



1600 Pacific Highway, Room 352
 San Diego, CA 92101-2942

www.sdstatusofwomenandgirls.org
CSWG@sdcounty.ca.gov

Chairwoman: Kristine Custodio Suero

<p><u>Vice Chair</u> Kelly Jenkins-Pultz Rohida Khan Idara Ogunsaju</p> <p><u>District 4, Montgomery</u> <u>Steppe</u> Idara Ogunsaju Vacant</p>	<p><u>District 1, Vacant</u> Vacant Monica Martinez</p> <p><u>District 5, Desmond</u> Rohida Khan Amy Nantkes</p>	<p><u>District 2, Anderson</u> Mary Davis Vacant</p> <p><u>Members At Large</u> Kelly Jenkins-Pultz Vernita Gutierrez Amelia Tsering</p>	<p><u>District 3, Lawson-Remer</u> Kimberly Keen Kristine Custodio Suero</p> <p><u>Staff Assistant</u> Chiara Leroy <u>Senior Deputy County Counsel</u> Heather Murray</p>
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MINUTES
April 3, 2026
Regular Meeting
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Chair Custodio Suero Meeting was called to order at 12:08 PM.

Agenda item #1 – Commissioner Roll Call:

Members Present:

Monica Martinez	Mary Davis
Kristine Custodio Suero	Idara Ogunsaju
Rohida Khan	Amy Nantkes
Kelly Jenkins-Pultz	Vernita Gutierrez
Amelia Tsering	

Members Late:

Kimberly Keen	
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Agenda item #2 – Approval of Minutes: March 6, 2026
 Motion by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Tsering.
 Motion passes.

Agenda item #3 – Public Comments:
 None

Agenda item #4 – Guest Speaker: Athia Carrim, FGM Task Force
 Athia Carrim presented on Femail Genital Mutilation (FGM) – Dispelling the Myths – Attachment #1

Q&A followed the presentation.

Agenda item #5 – Committee Reports:

- a. Civic Engagement: VC Jenkins-Pultz – Provided an update.
- b. Governance: VC Khan – Provided an update.
- c. Policy: VC Ogunsaju – Provided an update.
- d. Executive: Chair Custudio Suero – Provided an update.

Agenda item #6 – OERJ Presentation & Updates

Director Taryell Simmons provided updates to the board:

1. Virtual Meetings – The next opportunity for the Commission to submit a request will be in September with potential implementation as early as December if approved.
2. Trainings – Chiara has been reviewing the training records and will reach out to each of you about any training needs.
3. Potential Collaboration Efforts – As you become aware of collaboration efforts that are in alignment with OERJ, please reach out as we would love to collaborate with the Commission.

Commissioner Keen wanted clarification if they are allowed as individuals to contact Mr. Simmons. County Counsel says yes, if quorum is not being held.

Agenda item #7 – 2026 U.N. Conference on the Commission on the Status of Women – Commissioner Nantkes

Public comment: Advocacy in Action - USD VIP Career Mixer attendee, Kylie Campo, introduced herself to the commission.

Commissioner Nantkes presented to the commission on her and her students' trip to the UN. – Attachment #2

Old Business:

Agenda item #8 – Vacancies & Appointments

- a. **Vacancies - Districts 2 (Anderson) & 4 (Montgomery Steppe)**
- b. **Appointments –District 1 (Aguirre) Daniela Perez**
 - Pending onboarding and orientation.

Chair Custudio Suero

Agenda item #9 – Update on the status of County staff's drafting of the board letter requesting approval of CSWG Bylaws revisions.

Chair Custudio Suero confirmed with Chaira that the draft Bylaws was submitted to the BOS, Chiara confirmed it was submitted and approved on March 24th 2026.

Agenda item # 10 – Further Debrief and updates on Status regarding CEDAW baseline analysis report
Pending OERJ updates.

Agenda item # 11 – 3/24/26 County of San Diego Board of Supervisors' Presentation to the Commission for CEDAW Advocacy

Chair Custudio Suero showed the board the Proclamation they received on March 24th, thanked the Office of Equity and Racial Justice for co-collaborating. It was discussed a group photo would occur after the meeting.

