



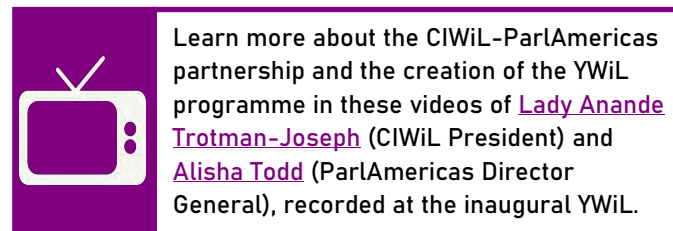
YOUNG WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP—ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

In October and November of 2020, 41 young women leaders from across Antigua and Barbuda took part in Young Women in Leadership – Antigua and Barbuda ([#YWiLAB](#)), an in-depth training programme on transformational leadership, inclusive decision-making, and parliamentary procedure convened by [ParlAmericas](#), [Caribbean Women in Leadership](#) (CIWiL), and the [Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda](#).

YWiLAB was the second in a series of national-level initiatives to be implemented across the Caribbean specifically to foster young women's interest in public leadership. The programme is designed to support these leaders in building knowledge, skills, and networks necessary for their work as current and future changemakers. The first YWiL was hosted in [Trinidad and Tobago](#) in March 2020.

The initiative in Antigua and Barbuda consisted of three parts:

- A series of foundational training sessions on the programme's core themes
- A workshop to further enhance participants' understanding, skills, and ability to engage in different forms of leadership through the sharing of good practices with other women leaders
- Simulated parliamentary debates in the House of Representatives and the Senate



ONLINE TRAINING SESSION

Parliamentary procedure

See the following resources for information on parliaments:

- [Agora Portal for Parliamentary Development](#)
- [Glossary of Citizenship and Democracy Terms](#) (Caribbean Elections)

The first YWiLAB virtual training session focused on parliamentary procedure in order to support participants in their preparations for the YWiL Parliamentary Sitting, and as part of the programme's overall objective of encouraging young women's interest in the pursuit of public leadership.

Led by a distinguished panel of women parliamentarians and parliamentary authorities, the session provided a comprehensive introduction to the work of the legislature, and the critical role of the parliament and parliamentarians in a democracy and in national development:

- The Honourable Alincia Williams Grant, President of the Senate, opened the session with remarks on the importance of women's participation in national legislatures for the institution's effective functioning in its representative role, as well as international frameworks and national efforts that seek to advance women's political participation in Antigua and Barbuda.
- Senator the Honourable Shawn Nicholas presented an overview of the composition of the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda, as well as an introduction to the [Standing Orders](#) that lay out the rules for the conduct of proceedings in each legislative chamber.
- Senator the Honourable Maureen Hyman-Payne shared in greater depth on the structure of the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda as a bicameral institution, explaining how the system functions, its history, and the role of the [constitution](#) in defining the parliament's structure.

"A greater gender balance in politics that reflects the diversity of our societies is a crucial goal for all of our global society. It is an issue of democratic representation. It is simply not fair that more than half of our citizens are not adequately represented within the highest constitutional institution: the parliament."

— The Honourable Alincia Williams Grant,
President of the Senate of Antigua and Barbuda



ONLINE TRAINING SESSION

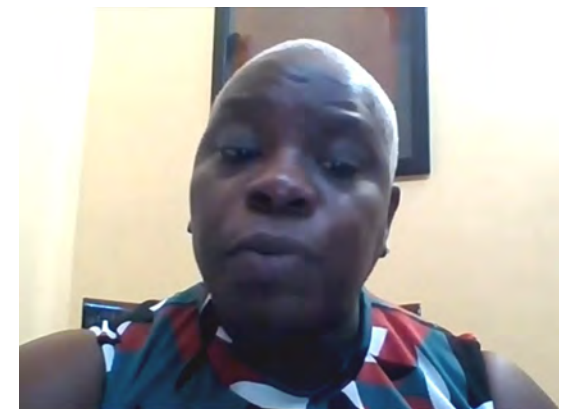
Parliamentary procedure (cont'd)

