

PRESIDENT

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Since last summer, when there was a change in leadership at both NCJW National and our Arizona section, our organization has been transitioning from awareness to advocacy. It certainly has been a challenge to begin building an infrastructure to support a new social justice agenda and social action initiatives. Indeed, there have been growing pains, not only in our section but across the country, as we refocus our direction.

Our strategy is still a work in progress and we look forward to your participation to help smooth the rough drafts of change. NCJW is unique in its mission to harness the voices and power of women to create social change. Eight months ago, a board member described us as “the best kept secret” in Arizona. No longer. We are making an impact and leaving a big imprint in the progressive community. [*Jewish News Gallego article*](#)

Over the past year, we have gained more than 80 new members—14 in just the last month. Our monthly general meeting programs are drawing well over 100 people and our upcoming Annual Awareness Luncheon on March 1 has doubled in attendees since last year and is nearly at sold out capacity of 360.

To underscore the theme of our luncheon, we at NCJWAZ are taking back the fight and making our voices heard. More than 45 members have signed up for Request to Speak (RTS) to voice opposition or support for proposed bills at the state legislature. Recently we helped table a bill to ban sex education and another to allow school personnel to carry weapons. We expect these bills likely will resurface during the legislative session, but we made our voices heard. And a few days ago, we stood together with other organizations at the Arizona Capitol to oppose two other proposed bills: one that would give \$3 million taxpayer dollars to church operated fake crisis pregnancy centers and another, similar to SB1070, that resurrects “stop and detain” racial profiling by law enforcement.

Our State Policy Advocate and interim Executive VP of Social Action, Carol Consalvo, is heading up our Protect, Promote the Vote 2020 (PPV2020) campaign and is working in partnership with Stand Indivisible and other seasoned Get Out The Vote groups to mobilize and train our members on phone banking and texting, letter and postcard writing and on-site voter registration. There is a training session this Tuesday February 11 and we encourage members and their friends to contact Carol to attend. She can be reached at advocacy@ncjwaz.org.

At the same time, we continue to develop the first rape healing center in Arizona and to explore a collaboration with Jewish Family and Children's Services to expand legal advocacy for survivors of domestic violence. At the same time, we understand that not everyone has the time or interest in activism. But as we always are reminded, these are not the times to be a bystander. We encourage everyone to step up to volunteer for existing community service projects and to help launch new ones so we can enhance that platform. Please reach out to our Director of Community Service, Jo-Ann Mullen at diad@ncjwaz.org.

There is so much to do, so let's do it!