



WCMA

Washington City/County Management Association

A State Affiliate of ICMA

WCMA Board Meeting Agenda

August 16, 10:00 am – noon
Wenatchee

1. Approval of June 20, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes
2. Installation of Officers and Introduction of Newly Elected Board Members

Rich Huebner (President)
Laura Philpot (Incoming President)
Katrina Knutson (Vice-President)
Stephanie Lucash (Past President)
Bristol Ellington (Board Member)
Elizabeth Chamberlain (Board Member)
Heidi Behrends Cerniwey (Board Member)

3. Motion to appoint Amy Buckler and Scott MacColl to fill the Board positions vacated by Katrina Knutson and Eric Holmes.
4. Recognition and appreciation for Board member service – Sephanie Lucash
5. Approval of the I-NAPA Affiliate Agreement – Stephanie Lucash, Bucoda Warren
6. WCMA Mentorship Program – Stephanie Lucash
7. Proposal to create a Community of Practice around public engagement methods that build trust and help communities bridge differences – Stephanie Lucash and John Mauro
8. NWWLA Capstone Project: Increasing Female Leadership in Local Government – Melissa Bartoletti, UW Evans School

9. Board Committee Reports:

- a) Regional Board Responsibilities - Eric Holmes
- b) AWC/WCMA Partnership – Laura Philpot, Deanna Dawson
- c) Communications and Member Value – Leslie Harris
- d) Sponsorship – Rich Huebner

- 10. Membership Update – Stephanie Lucash
- 11. 2024 WCMA Salary Survey – Leslie Harris
- 12. NWWLA Cohort 6 Update – Stephanie Lucash
- 13. Local Government Certificate Program Update – Stephanie Lucash
- 14. Financial Report – Tracy Burrows
- 15. Senior Advisors - Members in Transition
- 16. International Report - Lloyd Halverson
- 17. Other Business



WCMA

Washington City/County Management Association

A State Affiliate of **ICMA**

WCMA Board Meeting Minutes

June 20, 8:00 am – 10:00 am
Vancouver Hilton

Attendees:

Stephanie Lucash, President
Rich Huebner, Incoming President
Laura Philpot, Vice-President
Kristi Rowland, Past President
Leslie Harris
Mike Rizzitiello
Eric Holmes
Deanna Dawson
Tyler Christian
Michael Jones
Katrina Knutson
John Mauro
Brent Kirk

Marilynne Beard
Andrew Neiditz
Ray Corpuz
Bucoda Warren
Derek Matheson
David Cline
Jodi Sandfort
Dave Zabell

1. **Approval of March 29, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes** – The Board approved the March 29 meeting minutes.

2. **I-NAPA Affiliate Agreement** – - Bucoda Warren presented background on the proposal for a Washington affiliate agreement with the International Network of Asian Public Administrators (I-NAPA). Under the affiliate agreement the parties would make a number of commitments, including:
 - a. A renewed focus on the DEI commitment of WCMA and to engage I-NAPA in structured way in WCMA DEI efforts’
 - b. Provide in-person space at conferences, etc. for I-NAPA sponsored content and meetings;
 - c. Develop the terms of WCMA becoming the fiscal sponsor for the Washington I-NAPA organization should that be a need in the future;
 - d. Having an I-NAPA member on the conference planning committee; and
 - e. Co-promoting relevant events and activities on social media

Stephanie Lucash stated that the August WCMA Board meeting agenda will include the consideration of the final agreement.

3. **Evans School Certificate Program** – Dean Jodi Sandfort reported that the Evans School will launch of a 4 course Local Government Resilience graduate certificate in January 2025. The courses will include skills, training, and case studies about the realities of local government. The courses include: leadership with a focus on equity in local government; public – private partnerships; strategic community engagement - design and tools; and, a capstone on emergency preparedness that involves a multiagency crisis simulation that builds on the learnings from the classes. Credits can be directly applied to the Executive Masters Program. Applications will be due early November. Classes will run from February – Mid August. Total cost is approximately \$12,000 discounted to \$8,000 that is split between agency and the student participant. The Evans School is planning for 30 – 45 students per session. The Evans School is also working with AWC on a collaborative elected leaders institute – a 3-month program on disagreeing better. The course will run 4 sessions, July – October, with 50 participants.
4. **Proposed WCMA Ethics Policy** – Tracy Burrows reviewed the proposed ethics policy which is based on the Oregon City County Management Association policy. This policy is in place should WCMA receive an ethics complaint against a WCMA member. WCMA members who are also ICMA members will have the complaint adjudicated by ICMA. WCMA is responsible for applying the ICMA code of conduct to WCMA members who are not ICMA members. The ethics policy creates a chair of the ethics committee who serves a 3 year term and who calls an ad hoc committee together to investigate and make a recommendation when complaints are received. The Board voted to approve the ethics policy.
5. **Committee reports**
 - a. Regional Board Responsibilities Committee – Eric Holmes reported that he is completing the final work on the WCMA districts and formalizing the relationship

between districts and the work of the Sr. Advisors. The proposal will be before the Board in August

- b. **AWC/WCMA Partnership** – Laura Philpot reported that the partnership with AWC is strengthening as evidenced by the AWC conference sessions (roundtable session for city managers and the panel centering on respective roles and importance of professional management) and the AWC year-long sponsorship of WCMA. Deanna Dawson added that this is an ongoing relationship and we'll continue to identify opportunities for partnership.
 - c. **Communications** – Leslie Harris reported that the NWWLA has started series of lunch and learns that will include information about WCMA activities. The committee is also working on the salary survey.
 - d. **Sponsorships** – Rich Huebner reported that the summer conference has hit \$48,000 in sponsorship funding. He thanked everyone who has been working on sponsorships and urged people to continue sponsorship outreach.
- 6. **Selection of 2026 Conference Site** – The Board reviewed the summer conference options and approved the following sites: Kennewick in 2026 and the Historic Davenport in 2027.
 - 7. **WCMA Board 2024 Nominating Committee Report** – Rich Huebner reviewed the slate of candidates for Board. The Nominating Committee (Rich Huebner, Stephanie Lucash, Laura Philpott, and John Mauro) focused on state-wide representation and participation in WCMA. The Board approved the nominating committee slate.
 - 8. **Summer Conference Planning: Board Baskets**– Rich Huebner reported that the conference will include 2 fundraisers. The Board is putting together gift baskets with local products from Wenatchee and from the Board member's cities. Board members should ship or deliver their items for the basket to Rich in advance of the conference.
 - 9. **WCMA Annual Awards** – Stephanie Lucash, Rich Huebner and Kristi Rowland volunteered to judge the award applications.
 - 10. **Membership Update** – Stephanie Lucash reported that we have 272 members and we are getting new members as they sign up for the conference. We should exceed 300 members with the addition of the entire NWWLA cohort, which would be an all-time high for WCMA.
 - 11. **2024 WCMA Salary Survey** – Leslie Harris reported that the draft salary survey is out for review. The final should be sent out in July.
 - 12. **NWWLA Capstone Project Update** – Stephanie Lucash and Laura Philpot reported on the Evans school team of students who have completed a capstone project on the impact of the NWWLA. The report is based on a survey and focus groups of NWWLA alumni and includes recommendations for future cohorts. The team will present findings at the summer conference.
 - 13. **NWWLA Cohort 6 Update** – Stephanie Lucash reported that this year's NWWLA cohort has been selected. The selection process was competitive with 36 selected out of 63 applications. The cohort will officially be announced in August.

14. **Census of the Profession Update** – Stephanie Lucash reported that the high survey response rate by clerks compared to managers and administrators skewed some of the data. The team made some changes to the reporting out of the data to better reflect the gender representation of the manager/administrator job title.
15. **WCAA/County Administrators Outreach** – Stephanie Lucash and Michael Jones reported on the WCMA meeting with the County Administrator's association. It was a good meeting and helped to raise awareness of WCMA amongst County Administrators. We are working on increasing the County Administrator presence at the summer conference and Stephanie has crafted a message to the Administrators encouraging them to join WCMA and consider running for a Board position. Michael Jones encouraged everyone within WCMA to use the term "Managers and Administrators" when describing the membership rather than "City Managers and Administrators", which excludes county leaders.
16. **Financial Report** – Tracy Burrows reported that the finances are doing fine and the membership revenues are well exceeding the budget figures largely because of the new emphasis on package memberships.
17. **Senior Advisors - Members in Transition/Form of Government** – The Senior Advisors reported on a number of transitions, with Yakima, Des Moines, Battleground and Vancouver getting close to choosing a new CAO. In Tacoma, the change in form of government will likely be on the ballot.



WCMA
Washington City/County
Management Association
A State Affiliate of ICMA

I-NAPA
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF
ASIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATORS

WCMA | I-NAPA Affiliation Agreement

This agreement serves as a written understanding of the affiliation agreement between the Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) and the International Network of Asian Public Administrators (I-NAPA). The WCMA is recognized as the official state chapter of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) in the State of Washington. The collaborative measures outlined in this agreement will contribute to greater success for both I-NAPA and WCMA, in the areas of membership, equity and inclusion, awareness and strategies, community engagement, and promoting local government careers and the management profession for individuals of Asian heritage.

WCMA and I-NAPA will collaborate on an annual work plan focusing on action or campaigns that may be changed year-to-year. This gives WCMA and I-NAPA an opportunity to work on activities without amending the affiliation agreement.

In November of every year, WCMA and I-NAPA will review the year's accomplishments against the current work plan and develop a new annual plan outlining programming and development activities for the upcoming year.

In addition to the annual work plan, WCMA agrees to support I-NAPA's core mission to advance inclusive local government by empowering leadership among persons of Asian heritage through the following opportunities as they arise:

- Developing leadership of emerging leaders of Asian heritage
- Supporting public administrators of Asian heritage as leaders
- Providing networking opportunities
- Providing unique resources to Asian public administrators

I-NAPA Commitments:

- I-NAPA will provide guidance, education, and expertise in the DEI space and will promote leaders in with Asian and Pacific Islander heritage;
- I-NAPA will amplify WCMA's efforts to educate local government professionals and organizations on creating an inclusive culture for employees and community members of Asian heritage;
- I-NAPA will appoint a member to serve on WCMA Conference Planning Committee as an I-NAPA representative. As with other appointees, WCMA will not be responsible for travel expenses;
- I-NAPA will ensure full participation in any WCMA diversity, equity, and inclusion advisory committee.
- *In the future, I-NAPA may act as a fiduciary for the I-NAPA Washington Chapter, once it establishes national 501(c)(3) status and financial controls.*

WCMA Commitments:

- WCMA will commit to evaluating its diversity, equity, and inclusion commitments as an organizational value and will actively seek advice and engagement of members on this commitment.
- WCMA will commit to the discussion and implementation of DEI issues through the formation of a diversity, equity, and inclusion advisory committee, ex-officio board representation, or other means appropriate to WCMA structure.
- WCMA will commit to active engagement with I-NAPA members from the State of Washington
- WCMA will commit to providing an inclusive space and networking group, both virtually and at in-person professional gatherings, for local government professionals of Asian and Pacific Islander heritage, including a meeting space for I-NAPA formal and informal meetings with affiliated or other groups at Summer Conference, pending space availability
- WCMA will provide two complementary WCMA Summer Conference registrations to I-NAPA to be used by I-NAPA to encourage attendance and participation;
- WCMA may in the future act as a fiduciary for the I-NAPA Washington Chapter and will assist in management of their financial accounts, membership dues, and monetary commitments, and a separate agreement will be drafted for such a relationship.

Joint Commitments:

- WCMA and I-NAPA will post notice of the affiliation on their respective websites in the appropriate partner space (e.g. on WCMA's home page and on I-NAPA's webpage and LinkedIn group page);
- WCMA and I-NAPA will actively seek opportunities to cross-promote social media posts on all relevant platforms, and, when mutually beneficial, tagging each other on relevant social media posts using the following tags depending on the nature of the post such as: @WCMA, @Intl_NAPA, #WCMA, #INAPA

Signed,

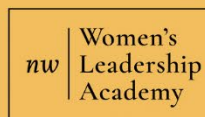
Stephanie Lucash, WCMA, President

Elaine Wang, I-NAPA, President

Increasing Female Leadership in Local Government

Prepared for the Washington
City/County Management Association

By: Rose Taylor, Johanna Miller, Melissa Bartoletti
May 31, 2024



Increasing Female Leadership in Local Government

By: Rose Taylor, Johanna Miller, Melissa Bartoletti

A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Public Administration

University of Washington
Daniel J. Evans School of Public Policy & Governance
2024

Approved by:

Matt Steuerwalt

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Acknowledgements from the Authors

We would like to thank the following individuals and groups for their contributions that enabled the successful execution of this project.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Stephanie Lucash, President of Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) and Laura Philpot, Vice-President of WCMA. Both Stephanie and Laura are city leaders and have been supportive with their time and passion throughout the project. They gave us the tools and resources that were essential to our research.

We would like to thank the WCMA Board of Directors for supporting the project proposal and for funding this project. In addition, we send gratitude to the Capstone seminar colleagues for their peer feedback and to Matt Steuerwalt for his instruction and guidance.

We would like to thank the entire NWWLA alumni and to express gratitude towards the survey respondents, interview and focus group participants. This project would not have been possible without your honest feedback, insight, and shared experiences. It is truly evident that this is a group that wants to pay it forward and uplift others around them. It has been an honor to work with you all.

Thank You from the Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA)

On behalf of the Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) and the Northwest Women's Leadership Academy (NWWLA), I want to thank Rose, Melissa and Johanna for their incredible work on this report. This capstone team did an extraordinary amount of work in a very short period of time, and I am so impressed with this final product.

A survey of NWWLA graduates and a report that would help tell the value proposition of the Academy has been a dream of mine for years, and I am so pleased all the pieces came together to make this happen in my year as WCMA President. Thank you to the team for choosing this capstone project in 2023, and for your diligent work on the survey, interviews, focus groups, analysis, and report over these last six months. Your deep commitment to this project and your thoughtful analysis has resulted in a fabulous final report.

I look forward to sharing this report with the WCMA Board of Directors, the NWWLA Executive Board, and with the more than 160 Academy graduates. There are many recommendations in this report that can be implemented immediately, and I look forward to helping to make that happen.

In closing, it has been a highlight of my year to work on this project with the three of you and WCMA Vice President Laura Philpot. Our biweekly meetings over these last six months were full of hard work, strategic thinking, and also laughter. Here's wishing you all the best in your endeavors post-graduation. Thank you again for your excellent work.

With gratitude,
Stephanie Lucash, MPA
2023-24 WCMA President

List of Abbreviations

NWWLA and/or Academy – Northwest Women’s Leadership Academy

ICMA - International City/County Management Association

OCCMA - Oregon City/County Management Association

WCMA - Washington City/County Management Association

Executive Summary

Background

The Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) launched the Northwest Women's Leadership Academy (NWWLA) in 2018 to provide the training, empowerment, networking, mentorship and sponsorship needed to help advance women and nonbinary leaders working in local government into leadership roles. NWWLA is often a pipeline to promotions to City Manager and City Administrator roles. Since its start, there have been five completed cohorts of over 160 alumni with the most recent cohort having graduated in spring 2024.

