding, followed open coding. Second cycle coding is more analytical than primary cycle coding and involves the organization, synthesis, and categorization of individual concepts (Tracy, 2013). By sorting the discrete concepts into conceptual categories, I was able to relate codes to each other and make connections among categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

To assist in the coding process, I created a codebook based on the previous literature, the research questions, and the theoretical framework, as well as a preliminary reading and analysis of the data. To ensure validity and reliability, each code included a label, a clear definition, a rich description of the identified phenomenon, an explanation of any qualifications or exclusions, and an example from the data. Over time, new codes were added and old codes were modified.

Ensuring Reliability and Validity

To ensure the reliability and validity of the data, I engaged in a number of practices, including deviant case analysis, triangulation, debriefing, and memoing. Deviant case analysis involved searching for data that contradicted or did not support the existing explanations and refining the analysis and arguments until they were incorporated into and explained all the data. Such a process revised, broadened, and confirmed patterns that emerged from the data analysis process and discouraged the cherry-picking of data to support the hypothesis, thereby increasing the fidelity and credibility of the findings (Tracy, 2013).

In this case study, the collection of data in the form of text, participant observations, surveys, and interviews allowed for a unique triangulation of data. In triangulation, it is assumed that if multiple sources of data, types of data, theoretical frameworks, or researchers converge on the same conclusion, then the conclusion is more credible (Denzin, 1978). Because these different and contrasting methods of data collection yielded identical findings, the validity of the results increased.

Debriefing—also known as member checks, validation, or reflections—allows for sharing a researcher's findings with study participants. This dialogue that I had with participants allowed them to ask questions and provide feedback that critiqued and/or affirmed the results of the analysis. Rather than being viewed as a "test" of the research findings, debriefings offer an opportunity for collaboration and reflexive elaboration (Tracy, 2010).

Finally, I engaged in analytic memo writing, or memoing, throughout all stages of the research. Memoing is an inherently reflexive practice that involves capturing analytic thoughts about data; identifying and development of the properties and dimensions of concepts or categories; comparing and questioning; elaborating on a paradigm, including on the

relationships among conditions, actions, interactions, and consequences or on the development of a storyline (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). According to Miles and Huberman (1994), “memoing helps the analyst move easily from empirical data to a conceptual level, refining and expanding codes further, developing key categories and showing their relationships, and building towards a more integrated understanding of events, processes, and interactions in the case” (p. 74). Not only is memoing essential in examining and interpreting the data and identifying conceptual relationships among themes, and memoing also creates an audit trail and can serve as a verification and self-correction strategy during the conduct of an inquiry (Morse, 2002).

The design of this mixed methods study, including the collection and analysis of data, was intended to produce a high-quality research product that at the same time is “rigorous, interesting, practical, aesthetic, and ethical” (Tracy, 2013, p. xiii). I am confident the processes of purposeful sampling and iterative data analysis as well as self-reflexive practices generated results that will likely transform the types of training offered by organizations such as Ready to Run and improve the lives of women running for office.

Chapter 4: The Ready to Run Approach

"Women make government more transparent, inclusive and accessible. Women bring different priorities and experiences to public life, including perspectives that have been largely absent in public policymaking. Women change the way government works, and their voices are needed around the country." –Ready to Run

Introduction

The number of women in politics today remains far below 50% (CAWP, 2017), and through this study I posit that increasing the number of women in elected office is an adaptive challenge. Given that "the most common cause of failure in leadership is produced by treating adaptive challenges as if they were technical problems," (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 19), evaluating whether or not Ready to Run approached the process of recruiting and training women to run for office as a technical problem or an adaptive challenge (RQ1) provides insight into the program's ability to make progress. Additionally, identifying the types of technical and adaptive resources that Ready to Run used to recruit, train, and support women in the process of running for office (RQ2) is the first step in diagnosing the situation. As a review, diagnosing the situation involves understanding the adaptive challenge at hand, specifically the contributing social structures, driving cultural factors, and default behaviors (Heifetz et al., 2009). In this chapter, I answer research questions one and two through an analysis of the Ready to Run website, my participant observation of the training program, and an interview with program staff. I conclude that if the challenge is the lack of women running for political office and serving in elected positions, then opportunities for addressing the challenge are threefold: (1) to recruit more women to run for political office, (2) to provide women candidates with the

appropriate training and resources they need to wage competitive campaigns, and (3) to improve success rates by better supporting women in the process of running for office. This chapter will begin with a review of technical and adaptive approaches, followed by an analysis of the recruiting methods using by Ready to Run, including technical and adaptive materials. Next, I will discuss the technical and adaptive approaches that Ready to Run employs during the training. Finally, the chapter will conclude by looking at how Ready to Run does not support women in the process of running for office.

Review – Technical Versus Adaptive

As was discussed in the literature review, key to the theory of adaptive leadership is the ability to distinguish between technical problems and adaptive challenges. Technical problems are routine problems with known solutions that can be solved by an expert or an authority figure (Heifetz et al., 2009). This is not to say that technical problems are simple or unimportant, only that there is a standing operating procedure in place to fix the problem. In contrast to technical problems, adaptive challenges have no known solutions. Instead, adaptive challenges require learning and innovation, stakeholder involvement, and ultimately a shift in values, beliefs, or behaviors (Heifetz et al., 2009). Most challenges contain both technical and adaptive elements, and yet Heifetz et al. (2009) emphasize that one of the most important concepts within adaptive leadership remains distinguishing—that is, diagnosing the difference—between the two. This is because, as previously noted, “the most common cause of failure in leadership is produced by treating adaptive challenges as if they were technical problems” (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 19). Ready to Run has clearly done so on occasion, whether intentionally or not when recruiting, training, and supporting women running for office.

Recruiting

At the time of this study, when it came to recruiting women to run for political office, Ready to Run simultaneously approached the issue as a technical problem and an adaptive challenge. The tactics used to recruit women to attend the training program were predominantly technical, although a more adaptive approach was employed at the training itself.

Technical Recruitment Materials

In general, Ready to Run's marketing materials were technical in nature, simply providing training dates and directing women to the program's website to sign up. The Facebook post in Figure 1 was used repeatedly by Ready to Run to advertise the training and encourage women to sign up. Although it features the picture of a woman and highlights the fact that Ready to Run is a campaign training program specifically for women, it does not offer any additional details about the training beyond the date and where to sign up. When promoting an event that occurs on a set of specific dates that are not necessarily the same each time the program is held, the technical details are certainly necessary. Without knowledge of when and where the program is taking place or how to sign up, no one would attend. Furthermore, women unfamiliar with the Ready to Run program would need more information to spark their interest in signing up.

Figure 1: Example of technical promotional material.

The Facebook ad did link to Ready to Run's website, which offered slightly more information about the program. Although the website included the same photograph of the woman that appeared in the Facebook ad, it also included the program's mission, "committed to electing more women to public office," as well as what program attendees could expect to learn from the training (see Figure 2). Most of the recruiting materials focused on the who, what, when, and where, predominantly technical aspects, although some recruiting materials incorporated more adaptive elements by focusing on the why.

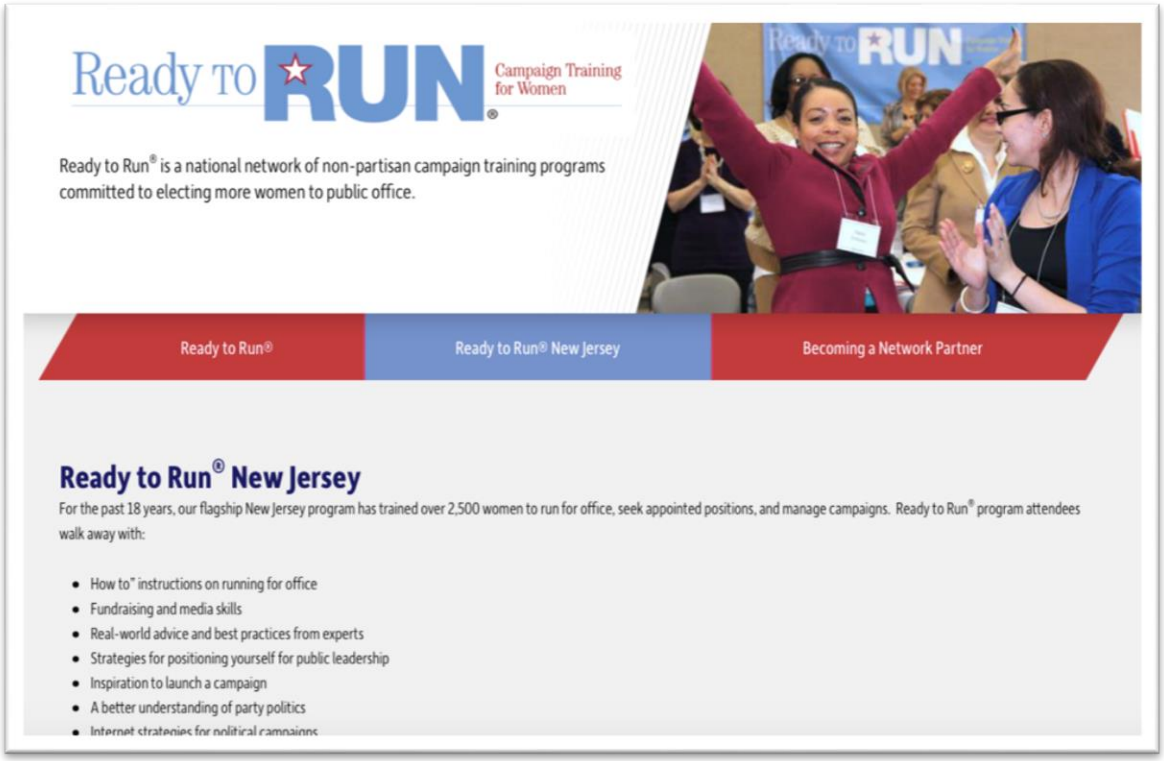

Figure 2: Ready to Run New Jersey training homepage.

Adaptive Recruitment Materials

On occasion, I observed that Ready to Run had included information about the importance of women serving in elected office in their online media and print publicity materials. The Facebook post in Figure 3 is an example of an adaptive recruitment strategy. Rather than provide the exclusively technical details, such as the date or the training and where to sign up, it highlights the purpose of the training—namely, to elevate women's voices. The quotation "if you're not at the table, you're probably on the menu" could help women to understand the roles that they as women play in the current system. Decision-making power is currently concentrated among elected officials, the majority of which are white men. Thus, policies in the best interest or focusing on the well-being of women and other minority groups

may not be a priority. By highlighting this truth, Ready to Run may inspire women to run for office or at least attend the training, in hopes of effecting change.

Figure 3: Example of adaptive promotional material.

When it came to recruiting women to run for office, Ready to Run employed a two-prong strategy. The first strategy, which occurred mostly online, involved recruiting women to attend the Ready to Run training. The second strategy, which occurred in person at the training, included numerous direct asks as well as an indirect attempt to inspire women to run.

Online Recruitment. According to the director of Ready to Run and the associate director of the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Jean Sinzdak, CAWP publicized Ready

to Run using email blasts to an existing CAWP mailing list, Facebook posts—often boosted as a paid ad to increase reach and impressions—and advertisements on state political websites.

By promoting Ready to Run to women who had already signed up to receive emails from CAWP and/or "liked" the organization's Facebook page, Ready to Run reached what was likely a very limited audience, albeit one that was likely to be receptive to its message. However, through the power of digital technology and social media, information about the training could be readily shared with a much larger and broader audience. More than 50% of participants who completed the survey or who were interviewed for this study reported having learned about Ready to Run from a friend, mentor, or colleague. By recommending the training, the women who told the participants about the training were, in effect, asking other women to consider running for office. And because women need to be asked to run three times on average (Lawless & Fox, 2005), the suggestion that women attend the training and consider running for office could be meaningful to the participant as she considers her future.

In-Person Recruitment. When it came to communicating the need for more women in elected office, Ready to Run started by articulating the status quo. For example, in her welcoming remarks at the training Debbie Walsh, the director of CAWP, spoke about the 18-year history of Ready to Run, specifically the progress that the program had made at the state level. In addition, Walsh wrote in a welcome letter included in the participants' packets that when Ready to Run was first launched, New Jersey ranked 39th in the nation for the number of women in the legislature; at the time of Walsh's writing, New Jersey ranked 11th. However, she argued, progress still needed to be made at the local level. In a press release Ready to Run announcing the training titled "Help Wanted: More Women Needed in NJ County and Municipal

Elected Offices," it was noted that only four of New Jersey's 21 counties would receive excellent marks if graded on their efforts to elect women. "Unfortunately, at the county and municipal levels, women are still largely missing from the picture," Walsh stated. "To have reasonable balance at the county and local levels, more women must run, and both parties must do their part to create government that better reflects the population."

Increasing the number of women in elected office is about more than just numbers. More women need to run for office because of the unique perspective they bring (Caiazza, 2002; CAWP, 1991; Walsh, 2002; Women's Policy Research Institute, 2002). For example, in the welcome letter, Walsh and Sinzdak cited CAWP research about why we need more women in elected office: "Women lawmakers bring distinctive life experiences, priorities and leadership styles to their work. Women make government more transparent, inclusive, and accessible. Women change the way government works. All of that means that women's voices are more urgently needed than ever in the halls of government." Communicating the need for more women in elected office also served as an argument to inspire the participants to run. "Just highlighting the issue of how few women are serving, even just literally being that place where people hear that message from and understand it, and then encouraging and inspiring more and more women to run is absolutely crucial," Sinzdak said in an interview conducted for this study.

Because women are far less likely to be asked to run for office, Ready to Run makes a point of doing so. "We're always saying, 'We're asking you. We need you. No one else might be asking you, but we're asking you,'" Sinzdak said in an interview. "If we get that message across

that it's valuable, it's necessary, we need more women, we need more women like you, that piece of it is the most useful part of it, or one of the most useful parts of it."

Finally, Ready to Run also relied on the network of attendees to encourage other women to run. Included in each participant's packet was a postcard (see Figures 4 and 5).

Figure 4: Front of recruitment postcard.

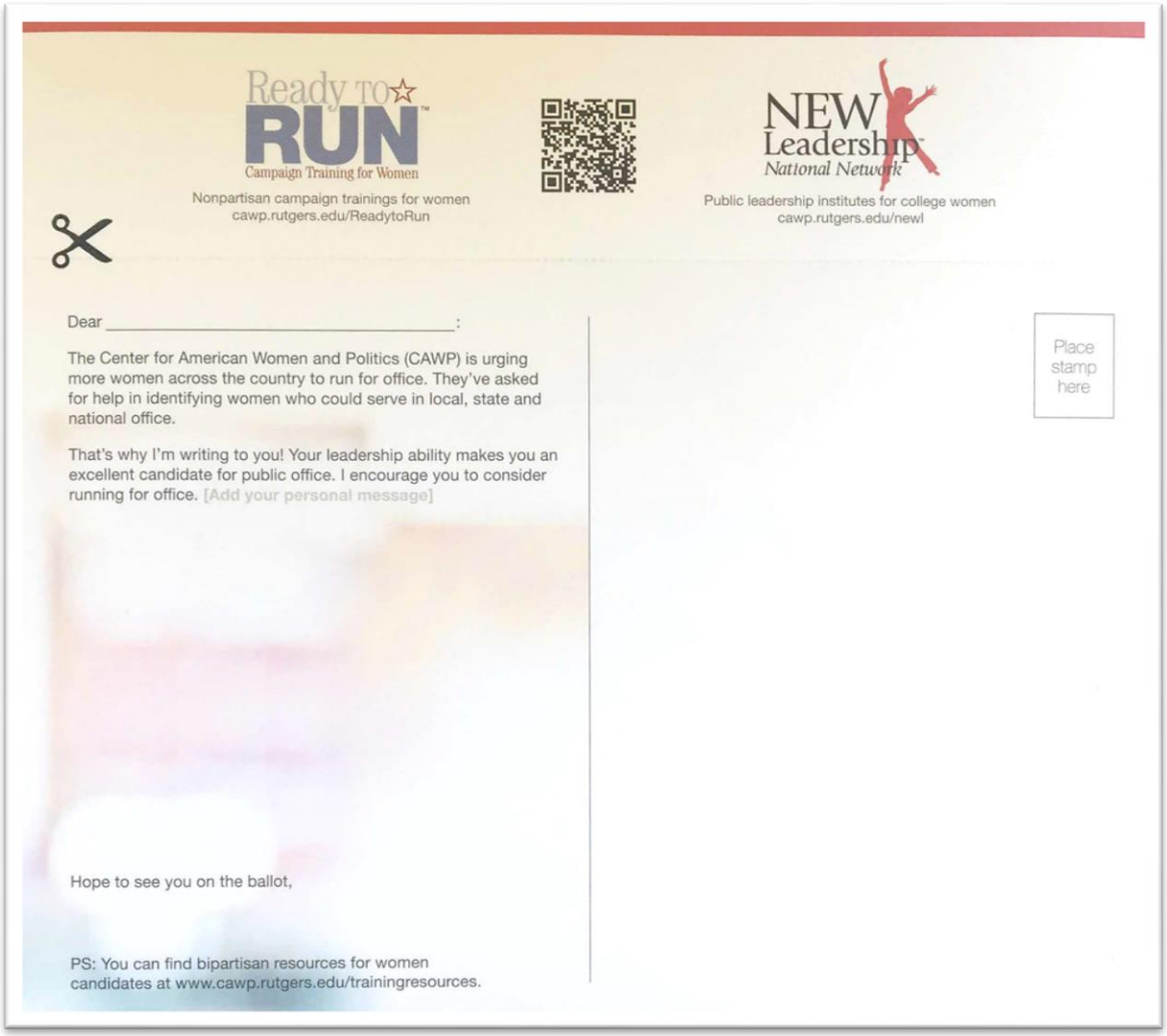

Figure 5: Back of recruitment postcard.

This postcard is a strong example of an adaptive recruitment strategy, as it seeks "changes in people's priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties" (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 19). First, the postcard re-establishes the priority of electing more women to office with the line "our country needs more women on school boards and town councils, in state legislatures and Congress." Ideally, the postcard would have also included language about why more women are needed in office. The postcard seeks to change women's beliefs by suggesting that the

woman looking in the mirror is a leader and is therefore qualified to run for office, whereas we know that women in general do not consider themselves to be qualified (Lawless & Fox, 2010). This postcard is asking the audience to "imagine the impact she could have as a government official," if the composition of elected bodies were different. Finally, the postcard identifies new loyalties—a loyalty to encourage other women—by asking for help in identifying potential women candidates. Adaptive recruitment material which includes a personal connection as well as an emotional appeal could be particularly effective in recruiting women to run and should be used at higher rates.

Training

Similarly to the way that Ready to Run approached the recruitment process—namely, as both a technical and an adaptive problem—the process that Ready to Run took in training women to run for office included both technical and adaptive elements. The content itself tended to be technical, although the method of delivery was more adaptive. As will be presented below, the session "What Women Candidates Need to Know" approached the issue as an adaptive challenge. Overall, the training unfortunately reinforced women's fears that they are neither qualified nor prepared to run for office.

