#WRENThisTogether
2020 WREN Virtual Summit
Presented By abacus
create abundance
In this time of uncertainty, it is now more important than ever to work together. The change we want can not happen without the dedication and will of all South Carolinians. We are #WRENThisTogether because we believe that our communities have all the tools we need to make this state a more equitable place. We are #WRENThisTogether because we know that all voices and people have value. In these sessions, we will address the barriers, benefits, and challenges that people face when working toward a better South Carolina for all people.

We are so thrilled to be offering this summit in a completely virtual format. To register for any of the sessions (for free!) please visit:

scwren.org/projects/summit

We cannot wait learn and interact with you all in this unconventional, but incredibly exciting, way.

See you soon,
The WREN Team
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**Keynote**

NYT Bestselling Author Rebecca Traister
October 14th | 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
Session 1

ADVANCING RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUITY IN SOUTH CAROLINA’S WORKFORCE

WREN seeks to create and cultivate workplaces that allow for all people to thrive and we address that via legislative action and private sector partnerships. WREN has advocated for and passed policies to support workers (Lactation Support and Pregnancy Accommodations) as well as published informational guides for partners in the private sector to make internal policy changes (Power Up the Workplace). This panel aims to give an overview of the workplace protections that South Carolina has in place, address the supports that are still needed, and provide examples of how private sector employers can implement change. After the panel, participants will be invited to engage in breakout rooms on questions related to the topic.

Moderator: Beth Ruffin, She/Her
Vice Chair, Women’s Rights & Empowerment Network Board of Directors
Follow Beth: @thebethruffin (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

Panelist: Bethany M. Griffith, She/Her
Senior Financial Advisor and Leader of People and Team Development, Abacus Planning Group
Follow Bethany: @abacusBethany (Twitter)

Panelist: Lee Ann Watson, She/Her
General Counsel, SC Human Affairs Commission
Follow Lee Ann: @Schacomm (Facebook)

Panelist: Sandy Jordan, She/Her
Director of Employment Programs, Able South Carolina
Follow Sandy: @HireMeSC (Facebook)
Session 2

FROM DISPOSABILITY TO ACCOUNTABILITY: DISRUPTING HARM IN SC

CONTENT WARNING: Please note that in this series, we will be discussing responses to harm. As a result, during the webinars there may be some explicit mention or discussion of harms such as interpersonal violence, abuse, sexism, racism, and white supremacy.

In South Carolina, we face multiple threats to public health like widespread evictions, record unemployment, climate disaster, violence, and police brutality. These crises, worsened by COVID-19, bring into sharp focus the reality that we cannot rely on the state to protect our communities.

Aparna Polavarapu will lead us through a workshop to examine some of the basic tenets of transformative justice, discuss strategies to build accountability, map out sources of support to get us through times of crisis, and explore the challenges of applying these practices at the community level. During the second half of the workshop, participants will be invited to engage in breakout groups to further explore the principles and practice of transformative justice.

**Speaker: Aparna Polavarapu, She/Her**
Executive Director, South Carolina Restorative Justice Initiative; Associate Professor, University of South Carolina School of Law
Follow Aparna: @ProfAparna; @scrjinitiative (Twitter)

**Speaker: Melissa Moore, They/Them**
Lowcountry Manager, Women’s Rights and Empowerment Network
Follow Melissa: @ComradePickes (Twitter) @MeMo1030 (Instagram)
COMMUNITY EXPLORATION OF PAID LEAVE

According to Paid Leave For All, “Only 19 percent of U.S. workers have access to paid family leave through an employer and only 40 percent have access to short-term disability insurance.” Comprehensive guaranteed paid leave is essential for the well-being and ability to thrive for families in South Carolina and across our nation. In acknowledgement of paid leave as a form of self-care and access to paid leave being important for individual and collective self-care, session 3 will begin and conclude with a mini mindfulness/breathwork session facilitated by Brailey Johnson. The opening session will highlight the work being done on behalf of comprehensive paid leave and help us to collectively reimagine a world with adequate access to paid leave for all. Tanesha QueenItShallBe Hall, a Columbia-based storyteller and poet will engage participants by weaving individual paid leave stories into the larger narrative of the fight for paid leave.

Speaker: Tanisha “Queen It Shall Be” Hall, She/Her  
Founder/Board Game Developer, In All Series-Ness, LLC  
Follow Tanisha: FB/IG/Twitter/YouTube @queenitshallbe (Twitter), @inallseriesness, @hillmanthegame

Speaker: Brailey Johnson, She/Her  
Artistic Director of the Johnson Company Dance  
Follow Brailey: @thejohnsoncompany (Instagram)
LEADERS OF TODAY- SC YOUTH PANEL

As the last few years have shown, South Carolina is a state capable of progressive change. Young people all across South Carolina are leading movements that are changing the trajectory of our state. Yet, too often their work is not recognized for what it is-- leadership. Join this session as we learn from a high school and college students making a difference today. Take time to listen and learn.