Agenda item #12 - Initiative Updates and Liaison Reports

- a. **CEDAW Advisor: Chair Emeritus, Parisa Ijadi-Maghsoodi**
No updates provided.
- b. **National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW): VC Kelly Jenkins-Pultz**
No updates provided.
- c. **Women's Hall of Fame: VC Kelly Jenkins-Pultz**
No updates provided.

Agenda item #13 – Annual Report for Board of Supervisors regarding Status Updates, Discussion and Submission

VC Kelly Jenkins-Pultz provided an update to the commission.

Agenda item #14 - Triton Consulting Group – Interest in Paid Family Leave Research Project

No updates provided.

Agenda item #15 - Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) Updates –

No updates provided.

Agenda item #16 – Collaborators/Partners of the Commission – Update on Selection Process & Information Gathering for Upcoming Events/Projects

- Board of Supervisors - 2026 Board of Supervisors Meeting Calendar – Interest & Availability for Attendance by Commissioners • 4/21/2026 – Annual County Volunteer Recognition Event (9 am) & General Legislative Session (10 am)
- 5/5/2026 – General Legislative Session (9 am)
- 5/19/2026 – General Legislative Session (9 am)
- 6/1/2026 – Budget Hearing: Recommended Budget Presentation & Community Feedback (12 pm)
- 6/9/2026 – General Legislative Session (9 am)
- 6/23/2026 – General Legislative Session/Budget Deliberations & Adoption (9 am)

VC Kelly Jenkins-Pultz informed the commission that for their next meeting held on May 1st, there will be a ‘No Day of Action’, CAC could be impacted by event attendees, suggests looking elsewhere to hold the meeting or for the meeting to be cancelled altogether.

Chiara will look at County Operations Center (COC) on Overland for a conference room. More to come.

New Business

Agenda item #17 – Chair/Commissioner Announcements

- 3/3/2026 Mesa College Human Rights Law Career Panel
- 3/3/2026 USD Business for Good VIP Career Mixer
- 3/7/2026 Silayan Filipina Women in Law Career Panel
- 3/9/2026 International Women’s Day (Consulate Generals) – Attachment #3
- 3/6-8/2026 Startup Weekend Women San Diego

Agenda item #18 – ADJOURNED: This meeting is closed at 1:06 PM.

NOTE: The Commission on the Status of Women and Girls jurisdiction is established by action of the Board of Supervisors as follows: The Board of Supervisors of the County of San Diego declares that it is the policy of the County to take action to identify needs and problems of women in the County that are affected by public policy decisions; and furthermore, to eliminate the practice of discrimination and prejudice on the basis of sex within the County. In order to promote this policy and to provide an open forum for discussion and action, there is hereby established a San Diego County Commission on the Status of Women in the Chief Administrative Office. County Code of Administrative Ordinances, Section 85.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Dispelling the Myths

Athia Carrim
Interfaith and Education Director
International Institute of Tolerance 2018

FGM: Dispelling the Myths- Rewiring the Brain

- What is FGM? What are the first thoughts that come to mind when you hear this term?
 - Barbaric: these communities have to be civilized and educated
 - Islamic: spread by religious belief of Islam only and raises ethical questions about Islamic beliefs and structure
 - Africa: only occurs here
 - Unknown: never heard of it in my culture therefore it's a foreign practice that must be destroyed or wiped out.

History of FGM

- The origins of FGC are a mystery. It is thought to have existed in ancient Egypt, Ethiopia, and Greece.⁶The practice transcends religion, geography, and socioeconomic status. Although FGC predates Islam, a small number of Muslims have adopted the practice as a religious requirement. As late as the 1960s, American obstetricians performed clitoridectomies to treat erotomania, lesbianism, hysteria, and clitoral enlargement.⁷
- There's no way of knowing the origins of FGM, it appears in many different cultures, from Australian aboriginal tribes to different African societies," medical historian David Gollaher, president and CEO of the California Healthcare Institute (CHI), and the author of "Circumcision," told Discovery News.
- Another assumption is that it originated in Egypt because of the term "pharaonic circumcision". While there's evidence of male circumcision in Old Kingdom Egypt, there is none for female. "This was not common practice in ancient Egypt. There is no physical evidence in mummies, neither there is anything in the art or literature. It probably originated in sub-Saharan Africa, and was adopted here later on," Salima Ikram, professor of Egyptology at the American University in Cairo.
- It is known to be practiced by Greeks on female slaves, Russians and South American tribes. It is also practiced by Jews, Catholics, Christian Copts, Muslims and Animists.