Introduction

WCMA asked our Evans School Capstone Lab to produce a final report that substantiates the value that the Academy provides for its participants, determine areas of improvement for the program, and to gain testimonials and stories from graduates. To conduct the research, our team designed and administered a survey to all NWWLA graduates of Cohorts 1-4 and conducted a second survey to the recent graduates of Cohort 5. Our team determined key themes from the survey results that guided the interviews and focus group discussion points. Lastly, we completed quantifiable data analysis and compiled all findings into a comprehensive report which includes recommendations for how the Academy can improve the program for future participants. We have also created presentation materials that can be used to disseminate research findings to multiple audiences.

Findings and Analysis

The findings were categorized into themes that emerged from the survey results, interviews, and focus groups. Regarding recruitment, word-of-mouth is the most common way that participants first learned of the Academy, particularly from supervisors and alumni of the program. The NWWLA offers substantial networking opportunities to participants that they find highly valuable. However, those living outside the Puget Sound region do not benefit from these networking opportunities as much as those living within.

Participants want more in person opportunities to meet, but this must be balanced with keeping the Academy accessible for those living all throughout the state. Many participants expressed that they had either gained a mentor or gained the opportunity to become a mentor through their participation in the Academy.

Only 14 out of 113, or 12.3%, survey respondents worked for an organization outside of the Central Puget Sound region. Respondents gave feedback of the program not feeling accessible to those living in Eastern/Central Washington.

Time constraints was the number one barrier selected by survey respondents, with 68 out of 113 responses. Some of the closest connections that were made by the academy participants were made through the small groups, which are set at the start of the program. Many participants expressed that they wished they had had more opportunities to connect with the other members of their cohorts as well.

Overall, there is substantial evidence and feedback that supports that the majority of survey respondents indicated that they have strengthened their confidence and self-awareness through their participation in the Academy. Participants have also experienced an increase in their salaries since graduating from the Academy. Lastly, the vast majority of participants would strongly recommend the NWWLA to others.

Key Recommendations

To address feedback from program participants, we determined the following priority recommendations for the Academy to consider. To ensure that mentors and mentees are good matches in terms of experience levels, geographic location, and career paths, the Academy should systematically create mentor/mentee pairings between the current cohort members and past graduates. To further promote the Academy and maintain alumni engagement and connections, WCMA should host lunch and learn events, advertise on social media, and the AWC newsletters. NWWLA should split the Academy into two tracks to cater for those who seek the “top job” of the City Manager/City Administrator career path versus those seeking a managerial, director, or other leadership position.

Chapter 1 - Project Overview

Background

The Northwest Women's Leadership Academy (NWWLA) was founded in 2018 with the mission to increase the number of women in local government leadership positions in Washington State. The NWWLA was founded following the convening of an International City/County Management Association (ICMA) task force. The ICMA set out to evaluate whether the number of women in top executive positions in local government had seen an increase since 1976. The task force determined in 2014 that the number of women Chief Administrative Officers across the nation was 14.4%. At that time, the number of women local government leaders in Washington State was similar, but as of 2024 it is around 25% (ICMA, 2020). The Academy was formed with the vision of achieving a gender-balanced leadership team to strengthen local government. The target audience for the Academy was expanded to include nonbinary individuals in 2021. The Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) sponsors the NWWLA and provides funding for scholarships each year. The WCMA is the professional association for city managers and administrators, assistant/deputy city managers and administrators, department heads, and other local government leaders from cities and counties across Washington state.

The NWWLA's mission is to prepare and promote women and nonbinary individuals into leadership roles throughout local government and is often a pipeline on promotions to City Managers and City Administrators roles. The NWWLA aims to equip women and nonbinary leaders with the training, empowerment, networking, mentorship, and sponsorship needed to help advance their roles in local government. Since its start in 2018, there have been five completed cohorts of over 160 alumni with the most recent cohort having graduated in Spring 2024. The NWWLA accepts applications in the spring, selects the new cohort members in early summer, with the program running the following October through March.

Client Objectives and Deliverables

The NWWLA seeks an in-depth report identifying and summarizing what kinds of quantifiable value the NWWLA provides to cohort participants. We, as consultants, have created and administered a survey to current and past Academy participants to gather demographic information and input about the curriculum. The goal of the survey is to see what was valuable about the Academy to participants. We have also conducted follow-up interviews and focus groups to allow cohort members to expand on short answers from the survey. Lastly, we completed quantifiable data analysis and compiled all findings into a comprehensive report which includes recommendations for how the Academy can improve the program for future participants. We have also created presentation materials that can be used to disseminate research findings to multiple audiences.

Research Questions

We conducted surveys, interviews, and focus groups with the goal of answering the following research questions:

- Are there quantifiable values for participants of the NW Women's Leadership Academy?
- Are there qualitative values for participants of the NW Women's Leadership Academy?
- How could this data be measured and applied to improve program curriculum and reach?

Report Structure

The remainder of this report is divided into five chapters. The following is a summary of each subsequent chapter:

Chapter 2: Literature Review provides an overview of sources and current knowledge surrounding other leadership academies in the United States, gender discrepancies in local government leadership, and general knowledge on leadership skills.

Chapter 3: Research Methods details our approach to addressing the research questions through various tools including surveys, interviews, and focus groups. It will also discuss the limitations of these methods.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis compiles the findings from our research and analyzes the feedback from current and past cohort members.

Chapter 5: Recommendation uses the information and analysis found in Chapter 4 to identify improvements for the NWWLA curriculum and format.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Introduction

In this section, we summarize the existing knowledge and data in the field and summarize the research methods chosen. We are using a literature review to gain a better understanding of some background information that we feel will help us give the best recommendations to our clients.

Background on Representation of Women in Local Government

Women continue to be underrepresented in local government leadership positions in the United States. As of 2022, only 29% of top appointed executive positions in local government were held by women in the U.S. (Cagaanan, Dean, & Lee, 2022). While this percentage has been steadily rising since 2013, at the current rate it would take until 2048 for gender parity to be reached (Lucia, 2022). It is also important to note that gender representation varies by size of municipality, with smaller cities being more likely to have women in top positions (Cagaanan, Dean, & Lee, 2022). This indicates that even when women are able to reach top positions, there are barriers preventing them from attaining the highest power positions in large, influential cities.

Prior Research on Leadership Academies

The Northwest Women's Leadership Academy is rare in that there are few such programs throughout the United States. Most leadership programs are connected to a university, and thus only available to students at the university. Many leadership programs or academies are also directed toward people working in the private sector, unlike the NWWLA which is exclusively for women and non-binary individuals working in local government. Other leadership programs that do focus on helping women gain leadership roles in government largely focus on elected offices, which is not the case for the NWWLA which focuses on administrative positions that are either appointed or achieved through a traditional hiring process.

The Oregon City/County Management Association (OCCMA), another state affiliate of ICMA, shares the same mission as WCMA which is to provide training and education to local government management and increase the knowledge and ability of administrators and managers. The OCCMA has a similar structured training program called NWWLA that seeks to advance, connect, inspire, and empower women in local government throughout Oregon state. The OCCMA published The NWWLA 2020-2024 Strategic Plan which is a five-year plan and living document developed to enhance engagement of academy stakeholders and provide a structure to promote accountability amongst their leadership. The plan engaged the 2019-2020 cohort members and was developed through thought workshop, online survey, and discussions with the Steering Committee and Leadership Team (OCCMA, 2020). Although there were similar research methods conducted to our project, this report does not provide a quantitative analysis of the program and participant feedback, however, rather it serves as a charter outlining stakeholder responsibilities and action plan with goal attainment.

Given the unique aspects of the NWWLA, we were unable to find existing research on similar programs and a substantial amount of evidence on program outcomes for participants. There has been no prior formal evaluation of the NWWLA, so our research will provide the directors of the

Academy with valuable insights into the ways in which the program benefits participants, as well as areas where the program can be improved.

Benefits of Female Representation in Local Government Leadership

The UN Women's report, *Gender Equality and the New Urban Agenda* highlights the fact that the sustainable progress of cities relies on the establishment of "gender-inclusive and gender-responsive cities", which involves women's meaningful economic, political and social empowerment and leadership in city life (UN Women, 2016, p.2).

Increased female representation in local government leadership contributes to diversity and inclusivity within decision-making processes. Research by Eagly and Carli (2007) suggests that diverse leadership teams, including gender diversity, are more effective in problem-solving, innovation, and decision-making. By bringing diverse perspectives, experiences, and priorities to the table, female leaders in local government ensure that policies and initiatives are more reflective of the needs and interests of the entire community.

Female leaders in government also often prioritize issues that are of particular importance to women, children, and marginalized groups. Research by Burrell (1996) highlights how female politicians are more likely to champion policies related to issues that disproportionately impact women such as gender equality, childcare, and reproductive freedom. By advocating for gender-sensitive policies and addressing issues such as gender-based violence, pay equity, and reproductive rights, female leaders contribute to the overall well-being and empowerment of women within their communities.

The presence of female leaders in local government serves as a powerful source of role modeling and empowerment for women and girls. Research by Lawless and Fox (2005) suggests that increased representation of women in political leadership positions inspires greater political ambition and engagement among women. By demonstrating leadership capabilities and breaking gender stereotypes, female leaders in local government encourage future generations of women to pursue careers in politics and public service, thereby promoting greater gender equality and social progress.

Female leaders in local government play a vital role in promoting economic development and resilience within their communities. Research by Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2004) suggests that increasing women's participation in governance leads to greater investment in social infrastructure, job creation, and poverty reduction. By prioritizing economic policies that support small businesses, entrepreneurship, and workforce development, female leaders contribute to the overall prosperity and resilience of local economies.

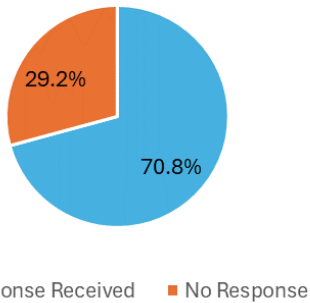
The benefits of female representation in local government leadership are multifaceted and far-reaching. From promoting diversity and inclusivity to advocating for gender-sensitive policies and empowering women and girls, female leaders play a crucial role in shaping more equitable, responsive, and resilient communities.

Chapter 3 – Methods

Surveys

We administered two online surveys to the graduates of the NWWLA. Survey 1 was sent to members of Cohorts 1 – 4 of the Academy. Survey 2 was sent to members of the most recent Academy cohort immediately after they completed the program. These surveys were nearly identical, with minor edits made to Survey 2 to ensure that the questions were relevant to participants who had just graduated. Where Survey 1 asked about changes in the lives of the respondents since graduating from the NWWLA, Survey 2 asked about changes since starting the Academy. These surveys were not anonymous, which participants were made aware of both in the email inviting them to participate and on the opening page of the survey.

Figure 1: Cohorts 1-4 Response Rate

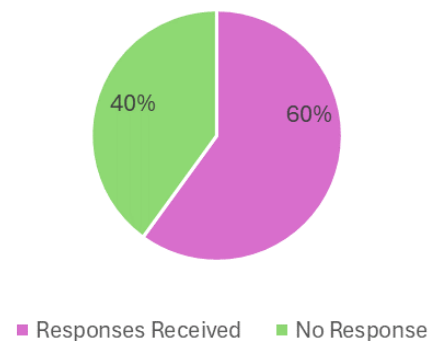


Survey 1 was administered to the 130 graduates of Cohorts 1 through 4 of the NWWLA. We received 92 complete responses giving us a response rate of 70.8 percent (see figure 1). There were an additional six responses that were incomplete and thus excluded from the analysis. Of the respondents, 26 were from Cohort 1, 18 were from Cohort 2, 22 were from Cohort 3, and 26 were from Cohort 4. This survey contained 39 questions and was expected to take respondents approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. The survey included multiple choice, multiple select, Likert

scale, and open response questions. The survey was formatted so that participants skipped certain questions depending on their responses to previous questions. For a complete list of Survey 1 questions, see Appendix A. Survey 1 was created and administered through an online survey tool by Qualtrics and was open for two weeks. Graduates were sent survey links over email. Reminder emails were sent to graduates who had not yet completed the survey, both by the UW team and by the WCMA team.

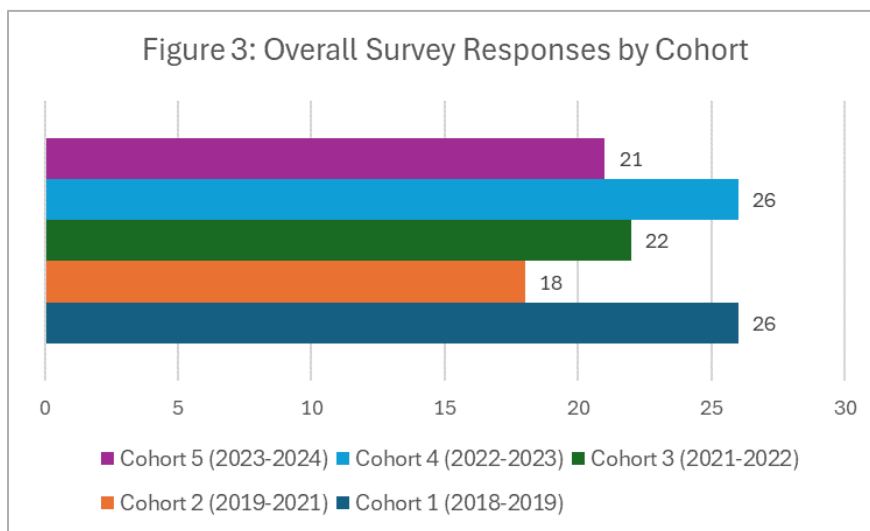
Survey 2 was administered, through Qualtrics, to Cohort 5 a few days after their graduation from the Academy. This survey was nearly identical to the first survey, with minor edits to make the questions more relevant to participants who had only just graduated. For a complete list of the Survey 2 questions, see Appendix B. The second survey was sent to all 35 members of Cohort 5, and we received 21 complete responses giving us a response rate of 60 percent (see figure 2). There was one additional response that was incomplete and excluded from the analysis.

Figure 2: Cohort 5 Response Rate



Reminder emails were also sent to those who had not yet completed the survey, and this survey was available for just over two weeks.

Overall, we received a distributive amount of representation from each Cohort. See figure 3 below for the amount of survey responses received by each Cohort.



Interviews

Follow-up interviews were conducted with 16 of the NWWLA participants who completed one of the surveys. Both surveys asked each participant if they would be willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview or focus group. Those who answered affirmatively were asked to provide the method of contact they would most prefer to be reached by. Potential interview participants were selected based upon their cohort and what region of Washington they were working in at the time of their participation in the NWWLA in order for the interviews to have representation from all five cohorts and from different parts of Washington state. The interviews were scheduled to take approximately 15 to 30 minutes and were conducted remotely over Zoom. With the permission of the interviewees, the interviews were recorded and transcribed. When permission to record the interview was not granted, the interviewer took detailed notes instead. The transcripts and notes were then coded using a coding guide developed based on the survey responses (see Appendix D). The interviews were semi-structured, with some questions being consistent between interviews and others being written based on individual survey responses. See Appendix C for the semi-structured interview questions.

The interviews were also used as an opportunity to ask participants if they would provide a testimonial about the Academy that could be used in future promotional materials. This was asked at the end of the interview so as to avoid the testimonials affecting responses to the

interview questions by priming interviewees to speak about the Academy more positively. Interviewees who agreed to provide a testimonial were sent a consent form (see Appendix E).