Content of Training

Overall, the conclusion drawn from this study is that the content of the Ready to Run training was primarily technical in nature, as the resources focused on existing, known processes. Sinzdak described that the purpose of the training is about providing practical tools for women. "A lot of research had shown, or some of the research had shown, that women said that they wanted more information about how to run for office. They wanted more of a

roadmap," she said. "They wanted resources, materials… It was a way to provide those practical skills and the inspiration to women, say that 'you can do it, too, and here are the tools. Here's how you do it.'"

When it came to providing campaign training, Ready to Run assumed that men and women have similar needs. "I would say campaigning is campaigning," Sinzdak stated.

> A lot of the tools and resources and sessions is *[sic]* the same for everybody. Regardless if you're a man or a woman, you have make an ask. You have to come up with a campaign organization. You have to do these sorts of different things.

From Sinzdak's perspective, the difference between what women and men need is related not to content but to process: "I think the bigger piece of it is that you're giving women the inspiration and guidance that they might not get, especially because there are so few women in political office in general that it's very hard to find people who look like you who are serving in office." The distinction between content and process is the equivalent of telling versus showing. Content and telling is important, but focusing on process and showing can be more effective.

Delivery of Content

The delivery of the content at the training overall relied on experts, as is customary when taking a technical approach. "A lot of our speaker workshops that really rely on people with a very particular technical expertise in their field, we have a tried and true roster of people," Sinzdak explained. Technical experts are an important part of a training, but it is not the only aspect to consider.

Balance and diversity. When identifying panelists, Sinzdak said Ready to Run paid deliberate attention to balance and diversity. "Our big thing is we're always looking for partisan

balance," Sinzdak said. "If we're putting together a panel and we've got three good people lined up, … we have to think about it. We've got one Democrat and two Republicans or vice versa, so we really need to find someone from that [under-represented] party to round it out. We're scrupulous about that." In addition to ensuring that panelists come from a variety of political parties, Ready to Run also looked for women at various levels of government. In her interview, Sinzdak said that they select participants by considering "what kinds of experience" they bring with them because, on a panel of four people, for example,

> two people [might] have a lot of experience in the executive side of government. They've gotten appointed and then they've done this and done that … and [if one] person is in the legislature but that was the first thing she ran for, then we really need to think about finding someone who's serving at the local level in city or town council or has that kind of experience because we really want to balance out the types of experience that they have.

Personal storytelling. Beyond party identification and electoral experience, Ready to Run also looks for women who have a story to tell. The incorporation of personal experiences—that is, storytelling, according to the language of adaptive leadership—is a uniquely adaptive element. According to Sinzdak, this is intentional:

> We try to pick people with different stories for our panels—people with different stories and different types of experiences—so that everyone can find someone that they identify with in a very practical way. It's not about the issues, but more about the experiences that they have and why that would be interesting or useful for the women in the audience to hear.

When participants see other women who look like them in leadership positions, they begin to envision themselves in leadership roles, and are often inspired. Sinzdak continued:

> In addition to us literally saying from the beginning of the program that we're asking you to run, they hear so much from so many of the speakers that they leave feeling inspired and engaged, and I can't tell you how many women have written something on the evaluation forms or have sent me a note or told me in person something along the lines of "I see now that I can do it, too." "I loved this particular speaker and her story really resonated with me and I realized that I could be her. I could be that person." It's intangible in the sense that I don't know that we could ever truly measure it. You can to some degree, but just that feeling of I belong at the table, I do think programs like Ready to Run can have an impact on.

What Women Need to Know

Over the course of the two-day training, only one session was specifically targeted to women running for office. This session on running for office as a woman and the particular hurdles that women face in the electoral arena indicated a broader understanding by Ready to Run of the problem as an adaptive challenge. The first session, which occurred on the second day of training, was titled "What Women Candidates Need to Know." The session speaker was Kristy Pultorak, a senior analyst at Lake Research Partners. Lake Research Partners is a national public opinion and political strategy research firm. The firm's founder, Celinda Lake, is "one of the nation's foremost experts on electing women candidates and on framing issues to women voters" (Lake Research Partners, n.d.).

Because Pultorak worked at a polling firm, her presentation was strongly rooted in data. She presented statistics about the number of women in elected office at all levels both historically and presently. She also broke down women voters by party affiliation, race, age, and marital status and spoke about the existing gender gap. If her presentation had only been a summary of statistics and historical quantitative data, the presentation might have been too technical to be useful to the participants. However, the presentation also included Pultorak's "key findings." The key findings included attitudes on the number of women in office and voting for men or women; voters' belief that women candidates are more in touch with real women's lives and families; issues on which women candidates have an advantage over men; and the importance of conveying qualifications and being likeable. These key findings along with how to frame a candidate, the importance of mentoring, networking, and fundraising, as well as the impact of women's organizations helped to establish a clear path forward for women candidates in the face of these less-than-inspiring historical numbers.

Pultorak oscillated between offering technical material and adaptive guidance. For example, in the section of her presentation titled "Voting for 'Qualified' Women," Pultorak said that "voters are interested in voting for a woman candidate, but by wide margins they think it is harder for a woman candidate to appear qualified." She then explained the data from Lake Research's own studies to support this claim before moving to characteristics that women can adopt to convey qualifications. "Specific words and phrases work better than others to convey to voters that a candidate for a major elected office is qualified," she said. "Most women who run for major office and most women who get elected to major office have these qualifications. The key is to communicate with voters in the right way." According to Pultorak, simply

describing a woman candidate as qualified can increase voter interest by eight points, in contrast to six points for male candidates. The qualities that voters associate with women candidates being qualified include confident, organized, and knowledgeable. “It is nearly universally important for a woman to have these traits (ranging from 97% to 96% important for each trait),” Pultorak wrote in her PowerPoint. Thus, “women candidates should have these qualities written into their introductions, editorials, and early descriptions, such as their websites, announcements, mailers, and stump speeches.” Pultorak then summarized case studies of women who had run successfully in order to demonstrate ways in which to integrate these qualities into their campaign materials.

Track Two: Not Ready to Run Yet, But…

At the training, Ready to Run offered two tracks: “Track One: I’m Ready to Run, Now What?” and “Track Two: I’m Not Ready to Run Yet, But...” Track One included information about launching a campaign and navigating the political party structure, although Track Two focused on tools and tips for laying the groundwork for a public life. The creation of two tracks could suggest to women they must first learn the “nuts and bolts of government and political parties” and “how to raise [their] public profile” before they will be ready to run. Women on average tend to see themselves as less qualified to run for political office than their male peers (Lawless & Fox, 2010), and such language might reinforce rather than assuage such fears. By telling women there is more they need to do and learn before they run for office, Ready to Run may be inadvertently sending a message that they should wait.

Supporting

Following the formal training sessions, Ready to Run had limited interaction with candidates; in other words, the program offered little support to women in the process of running for office. The program did provide participants with additional training materials and offers some follow-up workshops. However, Ready to Run currently does not maintain consistent contact with women once they have completed the training and are engaged in the process of running for office. This section will review the technical and adaptive support provided by Ready to Run as well as ways in which they could extend the program's support for women candidates in the future.

Technical Support

At the end of the training program, Ready to Run gave attendees a flash drive with more information about CAWP, documents to help women launch their campaigns, items to introduce women to New Jersey politics and advocacy, a guide about how to be articulate, information about navigating the political parties and laying the groundwork for public life, material about fundraising for success, and fact sheets produced by CAWP. The flash drive contained many essential *technical* resources, such as a campaign finance compliance manual; a list of Democratic and Republican county party chairs; and an election-year timeline produced by the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission and the New Jersey Department of State Divisions of Elections that included the filing deadlines, voter registration periods, and dates of the elections, among other materials.

Technical resources can be highly complex and critically important; a candidate could not operate effectively or within the bounds of the law without these resources. When there is current knowledge or authoritative expertise regarding structures or procedures, as is the case

in this instance, it should certainly be shared. Other resources, like the campaign manual published by the National Women's Political Caucus or a guide about how to run for a political party committee seat produced by The Citizens Campaign, supplemented and expanded upon the information received during the Ready to Run training, but was still mostly technical in nature. Even when the material was intended specifically for women, as was the excerpt from the book *The Well-Spoken Woman*, the content was gender-neutral and lacked adaptive strategies, such as naming the elephant in the room—in this case, the fact that women face unique communication barriers when running for office.

Although few of the women I survey and interviewed reported using these technical resources, they would be a valuable resource for first time and experienced candidates. Reminding women of the existence of these resources, encouraging them to familiarize themselves with the content and ultimately utilize them, as well as including some additional adaptive resources would benefit women who are both considering a run for office as well as those in the heart of a campaign.

Adaptive Support

In addition to the main two-day training held annually, Ready to Run offers half-day workshops two to three times a year. Generally, an expert in the field presents a workshop that focuses on a single topic such as fundraising, public speaking, or social media. Workshops allow Ready to Run to cover topics for which there was not enough time at the main training or which are more complicated and therefore require more detail. During interviews, program organizer Sinzdak expressed her belief that these workshops are beneficial to participants. "If I had unlimited resources, I would do a lot more of these smaller workshops," Sinzdak said. Sessions

are limited to 30 participants and are interactive, giving women the opportunity to not just learn, but practice skills. Sinzdak pointed out that the workshops allow women to focus on areas that they perceive to be weaknesses: “Maybe they've run before, or they feel pretty well-versed in the other pieces of it, but they really want to practice public speaking, or they really want figure out how to build their digital footprint and use social media effectively as a potential candidate.”

The workshops are different from the main training in that they take place in a more intimate environment, where women can focus more on process than content. Such an environment allows Ready to Run facilitators the opportunity to engage with participants by starting where the participants are and by building trust among participants, staff, and presenters. In turn, this allows the women participants better self-management insofar as they are afforded the opportunity to identify their own strengths, vulnerabilities, and triggers and to experiment beyond their comfort level, so they are more likely to thrive on the campaign trail.

The adaptive support provided to participants by Ready to Run are important to developing women candidates’ confidence in themselves and their ability to successfully run for office. Ready to Run should not only continue to provide this type of support, but should also look to expand it.

Expanding Support

Outside of the additional materials and the workshops, Ready to Run currently provides no additional support to candidates. The stated purpose of Ready to Run is “to encourage and train women to run for elective office, position themselves for appointive office, work on a campaign, or get involved in public life in other way” (CAWP, 2016). Supporting women in the

process of running for office is not a part of the organization's mission. However, the program was initially designed to fill a gap and meet an existing need. Yet women need support during the process of running for office as much as they need encouragement to run for office. This absence of long-term support for women who are running for office indicates that the problem of encouraging women to run has been addressed primarily in this case as a technical problem, rather than an adaptive challenge. Because this technical solution does not address the problem holistically, as an adaptive challenge, the program misses the opportunity to create long-term solutions that engage in the adaptive leadership process.

Conclusion

It is clear that CAWP and the Ready to Run program's organizers understand the lack of women in elected office as an adaptive challenge. In fact, they have regularly articulated this point of view on numerous occasions. However, in their approach to this adaptive challenge, Ready to Run has chosen to provide primarily technical resources. By adopting an adaptive approach, Ready to Run could elevate the training and, in turn perhaps, increase women's likelihood of winning. Possible ways that Ready to Run could address this shortcoming are included in chapter six, after I review the ways in which women utilized the resources from the training on the campaign trail in chapter five.

Chapter 5: Utilizing Resources

"There never will be complete equality until women themselves help to make laws and elect lawmakers." —Susan B. Anthony

Introduction

In March 2015 as I waited for the Ready to Run conference to start, I looked around at the more than 200 women who sat at round tables of eight, their quiet chatter filling the large banquet hall on the campus of Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. The crowd was made up of women of all ages and races, potential leaders ready to run for political office, or so I thought. Going into the conference, I was eager to observe the training sessions because I believed the resources provided by Ready to Run would be used by women candidates on the campaign trail. When I followed up with the program participants approximately two years after the initial training to see how they had utilized the resources provided by Ready to Run and whether or not those resources were effective (RQ3), I was surprised by what I found.

Of the 221 women who attended the training in 2015, I identified only 16 program participants who ran for office in 2015 or 2016. Ten of the women who ran were incumbents—that is, they were already serving in office at the time of the training. Therefore, only six women—less than 3% of the total number of participants—ran for office for the first time after attending the training. Two of those six women completed my survey, and I conducted interviews with an additional two women who ran. Further analysis of the 18 participant surveys and 14 interviews revealed that there were three categories of women who attended the Ready to Run training: (1) women who were ready to run immediately, (2) women who

were considering running in the future, and (3) women who had no plans to run now or in the future.

Exploring why women in these three categories chose to attend Ready to Run may at first seem to diverge from the research question at hand—namely, whether and how women utilized the resources provided by Ready to Run and whether or not they were effective on the campaign trail. However, the existence of three distinct types of women who attended the training speaks to the larger adaptive challenge of mobilizing women to run and helping them thrive in the process, and is therefore worth exploring.

Thus, in this chapter I will first summarize details about the women in the first category—that is, the women who were eager to run—and to what extent the Ready to Run training was geared to them and met their needs. Next, I will explain why women with tentative ideas about running in the future—namely, women in the second category—participated in the training and whether the training also served their needs. Third, I will examine the third category—women who said that they do not plan to run for elected office—to determine why they would participate in a training like Ready to Run and what, if anything, that training gave them.

Finally, I conclude this chapter by turning my attention to two specific training sessions: "Conquering the Camera" and "Fundraising for Success." Participants cited these two sessions more than any of the others. Based on my analyses, chapter 6 will include recommendations about the types of technical and adaptive resources that could be developed to mobilize women to run for office in greater numbers and allow them to thrive in the process.

Ready to Run Now

Given that "Ready to Run is a national network of non-partisan campaign training programs committed to electing more women to office" (CAWP, 2016), it would make sense that the majority of the training at the conference would focus on the needs of women running for office. On the organization's website, Ready to Run advertises that the training's "model curriculum covers fundraising, positioning oneself for elected office, navigating the political party structure, media training, the nuts and bolts of organizing a campaign, mobilizing voters, and crafting a message," all things a candidate would need to know before running for office. Thus, I was surprised to learn that only six women who attended the Ready to Run training in March 2015 ran for office during the 2016 election cycle; it was one of the most startling outcomes of this research. I was able to follow up with four of the six women for this study.

Running and Winning

The two women who completed the online survey and ran for office during the 2015-2016 election cycle both ran for local office—one for school board and another for city commission—and both won their elections.

Survey respondent #9, a 40-year-old Democrat, attended Ready to Run in hopes of gaining skills in communication, fundraising, networking, and the nuts and bolts of organizing campaigns. Her knowledge of these subjects prior to attending the training rated from "terrible" (for fundraising) to good (for communications). Unfortunately, she said the training did only "moderately well" at providing her with the knowledge and skills necessary to wage a successful campaign. Although she rated the fundraising session as the least beneficial of all she

attended, she reported that her political knowledge of all other issues increased after attending the training.

Survey respondent #12, a 70-year-old Democrat, attended Ready to Run in hopes of gaining skills in communication, field, fundraising, public speaking, and the nuts and bolts of organizing campaigns. Unlike survey respondent #9, #12 had previously run for office, having first been elected in 1993. Despite having run for office successfully a number of times, respondent #12 rated her ability to use digital tools, knowledge of field tactics, capacity to raise money, and networking skills from "poor" to "terrible." After the training, she rated her skills in these areas as average, and although she rated the overall training she received as "excellent," she also said that Ready to Run prepared her only "moderately well" to wage a successful campaign.

Running and Losing

Unfortunately, not everyone who attended Ready to Run and ran for office won. The two women I interviewed who ran for local office lost their races. Kesha, a 31-year-old Democrat sought a special appointment to the city council but was not selected. Carrie, a 62-year-old Republican, ran for freeholder (the equivalent of a county commissioner) in 2016, but fell 1,800 votes short of winning. Asked about her loss, Carrie had this to say:

> Yeah, we're a big Democrat county. We have been for 16 years, and I came really close. The Democrat leader told them one of them was going to lose to me. But unfortunately, they just skinned in there by the end of their teeth [sic].

Although Kesha and Carrie both lost, they are willing to run again. "Well right now I'm still really pretty active in the community," Kesha said in an interview, "so I'd say that if I were to run

again, I'd run the next time that the elections are open in two more years." Carrie spoke positively about her experience, saying that she would run again: "It's all right. I can try again. I came close." While candidate's were naturally disappointed by their losses, the fact that they were willing to run again was positive.

Running In Process

A fifth woman, Betsy, a 36-year-old Democrat, will run for the first time for the city council in 2017. She is an attorney who is single with no children. Although she said this is the right time for her to run, doing so was still a scary endeavor to her:

> I've always been interested in running for office. I'm in my mid-30s; this seemed like a good time to do it so I got a little bit more serious about it. To be honest, having the courage to do it has been the hardest thing. Really pulling the trigger and now saying, and that's been the scariest part for me. I'm lucky in that I have a pretty good fundraising network but, yeah, so just jumping off the ledge is the scariest thing.

Betsy was not the only woman I spoke to who found the decision-making process of running for office to be intimidating. Programs like Ready to Run may help alleviate some of those fears by familiarizing women with the process.

Facing the Challenges

Many of the women who ran attended Ready to Run did so to get a sense of what running for office would entail. For example, Kesha described why she signed up to attend the training:

> I guess I really just wanted a realistic look, an overview, of what running looks like from start to finish and what somebody in office, in a particular office, what their duties were

like once they were there as well. Just getting a realistic idea starting and what it looked like once I got in.

When it came to the challenges of running for office, some of the women cited the technical elements of the campaign. “The most challenging thing,” Carrie said, is “fundraising, getting organized, trying to pick the right people to be like your research, to be your campaign manager.” But they also faced adaptive challenges. Kesha described her experience trying to increase her name recognition and earn votes:

> There's a couple of challenging things, I think. Definitely just getting out and making a name for yourself. I was running in a city that I'd lived in for a majority of my life, and so people knew me more so growing up but not necessarily in that political arena. So, I guess that's the challenge of winning people over, getting the word out. There's [*sic*] a lot of people in my community that are not very trusting of the government system as well and so just getting out and bridging that gap. There's [*sic*] a lot bilingual people in my community. So, making the effort to go out and speak to people in Spanish and in Creole and just letting them know what was going on and just trying to bring back a sense of trust to the government, not just the face that they know, but the system as a whole. So those things are pretty challenging when it came to running.

Both Carrie and Kesha felt that Ready to Run prepared them to handle these challenges. That is not to say that running for office is easy. Asked what advice she would give to other women running for office, Kesha said:

> Maybe just that it really does take a lot of work. It's definitely not an easy. It's not an un-doable process; it's definitely something that's feasible, but it's going to take a lot of

> work. And you definitely need a strong team behind you to help you run and to help you get the job done. And so just making sure that people work on their connections and treat everybody [as] stellar and know that not everybody … that can help you and make a big impact has to be running.