- Mrs. Ramona Small, legislative advisor and former Clerk of Parliament, explained some of the roles of the auxiliary team members who support the functioning of the legislature; her remarks covered the clerk, the deputy clerk, sergeant-at-arms and the mace, and the editing officer.
- The Honourable Samantha Marshall, M.P. and Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Barbuda Affairs, highlighted the importance of parliamentary dialogue for the functioning of democracy; she explained that legislative debates are a crucial time for representatives to give voice to members of their constituency, and that parliamentary sittings also provide opportunities for transparency and accountability as legislators have a chance to ask questions of the executive.
- Senator the Honourable Gail Christian provided guidance to participants on taking part in a legislative debate, including how sittings flow in practice and how to frame and deliver a parliamentary intervention. She also explained the full trajectory of a bill in passing through the chambers before becoming law.
- Ms. Alison Peters, Clerk of Parliament, concluded the presentations by walking participants through the provisions of the Standing Orders that would be pertinent to their participation in the YWiL Parliamentary Sitting.

Participants then had an opportunity to engage with the esteemed panel. In addition to seeking further information on the frameworks presented and how parliament functions, the exchange explored speakers' journeys into parliamentary work and processes for preparing debate interventions.

International frameworks related to gender equality and women's political participation:

- [The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action \(1995\)](#)
- [The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women \(1979\)](#)
- [The Sustainable Development Goals \(2015\)](#)



ONLINE TRAINING SESSION

Transformational leadership

The second virtual training session focused on transformational leadership, which is the leadership model that forms the basis of CIWiL's flagship training programme and underlies the YWiL programme. The session was led by Dr. Rosina Wiltshire, Treasurer of the CIWiL Board of Directors, with support from Ms. Janice Sutherland, Chair of the CIWiL Antigua and Barbuda National Chapter, and also featured opening remarks by Senator the Honourable Aziza Lake.

This session provided participants with an introduction to the principles of the transformational leadership approach, its importance in the context of women's leadership, and how this form of leadership helps to achieve positive change for, and in service of, all of society through its focus on restructuring harmful systems that create and uphold inequalities. Dr. Wiltshire emphasized that leadership is not a position you hold, but an everyday practice that begins with the self.

To begin to put this approach into action, participants engaged in dialogues and exercises to reflect on their values, visions, and strengths and weaknesses as leaders, as well as some of the actions that can be taken to address the root causes of inequality.



Transformational leadership is defined as a leadership approach that contributes to change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change and enhances the motivation, morale, and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms.

The model of transformational leadership starts at the level of individual transformation, before moving on to the group and institutional levels. It fosters a culture of accountability, justice, and transparency.

When applied to gender and leadership, this process leads to the redefinition of gender and power relations, and the strengthening of leadership that is bold and innovative and builds on the skills of women and men in society thereby enhancing gender equality.

Learn more on [CIWiL's website](#).

ONLINE TRAINING SESSION

Applying a gender lens in decision-making

Adopting an inclusive approach to the consideration of legislative and policy issues – and the preparation of subsequent responses – is critical for decision-makers. Applying a gender perspective in developing solutions will help to ensure that these are responsive to the unique experiences of all individuals, avoiding “one-size-fits-all” thinking, and are particularly sensitive to the needs of under-represented or historically marginalized groups. When applied by legislators, this contributes to creating a legal framework that works in favour of as many people as possible and the implementation of actions that proactively respond to and redress inequalities.

Learn more in this handout on [gender sensitivity in legislation](#).

Benefits of inclusive decision-making

- Results in legislation and programming that is more responsive to public needs
- Strengthens public trust
- Helps to correct systemic inequalities
- Supports the achievement of national gender policies, development plans, and international commitments
- Can result in more efficient use of limited resources

Can you think of other benefits?