Focus Groups

We conducted two focus groups, the first with 4 participants and the second with 7 participants. Participants were selected based on where they worked at their time of participation in the NWWLA and the cohort they were a member of. We ensured that there was representation from all five cohorts and from within and outside of the Puget Sound area in each focus group. Both focus groups were scheduled to take approximately one hour. The topics that were discussed in the focus groups (see Appendix F) were selected based on recurring themes found in the survey and interview responses. While the focus group participants were introduced to specific themes and questions to get the discussions started, they were encouraged to take the conversation in whatever direction felt most relevant. One member of the UW student consulting lab team acted as a facilitator and ensured that the discussion in each focus group remained focused on the Academy, but otherwise the participants led the conversation. The focus groups were conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams and were not recorded in order to help participants feel as comfortable as possible. Instead, two UW student consulting lab team members took detailed notes throughout the discussions. The notes were coded using the same coding guide used to code the interview transcripts (see Appendix D).

Limitations

This research project has several important limitations that should be noted. First, the timeframe within which the project had to be completed was shorter than would be ideal. It would have been preferable to complete more interviews and focus groups, but that was not permissible due to time constraints. A second limitation is that it is reasonable to expect that the NWWLA participants who had the most positive experiences with the Academy would also be the ones who would be the most likely to volunteer their time to be interviewed or participate in a focus group about the Academy. It's possible that those who had a more negative or neutral experience with the Academy may have been less inclined to take the survey. However, given that the surveys had a response rate of 70.8% and 60% respectively, the surveys do capture the collective experiences of most of the Academy participants.

Chapter 4 - Findings and Analysis

We conducted surveys, interviews, and focus groups with the goal of answering the following research questions:

- Are there quantifiable values for participants of the NW Women's Leadership Academy?
- Are there qualitative values for participants of the NW Women's Leadership Academy?
- How could this data be measured and applied to improve program curriculum and reach?

The findings presented data that is characterized to be more qualitative than quantitative due to the nature of the open-ended questions in the survey and structure of the one-on-one interviews and focus groups. We intentionally designed the survey to have a blend of quantifiable data on the information it could apply to and qualitative to allow for open-ended and honest feedback from participants. 92 survey responses were collected from Cohorts 1-4, and 21 survey responses were collected from Cohort 5. Approximately 16 previous Cohort participants were interviewed individually. And 2 online focus groups were conducted; the first had 4 participants and the second had 7 participants.

The team used a coding method to decipher common themes when transcribing and analyzing data between the survey, interviews, and focus groups. We found the following themes and key takeaways that were present from all three research methods: Salary Increases and Professional Growth, Networking, Curriculum, In-person vs Online, Mentoring, Location: Eastern/Central WA, Barriers, Small Groups, Confidence and Empowerment.

Increases in Salary and Professional Growth Since Graduation

Survey 1 asked respondents to indicate what their salary was at the time of their participation in the NWWLA and what their salary was at the time they took the survey. The survey presented salary ranges for respondents to select, with each range being \$25,000 (for example, a participant could select that their salary was between \$100,001 and \$125,000, or between \$150,001 and \$175,000). 73.9% of Survey 1 respondents reported a higher salary range at the time of the survey than at the time of their participation in the Academy (see figure 4 below).

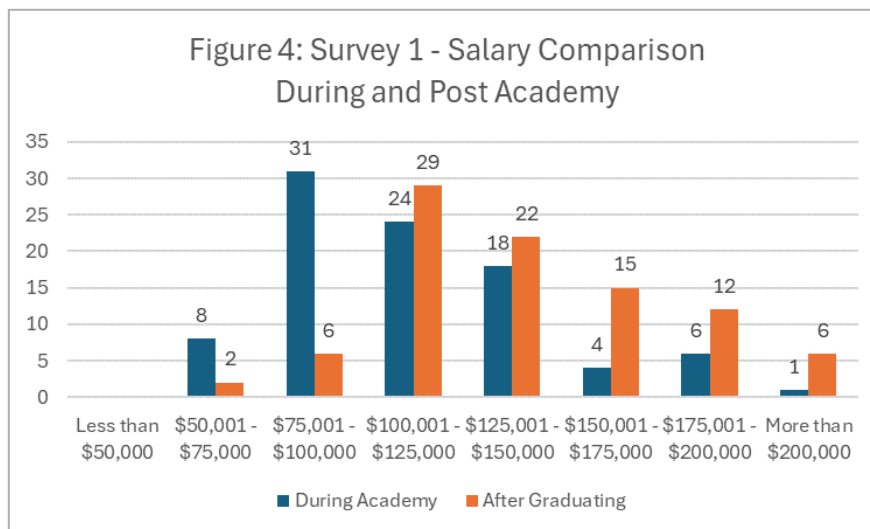
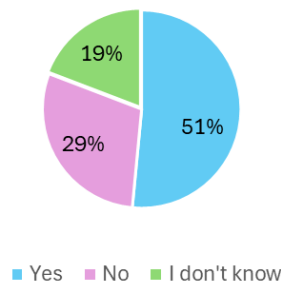


Figure 5: Survey 1 - Promotion Rate Attributed to Academy

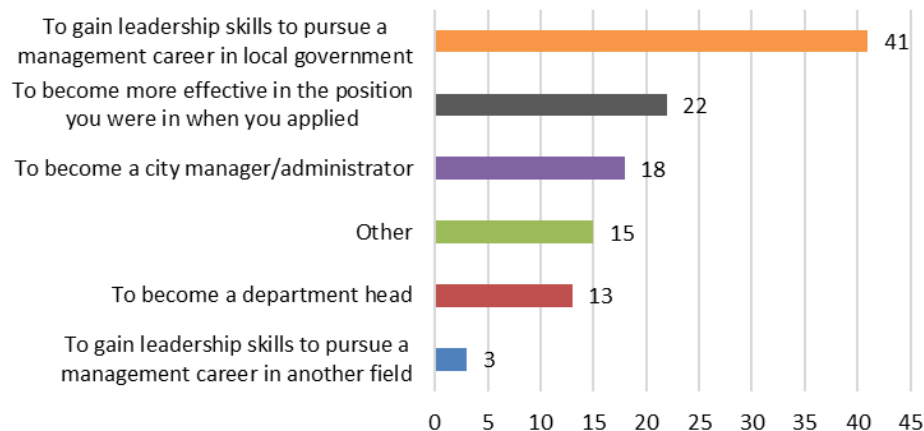


Only 3.3% reported a lower salary range. The rest indicated that they were in the same salary range at both points in time. It should be noted that the survey respondents graduated between one and five years prior to taking the survey, and so time could also have contributed to the increases in salaries. However, we believe that it is worth noting that so many NWWLA participants have experienced an increase in their salaries since graduating from the program. This is particularly relevant when 51% of respondents in Survey 1, (37 out of 72 that completed

this question), indicated that they felt that their participation in the Academy contributed to their promotion since graduating from the NWWLA (see figure 5).

When asked to indicate what their primary motivation for applying to the Academy was, the majority of respondents on both surveys indicated that they applied to gain leadership skills to pursue a management career in local government. The next most common response was to become more effective in the position they were in when they applied, followed by to become a city manager/administrator (see figure 6 on the following page). It is also important to note that none of the Cohort 5 respondents indicated that their primary reason for applying was to become a city manager/administrator. This indicates that the Academy is moving away from its original purpose of increasing the number of women in those top leadership positions in local government, or at least that applicants do not necessarily see that as the primary goal of the Academy. Of course, becoming a city manager or administrator could be a secondary motivating factor for some of these respondents in their decision to pursue the Academy, which would not be captured in this data.

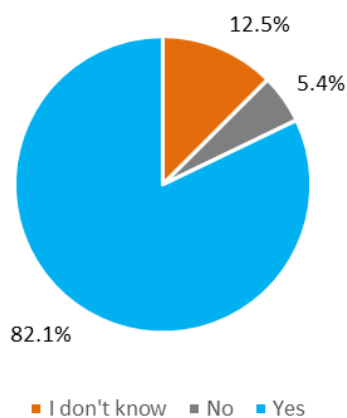
Figure 6: Both Surveys - Primary Motivation for Applying for the NWWLA



Regardless of their primary motivation for applying to the Academy, 82.1% of total respondents from both surveys indicated that they felt that participating in the Academy allowed them to achieve that goal or has set them on the path to eventually achieve that goal (see figure 7 below).

The vast majority of survey respondents on both surveys marked that they strongly agreed with the statement “I would recommend the NWWLA to friends and colleagues.” Only a small number of Survey 1 respondents indicated that they disagreed with that statement. This demonstrates that the majority of participants had a positive experience with the Academy and would want to share that experience with others.

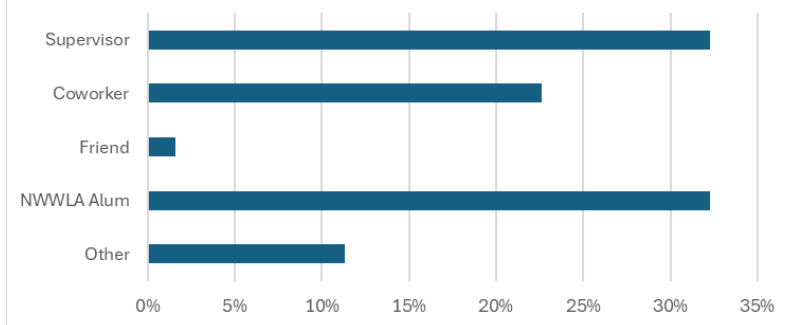
Figure 7: Both Surveys - Attributing the NWWLA Towards Achieving Personal or Career Goal



Recruitment

The survey respondents on both surveys were asked to disclose how they first learned about the NWWLA and were given several options to choose between as well as an option to indicate “other.” The most commonly selected option was Word-of-Mouth, with 48.9% of the Survey 1 respondents selecting this option and 81% of the Survey 2 respondents doing the same. This demonstrates just how important word-of-mouth advertising is for the NWWLA in terms of recruiting new applicants. The surveys also asked those who indicated that they had first learned about the Academy through word-of-mouth to indicate who they had learned about the Academy from, and the two most common responses on both surveys were a supervisor or an alumnus of the program (see Figure 8 below).

Figure 8: Both Surveys - If you learned about the NWWLA through word-of-mouth, who did you hear about it from?



These findings were reflected in the interviews and focus groups. One interviewee discussed how the program was recommended to her by a professional connection she had who worked on the west side of the state. He connected her to an alumna of the program who was able to answer her questions about the Academy. This was very influential in her decision to apply, as she did not want to let down the people who had thought of her for the program. During both of the focus groups, participants discussed how having a personal or professional contact encourage them to apply to the program was very influential in their decision to do so.

The importance of word-of-mouth recruitment for the NWWLA suggests a potential reason for why those living outside of the Puget Sound area are less likely to apply for the Academy. The distance is also of course a factor, but it is also more than likely that those living in other regions of the state simply are unaware that the NWWLA exists and have much fewer opportunities to learn about it. In some ways this is a vicious cycle where women and non-binary individuals living in the Puget Sound region are more likely to have a coworker or supervisor who is an alumnus of the program and thus are more likely to have the program recommended to them and are more likely to apply to and attend the Academy. This grows the number of alumni in those same areas and organizations and further contributes to the likelihood of more applicants. However, in regions like Eastern Washington, if an organization has no alumni, the workers at that organization may never learn about the Academy. If they do learn about the program, it is just in passing and they do not get the encouragement they need in order to apply. With fewer applicants and attendees from that region, a local network of alumni that can recruit other potential participants has limited opportunities for growth and face geographical limitations.

Networking

We found that the opportunity to grow one's professional network was one of the most significant benefits that the NWWLA provided for its participants. The vast majority of the survey respondents of both surveys (79.3% of Survey 1 respondents and 90.5% of Survey 2 respondents) either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "the NWWLA provided me with many networking opportunities that I can draw upon for advancements in my professional life."

During the focus groups, networking was prevalently mentioned by the participants. One participant even stated that they felt that the real value of the Academy came more from the opportunity to meet and network with other women in the field of local government than from the Academy's curriculum. Several of the focus group participants identified the opportunity to network as one of the primary reasons they chose to apply to and attend the Academy. This is consistent with the responses on the survey, where several respondents indicated that connecting with other women in their field was their primary motivation for applying to the Academy. This is also consistent with the findings from the interviews, where 13 out of the 16 interviewees

discussed networking even though it was not specifically inquired about. Several of the interviewees commented on how they expected the connections they made during the Academy to last well into the future, with one interviewee saying, “I can’t say enough how much I enjoyed the opportunity to meet my fellow cohort members. I think that was the most valuable thing about the program. And these are, I think, going to be lifelong friendships.”

Not everyone who was surveyed and/or interviewed had the same view of networking through the NWWLA. Participants from outside of the Puget Sound area did not feel that they gained as much from the networking opportunities provided by the Academy as other participants. One interviewee discussed how most of the professional connections she made through the NWWLA live in Western Washington and so she does not feel that she will be able to successfully leverage those connections for career gains because she lives in Central Washington. However, another interviewee from Central Washington did express satisfaction with the strength of the connections she made with the handful of other participants who live in her area. She stated:

I work in [Central WA city],¹ and it’s kind of a smaller community. But we had three people from our community who participated in this round, which was great. And on a couple of occasions, we got lunch together or did something else just sort of as a local cohort. And I think that opportunity to build relationships with those two other women at our local level was probably one of the most beneficial things to come out of it.

One focus group participant shared a similar sentiment. She discussed how the networking she completed in the Academy was helpful in the sense that it connected her with more women in her field, but that it was not helpful geographically as it was difficult to stay in touch with the people she met who live in other parts of the state. Finding new ways to help Academy participants who live outside of the Puget Sound area make networking connections that are truly beneficial to them should be a priority of the Academy moving forward so that these participants do not lose out on one of the most tangible benefits the Academy provides.

Several interviewees and focus group participants also brought up that they wished they had more opportunities to meet and network with other Academy participants who were not members of their small groups, but this will be discussed in greater detail in the “Small Groups” section of this report.

One additional point that was brought up frequently in the survey responses, interviews, and focus groups was a desire for more ways to stay connected with the cohort after graduation, as well as more continuous networking opportunities. When the survey respondents on Survey 1 were asked to share one thing they would change or improve about the Academy, 27 out of the

¹ City redacted to maintain privacy

92 Survey 1 respondents brought up a desire for greater networking opportunities and/or opportunities to stay connected with the program and other participants post-graduation.

Curriculum

The NWWLA aims to teach cohort participants tangible skills to move forward in their career in a series of 6 session topics spread out over the course of 5 months. The sessions focused on one of the following topics, or curriculum, at a time: *Know Thy Self*, *Know your Community*, *Know your Money*, *Breakdown of Barriers*, *Build Confidence*, *Get THE Job*. (Note: this is the current list of curriculum topics and the titles may differ from previous cohorts). Each topic is structured around learning, application, and small group facilitated discussions in a span of three days.

