



19th Amendment Centennial Celebration

FACT SHEET

WHO IS WEDC?

The Women's Economic Development Council (WEDC) exists to champion women as leaders in business and in the community. The mission of WEDC is to provide opportunities to women for leadership and economic development through education, mentorship, and strategic connections.

WEDC VALUES & BELIEFS

- We value and respect honest communication, integrity, equality, diversity and openness in our members, our organization and our community.
- We believe in supporting and encouraging each other in professional, personal and community endeavors.
- We believe in promoting an environment that elevates personal and professional growth and development.
- We believe in identifying, cultivating and supporting emerging women professionals.
- We believe in a community where women have influence, genuine engagement and "seats at the table."

WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF WEDC?

The Women's Economic Development Council was started in 1992 (incorporated in February 1994) as a 501(c)(6) for the purpose of providing women with opportunities for the promotion of the economic development of women in business.

Its' founders, Diane Weston, President of Uwohali, Inc., and Sheri Sensabaugh, President of ACT Personnel, were paired as mentor and protégé, respectively, through an SBA program called WNET in 1992. In addition to accomplishing the WNET goal, Diane and Sheri became very good friends and together they gave birth to the initial concept of the Women's Economic Development Council. Diane was a recognized leader in the business community and a leader of the Cherokee Tribal Council. She felt called to start a council by and for women to fill a need at a time when there were little to no organizations in the community that focused on the growth of and support of women leaders.

WEDC has been integral part of advancing the role of women in North Alabama from helping form a Women's Business Center (now known as The Catalyst), a Women's Business Council and the WEDC Foundation. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) philanthropic arm that supports women wanting to complete their education.

WEDC was also part of the Women on Board initiative to have 20% of corporate Board seats to be held by women by 2020, a goal met in 2018. WEDC developed the Milestone group as an effort to recruit and mentor young women business professionals as part of a sustainability and succession plan for the organization.



HOW DID THE 19TH AMENDMENT MURAL PROJECT START?

In late 2019, the Women's Economic Development Council (WEDC) wanted to focus on celebrating the centennial of the 19th Amendment. WEDC formed an ad hoc committee to focus on this project and quickly gathered over a dozen community partners to explore avenues worthy of celebrating this incredible anniversary in Huntsville. Early in the process, WEDC decided the mural project was a stellar project with a promise to make a lasting impact in the Huntsville community. WEDC, in conjunction with community partners and donors, quickly pledged their financial support for a mural project to commemorate this important milestone in US history. WEDC then partnered with Arts Huntsville to bring this project to fruition.

HOW IS THE 19TH AMENDMENT MURAL PROJECT FUNDED?

WEDC began fundraising efforts for the project in early 2020. Like the diverse allies who joined together in the fight for women's suffrage leading up to the 19th amendment, organizations from across Huntsville have joined forces to create this new public art installation in downtown Huntsville celebrating 100 years of women's votes in America.

The project, and leadership funding, is being provided by WEDC. The next tier of donations came from AUM Foundation, PNC Bank, Modern Technology Solutions, Inc., PeopleTec, and League of Women Voters of the Tennessee Valley. The third tier of funding was provided by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Huntsville Alumnae Chapter, American Association of University Women, Beth Brooks, Canvas, Inc., Cured & Company, Huntsville-Madison County Bar Association, Invariant, PALCO, Profit Wise Accounting, Synovus, The Collective, WaveLink, Women In Defense - Tennessee Valley, and the Women's Business Council.

Additional community support for this project was provided by Arts Huntsville, Alabama Women's Caucus for Art, and Huntsville Committee of 100.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS FOR THE 19TH AMENDMENT MURAL PROJECT?

From the project's inception, WEDC and the partners committed to engage a female artist from the southeastern United States to create Huntsville's 19th Amendment centennial mural. According to the National Endowment for the Arts, nearly half (45.8%) of visual artists in the United States are women; on

average, they earn 74¢ for every dollar made by male artists. More than \$196.6 billion was spent on art at auction between 2008 and 2019 and works by women accounted for just 2% of all sales. Over the same period, only 11% of all work acquired by the top US museums was by women artists. Therefore, WEDC felt very strongly the artist creating the 19th Amendment centennial mural should be female.

In addition to recruiting female muralists to apply for the 19th Amendment mural project, the partners also worked with Arts Huntsville to identify four goals for the project:

1. Honor the anniversary of the 19th amendment in Alabama
2. Celebrate the diverse fabric of our community
3. Inspire future civic engagement by all citizens
4. Encourage interaction and social media sharing

All four of these project goals are woven into the final mural.