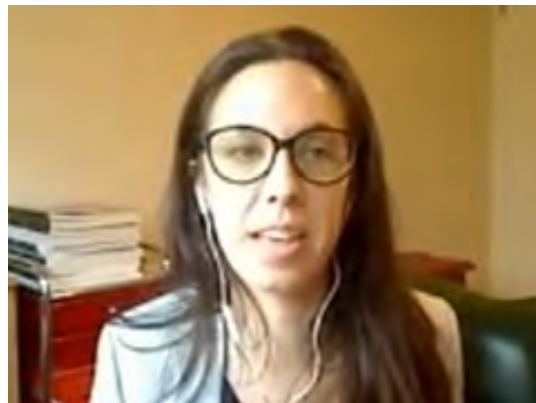
Type them in the chat ...



The final virtual session guided participants through discussions and exercises on applying a gender lens in decision-making, led by Ms. Lisane Thirsk, Deputy Director for Gender Equality and Communications at ParlAmericas, and Ms. Crista Daniel, Gender and Communications Officer at CIWiL. Opening remarks were shared by Senator the Honourable Knacyntar Nedd.

The session began with an introduction to key concepts related to gender and diversity, as well as critical discussions around norms and stereotypes, to serve as a foundation for identifying the gender dimensions of issues. Also emphasized in the session was the need to consider other identity factors and how these can interact with gender to impact an individuals' life experiences, stemming from long-standing systems of discrimination and inequality. Participants then took part in a power walk exercise to further think through these concepts at an individual level before applying such thinking to the examination of social issues on the population.

The session concluded with focused attention on the importance of adopting this approach in developing policy and legislation. Tools for supporting this analysis – including disaggregated data sources and qualitative studies – were also shared.



LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

DAY 1

On November 19 and 20, a two-part leadership workshop provided an opportunity for further exploration of topics covered in the virtual sessions, exchange on effective strategies to adopt in leadership work, and experience applying learning on parliamentary procedure before the YWiL Sitting.



The first day of the workshop opened with remarks by representatives of each of the organizing partners and was facilitated by Ms. Janice Sutherland, Chair of the CIWiL Antigua and Barbuda National Chapter (CIWiLAB), with support from Ms. Calisha Spencer, CIWiLAB Treasurer. The programme then consisted of panels of women leaders from various sectors sharing their knowledge and guidance in areas of important skill development, as well as engaging in rich dialogue with participants in response to points of interest.



"I trust at the end of today's session you will be even more enthusiastic to serve, and will be even better equipped to understand the factors that one should take into account in order to build better communities. I look forward to that flame I saw in all of you at orientation being set ablaze and welcome the prospect of basking in the fruits of your passion in a transformed Antigua and Barbuda."

- The Honourable Alincia Williams Grant, President of the Senate of Antigua and Barbuda



"Today I am very encouraged that, coming out of this engagement, you young women of Antigua and Barbuda will join the already evolving cadre of transformational leaders that are rising up in what may seem to be a soft revolution of women's activism... Because, together, we can really realize the culture shift towards gender equality that is required."

- Lady Anande Trotman-Joseph, President of CIWiL



"We understand the need for inclusiveness when we speak of women, and an important aspect of that inclusion is the views of young women. That explains the "why" of you being the focus of this initiative. Regardless of your individual aspirations - be it parliament, be it local or community level, be it in your homes - each represents an opportunity for positive change."

- The Honourable Bridgid Annisette-George, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago and Member of the ParlAmericas Board of Directors

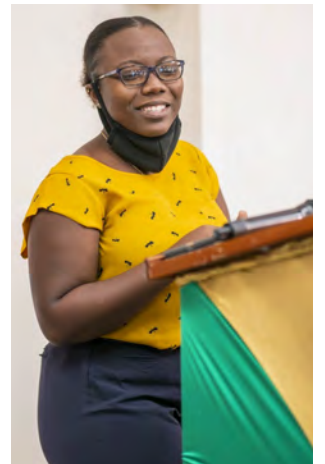


Building supportive communities and partnerships

A focus of the YWiL programme is on transformational leadership, inclusive decision-making, and leadership as service. As a reflection of that, the first panel, moderated by Senator the Honourable Bakesha Francis-James, Vice-Chair of CIWiLAB, focused on how to building meaningful relationships and partnerships to support participants' in their leadership journeys, but also provide mechanisms for sustainable community engagement that can inform their work and projects.