Feedback on curriculum in the survey were categorized in ways that participants found impactful post-Academy. For this analysis, data from Survey 1 will be highlighted to measure impact since completion of the Academy for Cohorts 1-4. Survey respondents were asked to indicate which technical skills they had improved through their participation in the Academy. On a mark all that apply question, Survey 1 respondents found the following top five technical skills that improved through NWWLA: negotiating, critical thinking, interviewing, problem solving and public speaking, with data analysis, marketing, and writing as the three least selected skills. On a mark all that apply question, 64 Survey 1 respondents found *Know Thy Self* to be the topmost helpful curriculum topic, and 52 selected *Building Confidence*, then *Getting THE Job*. On write-in responses, *Know Thy Self* was correlated to an increase in self-confidence and self-awareness that personally benefited participants. On the other hand, when asked which curriculum topic was least helpful in a mark all that apply question, 31 Survey 1 respondents marked *Know your Money*, and 16 selected *Breaking Down Barriers*.

During the focus groups, feedback included having a “Director” or “City Administrator” level track versus those trying to get into those top-level positions. However, participants still appreciate hearing from lived experiences of existing City Administrators to learn if that career path is the best fit for them. In addition, other City Administrators find the NWWLA to be beneficial to hear and learn from others in similar positions throughout the state. One survey respondent commented, “I appreciate that NWWLA is expanding to more general leadership development and not just for those on the City Manager track.” Overall, it is evident that the Academy’s curriculum provides networking and professional development that participants find beneficial to their own path forward in their career.

In-person vs Online

The NWWLA began as an in-person Academy in 2018 with the first cohort attending every session in person. Due to the pandemic, cohort two had to pivot to online sessions midway through their Academy year, and cohort three attended fully online sessions including the final

graduation. The Academy has since taken on a hybrid model for cohorts four and five, having the initial meeting and retreat as well as the graduation as in-person events, while the main classes are offered online via Zoom. We surveyed and spoke to members from each cohort to ensure a variety of perspectives on whether people preferred in-person sessions or ones that are fully remote.

The consensus across all five cohorts is members wanting more opportunities to meet each other in person. One person from a focus group mentioned the feeling that being able to network is almost as important as learning the curriculum. She felt members lost a lot of the close connection by having so much of the Academy online. Twelve survey respondents wrote in an open-ended response requesting more in person or face-to-face time during the Academy. One member suggested having an opportunity to meet in person halfway through the Academy and another said she felt the Academy was overall less effective in a virtual setting. The latter added the ability to network and communicate effectively online was challenging specifically to the introverted set of participants. Only one survey respondent requested holding sessions remotely, explaining she had to miss one of the training courses due to an illness and it would have helped her to attend online. This respondent was a member of the first cohort where all sessions were in person, meaning this comment has already been addressed by the NWWLA.

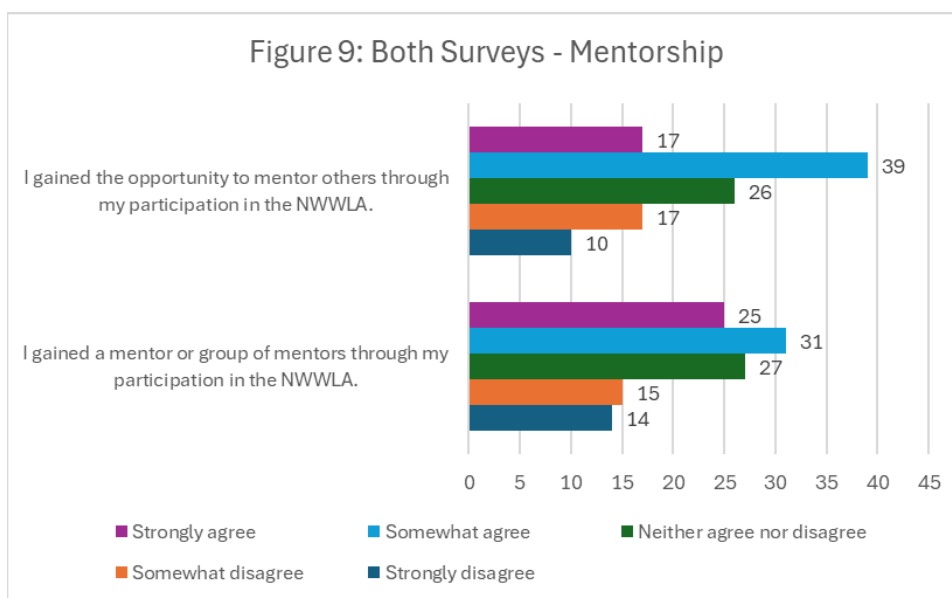
While some Academy alumni voiced wanting in person sessions, several acknowledged that having more in person sessions would be difficult for those members who do not live in the Central Puget Sound area. An interviewee expressed gratitude for the sessions being online stating she would not have been able to participate if they had been in-person due to being so far away. She felt that having the cohort meet for graduation was sufficient to have the ability to take certain friendships or relationships to a deeper connection level. Other interviewees made the same suggestions seen in the survey of having an in-person meet up halfway through the Academy or to have a longer period of time offered at graduation for networking with the cohort and other alumni members. The importance of building relationships in person was mentioned in three of the sixteen interviews as a hope for more in person opportunities for future cohorts, with one person saying they felt less connection with other members of their cohort by having a majority of the Academy virtual.

One interviewee from the first cohort explained how difficult it was attending the Academy in-person while being from the eastern side of Washington. She would have to drive over Thursday night and stay until Friday evening or Saturday morning, which was a financial strain on her by needing to pay for meals and hotel rooms each week for the duration of the Academy. Another interviewee talked about how much of a time commitment the Academy was and how appreciative she was that most of the sessions were offered on Zoom, although she did enjoy the in-person time she got to spend with other members of her cohort. Two interviewees said they thought it was more valuable to be able to have people from all over the state participate versus having

more in-person events. They each shared the sentiment that the Academy has found a good balance of having the first meeting be in person, then having the training sessions be online, and then gathering back together in person for graduation.

Mentoring

Many of the research respondents indicated that they had received the opportunity to gain a mentor or become a mentor through their participation in the NWWLA, though not to the same extent that they had gained more general networking opportunities. On Survey 1, 46.7% of respondents either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I gained a mentor or group of mentors through my participation in the NWWLA,” and 48.9% of respondents either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I gained the opportunity to mentor others through my participation in the NWWLA.” The results were slightly higher for Survey 2, where 61.9% of respondents either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I gained a mentor or group of mentors through my participation in the NWWLA,” and 52.4% of respondents either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I gained the opportunity to mentor others through my participation in the NWWLA.”



Mentoring was discussed by 6 of the 16 interview participants, most often in the context of expressing satisfaction with having mentored others during their time as a NWWLA participant. As one interviewee stated, “I’m finding a lot of rewards in being able to mentor specifically women to grow in their careers, and I don’t think I would have had necessarily the confidence or the understanding how to go about it, or even just knowing that I can be a mentor, without having had the experience in the Academy.” Another interviewee discussed how even though she did not personally feel that she had gained very much from her participation in her small group

due to a large difference in experience levels between herself and her group members, she did feel that she was able to be a mentor to her group members which she appreciated.

Mentoring was brought up during the second focus group, with the participants discussing how they would have liked to have seen a more formal effort by Academy leadership to connect mentors with mentees. One suggestion that was discussed was connecting each member of every new cohort with an alumnus of the NWWLA, thus providing mentorship opportunities as well as greater opportunities for alumni to remain connected to and involved with the Academy post-graduation. This would also help the Academy participants who have higher levels of experience than the majority of their fellow cohort members connect with mentors with even greater levels of experience. As one interviewee put it, “I didn't feel like I've built connections from the Academy that will serve me in the future, because the people who would have potentially been peers or mentors to me, I never met.” The Academy could work to help participants in a position similar to this interviewee connect with potential mentors. This suggestion was also brought up by two of the survey respondents when they were asked to share one thing they would change or improve about the NWWLA.

Location Eastern/Central WA

Fourteen out of 113, or 12.3%, of survey respondents worked for an organization outside of the Central Puget Sound region with two respondents not answering the question. The NWWLA has tried to emphasize recruiting members from central and eastern Washington, as well as those on the peninsula, but continues to struggle to recruit from these areas.

(Placeholder map)

Three survey respondents said they wanted to see events held outside of the Central Puget Sound area. A solution offered by a survey respondent was to hold more in person opportunities in the central or eastern Washington area, stating that the program as is does not feel accessible or relevant for folks who are not on the west side due to the travel required of members on the east side. The respondent added that because of this, she has not kept in touch with people from the west side or sustained a professional network that she's able to check in with frequently. Another member wrote in echoing the sentiment that it feels hard to participate in continued networking if you're far away from Seattle or the Central Puget Sound area. A focus group participant echoed wanting to see more events held outside of the Seattle area, saying she'd like a rotating setup where you visit different cities that are more spread out to see how they work. She also suggested weekend gatherings and mini retreats. Five focus group participants agreed that they would like to see in-person gatherings somewhere other than the Central Puget Sound region with one specifically stating that it is important to hear about different experiences from around the state. All these participants were from cities north or east of the greater Seattle area.

As for the make-up of cohort members, a survey respondent from the most recent cohort wrote she would like to see a greater geographic diversity of Academy members. She stated being from outside of the Puget Sound region made her feel like an outsider due to most of her cohort being from the greater Seattle-Tacoma area and seemed to know or have relationships with each other prior to beginning the Academy. An interviewee spoke of a “west side bias” to the Academy. She stated the program was not very accessible to those in central and eastern Washington since there were no events held east of the mountains. She missed cocktail hours because of the travel requirement and believes there is a struggle with recruiting from these parts of Washington due to the Academy not feeling accessible to participants from central and eastern Washington.

In general, members felt it was important to hear voices from across Washington state and wanted to see more accessibility for participants outside of the Central Puget Sound region. The barrier of having to travel far was brought up in five surveys, four interviews, and one of the focus groups. Feelings of being disconnected from the work and the group were raised in alumni who were from outside of the Central Puget Sound. One survey response stated they felt confident they could reach out to anyone if needed, but it was hard to attend any socializing events with current and older cohorts when you consider the traveling costs and such. With the current make-up of the cohorts being heavily from the Central Puget Sound, one interviewee from eastern Washington said this caused her network to be mostly western Washington women who she has never seen again. One survey respondent from the second cohort argued that women on the east side of the mountains are in greater need of a support system than women on the west side because those women in the Puget sound area have a stronger pre-existing support system.

Barriers

We found time constraints to be the biggest barrier for women in the Academy. Out of 113 total respondents between the two surveys, 53 from survey 1 and 15 from survey 2 listed time constraints as a barrier. Several cited struggling with their workload not lessening because of the Academy, meaning they would have to work late into Friday nights to make up for being away during the morning. Six survey respondents wrote that it was difficult to find time on nights and weekends to complete the homework during their time in the Academy, with two saying it took away from family time or was tough to juggle family time and the Academy work.

Four respondents selected finances as a barrier and were split between it being difficult to travel from eastern Washington as well as it being hard to not have financial support from their organization to attend the Academy. One interviewee mentioned attending the Academy being tough for moms since she had to pay for a babysitter “for the luxury of attending that conference or overnight retreat.” Another interviewee echoed this sentiment saying that having an early start was difficult as a solo parent and trying to get their children ready in the morning while needing to start their session with the Academy.

Between the two surveys, 31 respondents said life events were a barrier during their time in the Academy. Life events ranged from being pregnant and having a child, to medical issues with their own health or their loved ones, getting a new job with more responsibility, and going through a divorce. These life events created a challenge in being able to attend all sessions for the Academy for survey respondents as well as some finding it difficult to fully focus on each session.

Along with the barriers listed above, 21 respondents wrote in “Other” as a barrier. These included five people citing challenges with the pandemic, seven disclosing issues with their job or management, three stating travel times from eastern Washington proved to be a barrier, three citing items that fell under the life events category, and three with miscellaneous barriers. In addition, eight respondents selected lack of support from the organization as a barrier.

Small Groups

The small group model used by the Academy since cohort 2 was generally discussed positively by the survey respondents, interviewees, and focus group participants, though there were some aspects of it that could be improved. Overall, it appears that some of the closest connections that were made by the Academy participants were made through the small groups, as participants were able to spend more time getting to know their group members than the other members of their cohorts. However, this also means that the networking opportunities that participants had were in some ways limited due to them spending so much time in their small groups. One interviewee stated:

I was in one of, I think there were five or six small groups, and you only ever interact with those people, because we would be in these big group trainings for the first hour or so, maybe hour and a half. And then we'd split off into our small group, and you know, that left 20, probably 20 or more women in my cohort that I never got to interact with. And so, the small group format is probably effective to foster really good conversations from time to time. But we never mixed up the groups, we never got to branch out and meet the other women.

The small groups were discussed in a similar way during one of the focus groups, where the participants agreed that they became very close with their small group members and would not want to give up the small group model, but that they did wish they simply had more opportunities to interact with the rest of the cohort. This sentiment was also often expressed by the survey respondents and in the interviews. When asked to share one thing about the NWWLA that they would change or improve, multiple survey respondents expressed a desire to have gotten to spend more time with the cohort as a whole. One interviewee stated:

But I think I really could have networked and gained a lot from women that were in other small groups that maybe do more similar things to what I do at my city and could have been really good resources for me to forge a relationship with and reach out to, but I didn't even really get more than their name on the first weekend. I would say if anything can be improved upon, it's number one, mix up the groups from time to time, so that we can all actually meet each other.

During the second focus group, one participant brought up that she wished the small groups were coordinated more so that group members were closer in proximity to each other. A survey respondent expressed something similar when she said, "I am in SW Washington and it would have been nice to have the small groups be from a similar geographic area. Everyone in my small group was from Puget Sound area and I don't stay in contact with them."

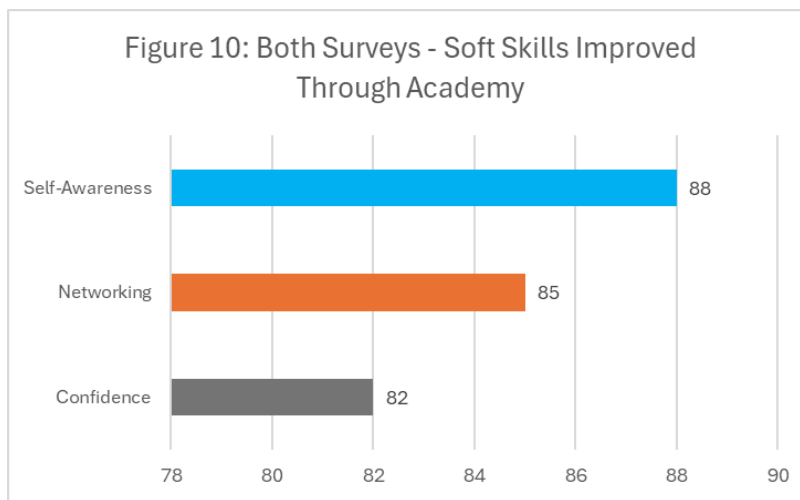
Staying in contact with small group members was asked about on both surveys with varying responses from Survey 1 to Survey 2. A full 85.7% of the Survey 2 respondents indicated that they somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "**I intend to stay** connected with my small group members who I met at the NWWLA [emphasis added]," compared to just 46.7% of Survey 1 respondents who indicated that they somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "**I am still connected** to my small group members who I met at the NWWLA [emphasis added]." This suggests that Academy participants may leave the Academy with strong intentions of staying in contact with their group members but may fail to do so over time.

