



**THE  
ASCEND  
FUND**

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**For More Information:**

LaShondà Steward

**Ascend Fund Announces Bipartisan Advisory Committee of Formerly Elected Women**  
*A nonpartisan and collaborative approach to elect women across the political spectrum.*

SEATTLE – Today, The Ascend Fund announced their nine-member Advisory Committee, comprised of formerly elected women from both sides of the political aisle and all levels of political office, from State House to U.S. Senate.

**Advisors**

- *Mary Bono*, Former Congresswoman, CA-45
- *Jane Campbell*, Former Mayor of Cleveland, OH
- *Cynthia Coffman*, Former Attorney General of Colorado
- *Kerry Healey*, Former Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts
- *Heidi Heitkamp*, Former U.S. Senator, North Dakota
- *Dr. Donna Lynne*, Former Lieutenant Governor and Chief Operating Officer of Colorado
- *Mee Moua*, Former Minnesota State Senator
- *Sandra Mortham*, Former Secretary of State of Florida
- *Kristine Reeves*, Former Washington State Representative

The Advisory Committee members, many of whom were the first woman elected to their role, will share their perspectives and personal experiences running for office to break down barriers to women seeking elected office. The committee will guide The Ascend Fund in uniting the field to achieve 50% representation for women in all 50 states by 2050.

“Too often the efforts to elect women are disparate. If we are going to achieve gender parity in all 50 states, we need a truly nonpartisan effort,” said Abbie Hodgson, Director of The Ascend Fund. “Our bipartisan Advisory Committee is comprised of women who are dedicated to lifting up and electing women on both sides of the aisle. I am thrilled to be working with this accomplished committee of women who are deeply dedicated to electing more women to all levels of office.”

The Ascend Fund is a collaborative fund that has awarded more than \$5 million in grants and maintains a portfolio of 12 organizations that are building the pipeline for women to run for office. The Ascend Fund serves as a convener, fostering collaboration among partners and coordinating strategy to achieve gender parity.

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### **About The Ascend Fund**

The Ascend Fund is a collaborative fund dedicated to accelerating the pace of change toward gender parity in U.S. politics. The fund pools philanthropic capital and makes mission-driven investments in nonpartisan, nonprofit organizations that break down barriers preventing women from running for office and winning. The Ascend Fund is powered by Panorama Global.

For more information visit [theascendfund.org](https://theascendfund.org).

### **About Panorama Global**

Panorama Global is a Seattle-based 501(c)(3) action tank working to solve some of the world's toughest problems by influencing people and policy and through innovative partnerships.

For more information visit [panoramaglobal.org](https://panoramaglobal.org).



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## Our Advisors



### *Mary Bono, Former Congresswoman, CA-45*

Mary Bono served as a Congresswoman representing California's 44th and later 45th District and in 2012 she became the first ever Chair of the Women's Policy Committee. She was the first Republican woman to serve as Subcommittee Chairman on the Energy and Commerce Committee and authored legislation that was signed into law by Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama, proving to be a true bipartisan consensus builder.

She has been on the forefront of the nationwide fight against prescription drug abuse, which impacts millions of teenagers across the United States and is now the fastest growing drug problem in America and recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a public health epidemic. Congresswoman Bono is now a nationally recognized leader on privacy and technology issues.

She is married to former astronaut Admiral Steve Oswald (U.S. Navy, Retired) and is mother to Chesare Bono, Chianna Bono, stepmother to Chaz Bono and a grandmother of two.



### *Jane Campbell, Former Mayor of Cleveland, OH*

Jane Campbell served as the 56th Mayor of Cleveland, Ohio from 2002 to 2006 and was the first women to hold this office. She currently serves as the President and CEO of the United States Capitol Historical Society. Prior to serving as Mayor of Cleveland, she was a member of the Ohio House of Representatives and was chosen to be the Majority Whip and later the Assistant Minority Leader.

Mayor Campbell served as Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana's Chief of Staff From 2009 to 2013, leading efforts to recover from both Hurricane Katrina and the Gulf oil spill and serving as the Senator's principal advisor on health care. Later, as Senior Advisor to Senator Maria Cantwell of Washington, Mayor Campbell led the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship's work on access to capital and women's entrepreneurship.

After successfully implementing welfare reform, Governing magazine honored Campbell as 2000 Public Official of the Year. Campbell also served as President of the National Conference of State Legislators.

Mayor Campbell is the proud mother of two accomplished daughters, Dr. Jessica Merrill of Little Rock, Arkansas and Catherine Campbell-Morrison, a Yale divinity student.



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### *Cynthia Coffman, Former Attorney General of Colorado*

Cynthia Coffman served as the 38th Attorney General of Colorado from 2015 to 2019 and was the second woman to hold this office in Colorado. Prior to serving as Attorney General, she was the Chief Deputy Attorney General. In 2018, she ran for Governor of Colorado.

In 1997, General Coffman's first job in Denver was working for the Colorado General Assembly's Office of Legislative Council. She staffed the Senate Judiciary Committee and assisted with a study of the state's adult parole system.

After a brief time in private practice, Coffman joined the senior management team at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. There she served first as the agency's Director of Legal & Regulatory Affairs and later as its Deputy Executive Director. General Coffman moved to the State Capitol in 2004, where she served as Chief Counsel to Colorado Governor Bill Owens.