Speaker: Maya Green, She/Her
Organizing Coordinator, Student Voice
Follow Maya: @mayagrreen (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram)

Speaker: Kaylen Jones, She/Her
Cofounder of No Longer Silent Greenville
Follow Kaylen: @nlsgreenville (Instagram)

Speaker: Kennedy Ross, She/Her
Social Justice Advocate
The gender and racial wealth gap, or the difference in wealth by gender and race, constrains the economic security and mobility of women, their families, and communities in South Carolina. The wealth gap will certainly widen in the COVID-19 global recession, which is disproportionately affecting women of color and their families. We all have a responsibility – including our nation’s public and private sector leaders, from policymakers to corporate CEOs – to reimagine a more just economy. We must go beyond breaking down the barriers to economic security for women and create new policies that enable all people to live with dignity. This panel aims to raise awareness and inspire action to close the gap and advance economic dignity in South Carolina. It will define the gender and racial wealth gap; quantify the gap in South Carolina; highlight some of the factors that create and perpetuate it, and offer high-level policy recommendations.
Hear from renowned author Rebecca Traister as the keynote for #WRENThisTogether.

Traister, an award-winning journalist and author, has become a leading voice on feminism and women in politics. Her writing has also sparked conversations on how the 2008 election reopened discussions of gender, generational differences, feminism, and sexism across party lines.
The WREN Team

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2020 WREN Virtual Summit
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Speakers

**Aparna Polavarapu**

Aparna Polavarapu is the Executive Director and Founder of the South Carolina Restorative Justice Initiative, as well as an Associate Professor at the University of South Carolina School of Law. She has over a decade of experience working in human rights, with a focus on how those rights interact with systems of informal justice. Through her work in sub-Saharan Africa, Aparna came to understand and respect the contributions of community-driven justice practices. More recently, she has begun working with local partners to promote and develop restorative justice practices in South Carolina.

**Beth Ruffin**

Beth spent 20 years in Corporate America before realizing her dream of entrepreneurship, opening her own boutique consulting firm, The Everyday Inclusionist. Beth is committed to making our world more inclusive through consulting, coaching and speaking. She is also the host of “At the Table,” a weekly podcast about elevating the voices of the underrepresented and her new book, You Belong Here, explores the topic of Self Inclusion. Beth believes that everyone has a purpose and has the power within them to impact lives. She is mom to one daughter and in her spare time blogs and travels.

**Bethany M. Griffith**

Bethany M. Griffith, CFP®, EA is a 2010 graduate of the University of South Carolina. Bethany is a senior financial advisor and the leader of People and Team Development at Abacus Planning Group in Columbia, South Carolina.

**Brailey Johnson**

Brailey Johnson started her dance career as a Dutch Fork High School Dazzler in 2011. She instantly fell in love with movement, and continued exploring her movement in college as a dance minor at the University of South Carolina, where she performed in various choreography showcases. Brailey was a founding member of Icono/clash Dance Collaborative in 2014. Since then, Brailey has taught and performed with various companies in South Carolina, including Fuse Artist Alliance and Vaughn Newman Dance Company. Currently, she is a member of Yuhas and Dancers, Moving Body Dance Company, and the Power Company Collaborative. In September 2019, Brailey founded the Johnson Company, where she acts as artistic director.
Speakers

Chynna A. Phillips
In this role she works on the Foundation’s public policy and advocacy work collaborating with leadership to strategically set policy priorities and bring awareness to systems-level poverty drivers. Additionally, she provides hands-on support to and interaction with community, state, and national stakeholders. Chynna is a graduate of the University of South Carolina’s dual master’s program where she obtained her Master of Public Health and Master of Social Work. She is also a graduate of Xavier University where she received her Bachelor’s of Arts in Sociology. She has been awarded the Columbia Business Monthly “Best and Brightest: 35 and Under” in 2019 and this year’s Top 20 under 40 Award by The State Newspaper.

Kaylen Jones
Kaylen Jones is a 9th grade Greenville County Schools student and the cofounder of No Longer Silent Greenville. No Longer Silent is a student-run organization that is seeking to make a safe and uplifting culture in schools for minority students. She is extremely activism oriented and is always advocating for the lives of others. Kaylen also enjoys writing and creating visual art that highlights topics that may not be spotlighted in her community.

Kennedy Ross
Kennedy Ross is a native Charlestonian and a life long advocate for the betterment of the world around her. She realizes that you can’t always help everyone at once but you can help at least one person over and over again to gradually make the world a better place.

