



AREZOO NAJIBZADEH

Young Woman of Distinction

Arezoo Najibzadeh is a rising voice for women's civic and political participation in Canada. As co-founder of the Young Women's Leadership Network (YWLN), she works with young women leaders and civic institutions to identify and address barriers to young women's engagement and success within grassroots and institutional politics.

Since its inception in 2017 YWLN has been dedicated to building leadership capacity among Black, Indigenous, and racialized young women and gender-diverse youth. YWLN has also helped more than 500 young women and non-binary leaders realize their own potential to drive change and has provided professional development to 120 young leaders.

The focus of Arezoo's work is redefining the role of young women and girls in politics, as well as the relationship between sexual violence, public safety and women's civic engagement. She advocates for intersectional, anti-racist and anti-oppressive policies while providing tools to civic organizations that aim to be harassment-free spaces.

A watershed moment in Arezoo's career came in 2018 when she established 'It's Time,' a set of survivor-centric, trauma-informed resources for addressing sexual violence in political institutions. This project has provided training to more than 100 politicians, political staff, and volunteers on creating consent culture within campaigns and in legislatures.

As a resounding voice for issues impacting young women and girls, Arezoo is regularly consulted to lend her expertise and perspective. Most recently, she was on the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women, the World Forum for Democracy, and the Platform Women Convention.

In addition to her work at YWLN, Arezoo is a 2020 fellow at the Muslim Youth Fellowship and an Advising Leader to the Female Laboratory of Innovative Knowledge.

Arezoo is boldly challenging systemic barriers in her quest to improve the experiences of young women, girls and gender-diverse youth in politics.



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