Providing women with a realistic look at the campaign process is important, although it may do little to assuage the fears of women who are already doing too much in their personal and professional lives and are afraid they do not have the time or energy to run for office, let alone serve as an elected official. However, the women who did run spoke positively about the connections that they made during their campaigns and about how other women helped them through the process. Kesha explained that:

> I had a lot of local people that were willing to come out and help and do some groundwork and get petitions signed and get me to where I needed to go.… It's kind of like "it takes a village to raise a child." It takes up a whole village to get up in office…. It takes work but [candidates] don't have to do it by themselves. And I think, as women, we tend to always want to take on the world, but [women should] realize [that] we don't have to do it by ourselves.

Betsy also found a network to support her in the process of running for office:

> Some people have been so wonderful and so supportive and so encouraging.... You know, once you find people who sort of have a shared value system and a shared vision of how you think that elected office can shape your city or your state, that's really rewarding, and that does make it worth it.

Reminding potential candidates of the existence of these networks, regardless of whether those networks include wealthy political donors, and then encouraging women to ask for help in the process of running for office is one way that women can reduce barriers to running.

A barrier that is more difficult to tackle is the gender discrimination that women still face on the campaign trail. Betsy and Carrie both faced a variety of gender-related challenges. Betsy talked about her experience:

> I'm running in a crowded field; it's all men. I'm the only woman, and people are very, you know, they talk about my gender, they talk about my age, they talk about my appearance. They use really … gendered language to talk about me even when they're trying to compliment me.… I knew that that was going to happen, but I didn't know that I was going to be so affected by it.

Betsy's recommendation to women who want to run for elected office, therefore, is to realize that such gender-focused commentary "really does not matter, but be prepared for those sorts of feelings that you're going to have."

Like Betsy, Carrie faced barriers running as a woman on a slate with two men:

> I loved my running-mate, but ... I'm five-foot-three, and they're over like six feet tall, the two guys I was running with. So, they would block me out a lot. You know, they have strong personalities, and when we would go up to people, the three of us, they would literally be standing in front of me and blocking me out. You're a team, but really it's every man for himself, you know, and so it took me … just about a month maybe to two months before somebody who was campaigning in another town said to me "You know you're a strong candidate, and you're letting them step all over you; go the other way.

> You need to start running your campaign, and go solo." So, when I would go to events I would turn, this is just giving an example ... and they would block me, all of a sudden, I'd kind of have this "FU" moment in my head, and I turned around and went to the other side of the venue and started to greet people on my own and work my way back to the other side of the room, and before I knew it, the more I did that, they were standing behind me following me. So ... for lack of better terminology you got to have your balls from the minute you walk out of the gate. But that's when you're running against the worst men, you have to be just as strong as they are, but yet we have a fine line. They want us to be feminine, but they want us to be strong.

Neither Betsy nor Carrie felt the training offered by Ready to Run prepared them in any way for such complicated circumstances related to gender. Although there is no way a training program could discuss all the potential ways women will be discriminated against on the campaign trail, having an open and honest discussion about the existence of the discrimination and potential resources to help women navigate the experience may be a helpful first step.

Run in the Future

Although very few women who attended Ready to Run had immediate plans to run for office, a much larger portion were considering a run in the future. In fact, only 13% of the women who completed the survey ran for office in 2015 or 2016. That said, 47% indicated that they planned to run in the future, and 33% were unsure. In this section, I will focus on the training that Ready to Run provided to the women who were not ready to run *yet*, at the time of the training, as well as the reasons that women in this group were waiting to run, their timeline for running, and what offices they plan to seek.

Track Two: "I'm Not Ready to Run Yet, But…"

Ready to Run encouraged women who were not yet ready to run for elected office to attend the training by offering them a special track titled "I'm Not Ready to Run Yet, But…" This track featured a session on "Political Parties, Appointments, and Advocacy – Tools and Tips for Getting Started." The agenda pitched the session as one that was

> designed for those who are not ready to run but want to have an impact on important issues. [The session] offers an overview of the "nuts and bolts" of government and political parties in the state. Topics covered will include positioning oneself for appointment to a public board or commission, getting active in a political party, and using effective advocacy techniques. The first half of the panel will address how to become active in the political parties. The second section of the panel will cover positioning oneself for appointment to a public board or commission and learning how to be an advocate on legislative issues.
>
> The session was divided into two parts: "Part 1: New Jersey Government and Political Parties – An Overview" and "Part 2: Appointments and Advocacy – Tools and Tips for Getting Started." Part 1 was moderated by Ingrid Reed, a political fellow at New Jersey Future, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that promotes sensible growth, redevelopment, and infrastructure. The panel was composed of one Democrat and one Republican. The Democrat, Lizette Delgado-Polanco, was the vice chair of the New Jersey Democratic State Committee. Vanessa LaFranco, the Republican, was the president of the New Jersey Federation of Republican Women. Michellene Davis—the executive vice president for corporate affairs at Barnabas Health, the largest nonprofit

> integrated health-care delivery system in New Jersey—moderated part 2. In addition to moderating the panel, Davis also participated as a panelist having served as the chief policy counsel within the New Jersey Governor's Office and as the first African American woman State Treasurer. Joining Davis as panelists were Jeannette Hoffman, the senior vice president at Capital Impact Group, a bipartisan government relations firm, and Christine O'Brien, president of the Insurance Council of New Jersey.

Track two also featured a session on "Laying the Groundwork for Public Life." The program description indicated that the session

> offers advice from the experts–women who already serve as public leaders. Learn everything you have ever wanted to know but were afraid to ask. Topics covered include learning to raise one's public profile, leveraging community leadership for political leadership, the various types of elected office to consider, working on campaigns, and balancing the competing priorities of political and family life.

The session was moderated by Ruth B. Mandel, the director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. The Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), which runs Ready to Run, is a part of the Eagleton Institute. The panel featured elected officials including Diana Reyna, the Brooklyn Deputy Borough President in New York City, Assemblywoman Donna Simon of the New Jersey Legislature, Mayor Suzanne Walters of Stone Harbor Borough, and Councilwoman Betsy Williams of the City of Plainfield.

At the time of the training, I was focused on women who were part of track one—that is, women who were then running or preparing to run for office. Thus, because track two's sessions conflicted with track one's sessions, I did not attend the track two sessions. However,

approximately one-half of the women who attended the Ready to Run training selected track two; more accurately, the number of women in the training sessions for track one and track two appeared equal in size. Additionally, because my research question focused on how women utilized the resources provided by Ready to Run on the campaign trail, I did not include any questions in my survey about these two sessions. However, four of the 14 women whom I interviewed indicated that they planned to run for office in the future and had attended these sessions.

Children, Career, and Community

In my survey, I asked the women who did not run for office about what aspect of campaigning they anticipated finding the most challenging. A majority of respondents, 62.5%, cited personal issues such as juggling work and campaign responsibilities and balancing the campaign with family responsibilities.

Children. A commonly cited reason for waiting to run for office was having young children. Rosa, a 38-year-old mother of three, stated that she simply did not have the time to run for office:

> I have a senior that's about to graduate. I have another one that's a junior. He'll be graduating the following year, so I have to worry about two kids making their way towards college. [I've] been kind of busy in helping them navigate those waters.... Then there's driving and all of these different things. I'm a single parent, so it's hard to try to do all of it, and I have [a child] going into high school, and she competes in gymnastics, so that takes a lot of time, because we're all over the state and in Pennsylvania and different things. So, the children, that's taking up a lot of time.

Thalia, a 37-year-old with two sons—one in fifth grade and one in ninth grade—said that she would consider running when both her children were older. She explained that she decided to wait until after her younger son "goes to high school" because that will "be good timing for me to explore those venues."

Dynah, a 32-year-old with a new baby and a full-time job who previously served as a body woman to an elected official, described her first-hand knowledge of campaigning to explain why she was not yet ready to run: "It's a grueling process and those of us who are working mothers know that we're already juggling four-thousand things at any given moment."

Jenny, who had been through the process of campaigning personally, echoed Dynah's sentiment. When asked about the hardest part of running for office, she cited the time commitment and balancing family responsibilities with the demands of the campaign:

> When it comes to [a] campaign, I would say two things. Time commitment, and especially if you have a family, you really need a partner, husband, spouse, whoever, family member, that will pick up the day-to-day activities that you're involved in with your children when you're campaigning. I think if you have somebody there helping you out while you're campaigning, it would be [helpful] to a successful campaign. That's one of the biggest challenges, and I think one of the things is, if you do have a passion, whether it's your spouse or a family member or your partner … if they're into it and you understand the whole political dynamic. You need to be out there. It's sort of like a sales call. You need to be out there. You need to be in front of people. If your partner or spouse or family member understands that, I think you, as a person, as a female person who is passionate about running, would run. You need that support, period. If you can

> communicate that to your spouse or your partner or family member that they need you there almost 24/7 while you're campaigning, I think it would be a better or smoother transition into politics.

Jenny was lucky to have the support of her spouse, but many of the women whom I spoke to were divorced or single mothers, or were not sure of whether their husbands would be willing or able to help at home. As a resource for women who run for office, Ready to Run should explore this issue more deeply to identify potential ways to overcome this barrier.

Career. In addition to having children, women cited their careers as a reason to delay running for office. Many of the women whom I spoke to said that they felt that they needed to establish themselves in their fields. Melissa, a young professional who is 33, said she did not run in 2016 because it was not the right time for her, professionally. “A good timeline for me [career wise] would probably be somewhere from six to ten years,” she said. For Jessica, it was a matter of career choice: “My particular field as a lobbyist has a lot of restrictions.”

Eleanor, a 33-year-old attorney, also felt limited by her work to consider running at the present time. In addition to her “current professional position,” her “very strong hobby as a professional soccer referee … takes a lot of time, so right now I sort of have two careers and a third is not of interest.”

Betsy, who had no immediate plans to run when she attended Ready to Run but was in the process of running for city council when I spoke to her, felt like she had reached a point in her career when she could run:

> I spent a lot of my 20s and my early 30s really focused on my professional career, and … I've sort of got that under control and I've been successful, so I'm in a financial position

> to run. I feel like I have built up the contacts over the course of the last few years … in terms of my charitable and political … civic engagement [experience]. I feel like I have the experience, the contacts, and the money to do it.

The idea of having that women need to have each of their "ducks in a row" is one that appealed to the women whom I interviewed. And although the idea of being fully prepared gave them an understandable sense of control, there are repercussions for women who wait to run for office. Women tend to be 20 years older than men when they first run for office (Thomas et al., 2002). The lack not just of women candidates but of young women candidates is certainly a contributing factor to the gender gap in elected office, particularly at the highest levels (Lawless & Fox, 2013). Also notable is the fact that the women whom I spoke with did not see serving as an elected official in and of itself as a career. Serving in public office does not have to be a part-time job; thus, more needs to be done in general and at Ready to Run to help women see themselves as career elected officials or civil servants.

Community. Just as women often expressed the belief that they need to establish themselves in their respective professional fields, women indicated a need to raise their personal profiles in their communities before deciding to run. Jessica, who had recently moved to New Jersey from the Midwest around the time that she participated in Ready to Run, said, "I feel like I need [to be] more welcomed in the community before attempting to represent the community."

For others, it was a matter of finding the right community. "If and when I decide to run for office, I have to do it strategically. It'll probably involve moving," Melissa said. "I vote in Plainfield, New Jersey, right now, and it's not the place for a Caucasian female to run for office."

When asked why she did not plan to run for office in the future, another survey respondent also noted that "I live in a very democratic [*sic*] urban county and I am a republican [*sic*]." Although it is disappointing that the current highly partisan environment can make running for office as a member of the minority party so unappealing, Ready to Run could help women be strategic about selecting where and which seat to run for.

Women candidates can be risk-adverse, preferring to wait for an open seat rather than challenging a sitting incumbent (Lawless & Fox, 2012). This was the case for Kate, who said she wanted to wait for an open seat, something she did not see happening for between two and five years. But given the power of incumbency discussed in chapter two, women cannot afford to be afraid to run. In fact, fear appeared to be holding back a lot of women. Mary—who has lived in New Jersey since 1990—also said that she might be interested in running in the future, "but I'm still continuing to learn about New Jersey politics, everything there is to know about what is relevant and important in this state."

Timeframe and Age

The survey of women who plan to run in the future indicates that 25% anticipated running for office in the next two years, although another 25% planned to do so sometime between the next two and five years. And although 17% of women surveyed said they hoped to run for office sometime between five and 10 years, 33% were unsure of when they would run for office.

Each of the four women whom I interviewed who said that they planned to run for office in the future were in their twenties and thirties, and each had an understanding about when in the future it would be most convenient for them to run. Kate, who was 25 at the time

of the survey, indicated in her survey response that she planned to run in the next two to five years, in her late twenties. In a follow-up interview, I asked Kate why she was waiting to run. “I think I’m not ready to do it right now, but I don’t want to wait too long, so two to five years sounds about right,” she said, because she was “just looking at what’s going on locally. That’s where I see some seats opening up in that timeframe.” When I asked Kate about why she thought that she was not ready at that time, she told me that she would like to continue her education. “I’d like to go back and get my master’s degree before I do it. I’d like to have that under my belt and done with and then feel like I can take on something on top of that,” she said.

Unlike Kate, however, Rosa, Jessica, and Melissa are older and do not plan to run until they are in their late thirties or early forties. This is in line with research that indicates that men serving in Congress often ran for office for the first time in their twenties, but women serving in Congress generally did not run for the first time until they were in their forties (Thomas, Herrick, & Braunstein, 2002). Rosa, who is 38 years old, plans to run in the near future, but “I don’t have a set date, a set year. I don’t have a set year because I’m still trying to get some things laid out in my personal life, but the intention is at least within the next three to four years I would run for something.” For Jessica, who is 31, moving to a new area means that she does not plan to run for between five and 10 years. Because of where she is at in her career and the need to move, Melissa, age 33, would also be in her late thirties or early forties when she runs for the first time, in six to 10 years.

Although Ready to Run may provide women with the tools that they need to run for office, it does not help women to create a plan for *when* they will run for office. Working with

women to overcome the barriers they face—real or perceived—and building a path to running for office would ensure that women who attend the training are more likely to run in the future.

Level of Office

Of equal concern to women who wait to run for office until they are older is the fact that women are far more likely than men to run for local office (Thomas et al., 2002). A majority of women who responded to the survey (68%) indicated an interest in running for office at the local level. Only 25% of respondents stated an interest in running at the legislative level for state senate or house, and none of the respondents were interested in higher office such as a statewide position or a congressional seat. In my interviews with women who responded to the survey, I found similar although perhaps more nuanced results.

For example, in our interview Kate indicated an interest in running for local office. She cited her age and local office as being a point of entry into politics: "I'm only 25 right now, and I just think it's a good starting point. I also really already engage locally. I'm on the planning board, and I joined the environmental commission, and I see that as a natural next step." Despite her involvement and experience, she raised a question about her ability to serve in office when I asked her about what other types of training she would find useful: "My mind went right to 'Oh, you've won, you're in this position. How do you effectively read a municipal budget?'"

Jessica, Melissa, and Rosa were most interested in serving at the state legislative or statewide level, but believed that they needed to start at the local level. Melissa expressed interest in running for higher office but said she would also consider running for county office:

> It would be ideally running for a statewide seat in a city non-competitive district, as for my first role. If that does not work out, it makes more sense [that] I start at the freeholder level.

Jessica, who works as a lobbyist, said that she was interested in running for legislative office because "those are the offices I work to lobby. I think it's the most interesting branch," although she also said that she would consider running for local office. Rosa was also interested in running at the state level, but planned to start at the local level:

> I preferably would want to do something at the state level, but the way the state of our politics here seems to work where I'm at in South Jersey, you kind of have to work your way up. The goal would be state, not federal for now, but the initial seat that I would run for is a county seat.

As a first step to running for office, Rosa successfully sought out an appointment to her local zoning board. "I actually did it while I was sitting in Ready to Run, I began the process," she explained. "I reached out to our mayor." Rosa was inspired by what she heard from the panelists:

> I liked the practical aspects of letting me know that it's not ridiculous to reach out to your local legislators or to your local leaders and say, "Hey, I really want to be a part of something." I never thought to do that until they said it, so it was like, "Oh, okay. Wow." That's something that I did while sitting there; I actually reached out to our mayor on Facebook … and he was like, "Hey, let's figure something out."

The age at which women run for office for the first time—combined with the fact that they more often run for local office rather than at the state or national level—contributes

substantially to the gap between the number of men and women serving in Congress (Thomas et al., 2002). Despite extensive research, I was unable to find any data about the number of women in the U.S. who indicate a desire to run the future and then do, in fact, run for any local, state, or national office. However, the important issue is not necessarily how many women follow through but how to support women during their exploration of running for elected office and in the process of actually campaigning. The more important question is how to mobilize more women to follow through on their promise of running in the future, and then support them in that process, because fewer women than men currently run for any office at any level.

No Plans to Run

Ready to Run data indicates that one in three women who attend the training do eventually run for office. Of course, this means that two out of three women do not. My survey of participants and subsequent interviews indicates that many who attended did so with no intention of ever running for elected office. My survey found that not only did 87% of participants not run for office in 2015 or 2016, but also a majority of women (53%) had no plans to run in the future or were unsure of whether they ever will. Of the women I interviewed, one in three had no plans to run for elected office in the future.

The decision to run or not to run for office is certainly personal and complicated. Since most of the women who attend Ready to Run will not run for elected office, it would be easy to assume that they will never utilize the skills and resources that they gained at the training. But my analysis found that those who attended the conference were motivated by personal and professional considerations and a desire to help others, although not necessarily women, get elected.

Helping Themselves?

Based on my analysis of the interviews I conducted, some women attended the training for professional reasons. For example, Thalia, who is a PhD student, wanted to gain more information about the lack of women in educational leadership:

> I chose to attend the conference because I wanted to know more… I was doing research … at the time, and I wanted to get more information [about] the political aspect of women running for office, particularly minority leaders or Latina women. So, I went there with the mindset to gather information.

Other women attended the training for specific professional benefits. Jessica, who had recently relocated from the Midwest, was looking for a job, and Robin, a public-relations expert, thought that the conference would be a good networking opportunity. Both hoped to connect with other women at the training. Likewise, Dynah, who worked in politics, wanted to learn more about the process of running for office, but was not interested in running herself:

> I was never a candidate. I didn't attend Ready to Run because I was explicitly looking to run for office. I have worked as a staffer for an elected official as a body woman, and I'm now director of community affairs for a city agency. So, I am very much in the political landscape.… I took the training more just to deepen my own knowledge about the political process, but not explicitly because I was ever going to be a candidate.

Like Dynah, Anna was also interested in learning more about the political process:

> I feel like the reason I attended the training was to learn more about how to become politically engaged, without necessarily running. And meeting like-minded individuals. I

> sit on a host of boards, and at the time, I was sitting [on] more that were much more involved politically. So, I felt that it would sort of complement my interests.

Both Dynah and Anna indicated a desire to use the knowledge gained at the training to deepen their involvement and knowledge in politics, although Anna appeared to be self-interested and Dynah did not necessarily indicate a desire to help others get elected.

Helping Other Women?