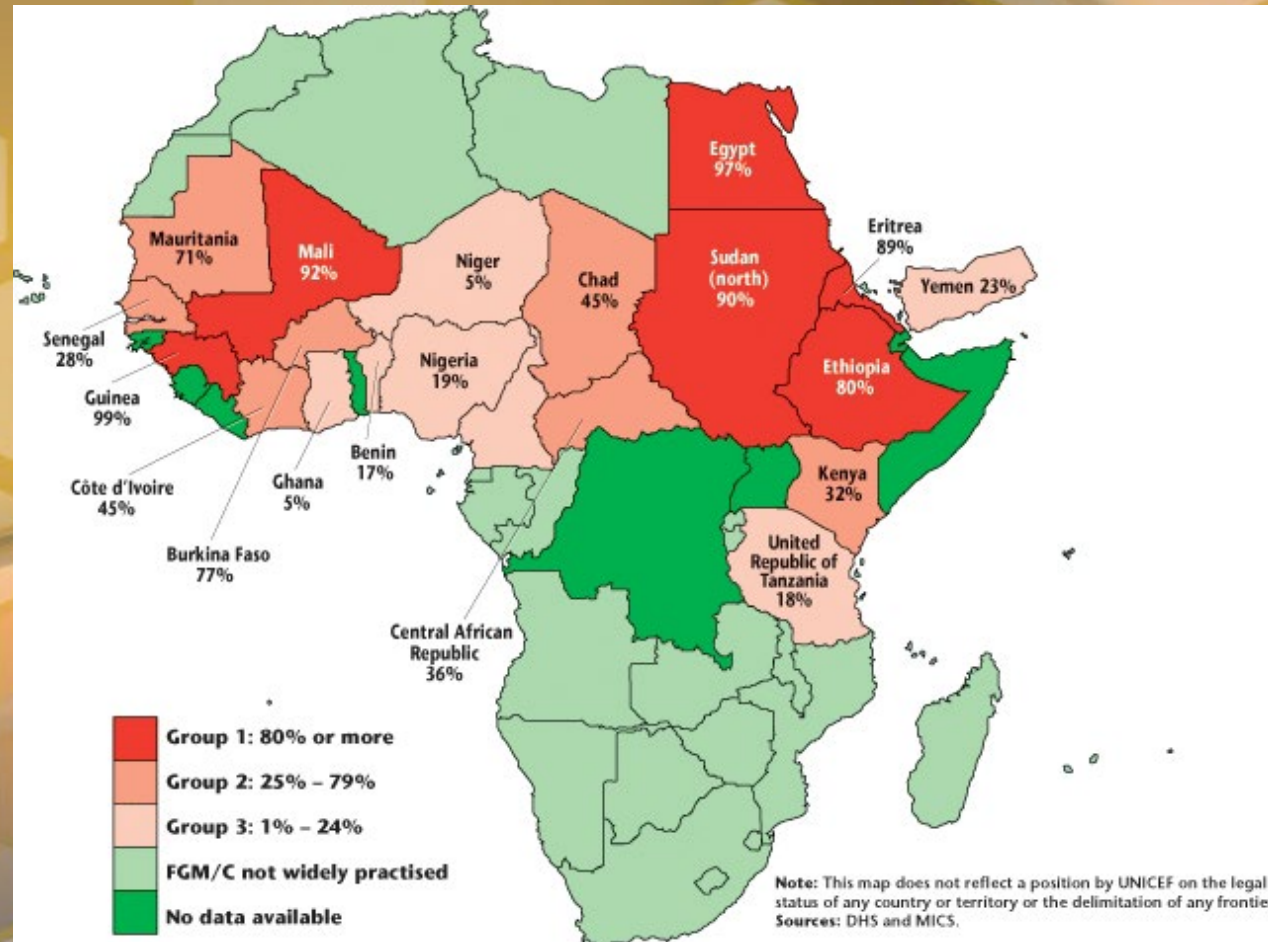
The Forgotten Practice of FGM in America