### *Kerry Healey, Former Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts*

Kerry Healey's career spans higher education, elected office, and foreign and domestic policy. In July 2019, she capped six years as the first woman president of Babson College, the 100-year-old business school consistently ranked as the country's leading institution in entrepreneurship education. During her tenure at Babson, Healey championed women entrepreneurs, created greater affordability and access for students, and oversaw a dramatic \$200 million renewal of the Wellesley campus.

Previously, Healey served as Massachusetts Lieutenant Governor, where she led bipartisan efforts to improve services for the homeless, tackle the opioid crisis, and increase protections for victims of child abuse, drunk driving accidents, and sexual and domestic violence.

Healey has been a fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government's Institute of Politics and Center for Public Leadership, and is on the International Council of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. She holds an AB in government from Harvard College and a PhD in political science and law from Trinity College, Dublin. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a trustee of the American University of Afghanistan.



### *Heidi Heitkamp, Former U.S. Senator, North Dakota*

Heidi Heitkamp served as U.S. Senator from North Dakota from 2013-2019 and was the first woman to serve as a Senator from North Dakota. She has since launched the One Country Project which aims to re-open the rural dialogue between voters and Democrats and help remind Democrats that rural voters have traditionally been part of the Democratic coalition.



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As Attorney General of North Dakota, she helped broker an agreement between 46 states and the tobacco industry, which forced the tobacco industry to tell the truth about smoking and health. It was one of the largest civil settlements in U.S. history. Prior to her time as Attorney General, Senator Heitkamp served as North Dakota's Tax Commissioner.

She lives in Mandan, North Dakota with her husband, Dr. Darwin Lange, a family practitioner. They have two children, Ali and Nathan.



### *Dr. Donna Lynne, Former Lieutenant Governor and Chief Operating Officer of Colorado*

Donna Lynne, DrPH, served as Colorado's 49th Lieutenant Governor and Chief Operating Officer from 2016 to 2019. She currently serves as the Chief Operating Officer of Columbia University Medical Center and the CEO of Columbia Doctors, an 1800-member faculty practice organization and has been an adjunct professor at Columbia University since 2005.

Prior to assuming her roles in Colorado state government, Lt. Governor Lynne served as the executive vice president of Kaiser Foundation Health Plan Inc. and Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, and as group president responsible for its Colorado, Pacific Northwest and Hawaii regions, overseeing an \$8 billion budget, 1.4 million members, and 16,000 employees. She has been recognized as one of the top women business leaders in Denver and one of the top 25 women in healthcare in the nation.

Before joining Kaiser, Lt. Governor Lynne spent 20 years working in various positions in New York City government including First Deputy Commissioner at the Office of Labor Relations, Director of the Mayor's Office of Operations, and Senior Vice President of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corp.

Lt. Governor Lynne resides in New York and Colorado with her husband. She has three children and two stepchildren



### *Mee Moua, Former Minnesota State Senator*

Mee Moua served a Minnesota State Senator from 2002-2011 and was the first Hmong American to be elected to a state legislature in the United States. In the State Senate, she served as the Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

After serving in the State Senate, she was the President and Executive Director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice-AAJC, a leading national civil rights organization based in Washington, D.C. She is currently the Principal of InterDependent Group, LLC, which provides training, facilitation and coaching support for individuals and organizations in planning, leadership, and transformation.



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Mee was born in Laos and came to the United States in 1978 as a refugee. She grew up in the mid-west, attended Brown University, received her MPA from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin and earned her JD from the University of Minnesota Law School.

She currently lives in Maryland with her husband and three children.



### *Sandra Mortham, Former Secretary of State of Florida*

Sandra B. Mortham served as Florida's 22nd Secretary of State from 1995 to 1999 and was the first Republican woman to be elected to the Florida Cabinet. Prior to serving as Secretary of State, Secretary Mortham was elected Republican leader of the Florida House of Representatives in 1992, becoming the first woman in Florida, of either party, to be nominated for Speaker of the House.

Secretary Mortham began her public service as a Largo City Commissioner and Vice Mayor and was elected to the State House in 1986 representing Largo, Dunedin and Clearwater in Pinellas County. She served as Republican leader Pro Tempore and chaired the Pinellas County Legislative Delegation.

In 2010, Secretary Mortham founded "Maggie's List" a political action committee that supports women seeking election to the United States Congress who will further the ideals of less government, fiscal conservatism, more personal responsibility, and strong national security. She now lobbies for various prestigious groups before the Florida Legislature and the Governor's agencies.

Secretary Mortham and her husband Allen live in Tallahassee, near their two sons and seven grandchildren.



### *Kristine Reeves, Former Washington State Representative*

Kristine Reeves served as a Washington State Representative, representing the 30th District, from 2016-2019. She resigned her seat in 2019 to run for Congress. She was the first African American woman elected to the Washington State House in 18 years and the only woman in the legislature with children under 5.

While in the legislature, Rep. Reeves served on the Capital Budget Committee, Community Development, Housing and Tribal Affairs Committee, and was the Vice Chair of the Business and Financial Services Committee as well as Vice Chair of the Commerce and Gaming Committee.

Prior to running for office, Rep. Reeves worked for Senator Patty Murray as the South Sound Regional Director and Statewide Veteran's Representative. She also served as the Director of Economic Development for the Military and Defense Sector in the Washington Commerce Department.

She currently lives in Washington State with her husband, Camron, and their two young children.