



THE
OASIS
CENTER
FOR WOMEN & GIRLS



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*****Press Release*****

Women Can Run! Launch Party Tonight
Initiative Will Encourage More Women to Seek Public Office

Tallahassee, FL -- Tonight the Oasis Center for Women & Girls, in partnership with Leadership Tallahassee and the League of Women Voters of Florida Education Fund, will launch the 2013-2014 Women Can Run! initiative with a party at Hotel Duval. The event will take place at 5:30 P.M. in the hotel's Sunrise Room and is free and open to the public.

Women Can Run! is a non-partisan program designed to encourage women to run for elective office or work on political campaigns in the future. Women from Leon, Gadsden, Wakulla and Jefferson counties are encouraged to participate. This year, the program will include a series of workshops that will be open to the public and a more intensive cohort program for a group of women selected through an application process. "We are very excited about the program this year and especially the new Women Can Run! cohort as a more comprehensive training program for a selected group of women who would seriously consider candidacy," said Haley Cutler, Executive Director of the Oasis Center for Women & Girls. "Our goal is to encourage more women to run for public office and we think that starts with the ask but needs to be followed by tools and training."

By training emerging leaders to serve their communities, the Women Can Run! initiative is helping strengthen the Big Bend area by developing a more inclusive group of elected officials to serve the region's diverse population. According to Barbara Boone, Executive Director of Leadership Tallahassee, "Women Can Run! is an excellent opportunity for women to become equipped for elective public service through its comprehensive curriculum of the basics of political campaigning, understanding critical public policy issues and cultivating the skills necessary for effective governing, once elected."

According to The Center for American Women and Politics, women account for only 25% of our state legislators and Florida ranks 23rd in the nation for the proportion of women in our state legislature. The numbers only decrease on the federal level, and while we have a record number of women serving in the U.S. Senate, women are still woefully underrepresented at all levels of public office. Having more women serve in public office means that a greater variety of opinions and voices are being heard. Women bring important and diverse opinions to the table and should be adequately represented in all levels of government. "Our government is only as good as the people elected to serve in it," said Jessica Lowe-Minor, Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Florida Education Fund. "That's why it is essential that capable leaders from all walks of life run for public office, giving voters more choices and making our local, state and federal governments more effective and accountable."

For more information about the program or to apply, please visit the Oasis Center for Women & Girl's website at theoasiscenter.net. The Women Can Run! initiative is made possible by support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.