One of the interviewees expressed that she did not feel that she got very much out of her small group discussions because the group was very unbalanced. She was already in a city administrator position, so her small group members tended to defer to her in all of their discussions and exercises. She described feeling frustrated by this, as she did not get the opportunity to learn from her group members or gain a mentor in the program as she had hoped to. Either mixing up the small groups from time to time or coordinating them to avoid too much imbalance between the group members would help avoid this issue.

Confidence/Empowerment

One of the NWWLA's objectives focuses on confidence by providing opportunities to enhance skills and competencies and build confidence. The Academy aims to foster confidence in each participant to move forward with their local government leadership career. One of the curriculum topics, Know Thy Self is a session designed to explore individual and collective purpose for the Academy and review a personal leadership assessment and work on a development plan. There is also a topic on Building Confidence that focuses on communication, confidence, and

orchestration, where 60 out of 113 selected it as one of the curriculum topics they found most helpful.



In a mark all that apply question for both surveys, 88 out of 113 respondents selected self-awareness as a soft skill improved through the Academy. Similarly, 82 out of 113 respondents marked confidence was a people skill improved through the Academy. In survey 1, twenty-three write-in responses identified an increased level of confidence,

and/or self-awareness as being the most helpful in their personal life since graduating (See figure 10). During the interviews, 9 out of 16 participants identified an increased self-awareness and confidence personally and professionally. Interviewees also mentioned renewed confidence, self-discovery, and leveraging strengths as key takeaways from the Academy in many facets of being in a leadership role. An increased sense of confidence also applied to the individual in their personal life, professionally in their role and in their relationship to their team or network, and educationally in their knowledge of government, or in their next career move.

Chapter 5 - Recommendations

In this chapter, we describe the set of recommendations that will better inform WCMA in understanding the quantifiable and qualitative value the Academy has given to cohort participants. The recommendations address: barriers participants face while in the program, increasing reach for statewide participation, shaping curriculum for future NWWLA participants, continuing network connections.

We've selected three recommendations as a top priority for the Academy to implement and included a full list of recommendations below. For the top three, we determined the Academy should split the learning tracks into two separate tracks, systematically create mentor/mentee pairings between cohort members and alumni, and host lunch and learn events to promote the Academy.

Split the Academy into Two Tracks. One track should be targeted for the original intended audience of the Academy – those who are looking to become a City Manager or Administrator. The second track will be for people who know they want to be at a higher level but are unsure about having the “top job”. This will be for people in more of a mid-career track, looking to be a director or manager. Splitting the curriculum into two will allow members to be around other people who are interested in the same level of leadership as they are and will enable groups to better support each other.

Systematically Create Mentor/Mentee Pairings between the current cohort members and past graduates. This would ensure that every participant leaves the Academy with at least one mentor who they can go to for help in advancing their careers. By doing this systematically instead of informally or randomly, the Academy could also ensure that mentors and mentees are good matches in terms of experience levels, geographic location, and career paths. This would also provide a tangible way for alumni to remain connected to the Academy if they would like to do so.

Host Lunch and Learn Events to promote the Academy and what it offers to individuals. Hosting these during the lunch hour allows individuals to attend and not have to miss work. Advertise these events on the NWWLA website, social media, and the WCMA and AWC websites. Also send a link to all current and past members to share with individuals in their cities. Have past alumni attend to field questions from prospective applicants.

Here are policy recommendations for the future broken down by theme:

1. Increased Outreach/ Statewide participation

A More Robust Website would give alumni somewhere to recommend people visit to learn more about the Academy. Include an overview of the curriculum and time commitment for applicants. Offer testimonials and a list of current events the NWWLA is hosting for past, current, and

future cohort members. Print flyers or QR codes that direct people to the website for additional information. Hand out the flyers at conferences and seminars across the state or reach out to conference hosts to add a QR code in presentations or posters for the event.

Emphasize Recruiters and Current Alumni to help spread the word. Have members make a pledge at the end of the Academy that they'll recommend three people in their city or county for the program. Word of mouth is an easy way to spread knowledge of the Academy at no cost to the NWWLA. Also reach out to job recruiters, especially contracted recruiters for higher level positions, to recommend the Academy to people they reach out to for hiring. Remind alumni to promote the Academy during interviews even if they're not hiring the individual.

Target Recruitment Efforts toward Organizations with no existing alumni. Word of mouth was consistently identified as the primary way survey respondents learned about the Academy, so potential applicants who are in organizations or networks with no alumni of the program are less likely to be informed of the Academy.

Host Alumni Engagement Events and structure them like the current retreats. Host them during the weekend while rotating the location around Washington state. This will allow more people to attend and get alumni excited to reconnect while going on a mini vacation.

2. Networking Maintaining Connections

Explore a Paid Alumni Membership. This would build a budget for more opportunities for regular connection by hosting events and providing support to new Academy cohort members. You should include an internal job board for members to submit job postings for other members to view. This may also allow for a dedicated staff person to support the Academy and the planning of networking events. Alternatively, have a social media group for each cohort to stay connected, rather than having them rely on obtaining direct contact information from one another.

Host a Mid-Session Cocktail Hour where members could meet in person. This will be in addition to the initial meeting and the graduation.

Construct the Small Groups Diversely to ensure there are no groups with people from the same city. This will let members meet more people and diversify their networks. Also have more opportunities to bring the big group together so people are interacting with more of their cohort and not just their small groups each week.

Request Personal Contact Information on the application to better maintain a database of reaching alumni to keep in touch with them. The goal of this Academy is for individuals to seek

new job opportunities and climb up the ladder, meaning their work emails may change. It is important to have personal contact information to keep in touch long-term.

3. Misc Recommendations:

Continue to Offer Headshots. These are useful for professionals and provide a tangible benefit cohort members can take with them after the Academy.

Add an Interview Coach to help members prepare for their next job interview since the goal of the Academy is to promote women in local government.

Allow Time for Presentations of the past winning projects. Begin the sessions by having the past year's winning team present their final project so that current members have an example of what they're doing.

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Appendix A – Survey 1 Questions

Start of Survey 1

The NW Women’s Leadership Academy’s primary goal is to prepare more women to advance in local government executive positions. Five cohorts have gone through the Academy since it was established in 2018. In partnership with the UW Evans School Consulting Lab, the Academy would like to track how it is doing and learn how it may improve. Thank you for choosing to participate in this survey.

We value your input and invite your honest feedback. Please note that individual survey responses will not be shared; the overall survey results will be compiled into a report that will be presented to the Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) and shared at the WCMA board meeting in August 2024.

Q1 Name

Q2 Name at time of participation in the NWWLA (if different)

Q3 Personal email address

Q4 To which NWWLA cohort do you belong?

- ☐ Cohort 1 (2018-2019)
- ☐ Cohort 2 (2019-2021)
- ☐ Cohort 3 (2021-2022)
- ☐ Cohort 4 (2022-2023)

Q5 How did you first learn about the NWWLA?

- ☐ Word-of-mouth
- ☐ The NWWLA website
- ☐ The Washington City/County Management Association
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Other Social Media platform (please disclose which platform)
- ☐ Other _____

Q6 If you learned about the NWWLA through word-of-mouth, who did you hear about it from?

- ☐ Supervisor
- ☐ Coworker
- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Family member
- ☐ NWWLA Alum
- ☐ Other _____

Q7 What organization do you currently work for?

Q8 What is your current job title?

Q9 What is your current yearly salary (before taxes)?

- ☐ Less than \$50,000
- ☐ \$50,001 - \$75,000
- ☐ \$75,001 - \$100,000
- ☐ \$100,001 - \$125,000

- ☐ \$125,001 - \$150,000
- ☐ \$150,001 - \$175,000
- ☐ \$175,001 - \$200,000
- ☐ More than \$200,000

Q10 Approximately how many years of work experience did you have when you attended the NWWLA?

- ☐ Less than five years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ 11-15 years
- ☐ 16-20 years
- ☐ More than 20 years

Q11 What organization did you work for when you started the NWWLA?

Q12 What was your job title when you started the NWWLA?

Q13 What was your yearly salary (before taxes) when you started the NWWLA?

- ☐ Less than \$50,000
- ☐ \$50,001 - \$75,000
- ☐ \$75,001 - \$100,000
- ☐ \$100,001 - \$125,000
- ☐ \$125,001 - \$150,000
- ☐ \$150,001 - \$175,000
- ☐ \$175,001 - \$200,000
- ☐ More than \$200,000

Q14 If you have been promoted since completing the NWWLA, do you feel that your participation in the program contributed to your promotion?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Q15 What was your primary motivation for applying to the NWWLA?

- ☐ To become a city manager/administrator
- ☐ To become a department head
- ☐ To gain leadership skills to pursue a management career in local government
- ☐ To gain leadership skills to pursue a management career in another field
- ☐ To become more effective in the position you were in when you applied
- ☐ Other _____

Q16 Do you feel that participating in the NWWLA allowed you to achieve that goal or has set you on the path to eventually achieve that goal?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Q17 If no, what could the NWWLA have done better to help you achieve your goal, or set you on the path to achieve your goal?

Q18 Please indicate which of the following technical skills you improved through the NWWLA (mark all that apply)

- ☐ Project Management
- ☐ Financial Management
- ☐ Risk Analysis
- ☐ Budgeting
- ☐ Data Analysis
- ☐ Marketing
- ☐ Customer Service
- ☐ Interviewing
- ☐ Negotiating
- ☐ Problem-solving
- ☐ Critical Thinking
- ☐ Public Speaking
- ☐ Writing

Q19 Please indicate which of the following people skills you improved through the NWWLA (mark all that apply):

- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Teamwork
- ☐ Time Management
- ☐ Confidence
- ☐ Networking
- ☐ Management
- ☐ Self-Awareness

Q20 Which of the following curriculum topics did you find most helpful? Mark all that apply. (Note: these are the current curriculum titles and so the language may differ from your time in the NWWLA.)

- ☐ Know Thy Self – A deep dive into you as an individual and a leader.
- ☐ Know Your Community - Strategically leading your organization, working with City Council, and authentically connecting it to your community.
- ☐ Know Your Money - How do you build a budget that moves your strategic community vision forward.
- ☐ Breakdown Barriers - Intersectional conversations around gender, diversity, equity, and inclusion in the profession and workplace.
- ☐ Building Confidence - Communication, Confidence, and Orchestration.
- ☐ Getting THE Job – Peeling back the curtain on the Executive recruitment process while preparing and getting ready for your next step.

Q21 Which of the following curriculum topics did you find least helpful? Mark all that apply. (Note: these are the current curriculum titles and so the language may differ from your time in the NWWLA.)

- ☐ Know Thy Self – A deep dive into you as an individual and a leader.
- ☐ Know Your Community - Strategically leading your organization, working with City Council, and authentically connecting it to your community.
- ☐ Know Your Money - How do you build a budget that moves your strategic community vision forward.
- ☐ Breakdown Barriers - Intersectional conversations around gender, diversity, equity, and inclusion in the profession and workplace.
- ☐ Building Confidence - Communication, Confidence, and Orchestration.

- ☐ Getting THE Job – Peeling back the curtain on the Executive recruitment process while preparing and getting ready for your next step.

Q22 For the following statements, please read the description and select if you Strongly Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Neither Agree Nor Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Strongly Agree, or N/A

- The NWWLA provided me with many networking opportunities that I can draw upon for advancements in my professional life.
- Since graduating from the NWWLA, I have sought more leadership opportunities in my career.
- I feel more confident in my professional role since graduating from the NWWLA.
- The NWWLA gave me the skills I need to achieve my career goals.
- I would recommend the NWWLA to friends and colleagues.
- I gained a mentor or group of mentors through my participation in the NWWLA
- I gained the opportunity to mentor others through my participation in the NWWLA.
- I am still connected to my small group members who I met at the NWWLA.
- I have gained a sponsor/someone who advocates on my behalf from my participation in the NWWLA

Q23 Please include comments on any of the above statements. (optional)

Q24 Did your experience in the academy grow your professional network?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Q25 Are you still connected with this network?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q26 What from the NWWLA has been the most helpful in your personal life since graduating?

Q27 What from the NWWLA has been the most helpful in your professional life since graduating?

Q28 Please share one thing you would change or improve about the NWWLA.

Q29 What is your current level of education?

- ☐ No high school diploma
- ☐ High school diploma or equivalent
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ Associate's degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master's degree or other professional graduate degree
- ☐ PhD

Q30 Have you completed more education since graduating from the NWWLA?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If No, skip to: Q33

Q31 Did your experience with the NWWLA contribute to your decision to pursue more education?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Skip To: Q33 If Did your experience with the NWWLA contribute to your decision to pursue more education? = No

Q32 Please explain how the NWWLA contributed to your decision to pursue more education.

Q33 During your time in the NWWLA were you a primary caregiver?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q34 Were there any barriers you faced during your time in the NWWLA? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Finances
- ☐ Time constraints
- ☐ Life events
- ☐ Lack of support from your organization
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ N/A

Q35 If you marked yes to any of the above barriers, how did this barrier/these barriers impact your experience?

Q36 Are you willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview or focus group?

Interviews will be conducted remotely via phone or Zoom during the month of March and will take approximately 15 to 30 minutes.

Focus groups will be conducted remotely via Zoom during the month of March and will take approximately 1 to 1.5 hours.

- ☐ Yes, interview only
- ☐ Yes, focus group only
- ☐ Yes, interview and/or focus group
- ☐ No

If no, Skip To: Q38

Q37 What is the best method to contact you for a follow-up interview and/or focus group? (Please enter email address and/or phone number for selected method(s).

- ☐ Email _____
- ☐ Phone call _____
- ☐ Text _____

Q38 Are you willing to participate in promotional materials such as a video or provide direct quotes for the academy moving forward?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ No

Q39 The NWWLA Executive Committee is currently recruiting to fill multiple volunteer roles. Are you interested in being more involved in the Academy?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ No

End of Survey 1

Appendix B – Survey 2 Questions

Start of Survey 2

The NW Women’s Leadership Academy’s primary goal is to prepare more women to advance in local government executive positions. Five cohorts have gone through the Academy since it was established in 2018. In partnership with the UW Evans School Consulting Lab, the Academy would like to track how it is doing and learn how it may improve. Thank you for choosing to participate in this survey.

We value your input and invite your honest feedback. Please note that individual survey responses will not be shared; the overall survey results will be compiled into a report that will be presented to the Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) and shared at the WCMA board meeting in August 2024.

Q1 Name

Q2 Name at time of participation in the NWWLA (if different)

Q3 Personal email address

Q4 How did you first learn about the NWWLA?

- ☐ Word-of-mouth
- ☐ The NWWLA website
- ☐ The Washington City/County Management Association
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Other Social Media platform (please disclose which platform)
- ☐ Other _____

Q5 If you learned about the NWWLA through word-of-mouth, who did you hear about it from?

- ☐ Supervisor
- ☐ Coworker
- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Family member
- ☐ NWWLA Alum
- ☐ Other _____

Q6 What organization do you currently work for?

Q7 What is your current job title?

Q8 What is your current yearly salary (before taxes)?

- ☐ Less than \$50,000
- ☐ \$50,001 - \$75,000
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- ☐ \$150,001 - \$175,000
- ☐ \$175,001 - \$200,000
- ☐ More than \$200,000

Q9 Approximately how many years of work experience do you have?