- The following six excerpt quotes are from actual American medical journals:
- **"...that the girl who becomes irritable, disagreeable and hysterical may become charming, interesting and possessed of all feminine graces when her prepuce[clitoral hood] is forcibly peeled away from the glans of the clitoris, and we have made a distinct step forward in civilization..."** [Is evolution trying to do away with the clitoris? Transactions of the American Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Vol. 5, 1892, pp. 288-302]
http://www.historyofcircumcision.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=50&Itemid=68
- **"I for one have circumcised as many girls as boys, and always with happy results."** [Circumcision of Girls. Journal of Orificial Surgery, Vol. 7, July 1898, pp. 31-33]
http://www.historyofcircumcision.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=51&Itemid=68
- **"Many neuroses and even psychoses have their origin in pathological conditions of the hood of the clitoris."** [Circumcision in the Female: Its Necessity and How to Perform It. American Journal of Clinical Medicine, Vol. 22, No. 6, June 1915, pp. 520-523]
<http://www.noharrrm.org/CircintheFemale.htm>
- **"Circumcision will relieve one of the greatest causes of masturbation"** [Why not circumcise the girl as well as the boy? Texas State Journal of Medicine, Vol. 14, May 1918, pp. 17-19]
http://www.historyofcircumcision.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=60&Itemid=68
- **"The same reasons that apply for the circumcision of males are generally valid when considered for the female."**[Circumcision of the Female. General Practitioner, Vol. 18 No. 3, September 1958, pp. 98-99]
<http://www.noharrrm.org/circumfemale.htm>
- **"If the husband is unusually awkward or difficult to educate, one should at times make the clitoris easier to find[by amputating the clitoral hood]."** [Female Circumcision: Indications and a New Technique General Practitioner, Vol. 20, No. 3, September 1959, pp. 115-120]
<http://www.noharrrm.org/femcirctech.htm>

FGM in America ??????



UNICEF Demographics: FMG 15-49 years





FGM is a complex multifaceted practice deeply rooted in a strong cultural and social framework. It is endorsed by the community and supported by loving parents with what is believed to be the best interests of a young girl at heart. FGM can only be understood within its cultural context, for in the societies where it is practiced - despite its harmful physical affects - FGM provides women with many social and cultural benefits.

The beliefs sustaining the practice of FGM vary greatly from one ethnic group to another, although there are many common themes. Caution needs to be made when addressing individuals because of its sensitivity.

A Persisting Practice

Parents who continue this practice are compassionate and loving. They believe that they are protecting their daughters from harm. Reasons that parents and practitioners give for the procedure include rite of passage, preserving chastity, ensuring marriageability, improving fertility, religious requirement, hygiene, and enhancing sexual pleasure for men.

Another significant factor in the continuation of the practice of FGM is the status and vested interests of circumcizors within affected communities. The role of circumcizors varies within the ethnic groups practicing FGM. In Somalia for instance, they have no special respect, while in West Africa they wield much power and have considerable status within traditional power structures. In Sierra Leone, the circumcizors are considered to be priestesses by their followers - they control the 'secret societies' and commonly have extended roles as counsellors and consultants in mother and child care. In Mali, they are often the gatekeepers of traditional power bases for women, feared and respected by women and the community at large. FGM is an irreplaceable source of revenue for the circumcizors and any challenge to FGM not only threatens this revenue, but is also perceived as an attack on the respected older women of the community.

The Role of Circumcizors



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Traditional Myths and Beliefs

- in areas where infant mortality is high and fertility so important, FGM is promoted as a pre-requisite for the cleanliness of a woman and the good health of her baby. (In practice however, infibulation has the opposite effect, compromising hygiene and causing an increased risk of infection, infertility, health complications and childbearing difficulties.)
- the Dogon and the Bambara of Mali, and the Mosi of Burkina Faso believe that the clitoris is dangerous during childbirth and can cause death when in contact with the baby's head
- amongst some communities the clitoris is thought to produce an offensive discharge and exude a foul odor
- in some areas of Ethiopia, there is the belief that if the female genitals are not excised they will grow and dangle between the legs like a man
- the Tagouna of the Ivory Coast believe that an unexcised woman cannot conceive
- in some countries such as Somalia, the external female genitals are considered dirty, ugly, and disfiguring. Infibulation is believed to produce a clean smooth skin surface that is desirable to touch
- in some cultures it is believed that the clitoris is a masculine feature which must be removed to create true femininity in women. Women who have not undergone FGM are believed to have characteristics thought to be only appropriate for men, such as sexual desire and promiscuity
- In the West it was a common practice to deal with mental illnesses among females
- Across the spectrum it was generally believed that a woman's sexual urges can be destroyed by this practice. What it shows is the extend of domination and control exercised by men over women in all societies irrespective of geography, belief or culture.