Some of the women whom I interviewed expressed an interest in working on political campaigns, despite their lack of interest in running for office. Robin, as a public-relations specialist, attended Ready to Run because she wanted "to help support women get elected":

> My goal was actually to … I do PR, but I want to focus on the political sector, and so my goal was not necessarily becoming ready to run. It was to become more knowledgeable on ways to be able to talk to women that's [*sic*] running so I can then support them not just in PR but just as the campaigning act as a whole.

Robin said that she wanted to see more women in decision-making roles: "I feel like if we have more women in office, then more issues that appeal to me or affect me will be introduced on a local level."

Dynah was working for a woman who was running for office when she went to the training. "At that point I was working very closely as a body woman to an elected official, who eventually ran for mayor. So, I was interested in the 360 aspect of the program," she said. "Joining other women who are interested, knowing more about the political process just helps inform me and, I think, just generally empowers folks to be a little bit more at ease" about the campaign process.

Not everyone was as explicit as Robin in expressing their desire to work help elect other women. As one survey respondent succinctly noted, “I am content assisting others seeking office.” Eleanor, who attended the training because of her work in politics, was also more generally interested in helping others get elected, regardless of their sex:

> I was not interested in running at this time. I work a lot in the political sphere, [with] my job at the time, the previous positions I had at [Washington] DC, and in my current position as well, so understanding some of the other challenges that face individuals when running, whether male or female, is very beneficial to me, and then with the upcoming presidential race, I was potentially interested in getting involved with one of the campaigns.

Notably, two of the five women whom I interviewed who were not interested in running for office themselves put the skills they learned to work, but worked for male political candidates. One of these women, Robin, stated that she has

> worked for some female candidates, but now I'm actually working for a male senator in Brooklyn, doing his social media, and although he's not a woman, it has helped me, of course, be influential in some legislation.... Although my lane is PR, [the training] has helped me understand what the other lanes are and apply it to my PR so that I'm actually showing that I'm supporting the other facets of the political agenda. So [the facilitators at Ready to Run] were very helpful [and] helped me to be more organized, helped me just think about … my mission and things like that to support what a candidate manager's doing, what an event planner's doing…. So yes, I have been able to use many of the skill sets.

These women's comments are in line with the mission of Ready to Run, which includes encouraging women to "work on a campaign, or get involved in public life in other ways" (CAWP, 2016). This was a message that was clearly conveyed to some participants. When asked in an interview for this study about why she attended Ready to Run if she was not planning on running for office, Eleanor stated that, according to her understanding, Ready to Run was designed for

> those interested in running, as well as those who have specific plans, as well as those who either work in the political sphere or were potentially interested in running or helping someone run in the future, so the way that the agenda was sort of presented is they serve two tracks of … instructional courses.

Given all that we know about why women do not run for office as well as the barriers that they will face in the process, it seems detrimental to offer women an "out" or a reason to not run for office.

Sparking an Interest

For some of the women who attended, the training did spark an interest in running. After attending the training, Thalia said,

> I gathered a lot of information and actually got motivated to run for office in the future. Initially, I did not attend the workshop with that intent, but after attending and, you know, getting more involved in that aspect, then I said, "You know what, once I'm finished with school, I get a little older, I will consider running for a council woman in my local town, as a council woman."

Even Dynah, who had no intention of ever being a candidate, acknowledged that "it's a possibility" when I asked about whether she would consider running in five, 10, or 15 years. "And I was not interested in even running; I was just there to information-gather, to empower myself with knowledge," she said. When asked the same question, Eleanor responded with "potentially, but probably not for at least a decade." Only one of the women interviewed, Anna, was adamant about not running for office. When asked about whether she had any interest in running, she said, "I don't think so, no." Her career was "where I really want to focus my energies. So, I'm not sure if political office is really something that I'm interested in."

These findings reinforce the challenge of recruiting women to run for office: Even if women gather in a room to talk about running for office, they do not necessarily see themselves as potential candidates. Other participants also noted the lack of interest that some women at the training expressed in running for office. "I just remember a handful of women being really ready to run, literally," said Dynah. Similarly, Jessica said that "there were a lot of people who were there who were unsure of why they were there.… 'I'm not sure I even belong in this room' is what I was hearing from a lot of people."

Fundraising Training

When women run for office, they typically raise as much money as men (Burrell, 2014; Hogan, 2010). However, women perceive fundraising to be more difficult than men do (Sanbonmatsu, Carroll, & Walsh, 2010). In fact, the extent to which some women find fundraising intimidating can be a significant hurdle in their willingness to run for office at all (Lawless & Fox, 2012).

In my survey, women who indicated that they plan to run for elected office in the future consistently cited fundraising as the most challenging aspect of running a campaign. In fact, 57% of survey participants rated their ability to raise money as having been "poor" or "terrible" prior to attending Ready to Run. No other category even came close to a 50% response rate for these two categories. Only 22% of respondents rated the quality of their fundraising skills after the Ready to Run training as "poor" or "terrible."[1]

Research indicates that barriers for women related to fundraising include having fewer personal resources, being less likely to be already tapped into pre-existing political donor networks, and not being part of social or professional networks that are accustomed to making financial gifts or donations. Additionally, women are uncomfortable with asking for money for themselves; they are more comfortable raising money for a cause than for their own campaign. This may be because, as Mandel (1981) argued, cultural expectations about women's selflessness can make women feel awkward about seeking campaign contributions. Mandel's findings were reinforced with data from my survey, and through my analysis I found that identifying potential donors and asking people for money remain two of the greatest challenges for female candidates. Often, women do not have access to the same pre-existing donor networks as men, and many women were raised not to talk about money, making "the ask" even more intimidating.

Fundraising for Success

[1] Digital media was the only other category in which participants–specifically, 11% of participants–rated their ability as "terrible" or "poor" post-training.

The last session of the Ready to Run program was “Fundraising for Success.” On the agenda, the session had the following description:

> Fundraising is one of the most crucial aspects of a campaign. This interactive workshop covers key components of campaign fundraising, including special emphasis on why people give and the in-person “ask.” The session will also address developing a strategy for your campaign, building a donor list, recruiting and motivating a finance committee, and special events.

The panel was moderated by Gail Gordon, of counsel at Florio Perrucci Steinhardt & Fader. According to the firm’s website, Gordon is “well-recognized for her work in government & community relations, crisis management, as well as for her political, hospital and non-profit fundraising expertise” (Florio Perrucci Steinhardt & Fader, 2013). Gordon has worked for a number of politicians, including Pennsylvania Governor Dick Thornburgh, and within the Reagan Administration; she was also on New Jersey Governor Chris Christie’s finance committee. She has appeared on PolitickerNJ’s 100 Most Powerful People in New Jersey list. Panelists included Amberle Gilroy, a fundraising consultant for Turnkey Productions, which provides fundraising services for Republican candidates and political committees; Stephanie Wohlrab, a Democratic fundraising consultant who owns her own firm, SW Consulting, in New Jersey; and Candace Straight, former co-chair of the New Jersey Republican State Committee.

No Experience

Many of the women who attended Ready to Run and completed my survey did so because they had no experience raising money and wanted to learn how to do so. “I wanted to learn how to fundraise. That was really a big question mark that I had,” said Betsy, a first-time

candidate running for the city commission. Another participant, Jessica, rated her knowledge about fundraising as “poor” on the survey. In our follow-up interview, she said, “it's not something I've ever attended a training for in the past, so it was brand new topic for me.” After the training, Jessica rated her ability to raise money as “good”:

> We talked about how everyone is bad at it at first and reluctant to do it. They explained that if you are supported by party organization, they'll give you lists and they'll tell you who you should hire to hold your hand and make you do it. It was reassuring to know that not everyone is naturally good at it and that there’s [*sic*] systems in place to help you become better at it.

Like Jessica, when Kate was asked in the survey to rate her ability to raise money prior to attending Ready to Run, the rating she selected was “poor.” When I asked her about it in our follow-up interview, Kate said that she did not have any experience with fundraising:

> I work for a nonprofit in my day-to-day job, so I do a lot of communication. I do a lot of thinking strategically about building membership, which I could see correlating well into getting out to vote or building campaigns or coalitions. That's what I do in my day-to-day. I don't directly do any fundraising or have experience [working on a] larger scale … like asking people to sponsor a conference [where they clearly] have some mutually beneficial relationship to doing that. I think it's like the direct ask [for money] that I don't have experience in.

As Jessica indicates, fundraising is more than getting a list to make calls; it is also about making “the ask.” As the next section indicates, this is a widespread concern for women running for office.

Making the Ask

When asked which of the training sessions was most useful, Jean Sinzdak, Associate Director of CAWP and the Director of Ready to Run, said that participants found the session on fundraising to be most useful because it taught them how to ask donors for financial support:

> I think the thing that makes people most nervous about serving in office is having to fundraise. Just in terms of meeting the concerns, addressing an issue that more people are concerned about, it's really, truly how to make an ask. I think that one is most helpful to people.

The women I interviewed reinforced this idea of being intimidated by the idea of asking for money. As Jessica explained, "I think it is just because I grew up in the Midwest, and you don't talk about money ever."

Thus, a large focus on the fundraising training session was on making "the ask." "You have to be ready to ask for money and not be *ashamed* [emphasis added] of it," Thalia said. According to Gordon's PowerPoint presentation, "successful candidates spend 35-50% of their time raising money." Gordon and the other panelists offered tips and techniques for personal solicitation, stressing preparation to include research, scheduling, handouts, rehearsing from a script, being on time, and dressing the part. The ask was broken down into three parts: (1) the greeting, in which the candidate makes a connection; (2) the sale, in which the candidate states why she is running, how she is going to win, and why she is are a solid investment; and (3) the close, in which in the candidate "writes the order," "does not drop the ball," confirms, and then follows up with a thank-you note.

Eleanor reported that the training taught her how to make the all-important ask:

> The biggest thing that I've learned is that you ask the question and then you're quiet and you wait for the other person to respond, because if you keep trying to fill that … blank space, they're never going to respond, but if you allow the awkwardness to just grow, you … will at least get a response from them, and if the answer is "No, not at this time," "I'll think about it," something other than "Yes'," that's okay, but you're at least getting a solid response from them.…

Access to Networks

Sinzdak stated that beyond making "the ask," one of the most challenging aspects to fundraising for women was the lack of access to traditional donor networks. Among the fundraising challenges facing candidates—including the ask—that Sinzdak noted, is the fact that women

> haven't traditionally been … in these circles, these networks, what we call the 'old boy' network. They haven't been traditionally in the halls of power and in these places where they have access to people with money. It's certainly not something you cannot overcome. You absolutely can, but just to be aware of that, that's a barrier for a lot of women right off the bat because if … you're a CEO of a company, which has traditionally been [a position held by] men, and you're on a golf course with a bunch of other male CEOs and everybody's got money, it's just much easier to have a network of funding right at your disposal.

Although Sinzdak seemed to understand what women candidates were missing, the fundraising moderator and panelists missed the mark.

As part of the training, Gordon discussed creating a finance plan that included soliciting funds in four ways: personal solicitation, finance committees, special events, and direct mail and websites. A large part of the panel discussion focused on establishing a finance committee. According to the PowerPoint, “a good finance committee can raise 60% of your budget.” The composition of committee was stressed: Gordon suggested that a good chair is someone who has money or a well-known name and knows other people with money who are likely to give. They are also well-respected in the community and will bring other people to the table. Members of the committee, Gordon went on to clarify, should be matched with donors and must be willing not only to lend their name, but also to also make fundraising phone calls. There was no discussion about how women should go about building a finance team or make connections to people who might, for instance, be suitable finance committee chairs, only that they needed to do it.

Sinzdak suggested that one solution to women’s lack of access to traditional donor networks was to create new ones for women:

> We need a deeper fundraising network for women candidates. We need more women PACs [political action committees]. There are a few. There's [*sic*] some really prominent national ones, but especially at the city and local levels there are not that many PACs that support women, so we need more of that…. When [people] come to me and they say “well, there's already a great campaign training in my area, but I want to know what else I can do,” I [say], “You can start a PAC.”

In addition to the training session on fundraising, the media training was most often identified as beneficial. The next section details the major themes emerging from the responses related to media training.

Media Training

Although Ready to Run participants rated their ability to raise money—both before and after the training—as "poor," the opposite was true for the session on media training. Prior to attending the Ready to Run, 86% of women surveyed rated their ability to "look and sound good when speaking with members of the media or the public" as "average" (43%) or "good" (also 43%). After attending Ready to Run, that number jumped to 100%, with 11% of respondents surveyed rating their ability as "average," although 56% rated it as "good" and 33% as "excellent."

On the first day of training, Ready to Run participants gathered for a luncheon plenary session titled "Conquering the Camera – An Interactive Media Training." According to the training agenda,

> this interactive media training workshop will include tips for successful interviews on tough topics, how to look poised and professional on camera, staying on message, and public speaking techniques. Selected participants will take part in mock interviews and on-camera practice sessions.

The session was led by Christine Jahnke, president of Positive Communications. Jahnke is a political communication specialist, former TV reporter, and the author of *The Well-Spoken Woman: Your Guide to Looking and Sounding Your Best*. In addition to being recognized by *Campaigns & Elections* magazine as a "Rising Star in Politics," according to her website, Jahnke

has coached more women candidates and elected officials than any other trainer (Positive Communications, 2014).

When I attended Ready to Run, I saw more than a dozen women speak. Jahnke was by far the most dynamic presenter. Many of the attendees also had positive things to say about Jahnke as a presenter. This is notable because none of the women whom I surveyed or interviewed brought up other presenters. Betsy, for example, said that she "really liked the public speaking piece" and identified Jahnke as a "really wonderful woman." In our interview, Carrie also said that the media training was "really great" and that "the woman that taught it is fantastic." It's possible that Jahnke's being such a dynamic speaker made the session more memorable, and therefore women were more likely to mention it on the survey and in interviews. It's also possible that the training was memorable because it provided the participants with tangible steps that they could take to look and sound good on the campaign trail and elsewhere.

Looking Good

Fifty percent of survey participants identified the session about media training as the most beneficial out of eight trainings available. Even two years later, interview participants indicated that they could still remember tips from the training about makeup, clothing, and posture. Carrie said that she "really took a lot from the one class where the woman was talking about how to present yourself … when you're talking." The fact that the training was tailored specifically to women appealed to Kate, who focused on the session's attention to candidates' physical appearances while on the trail in speaking with me about the session:

> It was really helpful. The difference of men can just wear a dark suit, whereas I'm reading the chapter about, okay, here are some different types of clothing that you can wear, which you wouldn't get from a trainer, that was not specific to women. Or talking about your tone of voice or what kind of makeup to wear. It is those types of practical things that you wouldn't get from someone who was not specifically talking to a female audience.

Mary also picked up on the ways in which men and women are supposed to behave and, in turn, how their behavior is interpreted by voters differently:

> I think that [the session] covered a lot of good aspects of how you present yourself to the public. I thought it was quite interesting that when women smile, they were supposed to be not a closed-mouth smile, because that somehow portrays some sort of negative or, I would say, some kind of attitude that might not be good to present yourself to the public. That was interesting.

One interpretation of this focus on the physical is that it is something that the women candidates themselves can control. A woman can choose what shade of lipstick to wear to a political event, granting her a degree of perceived control over how a voter will respond. A woman cannot, however, choose what her opponent will say about her in a debate, what the media writes about her candidacy, and whether or not voters will cast their votes for her. Therefore, picking the “right” lipstick color is a small way in which a candidate can reclaim a sense of control in a chaotic campaign season.

Another interpretation of the session’s popularity is that the media often comments on female candidates’ appearances, and voters want to like female candidates versus merely

thinking that a male candidate is qualified (citations). It is possible that women who are interested in running for office have internalized this and thus value this type of training because they see it as a way to reduce public criticism and improve their chances of electoral success.

Sounding Good

Although many of the women interviewed identified looking good as a priority, others placed emphasis on sounding good. Rosa, for instance, acknowledged feeling nervous about speaking in public:

> Public speaking is not something I like at all, and so that was one of the things that was discussed that day, and then just the whole process of how to begin thinking about running, connecting with voters, and who do you need to make the connections with, and getting your name out there and things like that.... When I saw what the outline was, I was like, "Oh, those are things that, yeah, I guess that would be pretty important," but for me, specifically, it would be public speaking. That's what I was nervous about.

Jahnke was able to equip women with the tools necessary to project confidence. Rebekah found the session to be "empowering" because "she [Jahnke] sort of talks about the nuts and bolts of public speaking in a way that makes it very acceptable and sort of fun." Given how many women experience speech anxiety, this level of reassurance seemed important to these participants.

The Challenge of TV

In terms of both looking and sounding good, the survey's results indicated that women candidates found or anticipated appearing on TV, in debates, and in public forums to be the most challenging aspects of communication in their campaigns. In the interviews that I conducted, women talked exclusively about appearing on TV, and again focused more on appearance. In addition to the tips on what types of clothing and makeup to wear, Kate reported that she had even applied the skills she learned from the Jahnke's training session when she was interviewed on television just prior to her interview for this study. Thalia mentioned that prior to attending the training she had not thought about how she looked or:

> …how you have to prepare for interviews, for the camera, how you present yourself, how you sit down, how you express yourself, how you look at the camera, that sort of thing that I was not really paying attention before, or even really thinking about.

After the women attended the training, they started to notice how others were presenting themselves. "Yeah, I thought that that was just so informative, and it really opened my eyes to a lot of how I presented myself, and then I started to see how other people are making those mistakes," Carrie said. Women's concerns surrounding appearance simultaneously speaks to the need for such training to alleviate fears, but also a deeper societal pressure regarding women and beauty.

Conclusion

Searching for an answer to the question "how do female candidates utilize the resources provided by Ready to Run when on the campaign trail, and are they effective?" proved far more difficult than I initially imagined given the small percentage of women I survey and interviewed who attended Ready to Run and ran for office in the subsequent election cycle.

More useful however, were conversations with women who will run in the future. The typical barriers to running for office that they face include caring for children, maintaining their careers, and having a sense of connection to the community. Most women expressed a desire to wait until they are older before running as well as a belief that they need to start at the local level. Unfortunately, Ready to Run did little to overcome these barriers. In fact, by offering a separate track for these women—namely, the track titled "I'm Not Ready to Run, Yet, But…"—they reinforced the women's own beliefs about their lack of preparation. Additionally, by opening up the training to women with no interest in running for office, they distracted from the original intent of the program, thereby possibly diluting its potential effectiveness.

Although the sample of participants who ran for office was not large enough to draw conclusions from about how participants generally use the resources provided by Ready to Run on the campaign trail, the topics addressed in two sessions in particular—namely, fundraising and media preparation—were discussed often by participants who participated in this study. Based on the results of the survey and they analysis of the interviews, fundraising remains a significant challenge for women who are considering running for office. However, the quality of fundraising training offered by Ready to Run appears to be inadequate to meet the needs of participants. Not only were adequate technical resources not provided, the session did not equip women with the adaptive skills to feel confident in their ability to raise money successfully. In contrast, the session titled "Conquering the Camera – An Interactive Media Training," addressed being camera-ready was interactive and left women with tangible skills to apply not only on the campaign trail, but also immediately in their personal and professional lives. Unfortunately, however, the focus on image emphasized in this session might reinforce

societal assumptions that women's value is tied to their physical appearance and demeanor–even when they are considering a run for office that could allow them to challenge such stereotypes.