- ☐ Less than five years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ 11-15 years
- ☐ 16-20 years
- ☐ More than 20 years

Q10 What organization did you work for when you started the NWWLA?

Q11 What was your job title when you started the NWWLA?

Q12 What was your yearly salary (before taxes) when you started the NWWLA?

- ☐ Less than \$50,000
- ☐ \$50,001 - \$75,000
- ☐ \$75,001 - \$100,000
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- ☐ \$125,001 - \$150,000
- ☐ \$150,001 - \$175,000
- ☐ \$175,001 - \$200,000
- ☐ More than \$200,000

Q13 If you have been promoted since starting the NWWLA, do you feel that your participation in the program contributed to your promotion?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Q14 What was your primary motivation for applying to the NWWLA?

- ☐ To become a city manager/administrator
- ☐ To become a department head
- ☐ To gain leadership skills to pursue a management career in local government
- ☐ To gain leadership skills to pursue a management career in another field
- ☐ To become more effective in the position you were in when you applied
- ☐ Other _____

Q15 Do you feel that participating in the NWWLA allowed you to achieve that goal or has set you on the path to eventually achieve that goal?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Q16 If no, what could the NWWLA have done better to help you achieve your goal, or set you on the path to achieve your goal?

Q17 Please indicate which of the following technical skills you improved through the NWWLA (mark all that apply)

- ☐ Project Management
- ☐ Financial Management
- ☐ Risk Analysis
- ☐ Budgeting
- ☐ Data Analysis

- ☐ Marketing
- ☐ Customer Service
- ☐ Interviewing
- ☐ Negotiating
- ☐ Problem-solving
- ☐ Critical Thinking
- ☐ Public Speaking
- ☐ Writing

Q18 Please indicate which of the following people skills you improved through the NWWLA (mark all that apply):

- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Teamwork
- ☐ Time Management
- ☐ Confidence
- ☐ Networking
- ☐ Management
- ☐ Self-Awareness

Q19 Which of the following curriculum topics did you find most helpful? Mark all that apply.

- ☐ Know Thy Self – A deep dive into you as an individual and a leader.
- ☐ Know Your Community - Strategically leading your organization, working with City Council, and authentically connecting it to your community.
- ☐ Know Your Money - How do you build a budget that moves your strategic community vision forward.
- ☐ Breakdown Barriers - Intersectional conversations around gender, diversity, equity, and inclusion in the profession and workplace.
- ☐ Building Confidence - Communication, Confidence, and Orchestration.
- ☐ Getting THE Job – Peeling back the curtain on the Executive recruitment process while preparing and getting ready for your next step.

Q20 Which of the following curriculum topics did you find least helpful? Mark all that apply.

- ☐ Know Thy Self – A deep dive into you as an individual and a leader.
- ☐ Know Your Community - Strategically leading your organization, working with City Council, and authentically connecting it to your community.
- ☐ Know Your Money - How do you build a budget that moves your strategic community vision forward.
- ☐ Breakdown Barriers - Intersectional conversations around gender, diversity, equity, and inclusion in the profession and workplace.
- ☐ Building Confidence - Communication, Confidence, and Orchestration.
- ☐ Getting THE Job – Peeling back the curtain on the Executive recruitment process while preparing and getting ready for your next step.

Q21 For the following statements, please read the description and select if you Strongly Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Neither Agree Nor Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Strongly Agree, or N/A

- The NWWLA provided me with many networking opportunities that I can draw upon for advancements in my professional life.
- The NWWLA has inspired me to seek out more leadership opportunities in my career.
- I feel more confident in my professional role since starting the NWWLA.
- The NWWLA gave me the skills I need to achieve my career goals.

- I would recommend the NWWLA to friends and colleagues.
- I gained a mentor or group of mentors through my participation in the NWWLA.
- I gained the opportunity to mentor others through my participation in the NWWLA.
- I intend to stay connected to my small group members who I met at the NWWLA.
- I have gained a sponsor/someone who advocates on my behalf from my participation in the NWWLA.

Q22 Please include comments on any of the above statements. (optional)

Q23 Did your experience in the academy grow your professional network?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

If Yes, Skip To: Q24

Q24 Do you intend to stay connected with this network?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q25 What from the NWWLA has been the most helpful in your personal life since starting the program?

Q26 What from the NWWLA has been the most helpful in your professional life since starting the program?

Q27 Please share one thing you would change or improve about the NWWLA.

Q28 What is your current level of education?

- ☐ No high school diploma
- ☐ High school diploma or equivalent
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ Associate's degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master's degree or other professional graduate degree
- ☐ PhD

Q29 Have you completed more education since starting the NWWLA, or do you intend to complete more education?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If no, skip to: Q32

Q30 Did your experience with the NWWLA contribute to your decision to pursue more education?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If no, skip to: Q32

Q31 Please explain how the NWWLA contributed to your decision to pursue more education.

Q32 During your time in the NWWLA were you a primary caregiver?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q33 Were there any barriers you faced during your time in the NWWLA? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Finances
- ☐ Time constraints
- ☐ Life events
- ☐ Lack of support from your organization
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ N/A _____

Q34 If you marked yes to any of the above barriers, how did this barrier/these barriers impact your experience?

Q35 Are you willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview or focus group?

Interviews will be conducted remotely via phone or Zoom during the month of March and will take approximately 15 to 30 minutes.

Focus groups will be conducted remotely via Zoom during the month of March and will take approximately 1 to 1.5 hours.

- ☐ Yes, interview only
- ☐ Yes, focus group only
- ☐ Yes, interview and/or focus group
- ☐ No

If no, skip to: Q37

Q36 What is the best method to contact you for a follow-up interview and/or focus group? (Please enter email address and/or phone number for selected method(s).

- ☐ Email _____
- ☐ Phone call _____
- ☐ Text _____

Q37 Are you willing to participate in promotional materials such as a video or provide direct quotes for the academy moving forward?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ No

Q38 The NWWLA Executive Committee is currently recruiting to fill multiple volunteer roles. Are you interested in being more involved in the Academy?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ No

End of Survey 2

Appendix C – Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Prior to conducting interviews, staff will review the talking points below with the participants to ensure they are informed about the interview and agree to participate.

- Introduce yourself
- **Prompt:** We have some follow-up questions and would like to get some testimonials for marketing materials. If you agree, you will participate in an interview with me. It will last about 15-30 minutes.
- Send consent form for testimonial, if not already signed
- Remind participant that participation in interview is voluntary and if they decide to participate, they can stop at any time.
- Tell subject their information will be kept confidential, and that study data will be stored with WCMA

Universal Questions:

1. Was there anything that you did not get the chance to say on the survey that you would like to say now?
2. Please describe an experience when you used something you learned in the NWWLA to your benefit.
3. Looking back on your academy experience, what do you think we could have done differently to have made your experience better?

Personalized Questions:

1. Follow-up on anything to be improved question
2. Follow-up on most helpful things in personal or professional life question
3. Follow-up on one or two other survey question answers

Testimonial:

We're compiling a list of quotes to use for marketing materials. We would love to have your permission to use a quote:

Prompts:

1. What are some experiences, tools, or lessons you have found valuable from the NWWLA?
2. Would you recommend the NWWLA to others and why?
3. I feel that participation in the NWWLA has...
4. My experience in the NWWLA has helped me... or given me...

Appendix D – Coding Guide

Themes:

- Networking
- Curriculum
 - Positive
 - Negative
 - Not advanced enough
- Mentoring
- In-person vs Online
- Small Groups
- Barriers
- Eastern WA vs Western WA
- Recruitment
- Confidence/Empowerment

Appendix E – Testimonial Consent Form

NWWLA Post Survey Interview

Right of Privacy

I hereby grant to the Washington City/County Management Association and Evans School of Public Policy and Governance Student Consulting Lab, the right to edit, broadcast, portray, and make use of any testimonial quote given from myself. The permission I am giving includes utilization of my testimonial in compilation of web, print and presentation materials for promotional and informational purposes.

The utilization of my interview shall not at any time be offered for any other purpose than listed herein. The terms of this release will never expire.

I have read this release and am fully aware of its contents. This release shall be binding on me and my heirs, legal representatives, and assigns.

Signature

Printed Name

Appendix F – Focus Group Themes

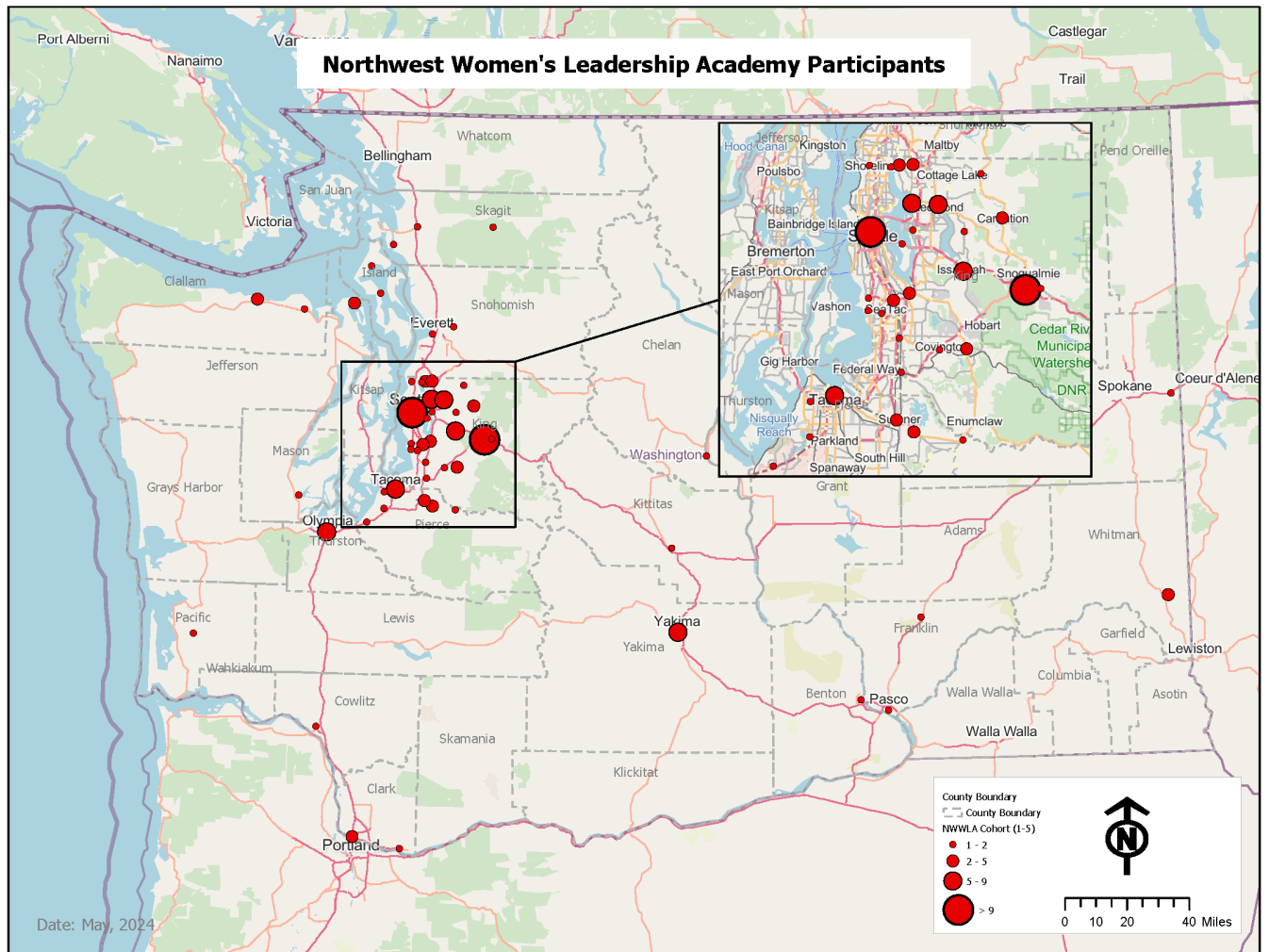
If you're introducing a speaker, facilitating, or moderating, please introduce yourself:

- Name
- Pronouns
- Organization/Position
- Share an accomplishment you're proud of

Themes

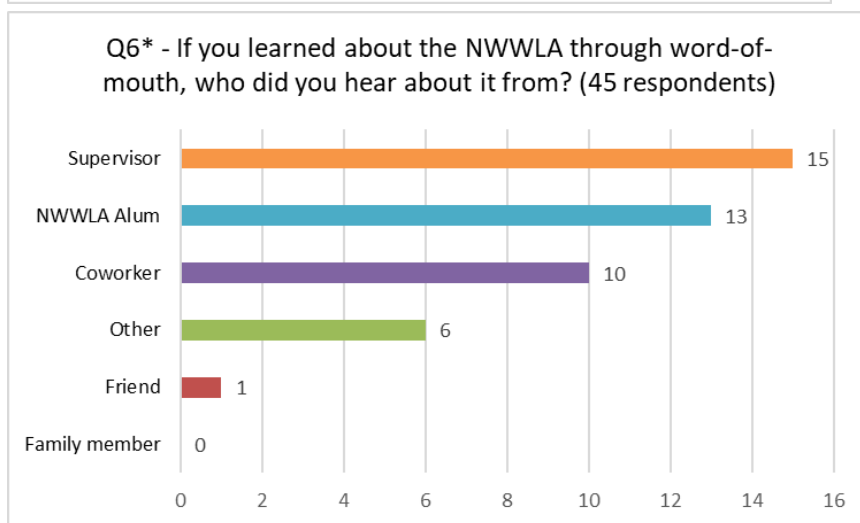
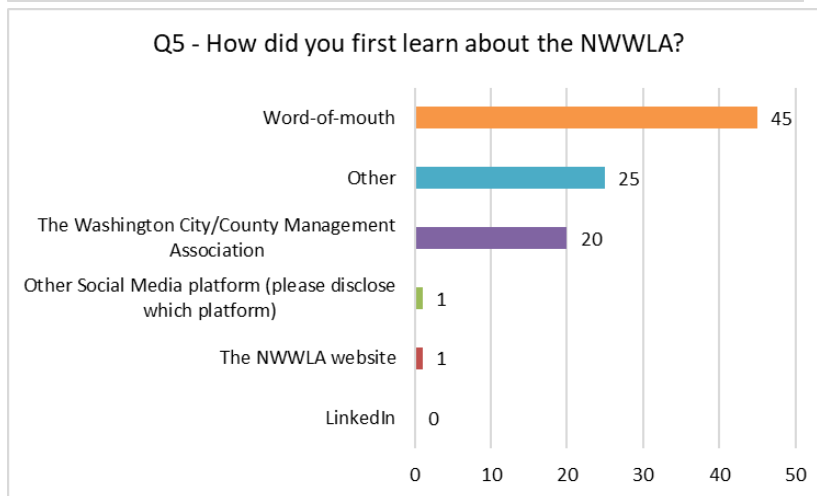
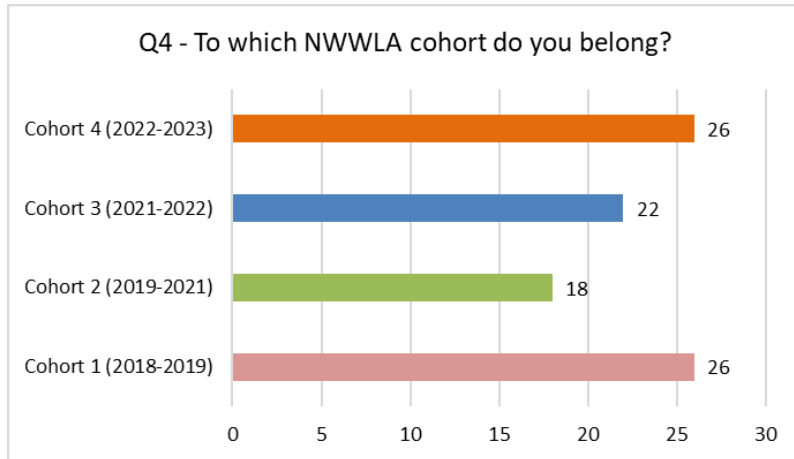
1. Primary Motivation for Joining the Program: To become a city manager/administrator
 - a. Should there be a section within the program for those to network and have training on becoming a city manager/administrator?
 - b. "More involvement from existing managers to share about their experiences."
 - c. "NWWLA helped me realize that I am capable of being a city manager. Now I know I want to be a city manager, and that is the track I am on. I would love more opportunities to be mentored by existing managers."
2. Statewide Involvement:
 - a. "More opportunity for involvement on the east side of the state, more accessibility from the distance."
 - b. "I am in SW Washington and it would have been nice to have the small groups be from a similar geographic area. Everyone in my small group was from Puget Sound area and I don't stay in contact with them."
 - c. "It was difficult as an east side of the state person to attend some of the social events which made me feel a bit left out. I know the geography is an issue but I would argue that women on the east side of the mountains are even more in need of a support system than west side women who perhaps have a stronger pre-existing support system."
3. NWWLA Level 1 vs. level 2 (Curriculum)
 - a. More than 75% of survey participants had over 10 to 20 + years of work experience.
 - b. Some of the curriculum on government overview may not be new for most.