Dispelling Myths

Unknown In Scriptures

- The bible does not mention FGM. Despite the absence of scriptural support, women and girls within Christian communities, including in Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania, do undergo FGM. It has been found among Coptic Christians in Egypt, Orthodox Christians in Ethiopia, and Protestants and Catholics in Sudan and Kenya. A 2013 UNICEF report identified 17 African countries in which at least 10 percent of Christian women and girls aged 15–49 had undergone it. In Niger, for example, 55 percent of Christian women and girls had experienced it, against two percent of Muslim women and girls.
- The Beta Israel Jew of Ethiopia practice FGM.
- Widely practiced among Animists

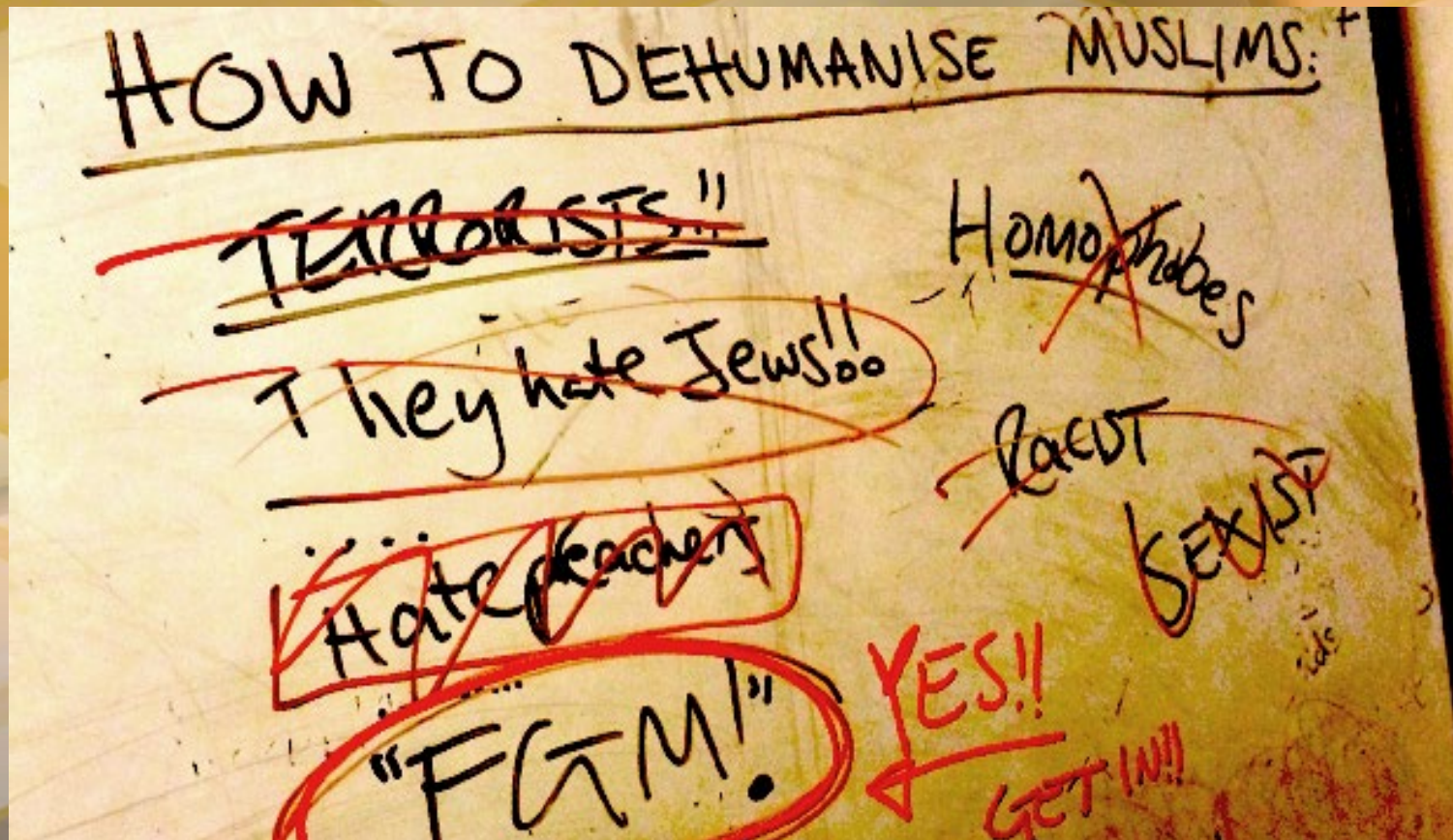
Islamic Responses

- In 2004 Grand Mufti of Egypt, Tantawi, declared the hadiths on FGM unreliable.
- In 2006 conference in Al-Azhar Uni.: Muslim clergy declare it unnecessary.
- In 2007 Al-Azhar Supreme Council of Islamic Research ruled : FGM “has no basis in core Islamic law/provisions & that its harmful & should not be practiced”.
- In 2012 Ihsanoglu, Sec.-Gen. of Organization of Islamic Cooperation :FGM is “A ritual that has survived over centuries & must be stopped as Islam does not support it”.
- Deputy chief Kadhi Rashid Ali Omar gives a press statement for FGM on 7th.May.2018“From the Islamic Law there is nothing called FGM and it prohibits the mutilation of any organ of a person and even of an animal,”.

How do We Deal with FGM: Rewiring the Mind

- Education: One of the most powerful phenomena to deal with a practice that has been embedded in the psyche for thousands of years. In many cultures it's the foundation upon which the family structure exists. What is the best way to tackle this?
- Cultural Relevancy: FGM is practiced in diverse cultures across diverse lands. In cities the practice is unknown when compared to remote communities in the same country. How much is understood about this diversity?
