

ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

A Breakfast Series Inspired by Sustainable Development Goal #5

Eliminate All Forms of Violence Against All Women and Girls

Wednesday, November 15, 2017 9:00am to 10:00am

2045 Rayburn House Office Building

Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) welcome you to this breakfast briefing series exploring each element of UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #5, "Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls Everywhere."

In the wake of the Weinstein scandal, millions of women and men took to social media to speak out against sexual harassment and violence. Facebook alone saw over 12 million posts from more than 4.7 million users around the world share their experiences and react, using the phrase "[Me too](#)." #MeToo exposed violence against women in the workplace from Hollywood to the halls of state and national legislatures. Sadly, violence and harassment against women is a global issue, affecting women's health, economic wellbeing, ability to participate in political processes and so much more, worldwide.

Sustainable Goal 5 has identified the need to eliminate violence against women and girls globally. Join us as we discuss this global call to action as it relates to recognizing violence against women and girls in the workplace and in politics in the U.S. and internationally, and how male and female policy makers can enact change.

[Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee](#) will host the event, which will be moderated by [Gabrielle Bardall](#), IFES' Senior Gender Specialist. Panelists include:

[Leila Milani](#), Sr. International Policy Advocate, Futures Without Violence

[Rebecca Gale](#), Award-winning journalist and contributing writer to Slate's Better Life Lab

[Judy Gearhart](#), Executive Director, International Labor Rights Forum

[Cassandra Waters](#), Global Worker Rights Specialist, AFL-CIO

[Tarana Burke](#), Founder and Director, Just Be Inc., and Creator of the #MeToo Movement

A light breakfast will be served. Please RSVP to esidell@ifes.org or 202.350.6705 by November 13, 2017.

Follow the conversation on Twitter [@IFES1987](#) and [@IFESGender](#) with #SDG5, #MeToo, and #MeTooCongress



Since 1987, IFES, a 501(c)3 nonpartisan nonprofit, has worked in over 145 countries to provide electoral technical assistance and promote the political participation of underrepresented communities all over the world—including women, persons with disabilities, LGBT communities and religious and ethnic minorities—through engagement with broader society. IFES initiatives include projects in voter registration, public awareness campaigns, and capacity building for local organizations.

Websites: www.ifes.org and www.electionaccess.org

Twitter: [@IFES1987](#) [@IFESGender](#) [@IFESTech](#) [@IFESDisability](#) Facebook: www.facebook.com/IFES1987

PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES



The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee (TX-18)

Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee is serving her twelfth term as a member of the United States House of Representatives. During Congresswoman Jackson Lee's tenure in Congress she has served on various Committees including the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Homeland Security, and Judiciary. Congresswoman Jackson Lee is a senior Member of the House Judiciary Committee, and is now the Ranking Member on the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations – the first woman to ever hold that position on the Committee. Congresswoman Jackson Lee serves on numerous Caucuses including the Children's Caucus, Azerbaijan Caucus, the Pakistan Caucus, and the Afghan Caucus. She is also the founder and Co-Chairs the Nigeria Caucus. Congresswoman Jackson Lee has served in leadership positions in the Congressional Black Caucus and other affiliated organizations, and is currently the Chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation.



Leila Milani, Senior International Policy Advocate, Futures Without Violence

Leila is the Senior International Policy Advocate for Futures Without Violence, where she leads their work on global violence prevention with a focus on women and children. In this capacity she represents Futures on a number of leading national coalitions such as Girls Not Brides, Coalition For Adolescent Girls, the US Civil Society Working Group, Alliance To End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST), and serves as part of the Gender Based Violence Coalition's Executive Committee. Leila's portfolio of work includes prevention of gender-based violence at the international level, effective and strategic response to human trafficking, developing solutions for participation of women in peace negotiations, and removing obstacles to girls' education and ending child marriage.



Rebecca Gale, Writer and Journalist

Rebecca Gale is an award-winning journalist with years of experience covering the nexus of politics and people in Washington, D.C. Her work has appeared in *The Washington Post*, *Slate*, *Marie Claire*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Health Affairs*, among other outlets. She has worked on Capitol Hill as a Press Secretary and Communications Director for Members of Congress and Senators.



Judy Gearhart, Executive Director, International Labor Rights Forum

Judy Gearhart is the Executive Director of ILRF since March 2011. Judy is also an adjunct professor at Columbia University's School for International and Public Affairs, teaching the course Human Rights and Development Policy since 2002. Previously, Judy coordinated legal research and training programs for workers and trade unions at Social Accountability International, led field research and evaluations for UNICEF and the ILO's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor in Honduras, and worked for women's rights and democratization with NGOs in Mexico. She has published on women's rights, children's rights and labor relations. Judy holds a Master of International Affairs from Columbia University.



Cassandra Waters, Global Worker Rights Specialist, AFL-CIO

Cassandra Waters is the Global Worker Rights Specialist at the AFL-CIO, where she advocates for policies to build power for workers in the U.S. and around the world. Her focus areas include trade, gender equality, and corporate accountability. Prior to joining the AFL-CIO, she trained as a human rights lawyer at Georgetown University Law Center, and is admitted to practice in California. While in law school, Cassandra worked with the International Corporate Accountability Roundtable, the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights, International Rights Advocates, and IFPTE Local 21. Before law school, she worked in communications with SEIU Local 32BJ and catered events in a variety of silly hats. She has a B.A. in International Relations from Connecticut College. She can be reached at: cwaters@aflcio.org.



Tarana Burke, Founder and Director, Just Be Inc., and Creator of the #MeToo Movement

Tarana has worked in social justice and arts and culture for more than twenty years. As a part of the staff of the 21st Century Youth Leadership Movement she helped to develop hundreds of youth leaders using 21C's leadership, academics, culture, economics and spirituality (L.A.C.E.S.) training. While living in Selma, AL, Tarana worked at the National Voting Rights Museum & Institute as a curatorial consultant and special projects coordinator helping to organize the annual commemoration and celebration of the Selma Voting Rights Struggle known as the Bridge Crossing Jubilee. She also served as Executive Director of Black Belt Arts and Cultural Center where she created and oversaw cultural community programs designed for underserved youth. In 2003 she turned her focus to young women of color by co-founding Jendayi Aza an African centered Rites of Passage program for girls. That program eventually evolved into the creation of Just Be, Inc. Tarana has a life long commitment to serving the causes of people of color, with a particular focus on young women and girls. She resides in Philadelphia, PA with her teenaged daughter, who is made of magic.



Dr. Gabrielle Bardall, IFES' Senior Gender Specialist

As senior gender specialist, Dr. Bardall is responsible for providing strategic leadership and technical assistance to IFES' work in empowering women's political participation and promoting inclusive governance. Dr. Bardall has experience working on electoral assistance and gender issues in over 35 countries worldwide. Her accomplishments include pioneering the field of violence against women in elections with IFES and serving in multiple senior-level advisory positions for U.S. and European NGOs and international organizations. She holds degrees from McGill University (B.A), the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (M.A.) and the Université de Montréal (Ph.D.). A 2012 Trudeau Scholar and alumni of the Women's Campaign School at Yale University, Dr. Bardall has held visiting appointments with the Centennial Center for Political Science and Public Affairs (APSA) and Uppsala University's Department of Peace and Conflict Research. She was an APSA Congressional Fellow in 2016-2017.