Women in Politics
and Public Life

**Women in the U.S. Senate:**
Women hold 20 (20%) of the 100 seats in the U.S. Senate

**Women in the U.S. House of Representatives:**
Women hold 84 (19.3%) of the 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives

**Women on the Supreme Court:**
3 (33%) of the 9 justices on the U.S. Supreme Court are women

**Women Cabinet Members:**
4 of 15 (27%) Cabinet members appointed by the President are women

**Women Governors:**
Women serve as Governor in 5 (10%) of the 50 United States

**Women in State Legislatures:**
In 2015 1,786 (24.2%) of the 7,383 state legislators in the United States were women.
Since 1971, the number of women serving in state legislatures has more than quintupled
(Source: Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey).

**In Missouri:**

1 of 2 U.S. Senators from MO is a woman:
   *Sen. Claire McCaskill (D)*

2 of 8 U.S. Representatives from MO are women:
   *Rep. Vicky Hartzler (R-Harrisonville)*
   *Rep. Ann Wagner (R-St. Louis)*

3 of 9 Missouri Supreme Court Judges are women:
   *Judge Laura Denvir Stith*
   *Judge Mary Rhodes Russell*
   *Judge Patricia Breckenridge*

**Source:** Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life ★ www.umsl.edu/sueshear
In the Missouri Legislature:

Currently, women hold 43 (25.76%) of the 163 seats in the Missouri House of Representatives and 6 (17.6%) of the 34 seats in the Missouri Senate.

In 2015, the Center for American Women in Politics ranked Missouri 25th among the states in the percentage of women in the state legislature.

In St. Louis-area Local Government:

In 2015 women held 2 (28.5%) of 7 seats on the St. Louis County Council and 0 of 7 seats on the St. Charles County Council.

In 2015 women held 11 (39%) of the 28 seats on the St. Louis Board of Aldermen. In 2012, the City of St. Louis elected their first African American and first female Treasurer, Tishaura Jones.

In 2015 women led 18 (20%) of the 90 municipalities in St. Louis County and 4 (23.5%) of 17 municipalities in St. Charles County. (Source: St. Louis County http://www.stlouisco.com/scripts/communities and the Sue Shear Institute)

Between 1972 and 2001, the number of women in the Missouri House quadrupled and the women in the Senate rose from 1 to 6. Currently, women account for 6 of the 34 state senators (15%), down from an all-time high of 8 in 2010. Prior to a string of resignations in early 2011, a record number 41 women (25%) served in the House of Representatives. In 2001, Missouri ranked 21st among the states for the percentage of women in its legislature. Missouri’s legislature is currently ranked 24th for women elected officials.

Women office holders have increased in the St. Louis County and St. Louis City legislative bodies. The first woman was elected to the 7-member St. Louis County Council in 1974. Following the 2006 election, women became the majority (4/7), but today the current number of Councilwomen serving is 3. The St. Louis Board of Aldermen now has 9 women among the 28 Aldermen. While women have served as Mayor and County Executive in the Kansas City area, these urban offices have yet to be occupied by a woman in the eastern part of the state. St. Charles is the largest municipality in this region lead by a woman, Mayor Sally Faith who succeeded a woman, Patty York. Comptroller Darlene Green is the highest ranking elected woman in the City of St. Louis.

About Sue Shear:

In 1972, Sue Shear, a Clayton homemaker in her 50s, was persuaded by a group of newly energized young women to run for an open seat in the Missouri legislature. Defying conventional wisdom, she won her election and became one of the 10 women in the House of Representatives in 1973. Some of these pioneering women went on to serve in the Missouri Senate, but Rep. Shear persevered in the House for a record 26 years, retiring in 1998. In recognition of her service, the Board of Curators of the University of Missouri System and the Missouri Legislature voted to name The Institute for Women in Public Life at the University of Missouri-St. Louis in her honor.