- Support Network: How effective is the support network for victims who experience alienation, expulsion, hopelessness and fear? What protection can you offer besides litigation?
- Bias & stereotyping cultures & individuals: How to empower & embrace victims/communities by overcoming personal prejudices?

It's Time to Dispel the Myth & Rewire the Brain



References

- Female Genital Mutilation: Information for Health & Child Protection Professionals. www.fgm.co.nz
- Involuntary Foreskinectomy Awareness. Sites.google.com/site/completebaby/female
- Female Genital Cutting: A Persisting Practice. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
- FGM National Clinical Group- Historical & Cultural. www.fgmnationalgroup.org
- Female Genital Mutilation : An Islamic Perspective. <http://www.minaret.org/fgm-pamphlet.htm>

JESSICA DEYOUNG
LAINE MORAES
DR. AMY NANTKES

PRESENTATION TO
THE SAN DIEGO
COUNTY
COMMISSION ON
THE STATUS OF
WOMEN AND GIRLS
APRIL 4, 2026



United Nations 70th

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN



CEDAW *and* LOCALITIES

THE COMMITMENT TO ADOPT CEDAW AS LAW IN CITIES AND COUNTIES IN THE UNITED STATES IS STRONGER THAN EVER



NGO CSW FORUM 70

**FROM COMMITMENT TO IMPACT:
DRAFTING AND IMPLEMENTING
LOCAL CEDAW LEGISLATION**

March 9, 2026

CEDAW Rising  **UNA-USA**
Southern California Division

Moderator: Jenni Prisk
Chair, CEDAW Rising
Advisory Board



Jenni Prisk, CEDAW Rising
Jessica DeYoung & La...
Mary Hansel (CEDAW...
Amy Nantkes
Chelsea Mutual, CEDA...
Makanani Gomes
Roya Azizi
Colleen Cook



HOW OUR CSWG CAN ADVANCE

Gender Equality



- **STRENGTHEN NETWORKS**
- **HIGHLIGHT ALIGNMENT**
- **EDUCATE VIA SOCIAL MEDIA**
- **SHARE ANALYSIS RESULTS WIDELY**
- **RECONVENE STAKEHOLDERS IN PLANNING PHASE**
- **MONTHLY PUBLIC COMMUNICATION ON IMPLEMENTATION**

