

VoteRunLead

#RunAsYouAre Partners Statement on “The Squad”

Rally cries and tweets calling for four elected women of color to “go back home” have, once again, revealed the depth of racism and gender bias that have hindered the leadership of women and people of color throughout our nation’s history. The attacks on Representatives Ilhan Omar, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ayanna Pressley, and Rashida Tlaib cross core values of decency and morality. These attacks stand in sharp contrast to the vision of America that YWCA USA, VoteRunLead, IGNITE, and United State of Women seek to create - a vision of America that is inclusive. One that values diverse leadership and empowered women in all sectors of public and community life.

We must not only aspire to more, but also hold leaders accountable when they break universal norms of human decency and respect and instead choose to incite division designed to tear at the fabric of our democracy.

Despite our strides to ensure the rich diversity of our nation is represented and respected in decision-making, this moment makes clear that much remains to be done to ensure women, especially women of color and particularly immigrant women, can access and actively participate in shaping our nation as leaders.

These are challenging times that define us as a country. Our nonpartisan organizations have committed to increasing the participation of all women and girls in decision-making at all levels of government in the United States. We know that it is only through the encouraged participation of all of our citizens that we achieve the promise of America. This past May, we joined forces to train thousands of women across 20 cities on how to run for office and win. Led by VoteRunLead, the #RunAsYouAre event trained the largest group of women - nearly 3,000 in a single day, with more than half being women of color - coming from all backgrounds and parties, to consider a run for public office.

Our work to empower women and to lift diverse voices as remains the most important mission of our time. As we inspire and train women leaders, we urge all to join us in continuing to call out the conditions that create barriers to our leadership and to reject racism, xenophobia and misogyny. To all those who see themselves in these Congresswomen, do not be deterred. We will continue to increase the number of diverse women in leadership, we will continue to hold our leaders accountable, and we will continue to push our fellow Americans to do the same.