Chapter 6: Recommendations to Mobilize and Thrive

"As women thrive, so will we all." —Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary General

Introduction

As Heifetz et al. (2009) note, the words "mobilize and thrive" are integral to the definition of adaptive leadership: "Adaptive leadership is the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive" (p. 14). Thus, as we seek to make progress on the adaptive challenge of electing more women to political office, exploring how to mobilize women and advancing their ability to thrive are important. This chapter focuses on what types of technical and adaptive resources could be developed by Ready to Run to mobilize women to run for political office at higher rates and to allow them to thrive in the process (RQ4). It also includes recommendations about how this particular training program could be improved to better meet the needs of women running for office and, by extension, what similar training programs should be providing to their participants, who are usually though not exclusively women, to prepare them to run for elected office.

I begin by analyzing the strategies employed by Ready to Run to mobilize participants, looking specifically at how Ready to Run organizers measured and implemented success. Based on this analysis, I first recommend decreasing the number of women in each training session and adding additional networking components. Next, I discuss the ways in which Ready to Run can better support women running for office by creating a space in which they can discuss work/life balance, implementing a mentorship program, and connecting women to the formal political party structure.

Mobilizing Women to Run

According to Heifetz et al. (2009), "mobilizing people to meet their immediate adaptive challenges lies at the heart of leadership" (p. 15). At the heart of the Ready to Run program are the hundreds of women who attend each year, some of whom are certain and many more of whom are uncertain about the prospect of running for office and what it entails. As I discovered in my analysis in chapter five, there are many barriers to women running for office right now, including but not limited to having young children, developing a career, and a perceived lack of community connections. Mobilizing women to overcome these barriers—and thereby increasing the number of women who run for elected office—is critical to making progress toward a solution to the adaptive challenge of increasing the number of women in political office. The ways in which Ready to Run could improve efforts to mobilize women include changing the metrics of success, decreasing class sizes, and incorporating more networking opportunities. Many of these opportunities would benefit other election-preparation training programs, too, and could be used to improve equality, access, and opportunity. This section will explore each of these three recommendations in more detail.

Measuring Success

For Ready to Run, success is largely measured by the number of women who attend the training each year. In 2015, when I attended Ready to Run as a researcher, more than 200 women participated in the training. Since the program launched over a decade ago, more than 3,000 women have attended Ready to Run. But success does not have to be measured from a strictly quantitative perspective or based on attendance numbers. There are also qualitative ways to evaluate the success of the program, such as the assessment questions contained within the survey administered to the women at the end of the Ready to Run training by the

organizers. In this assessment, participants rated the training and provided feedback; however, because the program considers the responses confidential, I was not granted access to the data from this assessment. Still, including assessment surveys is important in order for Ready to Run to internally gauge the success of the training. I enjoin any program that does not use them to do so. Furthermore, the data should be taken seriously. Heifetz et al. (2009) cite institution reflection as key to continuous learning and improvement when tackling adaptive challenges. Referring to how such assessments are handled in businesses, Heifetz et al. (2009) state that "executives and managers know that some of the most useful knowledge resides in those out in the field or on the assembly line, those who deal with the organization's day-to-day realities because they have their hands on the customers, products, and key constituencies" (p. 106). For Ready to Run, this means listening to women who are thinking about running for office about what their needs and wants are, but it also means talking to women who have run for office about what was missing.

Another means by which the success of this training can be gauged is the number of Ready to Run participants who choose to run for office following their participation in the training program or even the number of participants who win their races. According to the welcome letter from Debbie Walsh, Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) director, and Jean Sinzdak, CAWP associate director, that was included in participants' packets, "more than a quarter of Ready to Run alumnae have run for office and of those who ran, 70% won their races." As discussed in chapter five, the low number of women who ran for office for the first time after attending the training—less than 3%—was surprising, although perhaps it should not have been, given the persistent ambition gap. Furthermore, the number of women who ran

and won their races after attending a Ready to Run program was also surprising. On average, women candidates win approximately 50% of open races (Seltzer et al., 1997), whereas according to the program director, Ready to Run New Jersey participants are successful at a far greater rate of 70-75%.[2]

On a broader scale, measuring the increase in the number of women in elected office in a given elected body can be a metric of success. For example, when Ready to Run was first launched, New Jersey ranked 39th in the nation with only 16% of members of the state legislature being women. In 2017, nearly twenty years later, women hold 30% of the seats in the state senate and house and New Jersey ranks 14th. "We know that it's [Ready to Run] changing Garden State politics," Walsh and Sinzdak wrote in the welcome letter. In a fact sheet that was included in participants' packets, the directors went even further:

> The results in New Jersey are clear: active intervention is crucial to changing the political climate of a state. Ready to Run shows what can happen in a state with a poor record of electing women. Now CAWP has developed the Network to help other states replicate the program, building a lasting presence to change political culture by grooming women candidates.

Outside of New Jersey, information is not available regarding Ready to Run's network partners, and the effect the program has had in other states, however such an analysis would bolster the claim about the effectiveness of the program overall. Not only would it demonstrate the consistency of the program content delivered in diverse political jurisdictions, but it would also

[2] Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton's study examined women running for office at the state house, state senate, U.S. House, U.S. Senate, and gubernatorial level between 1972 and 1994. Actual rates varied based on the office sought and whether the woman was an incumbent or challenger or if she was running for an open seat.

solidify the importance of the development and operation of a nationwide network in both mobilizing women to run and allowing them to thrive in the process.

What is presently available are current numbers and the historical data about women and politics that go as far back as the late nineteenth century. CAWP tracks women's progress at all levels. At the federal level, this includes the number of women who have been appointed to serve in the president's cabinet, the number of women sitting on the Supreme Court, and the number of women elected to Congress. At the state level, CAWP tracks the number of women in executive positions, which includes governors' offices, lieutenant governors' offices, and other statewide elected positions such as attorney general or treasurer, as well as the number of women serving in state legislatures. Finally, on the local level, CAWP tracks the number of women who serve as mayors in the 100 largest cities in the U.S. as well as cities with populations over 30,000. Such numbers allow CAWP to track the progress that women are making overall, as well as to create motivations or incentives to continue the existing work of recruiting, training, and supporting women in the process of running for office.

One conclusion that may be drawn from this material is that there is not a single metric of success, but there are multiple ways to measure progress, each of which provides insights into the adaptive challenge of electing more women. As Ready to Run continues to define what programmatic success looks like, I would encourage the organizers of this program and of others like it to not to limit their basis for success only on the number of women who attend a training. Given the ambition gap and the large number of women who attend the training and do not run for office (75%), election-focused training programs such as Ready to Run would do better to focus their attention on improving the conversion rate of women who attend and

then run for office, preferably in the upcoming election cycle. Thus, when recruiting women to attend the training, program organizers should emphasize the importance of running in the next two to four years.

Additionally, I would recommend Ready to Run discontinue Track Two: "I'm Not Ready to Run Yet, But…" As discussed earlier, "track two" is a program that offers training for women who are interested in appointed office, getting more involved in politics, or working on a campaign. Granted, although each of these political engagement activities is a worthy endeavor, the low number of Ready to Run participants who eventually run for office would indicate that the track does not effectively mobilize women to run for office. In fact, as discussed in chapter 5, much of the messaging coming from the track two training sessions indicated to women that they need to learn x, y, and z before running for office, which could reinforce the participants' existing fears that they are not qualified to run because, as Lawless and Fox (2010) found, women are more likely than men to underestimate their qualifications. For example, Lawless and Fox found that, of eligible candidates, 61% of women self-assessed at "somewhat" or "not at all qualified" in contrast to men, 60% of whom self-assessed as "qualified" or "very qualified." If they are plagued with those self-doubts, women are less likely to consider running for office. Notably, even when men perceive themselves to be only somewhat or not at all qualified to run for office, they still run at rates far higher than women do (Lawless & Fox, 2010). Ready to Run could consider renaming the track with a focus on effective political engagement and hold the training at a separate time.

Improving on Success

Many of the women who attended the Ready to Run training, both track one and track two, found value in simply being in a room with other women. These findings are in line with affinity group theory, according to which members who share a common tie and face similar challenges—in this case, women who are running for office—come together to provide mutual support (Douglas, 2008). More than 70% of those surveyed said that they selected Ready to Run because it is a training program designed specifically for women, and more than 90% said that this factor was very or extremely important in influencing their decision to attend. Data from the interviews yielded consistent patterns among participants, as an overwhelming majority of them indicated that it was an important factor as well.

During the interviews conducted for this study, participants used words to describe the all-women training such as "encouraging," "empowering," and "engaging." During her interview, Jessica spoke about how she found the training environment to be encouraging:

> I think it is important because I have been to previous trainings where they've said women won't run unless they are asked or women are so much more less likely to run than men. I think it's important to *encourage* [emphasis added] a culture of women talking about this and becoming more comfortable with the idea. Also, when you go to some trainings with men, they can dominate the conversation.

Participant comments about the positive training environment evoked that of consciousness-raising groups (Sarachild, 1978). A tactic first used by feminists in the 1960s and 1970s, "conscious raising" involved groups of women who took turns speaking from a point of personal experience about issues that affect women's lives. The small-group discussions brought women together and helped raised their collective political consciousness in much the

same way that the Ready to Run conference did about the need for more women to be in elected office.

In addition to finding the Ready to Run environment to be encouraging, participants found the conference—which brought women together from across the country—to be empowering. In an interview, Dynah explained:

> I'm from New York. Our representation in New York and certainly across the country is not in a place where we think it should be. Joining other women who are interested [in] knowing more about the political process just helps inform me and, I think, just generally *empowers* [emphasis added] folks to be a little bit more at ease.

The empowerment about which Dynah spoke is a key aspect of mobilization, because it often leads to engagement. As Sarachild (1978) wrote about conscious-raising sessions, "action comes when our experience is finally verified and clarified" (p. 149). Eleanor specifically found this to be true. In an interview, she said that the fact that the training was specifically designed for women positively influenced her "to get more interested and *engaged*" [emphasis added]. Eleanor attended Ready to Run with no intention of running for office, but she still participated in the program and at the time of our interview was considering running for office in ten years. Meanwhile, when I interviewed her, she was making plans to attend a small-group fundraising training that was organized by Ready to Run.

Bringing together women in a room with other women may not sound novel, but in fact the participants found it to be both a unique and valuable experience. "I was able to meet women that were there [and] we're still friends even though I attended two years ago. We connected on Facebook and we still chit-chat, and I see what other people are doing," said

Rosa. Kesha had a similar experience: “I think it was a great time to have women come together and talk and learn about different things.” And it was not just about being in a room with women; it was also about being in a room *without men*. There was a perception among women at the training that men have more political opportunities than women do. Mary stated:

> In my experience, in my advanced age, men seem to have more opportunities than women, so it was good to see so many women who were actually at a point where they were ready to launch their campaign. So, it was good to see the women.

Kate echoed Mary’s words: “We just have such a different experience than men do in our day-to-day lives, let alone professionally, let alone in—I can imagine—running for public office. To have that perspective taken into consideration is incredibly important.” Hearing about the unique experiences of women who had been successful at running for office, allowed the Ready to Run participants to envision a world where women are more involved, engaged, and have more opportunities in politics.

Finally, in addition to being in a room with other women, having women deliver the training material and comprise the panels for the Ready to Run program sent a powerful message to the participants. Sinzdak explained their intended message behind this aspect of the program’s design as an attempt to say to participants, "you can do it, too, and here are the tools. Here's how you do it." Participants responded positively to this message from the organizers that was embedded in the structure of the training. “I really liked the panels and just having women in different positions in office just there, answering questions and talking about their experiences; I really enjoyed that,” said Kesha. Among participants, there was a sense that the panelists were experts because they had experience running for office. Kate remarked that

"they had a forum of politicians, Democratic women and Republican women," which was important to the participants' "ability to compare and contrast how these people, how these women went about their campaigns and what their strengths are and how they interact with their base." Seeing firsthand that women can succeed—and hearing their stories of how they did it–positively affected the participants. "It was a very memorable experience, but … I felt like there was a real spectrum of knowledge," Melissa said. Because of the empowering, energizing, and engaging nature of the training, Ready to Run should continue to offer a women-only environment for the campaign training. Participants clearly felt a sense of mobilization, even if that did not immediately translate into more women running for office. The participants' comments also suggest that maintaining a network of women to provide support and encouragement could help women in the process of running for office to thrive.

Class Size. To build on this positive environment, Ready to Run should consider reducing the size of the training program breakout sessions. Doing so would be in part a response to concerns about how success is measured, but it would also be in response to participant recommendations, and it is grounded in the literature about ideal and effective group size. Overall, based on survey and interview data, participants gave very high ratings to the quality of the training that they received, but when asked about ways that the program could be improved, women expressed a desire for smaller class sizes, given that more than 200 women attended the training. Robin stated, "in terms of how it broke everything down … I do wish that we had more smaller breakout sessions because after our mix [we were] broken into two tribes, but the rooms were still kind of large." Many of the sessions were held as a whole-group

session, and at other times the participants were divided into two smaller groups of approximately equal size according whether they were in track one and track two.

More intimate classes would allow women to interact more directly with speakers, panelists, and other participants, asking questions and engaging in ways that many might not feel comfortable with doing in a room of more than 200 people. Mary expressed a desire to connect with the panelists but because of the size of the training, she did not feel it was possible: “I think that it may have been beneficial or more beneficial to me if … there were fewer people and there was a way to just take time to interact with the person running the meeting.” Smaller class sizes would also allow for more role-playing, which gives women an opportunity to practice the skills that they are learning and help them to gain confidence in their abilities. Carrie pointed out the benefits of role-playing:

> I know sometimes you get so many women there, but I think maybe if you broke into smaller groups, and maybe did a little role playing, or if everybody got a chance instead of just picking a random person to come up [and] only two people would get to come up. You know, because some people are shy, and you can pull them out and help them, have constructive criticism…. I take a training class, and you do role playing, and a lot of people don't like it, but it does help.

For some of the women, like Anna, the large size of the class made the training feel impersonal. “It felt like a larger conference versus creating more of a space where it was providing tactful oversight or insight into one how can potentially run for office,” she said. Having fewer participants per session would have also created an opportunity to delve deeper into the material. As Anna explained:

> I would argue that it actually could have been a smaller event, and there could have been touch points where there could have been working sessions around creating political strategy to what would be someone's platform [and] how would one go about creating a political strategy, or who do they need to connect within their own network, then, with the people there?

Others felt uncomfortable interacting with others in a large group and thus did not engage in the manner that they might have preferred to. Robin, for example, suggested that some women would feel uncomfortable asking a question in front of a room full of participants and would prefer to raise questions one-on-one with a particular speaker. Carrie expressed similar concerns:

> I'm normally pretty outgoing.… I'm shy … and it takes me a minute to raise my hand to volunteer, but then once I do I'm always glad I did, or if I get picked on, and if you're in a smaller group as opposed to if you're in that big venue, and then they just pick a couple people to come up, like when they [the program facilitators] were doing the "if you were going to be interviewed on TV" [presentation], and they had two people come up. It's very intimidating to stand up on that stage and role-play in front of 100 to 200 women, whereas if you broke it down into smaller groups, more people would probably be more apt to volunteer.

Ready to Run does offer smaller group trainings. On the day prior to the start of the main training, Ready to Run hosts a "Diversity Initiative" composed of three separate programs for African American women, Asian American women, and Latinas. The initiative is intended to "attract more women of color into the political process and encourage them to seek public

leadership" (Ready to Run, 2016). Since starting the initiative, more than half of the participants in the Ready to Run program have been women of color (Ready to Run, 2016). For those women who attend the training, they found the smaller group sizes fostered relationships. "I've found the small setting for the minority groups were excellent, but also the regular setting, where all of us gather; we were able to exchange information, get to know each other," said Thalia. The results indicate that decreasing the sizes of the breakout sessions could have positive benefits for participants.

Networking. In addition to smaller class sizes, participants indicated a desire for more networking activities—structured and unstructured—at the training. Formally, CAWP hosted a networking reception—called Women of Power—on the first evening. According to the event program, the reception benefits CAWP's nonpartisan leadership programs for New Jersey women, including Ready to Run, NEW Leadership, and Teach a Girl to Lead. "The Women of Power event is a shining example of how we can work together to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life," wrote Walsh in the reception welcome letter. In 2015, the event was hosted by New Jersey Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman and the 37 women of the New Jersey Legislature, including Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg. Although framed as a networking event, the reception is also the annual fundraiser for the CAWP programs. There were representatives from dozens of sponsors, including major corporations such as AT&T and State Farm, labor organizations such as the New Jersey Education Association and the AFL-CIO, and statewide associations and local businesses, as well as unaffiliated individuals.

For some of the participants who were interviewed, the opportunity to network at events was one of the reasons they attended the training. "I was extremely interested in the

content, excited to meet women who were interested in women, plus I thought it would be a good networking opportunity," said Robin. And many women found it to be just that. "It was a good networking opportunity," Kate said. Informal networking opportunities abounded for the more outgoing participants, as there was time between panels, during breaks, and at meals to talk with other participants, staff, and panelists. Kesha took advantage of the informal opportunities: "Yes, it definitely helped me and gave me good insight. Also, gave me some good connections [to] people to speak to and reach out to when I was running," she said.

But not all the participants who were interviewed recognized or took advantage of the opportunities to network, and many expressed a sense that there was not enough time or focus given to networking. When asked what she would change about the training, Thalia expressed a desire for more time to get to know the other participants. "Maybe a little bit more time" is needed in the program, Thalia commented, "to get to network with other women." The program "was well organized," she observed, but "I feel maybe half an hour to an hour to just get to know people, or maybe having an exercise in which people get to know other people" would have been beneficial. This disconnect between participants—the difference between some participants' reports about their positive networking experiences and others' noted absence of networking opportunities—is an opportunity, in the words of Heifetz et al. (2009), to design an effective intervention. Although both groups of participants, the outgoing and the shy, expressed a desire to build personal connections, not all felt comfortable doing so within the existing structure of the training. The resulting question is not only *why* but, more interestingly, *how* to build these connections and feel more comfortable in doing so.

Robin and other interviewees noted, getting to know other participants would help to create a personal support system that could continue throughout the process of deciding to run and campaigning for office. Kesha spoke about this issue at length during our interview:

> Other women that were there that were speakers as well as people who were running with me, as well, who were running for maybe the school board or running for their own city council or mayor, different things like that. So, it was great to meet people who were running as well and then women who were already in those positions, to connect with them and reach out and get some information, even beyond the things that we were [learning about] at the training.

Kesha's comments echo the recommendations of Heifetz et al. (2009), who stress that the tough work of adaptive leadership should not be done alone. It is important for leaders to "find partners who will share the dangers and the exposure. Together, you'll stand a far better chance of avoiding attacks from opponents and keeping your initiative alive" (p. 42). For women, having a network of other women who are taking the same risk can help to both mobilize them and help ensure that they have the support necessary to thrive in the process.