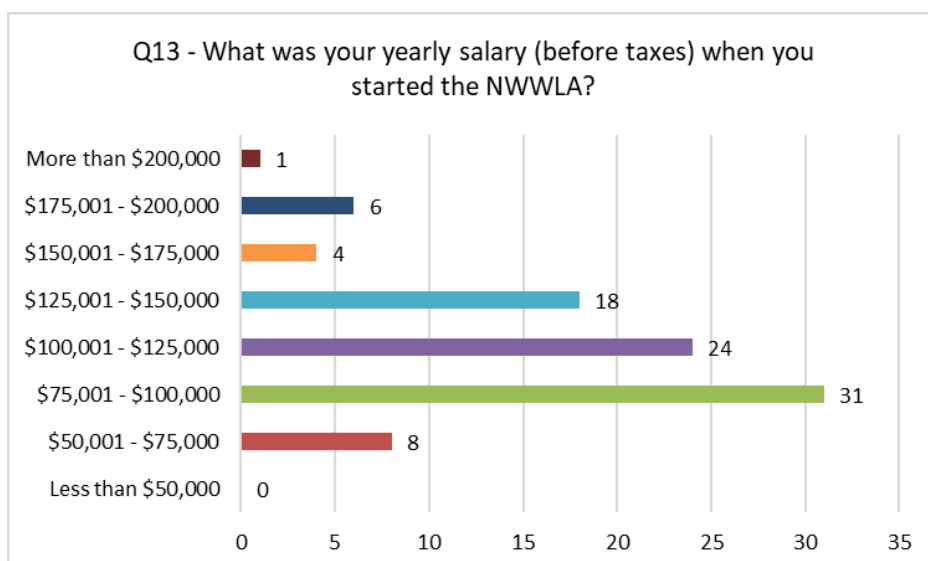
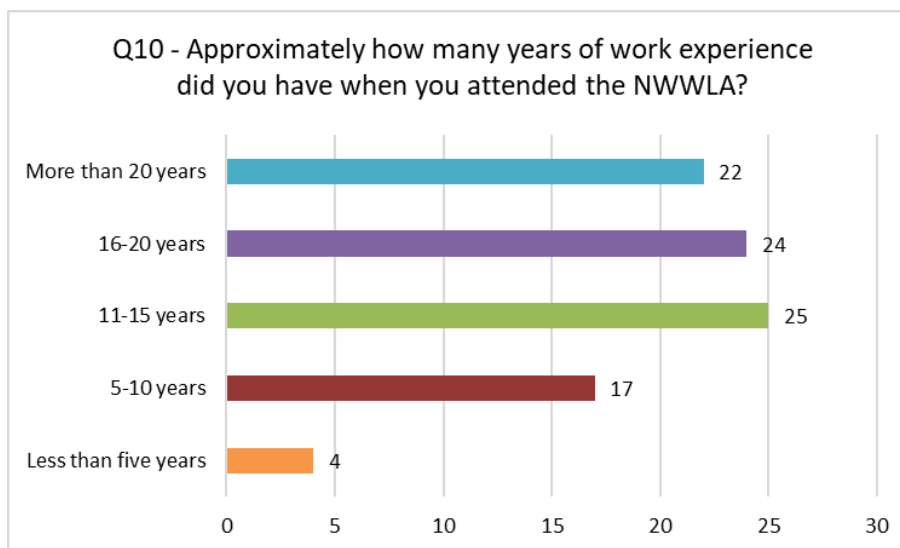
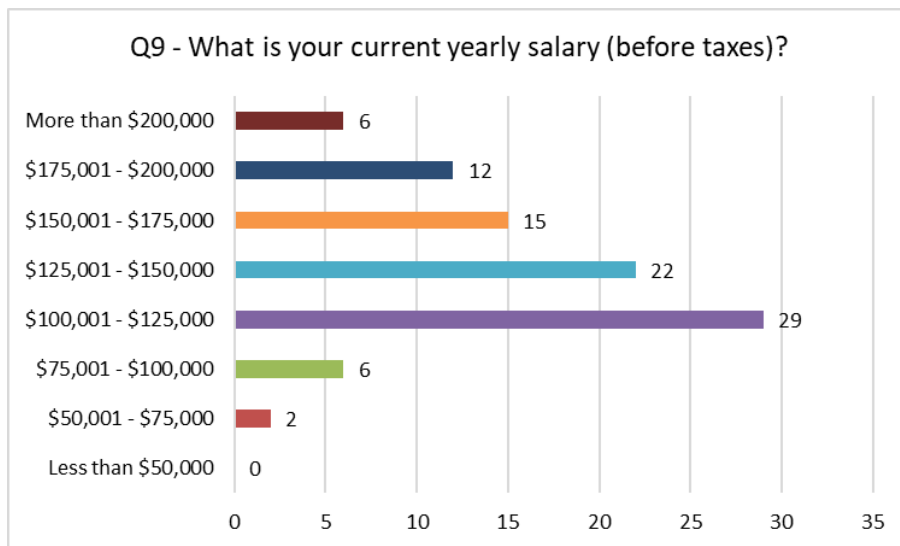
Appendix G – Geographical Map of NWWLA Graduates by Agency Representation

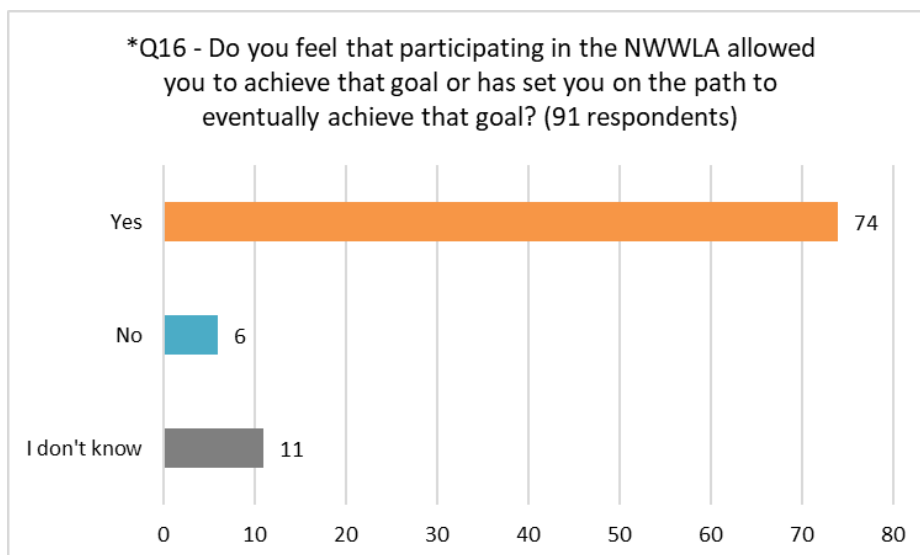
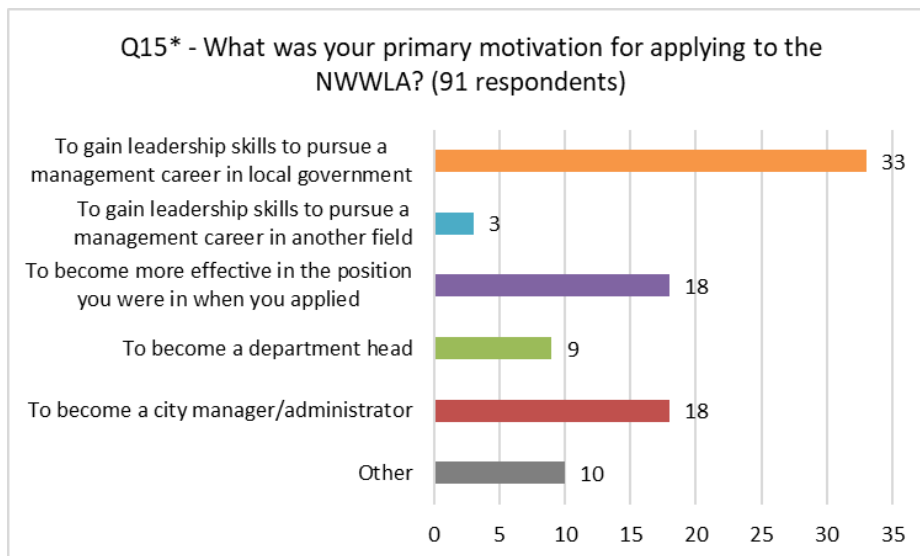
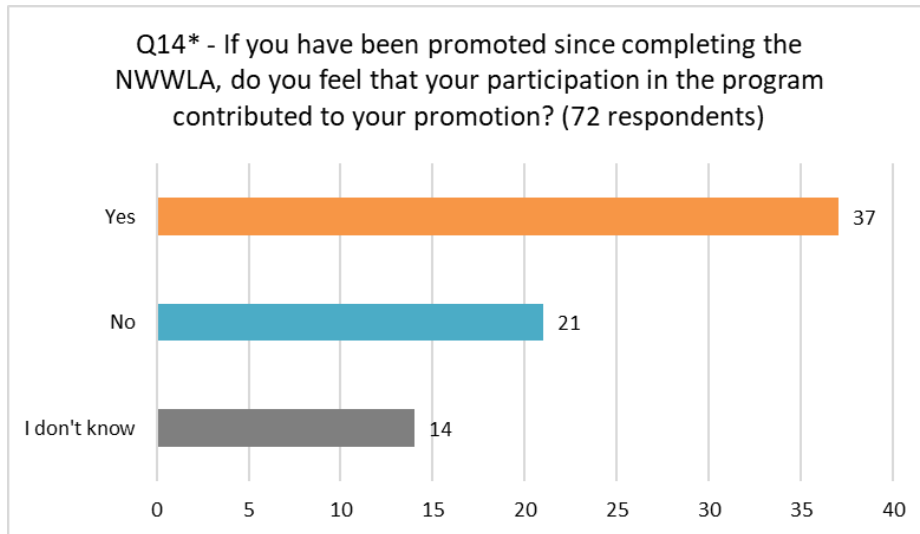


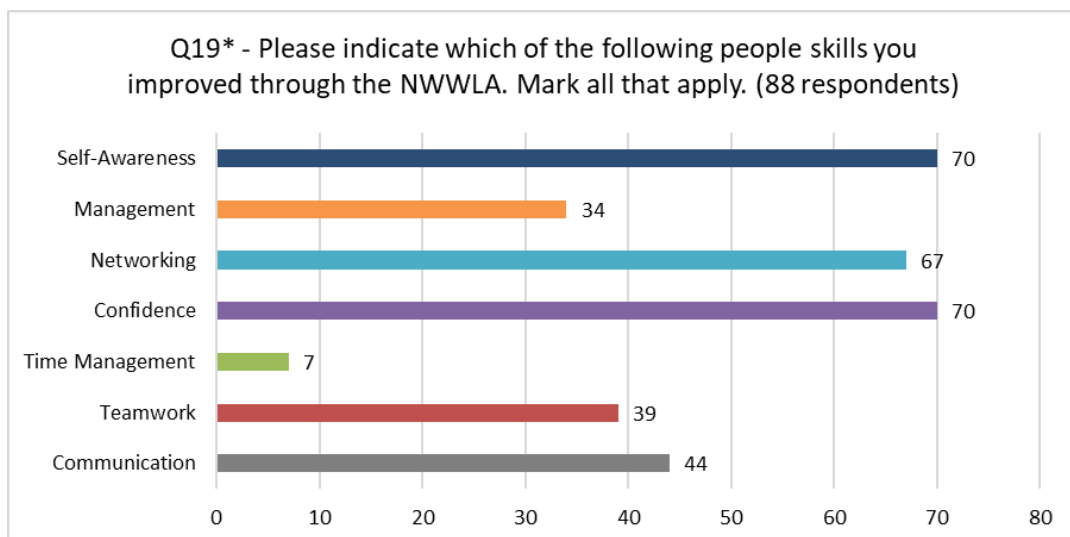
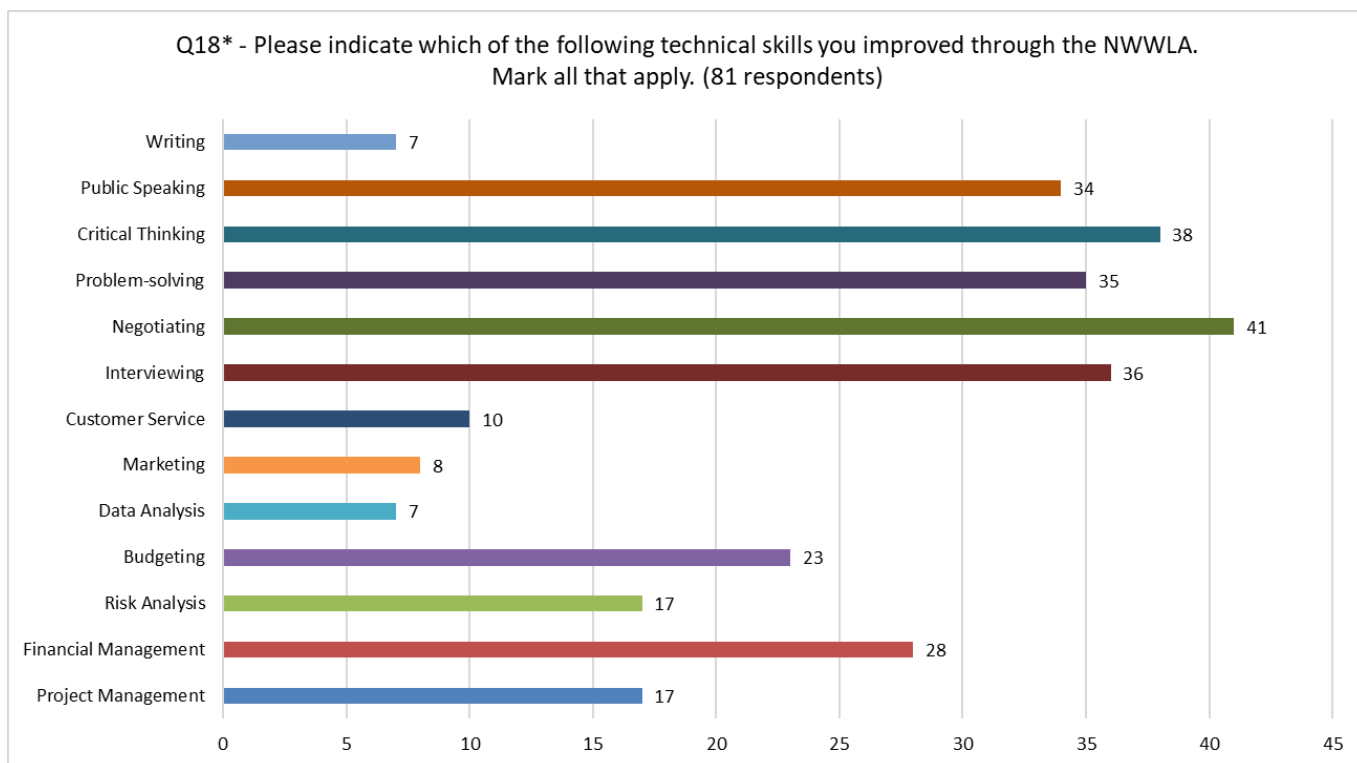
Appendix H – Survey 1 Statistical Results