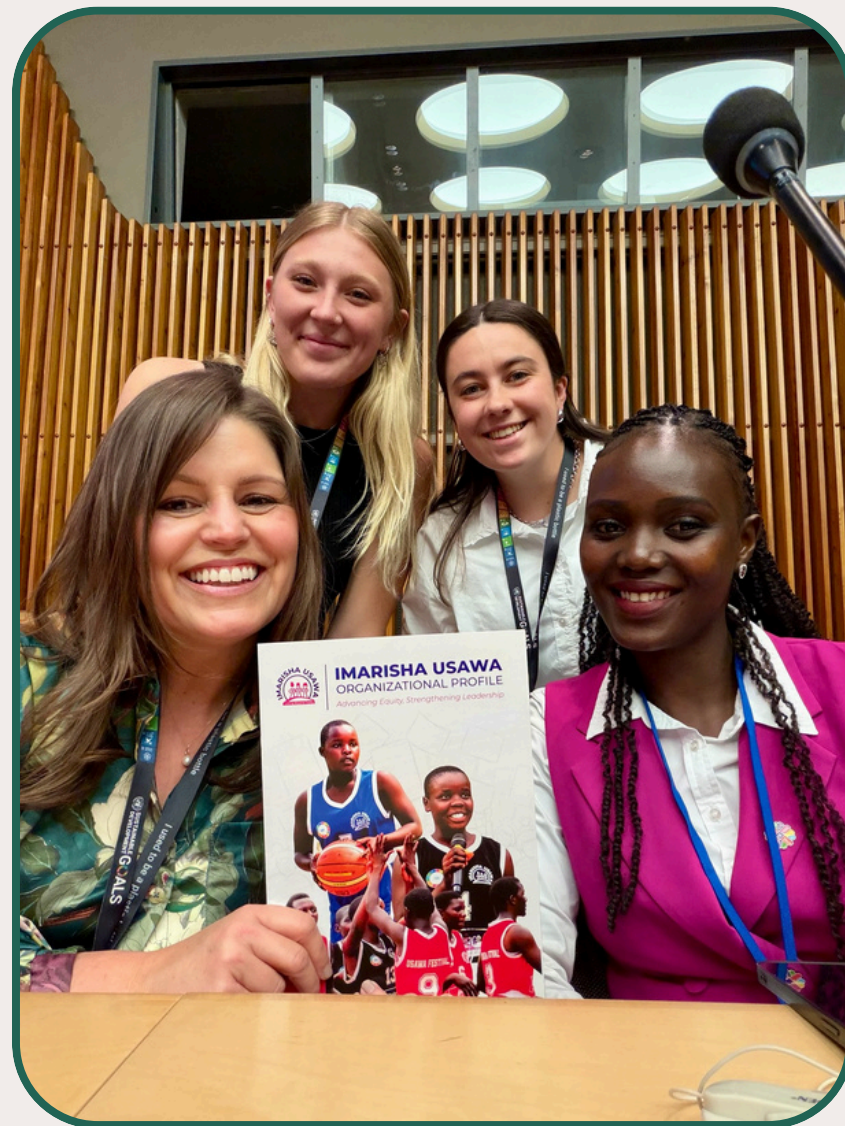
EDUCATION AND YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