- Senator the Honourable Shenella Govia opened the panel by advocating the necessity of partnerships in leadership work – a point echoed by all of the session's presenters; she shared some of her guiding principles for working collaboratively and the ways in which she establishes and maintains relationships.
- Senator the Honourable Shawn Nicholas spoke about the ways in which partnerships contribute to leaders' abilities to broaden their thinking and achieve positive results for broader groups of people, emphasizing the importance of clear and ongoing communications in these endeavours.
- Ms. Sheila Roseau, UNFPA Country Representative in Namibia, provided practical guidance on building and drawing on your networks, and discussed the need for leaders to also support others in their success as a key component of relationship building and as an investment in women's leadership in particular.
- Ms. Amina Doherty, Director of the Caribbean Women's Voice and Leadership Program of The Equality Fund, offered valuable advice on resource mobilization – which she clarified includes but is not limited to funding – and stepping into leadership as your whole, authentic self.





Effective communications

Developing messaging and sharing perspectives effectively in different mediums and spaces is essential as a leader. During this session, moderated by communications consultant and former minister and parliamentarian Dr. Jacqui Quinn, women leaders in various sectors of the communications field shared learning to support participants in strengthening their own skills in these areas.


- Ms. Chaneil Imhoff, Public Relations Officer of CIWiLAB, focused her remarks on communications strategies for women in leadership and politics, with a particular emphasis on the importance of developing a personal brand; she emphasized that this includes your online presence and materials, but also extends to what causes you champion and who people know you to be.
- Ms. Mickel Brann-Challenger, journalist and communications specialist, shared with participants on her career in media and provided practical strategies to employ when leading in this sphere or other workplaces, and for engaging with the media to promote your work.
- Ms. Sarah-Anne Gresham, Co-founder of [Intersect](#), presented a case study on the collective's work to demonstrate the power of social media and online spaces for advocating for gender justice and transformative justice and offered good practices for digital advocacy drawing on Intersect's experience.



Transformational leadership

The first day of the workshop concluded with exercises, led by Dr. Rosina Wiltshire, that built on the transformational leadership session. YWiL participants were encouraged to consider their own leadership approaches and strengths, their goals for making a positive impact and in their communities and country, and to plan strategic actions in the short, medium, and long term for meeting these objectives.



 Shavani Stewart
YWiLAB



Shavani Stewart "BE WHO YOU NEEDED WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER"

In the month of November, I was chosen to participate in [@_ciwil](#)'s Young Women in Leadership (YWiL): Antigua Chapter. I've always wanted to become an example to my succeeding generation but that was constantly overshadowed by my fears of public speaking and projecting my voice. During the programme, I was put in uncomfortable situations to allow for my growth and I'm forever thankful. Without the guidance of my fellow women leaders locally, regionally and internationally, the drive to build my confidence wouldn't have sparked. The programme ended with a contribution in Parliament to which I presented as the Hon. Shavani S. Stewart."

LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP DAY 2



The second day of the leadership workshop took place at Parliament and was a practical session focused entirely on supporting participants in their preparations for the YWiL Sitting. Participants received briefings from President Williams Grant and other legislative authorities on parliamentary procedure, and then took part in mock sittings of their respective chambers. The YWiL parliamentarians were able to practice their contributions and received individualized feedback and coaching on the content and delivery of their statements.



YWiL PARLIAMENTARY SITTINGS



Watch the House of Representatives Sitting here ([part 1](#), [part 2](#)) and the Senate Sitting [here](#).
Footage courtesy of Antigua/Barbuda Broadcasting Services (<http://abstvradio.com/>).

On November 23, the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda hosted debates in both the House of Representatives and the Senate as part of the YWiL Parliamentary Sitting, representing the first all-women sitting in the country's history. YWiL participants served as parliamentarians and officers of the parliament in both chambers for debates on a budget amendment bill developed through a simulated gender-responsive budgeting process.

