

Hi Latoya,

I'm very interested in Somerville's Commission for Women - Seat One. I'm a young woman of color who recently moved to Somerville and would love to be part of local government, especially in regards to promoting gender equity. These interests lead me to applying for a seat on Somerville's Commission for Women.

During my undergraduate studies, I majored in Biology and Gender & Sexuality Studies. During my senior year, I wrote an honors thesis that dove into what Anti-Abortion Centers (also known as Crisis Pregnancy Centers) are and why they pose a threat to public health. I am very excited by Somerville's proactive ban on Crisis Pregnancy Centers, and want to continue this incredible work in this city through the Commission for Women.

I have been able to continue this work with the support of Advocates for Youth (a national organization that helps young activists make changes to promote reproductive justice). I am part of their YWOC4RJ (Young Womxn of Color for Reproductive Justice) Council and the New England Regional Lead for their Youth Abortion Support Collective.

If I were part of this Commission, I would want to continue this work and investigate how we can ensure the protections of reproductive justice for all in Somerville: through public education about where to get legitimate reproductive healthcare, legislative action to further ensure that no Crisis Pregnancy Center can operate in Somerville, and advocacy for young people to use their voice to speak up about reproductive justice.

As well, I previously worked as a Health Care Assistant at Planned Parenthood in Boston. During my time there, I gained a lot of experience in abortion care, but also got to see first-hand how language barriers, socio-economic status, insurance status, and other social determinants of health impacted people's experiences in the clinic and beyond.

From that experience, if I was on the Commission for Women, I would want to make sure that all women are able to access healthcare (especially reproductive healthcare). I would like to advocate for supporting legitimate reproductive health centers in Somerville and ensuring that everyone (especially young people, immigrants, lower income folks) are able to get the care they deserve.

Thank you very much for your consideration and I hope to hear from you soon!

Best wishes,

Rachel Tam

(she/they)