An alternative way to divide the participants would be to do so based on geographic location—to bring women from the same area of the state together—as was Thalia's recommendation:

> Let's say we were all women in there, but I'm from [a specific] county; I would like to know other people from [another] county that already are serving to some capacity that can probably give [me] tips of how to start, how they got to where they were, not in a panel [session] but more like in an intimate conversation, almost in a small group or a

> one-to-one, something that will give you more time to really speak.… So maybe some sort of exercise where certain people that get invited get to talk to a small group, or maybe by area. I don't know what the best way would be, but that creates the opportunity to network with people from within your area that can help one another.

Given the large number of women who attended the training with no intention of running for office or of not running for office for many years, the conference was a prime location for women who are interested in running now to recruit campaign volunteers. Connecting with women from the same area would help to bring women together for this purpose.

In addition to holding a large networking reception once a year, Kate suggested that Ready to Run's organizers consider hosting smaller networking events throughout the year. "What I might find interesting," Kate said, would be "some smaller networking opportunities for young professional women," which could help women "who are interested in this type of activity, like an experience-sharing." Such an event, she said, might be similar to Ready to Run's "big annual event in the state" but would be something with a distinct purpose. The idea that the networking events could be further subdivided into interest groups, such as for young women or African American women, indicates a desire to connect with and create a support system among other like-minded individuals. Smaller networking events would also allow women who are uncomfortable with the process to expand their comfort level and reach a more productive level of disequilibrium.

In addition to the opportunity to network with other participants, many of the women whom I interviewed expressed a desire to interact more with the panelists and presenters. In an interview, Thalia expressed her frustration with the high ratio of participants to presenters:

> They have fabulous presenters and people that spoke about journeys and how they got to where they got. But then after that, it was just too much going on [and] you couldn't really interact more than just briefly with one of them because there was [*sic*] so many people.

Robin, too, spoke of a desire to have more direct contact with the panelists outside of the training room: "We didn't really kind of get to … network as much" because "there was a panel, and there was a large audience," which meant that participants could only ask a limited number of questions. Her desire was for "a segment where we can maybe network" more than they had the opportunity to.

Creating a formal space in which the women could network with the program's experts would be a way that Ready to Run could provide access to additional resources as well as an expanded, specialized knowledge base. Carrie spoke of her desire to meet people who could give her advice on her campaign down the road. Such individuals might be able to step in and "[say], 'here, in my experience of running, I found this'" resource, or who could provide lists of contacts—such as researchers and campaign staff—who "maybe you could … call," or to help women "at least know where to start."

The ability to network with voters and constituents is a key skill that women running for office need to develop; however, many women who attended the Ready to Run training were too timid or intimidated to seek it out on their own, even in a relatively "safe" environment. To further create the perception of a safe environment and encourage interaction, the Ready to Run program could start with a series of ice-breakers. Doing so would give participants the opportunity to get to know the other women at their tables, making them more apt to speak

with those to whom they have already been formally introduced. Furthermore, although time at a training is always at a premium, smaller class sizes would give women better opportunities to introduce themselves, further expanding their sense of comfort and familiarity. Because smaller class sizes would also allow for more interactivity—be it through role-playing or group interaction in breakout sessions—there would also be more interaction outside the training room, which would hopefully help build connections that extend beyond the training in the ways that participants think would be beneficial to their future campaigns.

Finally, because not everyone is comfortable speaking with people they do not know—which is such a critical skill to campaigning—Ready to Run may need to teach women how to network in addition to offering formal and informal opportunities to practice the skill at the conference.

Thriving in the Process

Heifetz et al. (2009) find that "adaptive leadership is specifically about change that enables the capacity to thrive" (p. 14). Because it can be challenging to motivate women to run, being able to reassure women that they can thrive in the process itself could help with the former. The barriers that were addressed earlier in this chapter and in chapter five not only make it difficult to mobilize women to run for office, but they can also make it challenging for women to thrive on the campaign trail. The ways in which Ready to Run could improve the training to support women candidates in the process of running for office includes (1) creating space to discuss work-life balance—specifically focusing on what motivates women to run—and what makes the sacrifice worthwhile; (2) creating a mentorship program to connect women with other women who have "been there, done that" and who have the ability to serve as

resources; and (3) connecting women to political parties to support candidates on the campaign trail in a way that, as a nonpartisan organization, Ready to Run cannot. This section will explore each of these three recommendations in more detail.

Work-Life Balance

Both mobilizing women to run and enhancing their ability to thrive requires not just the acknowledgement of the overwhelming challenge of simultaneously being a wife, mother, and candidate, but also an attempt to help them balance family circumstances with political reality. Although traditional gender roles have changed in recent decades, women are still responsible for an overwhelming majority of household tasks, including childcare, in what is termed a "second-shift" (Hochschild, 1989). Balancing motherhood and the needs of children and a family, with both professional and political demands seems unattractive, if not untenable to some. Lawless and Fox (2010) found that despite perceived social progress, traditional family role orientations continue to hinder women's ability to enter the political arena. Thus, some women may need help in learning how to navigate the dual role of wife/mother and candidate/elected official.

Creating a desirable work-life balance is difficult for nearly all women, but it is particularly challenging for women running for political office because they do so in the public eye and face public criticism for their choices. Jamieson (1995) used the term "double bind" to describe the internal pressure that women place on themselves when raising a family and holding elected office in addition to the external judgment from the public regarding their ability to do the job and balance their responsibilities as wives and mothers. It is very common, for example, for a voter to ask a woman about who will take care of her children when she

serves in office, a question not often asked of men. Liane Sorenson, a member of the Delaware State Senate, has noted the divergent expectations of men and women: “If a male lawmaker leaves a meeting to watch his son play soccer, everyone says he’s a wonderful father. But if a woman does it, you’ll hear she is not managing her responsibilities” (as cited in Lawless & Fox, 2010).

Because the elusive work-life balance is such a barrier for women who are thinking of running for office (for a complete analysis of this tension in the lives of women who are or are interested in running for office, refer to chapter five), Ready to Run should offer a panel discussion of women talking about their experiences and how they personally navigated the process. As Melissa noted in our interview, Ready to Run is already doing this in an informal manner at the training: “Just that space where women could ask questions back to other women … was really, uniquely great.” In an interview, Rosa talked about how these informal discussions of the issues spoke to her:

> I liked how they had women that were actually already serving up on the dais … speaking as panelists, and the discussions about how they were able to manage life and running, [and] the emotional side of it, how as a woman sometimes you feel that you need to be all things—that was important to me, because, for myself and [my] experiences, that’s a big portion of my life.

However, Ready to Run must be cautious because the reality—that running for and serving in elected office means making significant personal sacrifices—may effectively de-motivate women. One way that Ready to Run could attempt to overcome this barrier is to use women’s experiences in the private sphere to influence their entry into the public sphere. Most

women, unlike most men, do not run for office because they seek power and influence, they run for office because they want to improve their community and change the world (Thomas et al., 2002). According to a study by Thomas et al. (2002), 42% of women legislators cite a desire to effect social change as their primary reason for running, whereas 62% of men said that the primary reason that they ran for office was because they had always wanted to be a politician.

Mentoring

In addition to expanding the types of training offered and increasing networking opportunities, Ready to Run should consider establishing a formal mentoring program. Such a program would be a natural extension of what Ready to Run is already doing but would provide participants with significant opportunities to develop worthwhile relationships with women who can guide them through this process.

Studies in the business world have found that that mentorship is crucial for career progression and that mentoring leads to increased career success, gauged by such accomplishments as promotions or advancements, increased leadership opportunities, and higher salaries (Allen, 2004; Sandberg, 2013). And Heifetz et al. (2009) warn those doing the work of adaptive leadership, “don’t do it alone” (p. 41). Heifetz et al. (2009) assert that “the complexity of the political landscape is way beyond anyone’s ability to navigate alone” (p. 137); although is not a reference to the electoral process per se, it remains true of the electoral process nonetheless.

Given the findings cited earlier in this chapter—namely, that the Ready to Run participants found value in simply being in a room with other women with whom they could interact productively, and that the positive environment was encouraging, empowering, and

engaging—instituting a mentorship program could magnify those effects. I interviewed Jenny, a local elected official in New Jersey, who participated as a panelist for Rising Stars: Educating Asian Women for Politics, a Ready to Run pre-conference that seeks to increase the number of women of color in elected office. “I feel,” she said,

> that the more we reach out to women, the more we help women get involved, I think that's key.... It does not have to be just Asian American women or Hispanic women or Latino or African American. It's just all women. If we just can concentrate on that—that we're all women and we're here to work together—I think that would be a great, great foundation.

By connecting political novices with experienced politicians, Ready to Run could create powerful support relationships. Mentors could help encourage women to run, guide them in the process of selecting the right seat as well as identifying the right time to run. Once a woman has filed to be on the ballot, the mentor could help her navigate through the complex process of running for office and find the resources necessary to wage a competitive campaign, including volunteers, consultants, donors, and political party officials.

Perhaps most importantly, mentoring and networking are ways in which women can stay engaged and be held accountable because far too many women attend Ready to Run with the intention of running for office in a few years, but then they ultimately fail to do so. Although a political campaign can drain a candidate’s time, energy, and attention, as Heifetz et al. (2009) note, “growing a personal support network is key to thriving” (p. 287). Resilience, the authors assert, comes not just from within the self, but also from the sustaining relationships built over time. When the going gets tough—and it will get tough on the campaign trail—a

mentor can remind a candidate about why she is running, reorient her to her purpose, and reinforce the significance of the work that she seeks to do as a political official.

Partisan Connections

Just as mentors can play an important role in helping women to thrive on the campaign trail, so, too, do political parties. Although Ready to Run is a nonpartisan training program, the organizers recognize the power of the party machine in the state of New Jersey and, consequently, provide resources specifically to help women navigate this structure. However, Ready to Run could offer candidates additional value if it were to connect women directly to the major political parties in the state.

Nonpartisan program. The fact that Ready to Run is a nonpartisan training program is stressed repeatedly in program materials and by staff. The program's mission statement reads: "Ready to Run is a national network of *non-partisan* [emphasis added] campaign training program committed to electing more women to public office." When I asked Sinzdak what set Ready to Run apart from other training programs, she said the fact that it was nonpartisan. "We're not talking specific policy issues," she said.

According to Sinzdak, many of the Ready to Run participants are not active in partisan politics and do not identify with one party or another. "There are a lot of women that we get who have not really been involved in politics before. For them, It is less about getting involved in the party and helping Democrats win or helping Republicans win," she said. Instead, she asserts, women who attend Ready to Run do so because they want to make a difference. In describing what motivates participants, Sinzdak said that women come in thinking,

> I'm in my town and I'm really worried about this particular issue, so I might want to run for town council or somehow get more involved in town politics so that I can influence this issue or this set of issues that I'm really worried about or that I'm concerned about or I really want to have an impact on. They [the women who participate in Ready to Run] might be registered party Republican or Democrat, but they're not really thinking in those terms.

Sinzdak's assertion that women are motivated to run because of a specific issue is in line with the existing literature, which indicates that women run for elected office because they want to make a difference (Thomas et al., 2002). However, Sinzdak's claim that women do not think about party labels does not align with my findings. The women whom I interviewed were highly attuned to the politics of the state of New Jersey. For example, Mary, who was very active with the local Federation of Democratic Women, learned about Ready to Run through an email sent by the Democratic Party. And Jessica, who had recently relocated to New Jersey from the Midwest, wrote in the survey that she attended Ready to Run specifically to "get the scoop on New Jersey politics."

Additionally, my analysis indicates that Ready to Run participants affiliated with political parties at rates higher than the general public in New Jersey does. Of the women who attended Ready to Run and completed this study's survey, 67% were Democrats, 20% were Republicans, and 13% were not affiliated with either major political party. Of the women who attended Ready to Run whom I interviewed, 64% were Democrats, 14% were Republicans, and 22% were unaffiliated. In New Jersey, 36% of voters are registered as Democrats, 21% as Republicans, and 42% are not affiliated with a particular political party (New Jersey Department of State, 2017).

Not only were the Ready to Run participants affiliated with political parties, but they also trended Democratic. This is more in line with the political trends of the state. Although the governor's office was held by Republican Chris Christie at the time of the training that I observed, New Jersey has historically been considered a blue state. Voters in the state have supported the Democratic ticket in eight of the last ten presidential elections, and at the time of this study both states' U.S. senators were Democrats and the U.S. house seats were split evenly among six Republicans and six Democrats. At the legislative level, Democrats had a 60-40 advantage over Republicans in both the state house and the state senate.

Even though women running for elected office today are entering the most polarized political environment in decades (Pew Research Center, 2014), Sinzdak defended the nonpartisan aspect of the program, asserting that removes a barrier for women:

> What I think is nice about having a bipartisan program, which is essentially nonpartisan, is that you don't get into that. You don't have to make that decision before you come. You don't have to think in those terms. You just have to think about I want to serve in public office. That piece of it is really helpful.

In fact, Sinzdak stated that many women who attend the training are unsure of which party to affiliate with:

> It's funny, because we get women who come and say, "I've been approached by both parties and I don't know what to do. I'm just really not sure," and then people say to them "you have to think about which one—if you have to, you can—[and] there are plenty of local seats that are nonpartisan, but if you're in a town that is partisan, then

you do need to make a choice because it will be helpful to you. You really should pay attention and think about which one most closely aligns with you.

Although my research found that many of the women who attended Ready to Run plan first to run for office at the local level (see chapter 5), most were still interested in partisan seats. Additionally, women seeking higher political office will need to affiliate with a political party and building relationships with party officials now is a key component of networking.

Confronting the Party Machine. Ready to Run is housed in the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. Because Rutgers is a public academic institution, its affiliated organizations and programming must remain nonpartisan. However, they are not prohibited from talking about partisan political activities and in fact, they do so at the training.

For track one participants, Ready to Run offered a training session about "Navigating New Jersey's Political Parties as a Potential Candidate." According to the agenda, "the session will highlight the power dynamics of party organizations, building relationships with party operatives and gaining the party's support, and will address how to respond when the party organization is not supportive." Sinzdak moderated the panel, which included Angela Garretson, the mayor of the township of Hillside; Christine Hanlon, vice chairwoman of the Monmouth County Republican Party; Candice Straight, former co-chair of the New Jersey Republican State Committee; and Democratic Senator Loretta Weinberg, majority leader in the New Jersey Senate. For track two participants, one training session also included the topic of the political party system in New Jersey. The agenda for "Political Parties, Appointments, and Advocacy: Tools and Tips for Getting Started" described the session as including an "overview of the 'nuts and bolts' of government and political parties in the state."

In addition to the two sessions that included information about the political party system in New Jersey Ready to Run also provided participants with a number of additional resources on a flash drive, as mentioned in chapter 3, that included a chart about how to get involved in political parties at the district, municipal, county, and state levels; a document describing how to run for a political party county committee seat; a participant's guide to political party leadership; a document about how to write your name in for county committee, published by The Citizens Campaign; and a list of the New Jersey political party county chairs. Also, included on the flash drive was an executive summary of "Poised to Run: Women's Pathways to the State Legislature." Written by Kira Sanbonmatsu, Susan Carroll, and Debbie Walsh and published by CAWP in January 2010, one of the five key points of "Poised to Run" is that political parties matter. "It is critical that women candidates attract party support," the report read, because "women who reach the legislature usually do so with the support of their parties." It continued in more detail:

> Most women who successfully reach the legislature do so with party support. A majority of both women and men state legislators report that party leaders supported their candidacies. In fact, parties appear to matter even more to the success of women than to men: women are more likely than men to say that party support was very important to their decision to run. Women are also more likely to cite their party, rather than an organization, as the most influential source of encouragement for their candidacies. Because party support is so critical for those women who successfully attain office, it is important for both political parties to expand their efforts to recruit and support women candidates. This is especially true for the Republican party, since the numbers of

> Republican women in the legislatures lag so far behind those of Democratic women. In addition, more concerted efforts are needed to identify and recruit women candidates of color.

An ability to navigate the political system is even more essential in New Jersey than perhaps other states because of its unique partisan structure. It is the only state in the country to mention the two major political parties specifically in its constitution, and as a result the local parties act as gatekeepers. Sinzdak explained that New Jersey's

> county party chairs wield tremendous amounts of power in terms of candidates: Who gets on the ballot, who gets picked, who's next in line, those kinds of things. It's very, very hard to run unless you get the party support for certain seats. Obviously, at the lower levels, it can or cannot be an issue. Especially the higher you go you really, really, really need them.

Rosa explained the way that she perceived the party system restricts women:

> I preferably would want to do something at the state level, but the way the state of our politics here seems to work where I'm at in South Jersey, you kind of have to work your way up. [My] goal would be state, not federal for now ... but the initial seat that I would run for is a county seat.

According to Sinzdak, the session about navigating New Jersey's political parties was designed to help women navigate these barriers:

> We very specifically pick people to be on [what] we think of as pretty honest in the sense that they've reached a point that they're able to say things that maybe somebody

> who wanted to be a little more safe might not admit in terms of challenges and barriers and how to deal with things.

As a participant, Betsy found this to be very useful:

> I also found there was another thing that I really liked which is they had someone explain sort of the county political system and the way that our county, our Democratic and Republican county committees work in the state of New Jersey, which is just something that I think would be hard to figure out if you didn't have someone sit down and explain it to you.

Ready to Run should continue to offer the session on navigating political parties, but should also consider directly connecting women interested in running for office with the leadership of their perspective party.

Adding value: In addition to the sessions that offer an honest assessment of the political party structure in the state and recommendations for how to navigate, Ready to Run would do well to connect participants more directly with party leaders. As a nonpartisan training program, Ready to Run can serve as a resource for women at all stages of the process, but women will also need access to and support from their respective political parties. Although Ready to Run offers a training session about navigating the political party structure, building closer relationships with local, state, and national party officials on both sides of the aisle would be beneficial for female candidates.

A positive side effect of introducing qualified female candidates to political party operatives may be an increase in the number of women formally asked to run for office, which could help to reduce the gender gap in political recruitment. This is particularly true of the

Republican Party, whose gap is more than twice that of the Democratic Party (Lawless & Fox, 2010).

Conclusion

As Heifetz et al. (2009) note, adaptive work is about building on the past, not replacing it; in other words, adaptive work is about distinguishing what is essential to preserve but also what is expendable. This analysis is not intended to be overly critical of Ready to Run. In fact, as an organization, Ready to Run does a lot right. For example, participants consistently gave the program high marks and appreciated being in a room with other women. What is right about Ready to Run should be preserved and built upon because "the most effective leadership anchors change in the values, competencies, and strategic orientations that should endure in the organization" (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 15).

The ways that organizations adapt are driven largely through experimentation. This experimentation requires displacing, reregulating, and rearranging (Heifetz et al., 2009). Implementing a range of changes will result in a stronger program. Recommendations based on the present study start with (1) changing the metric of success and gauging that success not only on the number who attend but the number who run. It is also important to mobilize women to run; thus, improving these metrics should entail (2) decreasing the class size and (3) incorporating formal networking opportunities. When it comes to helping women thrive in the process, recommendations include (4) incorporating a panel and frank discussion about work-life balance, (5) establishing a mentor program, and (6) directly connecting participants with members of their respective political parties.