The simulated bill proposed fund reallocations in line with the following gender equality priorities:

- Promoting gender equality through education,
- Continuing improvements to police responses to gender-based violence, and
- Strengthening food security and climate change resilience for small-scale women farmers.

To achieve these goals, the bill proposed increases or reductions in the budgets of the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment; the Ministry of Social Transformation, Human Resource Development and Youth and Gender Affairs; the Ministry of Tourism and Economic Development; the Ministry of Information, Broadcasting, Telecommunications and Information Technology; the Attorney General's Office and Ministry of Legal Affairs, Public Safety and Labour; and the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology.

“The Council of Europe defines gender budgeting as a ‘gender based assessment of budgets incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality’.

The purpose of Gender Budgeting is threefold:

1. to promote accountability and transparency in fiscal planning;
2. to increase gender responsive participation in the budget process, for example by undertaking steps to involve women and men equally in budget preparation;
3. to advance gender equality and women's rights.”

Source: [Gender Budgeting](#) (European Institute for Gender Equality 2019, pg. 3)



Annetta Jackson
YWiLAB



Annetta Jackson "Sometimes I do serious things and I am grateful for every opportunity."

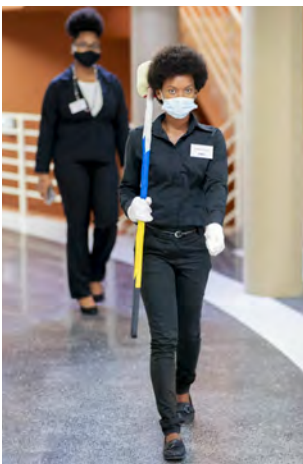
It felt good to sit in the seat where decisions are made. It felt even better to speak in the house where voices are heard. I am taking up space.


'I am deliberate and afraid of nothing' (Audre Lorde)"



YWiL parliamentarians' contributions offered their perspectives on the priorities established and the proposed resource allocations in alignment with their assigned constituencies and portfolios. Interventions further took the COVID-19 context into consideration in their assessment of whether the funding shifts would support national progress in addressing key issues of gender inequality in the country. Participants made effective use of research and guidance from peers and other experts, resulting in an engaging, thought-provoking, and intelligent debate.





 Chaneil Imhoff
YWiLAB



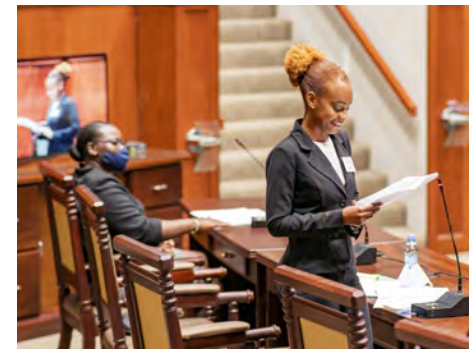
Chaneil Imhoff "As a Young Woman in Politics, today's proceedings in Parliament are making my heart soar. I am sitting in the gallery and I am amazed by the confidence and knowledge that the young women of YWIL are exhibiting.

Today, they are making history as the first all female sitting of Parliament in Antigua and Barbuda and I am extremely proud.

I am seeing the future.
The future is bright.
The future is female."



Following the votes in each chamber, the programme concluded with the presentation of certificates to all participants by Ms. Sutherland and President Williams Grant.



The following are examples of key learning participants reported as having gained from the YWiL programme that they will apply in their ongoing leadership pursuits:

- I have gained the courage to come out from the background and speak up.
- One piece of advice that I will hold on to is to stay steadfast in what I want, what I believe in, and what I feel passionate about if compromise is not an option. Sometimes it's perfectly okay to say no; because how good is your yes, if you can't say no?
- Gender-responsive budgeting is one strategy that stood out to me as its application is a practical approach in reducing gender inequality.
- Interdependence not independence! I can't do it by myself so I will be opting for the collective over individual strategies in my pursuit.
- A specific strategy that I would apply in my pursuit is to create your own part to public leadership, don't wait for anyone to open any doors for you.
- Equality isn't demanding more rights, opportunities and responsibilities for women and less for men; instead it is a leveled playing field filled with equal treatment, rights and opportunity for all persons of different sex, gender, race, religious group, sexual orientation and nationality.
- Networking and building meaningful relationships on our leadership journeys.
- Being accountable for my actions.
- It is essential for me to always apply a gender perspective in everything I do because I aim to ensure that the unique experiences of every individual are responded to and catered to as a leader.