WOMEN HAVE AND WILL CONTINUE TO LEAD NATIONS, SHAPE POLICIES, AND INFLUENCE GLOBAL CHANGE

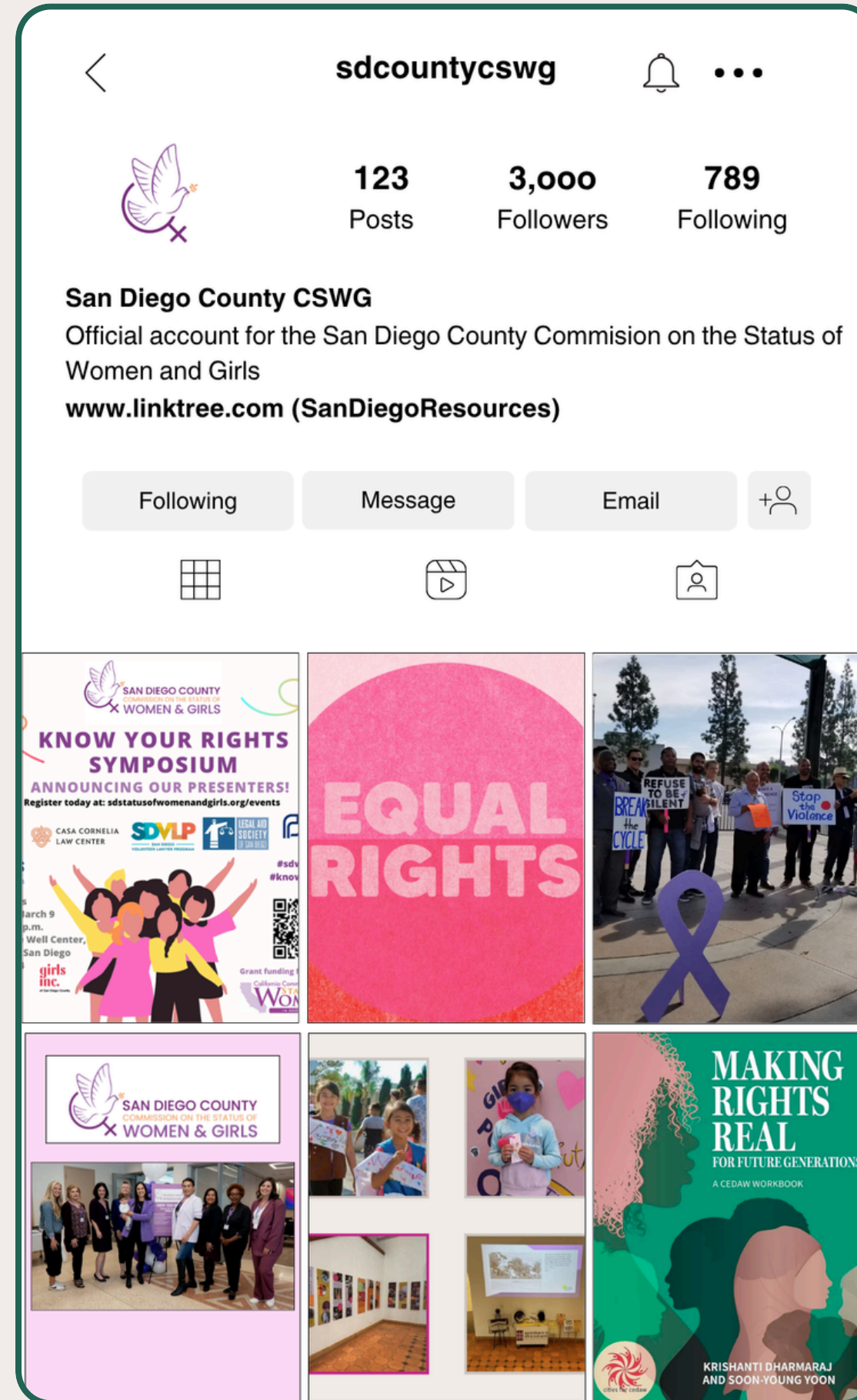


ROLE OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

YOUNG PEOPLE CAN CHALLENGE OUTDATED STEREOTYPES AND PROMOTE INCLUSIVITY.



STUDENTS CAN ADVOCATE FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.



SOCIAL MEDIA CAN BE USED RESPONSIBLY TO SPREAD POSITIVE MESSAGES ABOUT EQUALITY.

EMPOWERED YOUTH CAN BUILD A SOCIETY BASED ON FAIRNESS AND RESPECT.

FUTURE LEADERS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO CREATE INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES AND COMMUNITIES.

ENGAGING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

with CSOYG

- COALITION BUILDING
- ENGAGING LOCAL UNIVERSITIES: SDSU, USD, UCSD, PLNU
- FORMAL YOUTH/YOUNG PROFESSIONAL BODIES
- RESERVING SEATS



HOW CEDAW CAN IMPACT SAN DIEGO

Housing Services



- **EVICTION GENDER DISPARITY**
- **SAN DIEGO COUNTY AS A SERVICE PROVIDER - HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**
- **PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED WITH GENDER PERSPECTIVE**

CELEBRATING

Women and Girls

ADVANCING EQUALITY