Taken together, these six recommendations have the potential to effectively mobilize more women who attend Ready to Run to run for office. And the women who do, indeed, run likely 90will be better equipped to thrive in the process. But even when deploying adaptive methods such as these, it is important to remember that change takes time. In the last ten years, the number of women in Congress has climbed from 88 to 104. The addition of 16 women means that the number of women in the U.S. House now fills 24% of the 535 seats. Although this may seem like only an incremental change—or even a failure to some—100 years ago, in 1917, only one woman was serving in Congress. In the context of time, progress has been made; however, it is on this progress that we must continue to build.

Chapter 7: Discussion

"And to all the little girls who are watching this, never doubt that you are valuable and powerful and deserving of every chance and every opportunity in the world to pursue and achieve your own dreams." –Hillary Rodham Clinton

Introduction

In many ways, the 2016 election was like past elections. Women running for office encountered many, if not all of the same institutional and sociological barriers they faced in the past. But in other ways, the 2016 election was unlike any other past election: specifically, Hillary Rodham Clinton became the first woman to receive a major party's nomination for president.

From a historical perspective, this research project was uniquely situated. When I began this project Clinton was serving as the U.S. Secretary of State. Although many political prognosticators predicted that she would run for president in 2016, after her 2008 loss to Barrack Obama in the primary there was no guarantee in 2016 that she would win the Democratic Party's nomination. Although Clinton did end up beating Bernie Sanders in the Democratic Primary, she lost to Donald Trump in the General Election. It was in the weeks and months following Donald Trump's inauguration that I completed the research for this project.

Clinton's loss to Trump has been the subject of innumerable postmortem election analyses. One of the many conclusions that scholars and journalists alike have reached is that Clinton did not lose because she was a woman; however, being a woman did contribute to her loss (Anderson, 2017; Carroll & Walters, 2017; and Maxwell & Shields, 2017). In a post-election interview at the 2017 Women in the World Summit, Clinton herself said that "misogyny played a role." That being said, we must be careful not to let one woman or even one level of office be

a metric for women's political success – or failure. Had Clinton won the presidential election, women running for political office in 2018 and beyond would still grapple with similar impediments going forward, although the shattering of the ultimate glass ceiling—the presidency—would have been a symbolic accomplishment.

Interestingly, Clinton's loss (or Trump's win) may have sparked more of a movement than her win would have. In addition to the hundreds of thousands of women swarming the national mall in Washington, D.C. in pink "pussy" hats the day after Trump's inauguration, more women are currently stepping up to run for office (Wallace, 2017) and seeking training in higher numbers than ever before. Emily's List reports that since Election Day, the organization has heard from more than 15,000 women who are interested in running for office (Emily's List, 2017). Emerge America says they have trained more than 1,000 women to run for office since the November election (Emerge, 2017). And Ready to Run hosted 270 women at their 2017 workshop, an increase in turnout of more than 50% compared to past years.

The increase in women expressing *interest* in running for office, although immensely encouraging, does not necessarily mean that women will end up running for office at historic rates. Unfortunately, it also does not necessarily predict a surge in electoral victories for women and, thereby, a dramatic increase in the number of women holding elected office. In a study for Politico, Lawless and Fox (2017) found that despite a surge in the number of women engaging in political activism, women still are not interested in running for office. Additionally, they conclude that the overwhelming majority of women who are the most "upset, active, and ambitious" have no plans to run for office now or in the future.

The reports of large numbers of women who are newly mobilized to run for office—tempered at least in part by Lawless and Fox's (2017) findings—makes research about improving the recruitment of, training of, and support offered to women in the process of running for office even more timely and important. This chapter will first focus on the implications of my research, taking into consideration the new political reality. Next, I will outline the limitations of the study as well as potential areas that are ripe for future research. I will conclude with thoughts about how to move forward to ensure that more women are elected in the U.S.

Implications

This project is grounded in the theory of adaptive leadership as a lense through which to evaluate the Ready to Run program. The purpose of the analysis was to understand how Ready to Run and programs like it can improve the recruitment of women candidates, provide training that equips women to run competitive campaigns, and support women in a way that allows them to thrive on the campaign trail. My research and analysis were guided by four research questions:

RQ 1: Does Ready to Run approach the process of recruiting and training women to run for political office as a technical problem or an adaptive challenge?

RQ 2: What types of technical and adaptive resources does Ready to Run use to recruit, train, and support women in the process of running for office?

RQ 3: How do women candidates utilize the resources provided by Ready to Run when on the campaign trail, and are they effective?

RQ 4: What types of technical and adaptive resources could be developed by Ready to Run to mobilize women to run for political office at higher rates and to allow them to thrive in the process?

The results of this study reveal that Ready to Run simultaneously approached the issue of recruiting women to run for office as a technical problem *and* an adaptive challenge. They also provided both technical and adaptive resources to participants at the training and beyond, although a majority were mostly technical in nature. After the participants completed the initial training, Ready to Run provided candidates with very little support; however, it turns out that very few of the women who attended the training ended up running for office. That is not to say that participants did not use the training materials. Women specifically cited the media training as beneficial but also expressed a lack of confidence in their fundraising skills even after having completed the training. Finally, in my analysis, I found that there is great room for improvement in the ways that women are mobilized to run for office as well as ways to support them so that they can thrive on the campaign trail. The implications of each of these findings are discussed in more detail below.

The Political Ambition Impediment

This study indicated that although a large number of women attended a campaign training program, very few of those women ran for office—not only in the months following the training but also in subsequent years. One explanation for why women did not run for office, even after attending this campaign training, is the prevalence of an ambition gap (Lawless & Fox, 2010). When it comes to political participation, proximity, and interest, men and women are equally engaged. For example, women and men are equally as likely to participate in

political activities such as voting, attending a political meeting, or writing a letter to an elected official (Lawless & Fox, 2010). When it comes to political proximity—a more nuanced gauge of political participation—there is still no gender difference between men and women in terms of their likelihood of engaging in activities, such as attending a committee hearing or interacting with an elected official socially (Lawless & Fox, 2010). And women are slightly more likely than men to express interest in politics, as measured by how closely they follow national politics and current events (Lawless & Fox, 2010).

However, despite similarities in political participation, proximity, and interest, women are significantly less politically ambitious than men are. Looking at a pool of eligible candidates, a 16-point gap in political ambition emerged; 59% of men but only 43% of women had considered running for office (Lawless & Fox, 2010). It is notable that a majority of women, 57%, have never even thought about running for office, despite being identified as an eligible candidate. Men remain 25% more likely than women to take steps to explore running for office, such as discussing running with family, friends, or political or community leaders; learning how to be placed on the ballot; or soliciting financial contributions from potential supporters (Fox & Lawless, 2010).

The ambition gap further increases when looking at the number of men and women who actually decide to run for public office. Of those who considered running, only 15% of women did so, five points fewer than the number of men who sought public office (Lawless & Fox, 2010). Thus, of the original pool of eligible candidates, Lawless and Fox (2010) found that 12% of men put their name on the ballot but only 7% of women did. If training programs like Ready to Run are to overcome this ambition gap, they need to supplement their technical

program and employ more adaptive recruitment and training techniques. Making a concerted argument for why more women are needed in politics, asking women from all walks of life to consider running office, asking them as many times as it takes for them to say yes, and showing women that other women just like them have successfully run for office will chip away at the ambition gap and increase the likelihood that women will run. And as we know, when women run, women win (Newman & Leighton, 1997)!

The Confidence Gap

A subcategory of the ambition gap is the confidence gap. Women, regardless of experience, view themselves as less qualified to run for office than their peers who are men. Providing training programs like Ready to Run that prepare women to run for office by providing them with the skills and the tools to do so is an effective strategy for closing the confidence gap. However, the designers of such training programs need to be careful about even the most subtle of messages that they send to women. For example, Ready to Run offered two tracks—one for candidates who were "ready to run" and one for candidates "not ready to run yet." Although the training for the two tracks was not remarkably different, the existence of a track that reinforces for women the idea that they're not ready to run thereby also reinforces what they already likely believe—namely, that they're not qualified to run. Ready to Run and programs like it would make more progress in the number of women running for office by incorporating additional adaptive elements into the training such as creating smaller class sizes so that women can practice the skills they are learning and gain confidence, generating opportunities for women to both practice networking and actually do so, and connecting women to mentors who can assist in bolstering their confidence and assist in overcoming

challenges that arise. Additionally, the program and participants would both be better served by helping women to see the unique ways in which they are qualified to run for office and how their specific skill sets will help them serve as effected elected officials.

Mobilizing to Thrive

In order to make progress on both the confidence gap that exists among women and women's lack of political ambition, training programs like Ready to Run must find ways to mobilize women to run for office and then find ways to support them in that process so that they are able to thrive on the campaign trail. It is unlikely that even a perfectly designed training program alone, be it two days or nine months, would be enough to mobilize women. Likewise, it is unlikely that even a flawlessly designed curriculum would be enough to ensure that women will thrive on the campaign trail. But it is possible to make progress by approaching the lack of women in elected office as an adaptive challenge. The progress may be slow and incremental, as it has been over the last 20 years, with occasional setbacks. Or perhaps for an election cycle, women will be motivated by Clinton's loss and Trump's election, accelerating the number of women who will run for office. What we know from the research is that women will win their races at rates equivalent to the rates at which men win (Newman & Leighton, 1997), which will hopefully create a new "year of the woman" in 2018.

Limitations

This study makes a significant contribution to research on women and politics; however, its limitations are worth discussion and, ideally, addressing in future research. Three specific limitations—the scope of the research, the survey response rate, and the generality of the results—will be discussed below.

Scope of Research

This case study focused on a single organization, and although Ready to Run is a premier training program for women and the selection of this training well justified, it is still only one of many existing programs. Additionally, because of time and cost restraints, I was only able to observe a single training in New Jersey. Ideally, I would have been able to attend many trainings offered by Ready to Run across multiple years as well as trainings offered by their network partners.

Response Rate

In addition to the limited scope of research, this study was faced with a low response rate from participants. The pool of potential participants for this research project was small; approximately 225 women participated in the Ready to Run training in 2015, and accurate contact information was available for only 160 of those women. When sending out my survey I hoped to achieve a minimum response rate of 30% (50 participants), but, despite multiple points of contact and outreach to the participants, the response rate was only 11%. As a result, I was only able to perform a basic statistical analysis. It could be the case that the obstacles that pertain to recruiting women to run for office are also the obstacles that pertain to recruiting them to complete a post-training survey.

Generality of Results

In addition, this research project at times relies on generalizations based on a large body of existing research about women that, nevertheless, places all women under a single gendered label. It is important to acknowledge that women are not a monolithic group. Great diversity exists among women, be it in terms of age, race, religion, class, education, sexual orientation,

ideology, or political affiliation. As a result, some of my recommendations may not resonate with or be optimally effective for all women.

Future Research

In response to the limited scope of this project, future research should expand to study additional training programs. Each program currently offered to women candidates across the U.S. targets a slightly different audience (e.g., Democratic and/or Republican women, young women, pro-choice or pro-life women) and as such the material delivered through these varied programs is presented in a different fashion (e.g., in-person and/or online, over two-days or nine months, at state or national levels). However, the extent to which – and ways in which – the content differs across the various training programs remains unknown. Additionally, it would be informative to compare the conversion rates—that is, the number of women who attend each training *and* end up running for office—among programs, as well as the win ratios—that is, the number of women who run for office and win.

Finally, a longitudinal study that follows women who participated in the Ready to Run program over the course of several years could produce rich results. It could provide clarity about when women choose to run and what factors contribute to women's decision to run (or not). Both could result in improvements to the recruitment and training of women candidates.

Conclusion

In 2016, more than 65 million Americans cast votes for Secretary Clinton. Despite losing the Electoral College and, thus, the presidency, Clinton received more votes than any other presidential candidate in history. Unfortunately, while Americans' willingness to vote for a woman has improved, gender parity has not kept pace. At all levels of office women are

persistently underrepresented. To increase the number of women elected to office, we must increase the number of women running for office.

More needs to be done from both technical and adaptive perspectives to remove institutional barriers that keep women from running for office, such as implementing term limits to address the incumbency advantage, urging party gatekeepers to recruit women with diverse backgrounds, and reforming campaign finance laws to make politics more accessible. Perhaps even more challenging will be removing sociological barriers through strategies such as encouraging girls and young women to consider political careers, confronting women's self-doubt and building their political confidence, and creating new structures to help women take on the political establishment. In this time of domestic political turmoil, exacerbated by extreme partisanship, we can – and must – hope for the removal of such barriers. Because women may represent one very important—and arguably more necessary than ever—path forward, given what existing research demonstrates about their ability to collaborate, compromise, and reach across the aisle.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Program Staff Interview Protocol

Introduction

1. What is the purpose of the Ready to Run program?
    a. Why do we need more women in public office?
    b. In what ways do women change government and how it works?
    c. Why is the inclusion of women's voices important?

2. What makes Ready to Run unique?

3. What are the greatest strengths of your program? Why?

4. What are the greatest weaknesses of your program? Why?

5. What do you perceive the greatest challenges for women running for office to be?
    a. How does Ready to Run seek to address those challenges?

6. Have the needs of women running for office changed over time? If so, how?
    a. How has Ready to Run evolved to meet these needs?

Training

7. Why is training important?
    a. How does your training encourage more women to run for public office?
    b. How does your training help women position themselves to get involved in the political process?

8. What are the core elements of your training model?
    a. From website: fundraising, positioning, the political party structure, media training, campaigning, mobilizing voters, and crafting a message.

9. What aspects of the training do you perceive to be most important?
    a. Why?

10. Do women face unique barriers related to fundraising?
    a. If so, what are they?
        i. How does Ready to Run training seek to overcome those barriers?

11. Is the political party structure biased against women?
    a. What tools does Ready to Run provide to female candidates to help them navigate the system?

12. Why is media training important for female candidates in particular?

   a. How does Ready to Run training address issues of gender bias in the media?

13. In what ways is campaigning different for male and female candidates?
    a. What tools does Ready to Run provide to increase women's chances of success?

14. Do women face unique challenges in mobilizing voters?
    a. How can women overcome this challenge and increase their chance of winning?

15. Does a female candidate's message need to be different from that of a male candidate?
    a. If yes, in what way?
    b. If no, why not?
        i. How does Ready to Run help female candidates craft an effective message?

16. When planning a session, how do you identify and select your speakers?

17. Are there other aspects you would like to include should you expand the training?

18. If you had to shorten the training, what would you cut?

The Ready to Run Network

19. Ready to Run has almost 20 partner networks across the United States. How have you sought to recruit new partners and grow the program?
    a. How would you evaluate your efforts to date?

20. What kinds of on-going support do you provide to network partners?
    a. How do you ensure consistency and maintain quality across the various network partner programs?

21. Ready to Run is operated by network partners across the country. How does the program work to address the unique political culture and climate that exists of each location?

22. Moving forward, how would you like to see the network grow?

Evaluation

23. How do you evaluate the success of an individual training session and the Ready to Run program overall?
    a. Would you be willing to share the evaluation responses from 2015 program participants?

24. How much does the training change from year to year?

a. How much has it changed since it was first conceptualized?

25. How often do you review and revise the model curriculum?
    b. What does that process look like?

26. If resources such as time and money were not issues, would you modify Ready to Run in any way?
    c. If so, what changes would you like to make?

Conclusion

27. Research shows that women, more than men, need to be asked to run for office. How does Ready to Run address this problem?

28. In addition to providing training to female candidates, what else can or should be done to elect more women to public office?

29. What does success look like to you?

Appendix B: Participant Survey Protocol

The Department of Communication Studies at the University of Kansas supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

We are conducting this study to better understand what political campaign training resources are most effective in meeting the unique needs of female political candidates. This will entail your completion of a survey. Your participation is expected to take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The content of the survey should cause no more discomfort than you would experience in your everyday life.

Although participation may not benefit you directly, we believe that the information obtained from this study will help us gain a better understanding of how female political candidates utilize campaign training resources. Your participation is solicited, although strictly voluntary. Your name will not be associated in any way with the research findings. Your identifiable information will not be shared unless (a) it is required by law or university policy, or (b) you give written permission. Records in which your identity is disclosed will be stored digitally in a password protected file. It is possible, however, with internet communications, that through intent or accident someone other than the intended recipient may see your response.

If you would like additional information concerning this study before or after it is completed, please feel free to contact us by phone or mail.

Completion of the survey indicates your willingness to take part in this study and that you are at least 18 years old. If you have any additional questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call (785) 864-7429 or write the Human Research Protection Program (HRPP), University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7563, email irb@ku.edu.

Sincerely,

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Q1 Did you attend the Ready to Run campaign training for women in New Brunswick, New Jersey in March 2015?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

D Instructions: Please answer the following demographic questions.

D1 What is your age? Please move the slider to indicate your age in years. As you move the slider, you will see the exact number.

_____ Age (1)

D2 What is your sex?

- ❍ Female (1)
- ❍ Male (2)

D3 Which of the following races do you consider yourself to be? (select all that apply)

- ❑ African American (1)
- ❑ Asian (2)
- ❑ Caucasian (3)
- ❑ Hispanic (4)
- ❑ Native American (5)
- ❑ Other (please specify) (6) _____

D4 What is your marital status?

- ❍ Married (1)
- ❍ Widowed (2)
- ❍ Divorced (3)
- ❍ Separated (4)
- ❍ Never Married (5)

D5 Do you have children?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What is the highest level of education...

D6 How many children do you have?
- ❍ 1 (1)
- ❍ 2 (2)
- ❍ 3 (3)
- ❍ 4 (4)
- ❍ 5+ (5)

D7 How old are your children? Please move the sliders to indicate your children's ages in years. As you move the slider, you will see the exact number.

_____ Child 1 (1)
_____ Child 2 (2)
_____ Child 3 (3)
_____ Child 4 (4)
_____ Child 5 (5)

D8 What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- ❍ Less than high school degree (1)
- ❍ High school graduate (high school diploma or equivalent including GED) (2)
- ❍ Some college but no degree (3)
- ❍ Associate degree in college (2-year) (4)
- ❍ Bachelor's degree in college (4-year) (5)
- ❍ Master's degree (6)
- ❍ Doctoral degree (7)
- ❍ Professional degree (e.g., JD, MD) (8)

D9 Which statement best describes your current employment status?
- ❍ Employed full time (1)
- ❍ Employed part time (2)
- ❍ Unemployed looking for work (3)
- ❍ Unemployed not looking for work (4)
- ❍ Retired (5)
- ❍ Student (6)
- ❍ Disabled (7)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (8) _____

Display This Question:
If Which statement best describes your current employment status? Employed full time Is Selected
Or Which statement best describes your current employment status? Employed part time Is Selected

D10 Please indicate your occupation/industry (select all that apply):
- ❑ Architecture & Engineering (1)
- ❑ Art, Design, & Entertainment (2)
- ❑ Business & Finance (3)
- ❑ Computing & Technology (4)
- ❑ Construction (5)
- ❑ Education (6)
- ❑ Farming & Agriculture (7)
- ❑ Food Services (8)
- ❑ Government (9)
- ❑ Health Care (10)
- ❑ Legal (11)
- ❑ Office & Administrative Support (12)
- ❑ Professional Services (13)
- ❑ Sales (14)
- ❑ Social Services (15)
- ❑ Transportation (16)
- ❑ Other (please specify) (17) _____

BG Instructions: Please answer the following questions about your political background.