Ischikelle Corbin
YWiLAB



Ischikelle Corbin "Recently, I participated in a historic all-female mock sitting of parliament, which concluded the weeks of training with [@_ciwil](#) [@ciwilab](#) and the Parliament of Antigua in support of Young Women in Leadership.

This opportunity will forever be one of my greatest. I am thankful to have been chosen to participate in such an empowering initiative.

I was given the challenge to contribute as Leader of the Opposition, and I must say it was amazing. Being in an arena where you can share your concerns on issues and have your voice be heard is an extraordinary experience.

I am thankful to Caribbean Women in Leadership, ParlAmericas, and the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda for creating platforms for young women to be voices for change. Thank you to every one who assisted my preparation, guided and kept me motivated.

This is just the beginning."

Inspired by their participation in YWiLAB, the young women leaders planned next steps for taking positive action in their communities, sharing their learning, and continuing their leadership development.

Some of the commitments adopted included:

- Actively affirming their own capabilities and pursuing further growth opportunities
- Applying learning gained in their daily life and work, and sharing this with others through various mediums
- Raising awareness on themes of interest and actively sharing their perspectives
- Engaging in legislative work, including by running for office or seeking Senate appointment
- Volunteering/joining community groups
- Starting a new organization or initiative to empower and support young people, and especially young women
- Undertaking research to understand community needs and how they can contribute, including through consultations with other youth
- Encouraging other women to pursue leadership and providing an example
- Networking and connecting with other leaders to make strategic partnerships, including with other YWiLers



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CIWiL and ParlAmericas also wish to recognize and extend thanks to:

- the members of the YWiLAB Selection Committee,
- the YWiLTT peer mentors,
- the panellists and facilitators who shared their knowledge and time, and
- the numerous organizations and individuals who promoted the event and its recruitment process.

Each of these contributions was essential to helping to make this historic event such a success.



ABOUT CIWiL AND PARLAMERICAS



Caribbean Women in Leadership

[Caribbean Women in Leadership \(CIWiL\)](#) is a non-political, multi-partisan, and independent NGO established to monitor, strengthen and increase women's political participation and leadership in the region through advocacy, networking, research and capacity building initiatives.

CIWiL aims to create a sustainable, effective, and efficient women's leadership base, and to achieve gender equality, through advocacy, networking, research and capacity building.

CIWiL is about creating a space of sharing, nurturing, and solidarity among women across the many gaps that divide us.

The mission of CIWiL is to be a flagship organization to support efforts to increase the number of women in politics, leadership and decision-making at all levels in the Caribbean through high-quality training, networking, research, analysis and advocacy.

CIWiL acts as a coordinating and implementing mechanism for a regional programme of work developed and delivered by a network of organizations and individuals, to advance women's transformational leadership.



[ParlAmericas](#) is the institution that promotes parliamentary diplomacy in the inter-American system. Composed of the 35 national legislatures in North, Central and South America, and the Caribbean, ParlAmericas promotes cooperative political dialogue, facilitates the exchange of good legislative practices, and produces tailored resources to support parliamentarians in their work. The International Secretariat of ParlAmericas is headquartered in Ottawa, Canada.

Through its gender equality programming, ParlAmericas promotes gender mainstreaming in parliamentary agendas and operations and, in close collaboration with civil society partners, advances women's political leadership, including that of the next generation of empowered women leaders.

YWiLAB was hosted as part of the ParlAmericas-CIWiL joint project, "[Strengthening Women's Political Leadership in the Caribbean](#)," supported by the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada.