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Emerge Wisconsin Alumnae Increases to Eight in the State Legislature

Madison – Emerge Wisconsin is proud that as of today, there are eight Emerge Wisconsin alumnae serving in the State Legislature. Five alumnae - Senator Nikiya Harris (Class of 2011), Representative Dianne Hesselbein (Class of 2009), Representative La Tonya Johnson (Class of 2012), Representative Melissa Sargent (Class of 2012) and Representative Mandy Wright (Class of 2012) – join returning alumnae - Representatives Penny Bernard Schaber (Class of 2007), Jill Billings (Class of 2011) and JoCasta Zamarripa (Class of 2010).

"As the first Emerge Wisconsin Alumna to serve in the State Legislature, I am excited that in just 4 short years, our numbers in Madison have grown from one to eight Emerge Alumnae. I look forward to our numbers growing as more women take that step and run for office." State Representative Penny Bernard Schaber, Emerge Advisor and Alumna Class of 2007.

Emerge has trained 100 Democratic women across the state of Wisconsin. Their seventh class begins at the end of January. Alumnae have run for and serve in a wide range of offices including Village Trustee, School Board, County Board and State Legislature.

"The increase of Emerge alumnae in the legislature is indicative of the increase of Emerge alumnae running for and winning office at both the state and local level. We expect these numbers to increase at all levels of government as we continue to train more Democratic women to run for office." Wendy Strout, Emerge Wisconsin Executive Director.

Launched in 2007, Emerge is the only organization in Wisconsin that provides Democratic women with the comprehensive training they need to achieve their political aspirations. Emerge Wisconsin is part of Emerge America, a national movement and premier training program that addresses the under-representation of women in office at the local, state, and federal level. There are Emerge affiliates in twelve states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, and Wisconsin. Emerge was founded to create a legion of Democratic women leaders for generations to come.

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