

About Emerge California

Emerge California empowers Democratic self-identified women leaders who reflect the communities they serve to run for elected office — and WIN.

Why? To change the face of power by electing leaders who have the life experience, passion, and resolve to reimagine, rebuild, and fight for a just and equitable world.

The Emerge Difference

- Early-stage recruitment with staff on the ground and an intensive, 70-hour curriculum.
- Exclusive focus on training Democratic women.
- A proven commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- A cohort-based program to build a powerful ongoing network of support.

The Numbers

- 182 Emerge California alumnae serve in elected office, including 5 state-level officeholders and 19 Mayors.
- 80 women trained in 2021 through 2 programs: 6-month Signature Training and first-ever Legislative Boot Camp.
- Nearly 800 women trained since 2002.
- 43 alumnae have already announced candidacies for the 2022 election.

The Class of 2021

- The Class of 2021 was our largest and most diverse class in organization history!
- 85 percent of the class represents the New American Majority - Black, Brown, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, young and unmarried women.
- 16 2021 graduates have already launched campaigns for the 2022 election.

Contact Us

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Fighting for Justice by Melanie V. Ramil Executive Director



It's hard to capture in words what 2021 brought our way: a mixture of hope and horror as we began the new year, relief and then a familiar fear on the rollercoaster ride of this global pandemic, and all the emotions - joy, sadness, wonder, anger, excitement - of a post-2020 world.

What has remained constant is the conviction, passion and purpose that drives Emerge California women leaders to train with us, run and serve in elected office. Their leadership fundamentally changes the course of politics, policies, and priorities towards good and justice.

When we look back on the year, there are many things that come to mind that continue to reinforce these truths. The Class of 2021 was our most diverse in organization history. They made the choice to apply for our intensive 6-month candidate training in the midst of a global pandemic - a true testament to their resilience!

The Legislative Boot Camp we hosted in August was our first-ever candidate training focusing solely on candidates running for seats in the California State Legislature and United States Congress. It's noteworthy that nearly every single Boot Camp trainee was an Emerge California alumna who currently serves in local office. This means that 19 years after Emerge California's founding, our movement is working - not only are we building the pipeline of Democratic women leaders who are running and winning elected seats throughout the state, we are seeing Emerge California alumnae fighting to lead in higher office.

Finally, we can look at this year's victories to underscore just what it means to change the face of elected power in California. In January, we cheered on the 93 who ran as elected delegates of the California Democratic Party. We highlighted what it meant for 182 Emerge California alumnae to serve in elected office throughout the year, as they fought and won battles that better served their communities. And, we celebrated two exciting electoral victories as Mia Bonta won a special election to serve Assembly District 18 in the California State Assembly, and Courtney Welch won a seat on the Emeryville City Council - both trailblazers in their own right!

What makes these moments even more meaningful is what drives our work forward on a daily basis - our steadfast and relentless commitment to our vision to change the face of elected power to see leaders who look like us and know our stories fight for justice and equity. We know that even in the hardest and ugliest of moments, our movement and the Democratic women leaders we have trained and lifted up who now serve in elected office play a role in the arc of the moral universe bending towards justice. This is the source of our inspiration and the core of our why. Thank you for being a partner in this movement with us.

"Emerge California has done an incredible job of building community, bringing in credentialed trainers, and helping you walk away with tools that you can use immediately."

Shrina Kurani, Legislative Boot Camp Class of 2021 & Candidate for U.S. Congress, District 42



"Because of this training I am confident that I can overcome any challenge I may face during my campaign, and I have a strong support network as part of the Emerge Sisterhood."

Rudy Huebner, Class of 2021