BG1 What political party are you registered with, if any?
- ❍ Democratic (2)
- ❍ Green (7)
- ❍ Independent (3)
- ❍ Libertarian (6)
- ❍ Republican (1)
- ❍ Unaffiliated (5)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (4) _____

BG2 Did you run for office this election cycle (2015-2016)?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you currently or have you previous...

BG3 What level of office did you run for this election cycle (2015-2016)?

- ❍ Local (e.g., school board, city commission) (1)
- ❍ Legislative (e.g., state senate, state assembly/house) (2)
- ❍ Statewide (e.g., governor, attorney general) (3)
- ❍ Congressional (e.g., US House or US Senate) (4)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (5) _____

BG4 Did you win your election?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

BG5 Do you currently or have you previously held or run for elected office?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you plan to run for office in the...

BG6 What level of office do you hold now or have you run for in the past? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Local (e.g. school board, city commission) (1)
- ☐ Legislative (e.g. state senate, state assembly/house) (2)
- ☐ Statewide (e.g. governor, attorney general) (3)
- ☐ Congressional (e.g. US House or US Senate) (4)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (5) _____

BG7 When did you first run for elected office? Please write the year. For example, 2015.

BG8 Do you plan to run for office in the future?

- ❍ Yes (4)
- ❍ No (6)
- ❍ Unsure (7)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To There are a variety of reasons why a...

BG9 When in the future do you plan to run for office?

- ❍ Within next 2 years (1)
- ❍ Within 2-5 years (2)
- ❍ Within 5-10 years (3)
- ❍ More than 10 years (4)
- ❍ Unsure (5)

BG10 What level of office do you plan to run for in the future? (select all that apply)

- ❑ Local (e.g. school board, city commission) (1)
- ❑ Legislative (e.g. state senate, state assembly/house) (2)
- ❑ Statewide (e.g. governor, attorney general) (3)
- ❑ Congressional (e.g. US House or US Senate) (4)
- ❑ Unsure (6)
- ❑ Other (please specify) (5) _____

Display This Question:

If Do you plan to run for office in the future? No Is Selected

BG11 There are a variety of reasons why a person might choose not to run for political office. Please list the reasons why don't you plan to run in the future.

PS Instructions: Please answer the following questions regarding why you selected the Ready to Run program.

PS1 Where did you hear about Ready to Run?

- ❍ Elected Official (1)
- ❍ Friend or Mentor (2)
- ❍ Party Leader or Staffer (3)
- ❍ Social Media (4)
- ❍ Website (5)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (6) _____

PS2 Did you consider or attend other campaign training programs?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Why did you select Ready to Run over...

PS3 Below is a list of other campaign training programs and entities that sponsor campaign training programs. Please indicate if you considered or attended any of the programs below or sponsored by the entities listed.

	Did not consider (1)	Considered, but did not attend (2)	Attended (3)
American Majority (1)	❍	❍	❍
Camp Wellstone (2)	❍	❍	❍
Democratic Party (3)	❍	❍	❍
Emerge (4)	❍	❍	❍
Emily's List (5)	❍	❍	❍
Republican Party (6)	❍	❍	❍
Running Start (7)	❍	❍	❍
Leadership Institute (8)	❍	❍	❍
Women's Campaign Fund (9)	❍	❍	❍
Women's Campaign School at Yale (10)	❍	❍	❍
Other (please specify) (11)	❍	❍	❍
Other (please specify) (12)	❍	❍	❍

PS4 Why did you select Ready to Run over other training programs? (select all that apply)

- ❑ Cost (1)
- ❑ Location (2)
- ❑ Non-partisan (3)
- ❑ Quality of Training (4)
- ❑ Scheduling (5)
- ❑ Scope of Topics Covered (6)
- ❑ Specifically for Women (7)
- ❑ Other (please specify) (8) _____

PS5 Ready to Run is a non-partisan training program. How important was this in influencing your decision to attend?

- ❍ Not at all important (1)
- ❍ Slightly important (2)
- ❍ Moderately important (3)
- ❍ Very important (4)
- ❍ Extremely important (5)

PS6 Ready to Run is a training program designed specifically for women. How important was this in influencing your decision to attend?

- ❍ Not at all important (1)
- ❍ Slightly important (2)
- ❍ Moderately important (3)
- ❍ Very important (4)
- ❍ Extremely important (5)

PS7 What information or skills did you hope to gain by attending Ready to Run training? (select all that apply)

- ❑ Campaigning - the nuts and bolts of organizing a campaign (1)
- ❑ Communication - how to craft an effective message (2)
- ❑ Digital - how to use the web and social media strategically (3)
- ❑ Field - how to target, mobilize, and turnout voters (4)
- ❑ Fundraising- how to raise the money necessary to win (5)
- ❑ Media/Public Speaking - how to look and sound your best (6)
- ❑ Networking - how to navigate the political party system (7)
- ❑ Other (please specify) (8) _____

Prior Instructions: Please answer the following questions regarding your political knowledge prior to attending Ready to Run.

Prior1 How would you rate your knowledge of the process of campaigning such as the nuts and bolts of how to organize and execute a strategic campaign prior to attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Prior2 How would you rate your communication skills and your ability to craft an effective message prior to attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Prior3 How would you rate your ability to use digital tools such as the web and social media to communicate prior to attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Prior4 How would you rate your knowledge of field tactics such as targeting, mobilizing, and turning out voters prior to attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Prior5 How would you rate your ability to raise money prior to attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Prior6 How would you rate your ability to look and sound good when speaking to members of the media or the public prior to attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Prior7 How would you rate your ability to network and navigate the political system prior to attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Eval Instructions: Please answer the following questions in which you are asked to evaluate the Ready to Run program.

Eval1 Overall, how would you rate the training you received at Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Eval2 Of the sessions you attended, which one did you find the most beneficial?

- ❍ Internet Strategies for Candidates, Campaigns, and Advocates (1)
- ❍ What Women Candidates Need to Know (2)
- ❍ Launching Your Campaign (3)
- ❍ Political Parties, Appointments, and Advocacy - Tools and Tips for Getting Started (4)
- ❍ Conquering the Camera - An Interactive Media Training (5)
- ❍ Navigating New Jersey's Political Parties as a Potential Candidate (6)
- ❍ Laying the Groundwork for Public Life (7)
- ❍ Fundraising for Success (8)

Eval3 Reflecting on the session, please describe what made it the most beneficial.

Eval4 Of the sessions you attended, which one did you find the least beneficial?

- ❍ Internet Strategies for Candidates, Campaigns, and Advocates (1)
- ❍ What Women Candidates Need to Know (2)
- ❍ Launching Your Campaign (3)
- ❍ Political Parties, Appointments, and Advocacy - Tools and Tips for Getting Started (4)
- ❍ Conquering the Camera - An Interactive Media Training (5)
- ❍ Navigating New Jersey's Political Parties as a Potential Candidate (6)
- ❍ Laying the Groundwork for Public Life (7)
- ❍ Fundraising for Success (8)

Eval5 Reflecting on the session, please describe what made it the least beneficial.

Eval6 How well did Ready to Run provide you with the knowledge and skills necessary to wage a successful political campaign?

- ❍ Not well at all (1)
- ❍ Slightly well (2)
- ❍ Moderately well (3)
- ❍ Very well (4)
- ❍ Extremely well (5)

Eval7 Was there information or skills you hoped to gain by attending the Ready to Run training that was not covered? If so, please share your thoughts.

Eval8 Do you have any suggestions for how the Ready to Run program could be improved? Please share your ideas.

Post Instructions: Please answer the following questions regarding your political knowledge after attending Ready to Run.

Post1 How would you rate your knowledge of the process of campaigning, such as the nuts and bolts of how to organize and execute a strategic campaign, after attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Post2 How would you rate your communication skills and your ability to craft an effective message after attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Post3 How would you rate your ability to use digital tools such as the web and social media to communicate after attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Post4 How would you rate your knowledge of field tactics such as targeting, mobilizing, and turning out voters after attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Post5 How would you rate your ability to raise money after attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Post6 How would you rate your ability to look and sound good when speaking to members of the media or the public after attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Post7 How would you rate your ability to network and navigate the political system after attending Ready to Run?

- ❍ Terrible (1)
- ❍ Poor (2)
- ❍ Average (3)
- ❍ Good (4)
- ❍ Excellent (5)

Camp Instructions: Please answer the following questions about the skills you gained at Ready to Run.

Camp1 At Ready to Run, did you attend the training session on the nuts and bolts of organizing a campaign?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)
- ❍ Don't Remember (3)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...If Don't Remember Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...

Camp2 Was the training session on the nuts and bolts of organizing a campaign useful?

- ❍ Not at all useful (1)
- ❍ Slightly useful (2)
- ❍ Moderately useful (3)
- ❍ Very useful (4)
- ❍ Extremely useful (5)

Camp3 In thinking about your own campaign, what aspect of the campaign process did you find most challenging? If you have not yet run, what aspect do you anticipate you would find the most challenging?

- ❍ Balancing Campaign & Family Responsibilities (1)
- ❍ Juggling Work & Campaign Responsibilities (2)
- ❍ Following Your Campaign Plan (3)
- ❍ Managing Staff & Volunteers (4)
- ❍ Unsure (5)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (6) _____

Camp4 What additional types of training on running a campaign or the campaign process would you like to have received or found useful?

Camp5 Based on your personal experience, what have you learned about running a campaign or the campaign process you think other female candidates might find useful?

Coms1 At Ready to Run, did you attend the training session on how to craft an effective message?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)
- ❍ Don't Remember (3)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...If Don't Remember Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...

Coms2 Was the training session on how to craft an effective message useful?

- ❍ Not at all useful (1)
- ❍ Slightly useful (2)
- ❍ Moderately useful (3)
- ❍ Very useful (4)
- ❍ Extremely useful (5)

Coms3 In thinking about your own campaign, which of the following did you find most challenging when it came to the communication process? If you have not yet run, what aspect do you anticipate you would find the most challenging?

- ❍ Attacking Your Opponent (1)
- ❍ Crafting Direct Mail Pieces (2)
- ❍ Creating Television & Radio Ads (3)
- ❍ Drafting Talking Points (4)
- ❍ Staying on Message (5)
- ❍ Talking about Yourself (6)
- ❍ Unsure (7)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (8) _____

Coms4 What additional types of training on communicating with voters would you like to have received or found useful?

Coms5 Based on your personal experience, what have you learned about communicating with voters that you think other female candidates might find useful?

Dig1 At Ready to Run, did you attend the training session on how to use the web and social media effectively?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)
- ❍ Don't Remember (3)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...If Don't Remember Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...

Dig2 How useful was the training session on how to use the web and social media effectively?
- ❍ Not at all useful (1)
- ❍ Slightly useful (2)
- ❍ Moderately useful (3)
- ❍ Very useful (4)
- ❍ Extremely useful (5)

Dig3 In thinking about your own campaign, what aspect of digital communication did you find most challenging? If you have not yet run, what aspect do you anticipate you would find the most challenging?
- ❍ Buying Online Ads (1)
- ❍ Creating a Website (2)
- ❍ Tracking Digital Analytics (3)
- ❍ Using Facebook (4)
- ❍ Using Twitter (5)
- ❍ Unsure (6)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (7) _____

Dig4 What additional types of training on digital media would you like to have received or found useful?

Dig5 Based on your personal experience, what have you learned about digital media that you think other female candidates might find useful?

Field1 At Ready to Run, did you attend the training session on how to target, mobilize and turnout voters?
- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)
- ❍ Don't Remember (3)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...If Don't Remember Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...

Field2 How useful was the training session on how to target, mobilize, and turnout voters?
- ❍ Not at all useful (1)
- ❍ Slightly useful (2)
- ❍ Moderately useful (3)
- ❍ Very useful (4)
- ❍ Extremely useful (5)

Field3 In thinking about your own campaign, what aspect of field operations did you find most challenging? If you have not yet run, what aspect do you anticipate you would find the most challenging?

- ❍ Creating a Walk Plan (1)
- ❍ Data Entry & Using a Voter Database (2)
- ❍ Door to Door Canvassing (3)
- ❍ Get Out the Vote (GOTV) (4)
- ❍ Recruiting Volunteers (5)
- ❍ Voter Identification & Targeting (6)
- ❍ Unsure (7)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (8) _____

Field4 What additional types of training on field operations would you like to have received or found useful?

Field5 Based on your personal experience, what have you learned about targeting, mobilizing, and turning out voters that you think other female candidates might find useful?

Fund1 At Ready to Run, did you attend the training session on fundraising?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)
- ❍ Don't Remember (3)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...If Don't Remember Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...

Fund2 How useful was the training session on fundraising?

- ❍ Not at all useful (1)
- ❍ Slightly useful (2)
- ❍ Moderately useful (3)
- ❍ Very useful (4)
- ❍ Extremely useful (5)

Fund3 In thinking about your own campaign, what aspect of fundraising did you find most challenging? If you have not yet run, what aspect do you anticipate you would find the most challenging?

- ❍ Asking People for Money (1)
- ❍ Holding Fundraising Events (2)
- ❍ Identifying Potential Donors (3)
- ❍ Meeting with Big Donors (4)
- ❍ Online Fundraising Appeals (5)
- ❍ Scheduling & Completing Call Time (6)
- ❍ Unsure (7)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (8) _____

Fund4 What additional types of training on fundraising would you like to have received or found useful?

Fund5 Based on your personal experience, what have you learned about fundraising you think other female candidates might find useful?

Media1 At Ready to Run, did you attend the training session on public speaking and talking to the media?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)
- ❍ Don't Remember (3)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...If Don't Remember Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...

Media2 How useful was the training session on public speaking and talking to the media?

- ❍ Not at all useful (1)
- ❍ Slightly useful (2)
- ❍ Moderately useful (3)
- ❍ Very useful (4)
- ❍ Extremely useful (5)

Media3 In thinking about your own campaign, what aspect of public speaking and talking to the media did you find most challenging? If you have not yet run, what aspect do you anticipate you would find the most challenging?

- ❍ Appearing on TV (1)
- ❍ Debates & Public Forums (2)
- ❍ Delivering a Stump Speech (3)
- ❍ Holding Press Conferences (4)
- ❍ Interviews with Reporters (5)
- ❍ Unsure (6)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (7) _____

Media4 What additional types of training on public speaking and talking to the media would you like to have received or found useful?

Media5 Based on your personal experience, what have you learned about public speaking and talking to the media you think other female candidates might find useful?

Net1 At Ready to Run, did you attend the training session on networking and navigating the political party system?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)
- ❍ Don't Remember (3)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...If Don't Remember Is Selected, Then Skip To In thinking about your own campaign, ...

Net2 Was the training session on networking and navigating the political party system useful?

- ❍ Not at all useful (1)
- ❍ Slightly useful (2)
- ❍ Moderately useful (3)
- ❍ Very useful (4)
- ❍ Extremely useful (5)

Net3 In thinking about your own campaign, what aspect of networking and navigating the political party system did you find most challenging? If you have not yet run, what aspect do you anticipate you would find the most challenging?

- ❍ Working with Other Elected Officials (1)
- ❍ Interacting with Political Party Staff (2)
- ❍ Meeting Potential Big Donors (3)
- ❍ Identifying Allies (4)
- ❍ Unsure (5)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (6) _____

Net4 What additional types of training on networking and navigating the political party system would you like to have received or found useful?

Net5 Based on your personal experience, what have you learned about networking and navigating the political party system you think other female candidates might find useful?

Conc Instructions: Please answer a few final questions about your overall experience running for office.

Conc1 Are there other aspects of being a candidate, not discussed previously, that you found challenging? If so, what?

Conc2 What additional training or resources could Ready to Run have provided you to help address this challenge?

Conc3 Have you used any of the additional resources provided by Ready to Run on the flash drive?

- ❍ Not at all (1)
- ❍ A little (2)
- ❍ A moderate amount (3)
- ❍ A lot (4)
- ❍ A great deal (5)

Conc4 Is there any other information about Ready to Run or your experience running for office you would like to share?

- ❍ Yes (please specify) (1) _____
- ❍ No (2)

Conc5 Your responses to this survey have been incredibly helpful, may I follow up with you for a brief phone interview, which would allow you the opportunity to expand on your answers or include any additional information?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Conc6 First & Last Name

Conc7 Phone

Conc8 Email

Appendix C: Participant Interview Protocol

Background

1. Did you run for office in 2016?
    a. If yes, for what and did you win?
    b. If no, why not?

2. Have you run for or held elected office in the past?
    a. If yes, for what and when?

3. Do you plan to run for office in the future?
    a. If yes, for what and when?
    b. If no, why not?

Program Selection

4. Why did you select the Ready to Run training program?
    a. Was your decision influenced by the fact that Ready to Run is designed specifically for women?
        i. If yes, in what way?

5. What information or skills did you hope to gain by attending Ready to Run?

Program Evaluation

6. Overall, how would you rate the training you received at Ready to Run?
    a. Was there something specific you really liked about the training or thought was particularly beneficial?
    b. Was there information or skills you hoped to gain by attending the training that was not covered?

7. In what ways did the Ready to Run program provided you with the knowledge and skills necessary to wage a successful political campaign?
    a. Can you share a couple of examples of when you used what you learned at Ready to Run on the campaign trail?
    b. Did you use any of the additional resources provided on the flash drive?

8. In thinking about your own campaign, what aspects did you find most challenging?
    a. What type of additional training, resources, or support could have been provided you to help address this challenge?

Conclusion

9. Based on your personal experience, what have you learned about running for office you think other female candidates might find useful?

10. Is there any other information about Ready to Run or your experience running for office that you would like to share?

Demographics

- Age
- Race
- Marital Status
- Children
- Education
- Employment
- Political Party

Appendix D: Ready to Run Program Agenda

Ready to RUN Campaign Training for Women™

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Program Agenda

Friday, March 13, 2015

Ready to Run®

4:15 – 6:30 pm	**Welcome and Plenary Session:** **Internet Strategies for Candidates, Campaigns and Advocates** Welcome Debbie Walsh, Director, Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) Session Description Internet outreach is a key aspect of today's political and advocacy campaigns. Online tools including blogs, social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other online organizing and communications resources are increasingly important for getting campaign messages out to a broad audience of potential voters or stakeholders. This session will provide an overview of best practices and offer practical tips on how to get started or enhance your online presence. Presenter Tara Dowdell, Tara Dowdell Group	**Trayes Hall B**
6:30 pm	**Networking Reception**	**Trayes Hall A**

Saturday, March 14, 2015

7:30 am	**Registration Opens**	**DCC Lobby**
8:15 – 9:45 am	**Keynote Plenary: What Women Candidates Need to Know** Welcome Back Jean Sinzdak, Associate Director, Center for American Women and Politics Speaker Kristy Pultorak, Senior Analyst, Lake Research Partners	**Trayes Hall B**
9:45 – 10:00 am	**Break**	

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