Lee Ann Watson
After graduation from Furman, Lee Ann attended the University of South Carolina School of Law. While there, she received the Robert McCormick Figg, Jr., Trial Advocacy Award for her graduating class. She began with SCHAC in 2014.

Having developed a love for collegiate mock trial as a Furman student, she coaches the Brookland-Cayce team in Lexington County during the mock trial season. She is a Certified Public Manager, a Riley Institute Diversity Fellow through Furman University, Secretary/Membership Committee Chair of the Columbia Capital Rotary Club, and the Secretary of the Board for the Midlands Mediation Center.
Speakers

**Maya Green**

Maya Green is a first-year student at Stanford University studying public policy and a graduate of the creative writing program at Charleston County School of the Arts in South Carolina. Through her role as Organizing Coordinator at Student Voice and her involvement with organizations such as the Charleston Area Justice Ministry in high school, Maya seeks to elevate the lived experiences of marginalized communities to dismantle unjust policy. She is particularly passionate about educational and environmental justice. In her free time, she enjoys experimenting with recipes, blasting Taylor Swift, and writing everything from poetry to book reviews on Goodreads.

**Melissa Moore**

Melissa Moore grew up in Mount Pleasant, SC. After earning a Bachelor’s Degree in Sociology from the College of Charleston, Melissa quickly realized how few opportunities existed in South Carolina for young, innovative people to make a living doing transformative work. Nevertheless, they committed to staying in SC and build a career devoted to improving this little corner of the planet. In 2005, Melissa joined Alliance For Full Acceptance as Assistant to the Executive Director. Soon after that, Melissa went on to work for SC Equality as Field Director and Interim Director, with a focus on public policy issues and community engagement to advance the rights of LGBTQ+ South Carolinians. In 2010, Melissa became Executive Director of We Are Family, the only organization in SC that has a mission focused on the needs of LGBTQ+ and straight ally youth. Through working with We Are Family, they served as a mentor, helped countless young people see the value in themselves and their lives, and became a leader in the work of ending youth homelessness in Charleston, a county where there are few services focused on youth experiencing homelessness. Melissa worked with Riley Center for Livable Communities to develop the Charleston YOUngh Count, the first-ever study of youth housing instability and food insecurity in Charleston County. Melissa worked with the City of Charleston in 2018 to open Charleston’s first day resource center for people experiencing homelessness that included a thrift store, a TeleHealth clinic, on-site mental health services, a 10-workstation computer lab donated by Google, a shower, laundry, and a co-working space for local homeless service providers. Melissa served as Director of Operations for Housing For All Mount Pleasant, an organization that seeks to create, encourage and support the development of attainable housing that is accessible for those who work, live, or aspire to live, in Mount Pleasant.

**Nichelle Harrison**

Nichelle is the founder of The MAP Agency a workforce development platform that provides resources & assistance to women returning to the workforce after a career break. She is also The Director of Operations at the Center for Courage & Renewal, a global nonprofit that helps people reconnect their identity and integrity with their personal, professional and public lives.
Speakers

Sandy Jordan
Sandy Jordan is the Director of Employment Programs for Able South Carolina and the liaison and facilitator for the SC Disability Employment Coalition, a statewide initiative to decrease employment barriers for people with disabilities. Before working at Able SC, she spent ten years providing career supports and guidance to individuals with a variety of disabilities. She brings the disability voice to employers by providing technical assistance, troubleshooting reasonable accommodations, and overseeing an annual Employer Summit. She regularly connects with the community to share the message of Employment First and is a founding member of the SC Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) chapter. Sandy holds a Master’s in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of South Carolina, is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor and a Global Career Development Facilitator.

Sue Berkowitz
Sue Berkowitz is an attorney and director of South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center. Sue works on issues that impact the low wealth community before state agencies, the legislature and the courts.

Tammie Hoy Hawkins
Tammie Hoy Hawkins is the CEO of CommunityWorks, overseeing the day-to-day operations and business strategy for the organization, which is focused on equitable lending, investing and financial coaching for all. Tammie joined CommunityWorks in 2020, bringing over 20 years of community/economic development leadership experience. Most recently, she served as the Project Manager for the Northside Development Group’s Northside Redevelopment Initiative in Spartanburg. Tammie was also the founding Director of the Lowcountry Housing Trust in Charleston (now South Carolina Community Loan Fund).

Tanisha "Queen It Shall Be" Hall
Entrepreneur, Board Game Developer, Poet, Writer, Host, Dancer, Event Planner, Arts Activist and Glitter Enthusiast. Tanisha "Queen It Shall Be" Hall is the founder of In All Series-Ness, LLC, a board game company based on positive iconic Black images in sitcoms, cinema and original content. Her hometown of Brooklyn, NY shines through with her strong beliefs in building, supporting, and expanding community.
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