WHO IS THE ARTIST AND HOW WAS THE ARTIST SELECTED?

Arts Huntsville released a project Request For Quote (RFQ) in April 2020 via the national public art online application site Call For Entry (CaFE). The 19th Amendment mural project RFQ specifically targeted female artists in the southeastern United States. The deadline for artists to submit their qualifications and statement of interest was May 10, 2020. Working in partnership with representatives from the Alabama Women's Caucus for Art, three finalists were selected based on the following criteria:

- Demonstration of artistic excellence by maintaining high quality, innovation, creativity, and clarity of vision in the project proposal and sketch
- Demonstrated ability to collaborate with community stakeholders
- Enthusiasm for the project and ability to celebrate and inspire past and future milestones in voting rights and civic engagement
- A positive track record of delivering quality projects on schedule and on budget, as determined by past work and references from previous clients

The selected finalists submitted their mural proposals on June 12, 2020 in response to the project Request For Proposal (RFP).

The Huntsville Public Art Committee reviewed the proposal submissions and selected Nashville-based muralist Kimberly Radford for the project. A former art teacher, Radford transitioned to a career as a full-time professional artist in 2012. In recent years, the scale of her mural work has stretched across buildings in Nashville and Middle Tennessee. Radford's primary inspiration begins with the project goals and then often includes elements of folk art, pop art, and textiles from the 60's & 70's. Radford's most recent projects can be seen using the hashtag #kimradfordart on Instagram.

Radford's website: kimradfordart.com

WHAT IS THE MURAL'S FOCUS?

Radford's 19th Amendment mural design is inspired by the site's narrow dimensions and proximity to the tree growing on Washington Street. Radford's epic sized young girl is reaching high to share a neighborly drink with the tree. She is clothed in candy-colored fabric pieced together like a southern quilt, closely stitched to her surroundings. She blooms from a garden of enormous camellias, bold foliage, and stands tall on a nourished foundation of freedom fought & won by women and men long before her. On the ground level of the design, the girl looks to her future while honoring the past with a "Votes for Women" sash partially visible. The vibrant new Huntsville mural sets the stage for photo opportunities and social media sharing.

WHY IS AN AFRICAN AMERICAN GIRL IN A 19TH AMENDMENT MURAL WHEN AFRICAN AMERICANS DID NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE IN 1920?

This mural celebrates and honors the centennial anniversary of the 19th Amendment. While the young girl featured in Radford's mural is African American, she is an artistic representation of all the generations who have fought before her to have the right to vote. She serves as a symbol of nourishment as she waters the roots of the tree on the sidewalk in front of the mural. The tree is a symbolic representation of the roots of our community – which with her water will continue to nurture future generations.

If you allow your eyes to follow the mural from the top to the bottom you will see the watering can's messaging reflects the centennial anniversary of the right to vote. From there, your eyes fall on the "Vote" verbiage on the purple suffrage sash the young

girl is wearing. From there, your eyes travel to the "Huntsville" realizing the verbiage now reads "Vote Huntsville" as a call to civic action. From there your eyes flow to the bottom of the sash where you see "100" as a final reminder of the centennial anniversary of the 19th Amendment.

This is not a historical mural, but an artistic interpretation of the past 100 years. The young girl is symbolic of all the generations who have fought before her to have the right to vote. As a child, she is also the symbol for our future generations who we must continue to nurture and encourage to vote.

WHERE IS THE 19TH AMENDMENT MURAL LOCATED?

The mural is located on the north side of the Clinton Street Park. The three-story space faces Washington Ave and is located next to The Martin and directly across from Miller's Tavern. This mural is the first three-story mural in Huntsville.

WHEN WILL THE 19TH AMENDMENT MURAL BE FINISHED?

Radford will begin work on the mural project on Monday, July 20, 2020. Work on the mural will continue into mid-August. A mural dedication event is scheduled for Tuesday, August 18, 2020 @ 9am – the 100th anniversary of US ratification of the 19th Amendment.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE 19TH AMENDMENT CENTENNIAL AND OUR LOCAL HISTORY?

WEDC is currently building out a dedicated page on this topic on their brand new website:

wedchsv.org.

Until that site is launched, the Huntsville Madison County Public Library has compiled an incredible guide that offers an overview of the suffrage movements in Huntsville and Alabama and will connect you with resources pertaining to the 19th Amendment, the women's suffrage movement, and voting rights. **Find the Guide: <https://bit.ly/HMCPLsuffrageguide>**

WHAT IS THE TITLE OF THE MURAL?

The mural's title is: This Girl Can

The official hashtag of the mural for social media sharing is: **#ThisGirlCan**



ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

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