*Default number of respondents are 92, unless otherwise noted with *.*





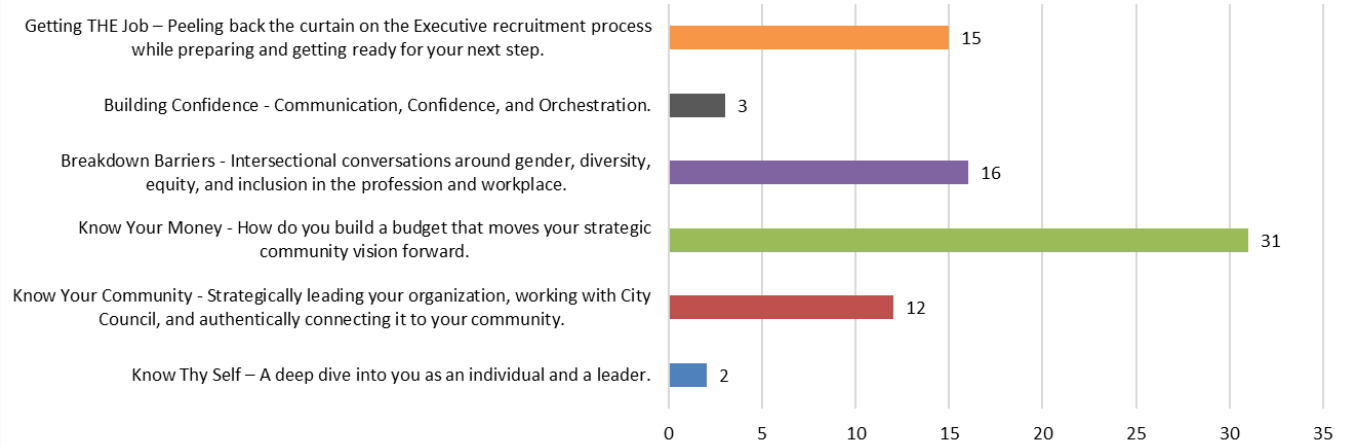


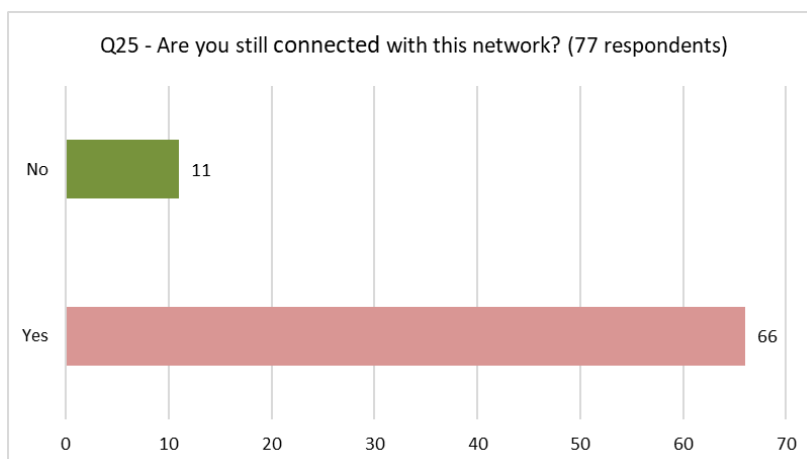
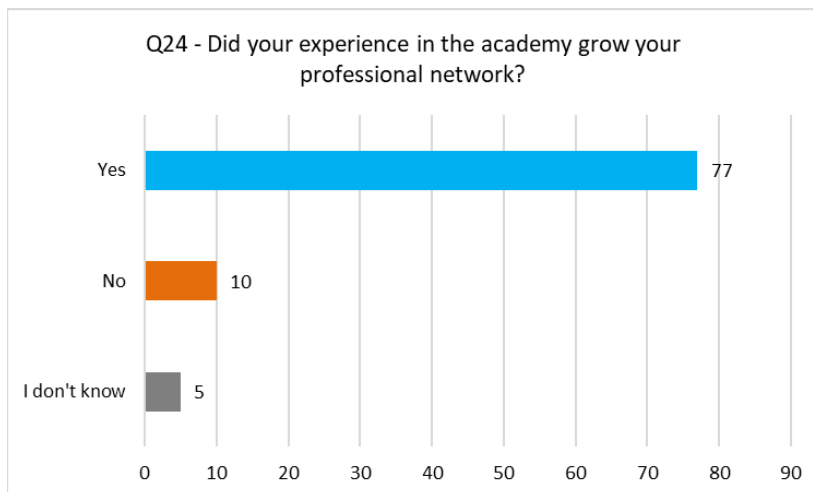
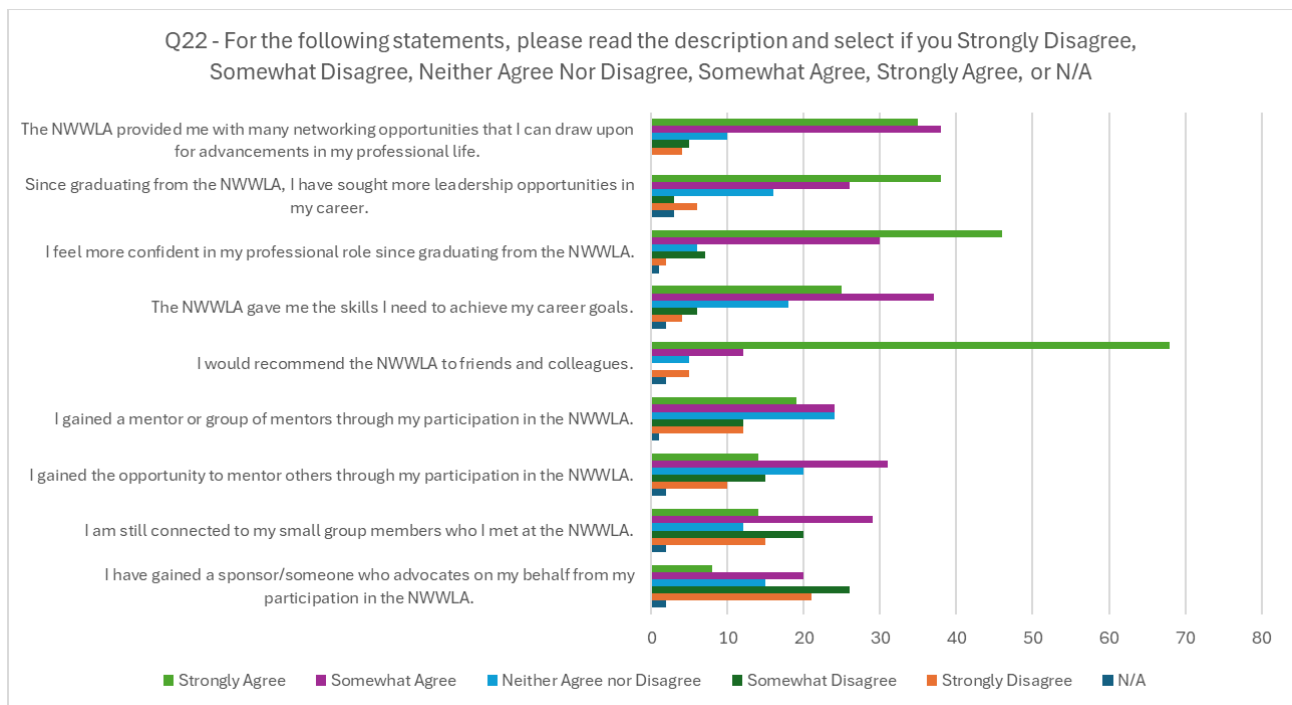


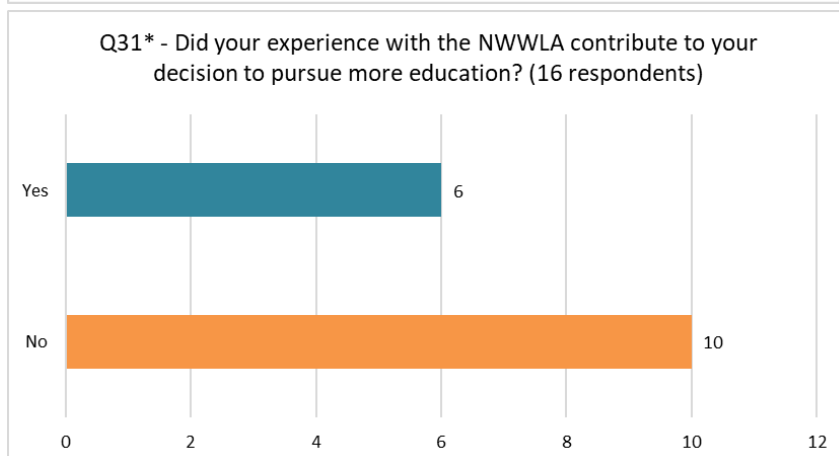
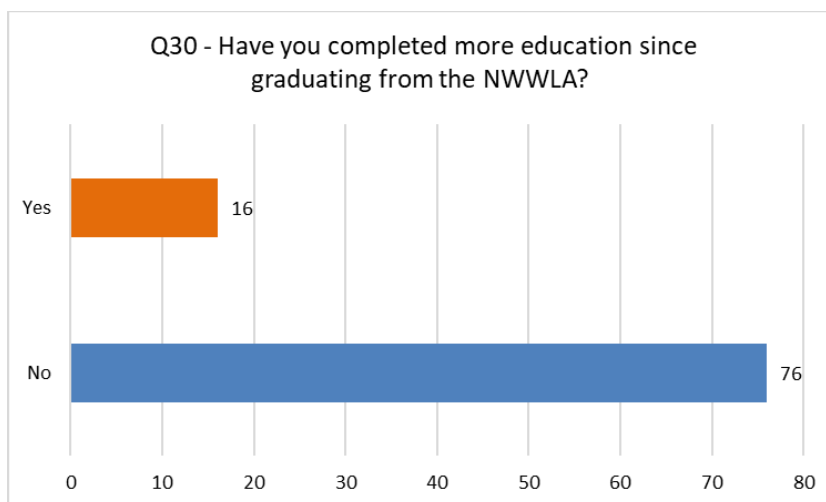
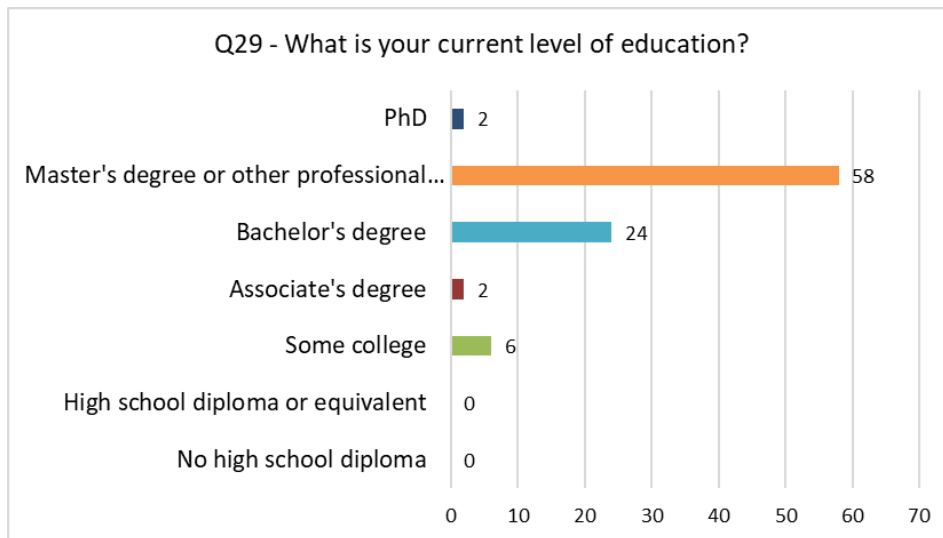
Q20* - Which of the following curriculum topics did you find most helpful? Mark all that apply. (88 respondents)

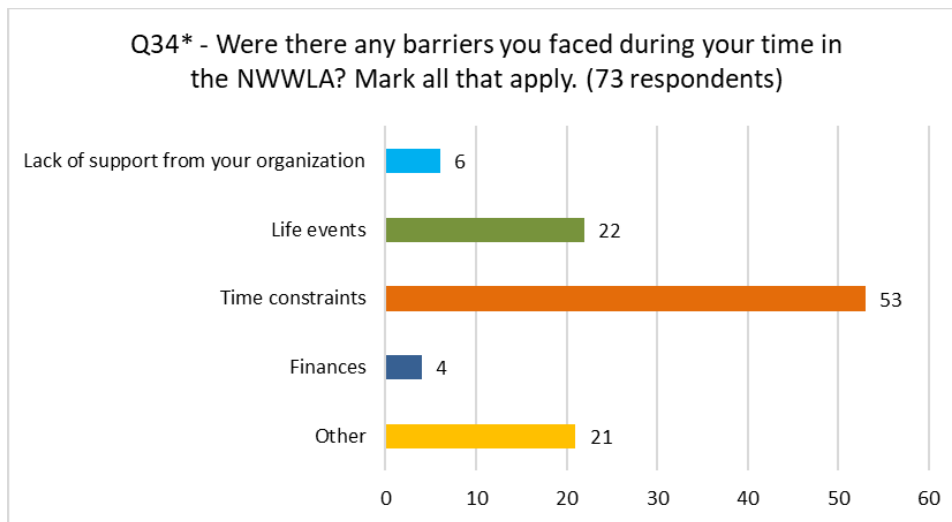
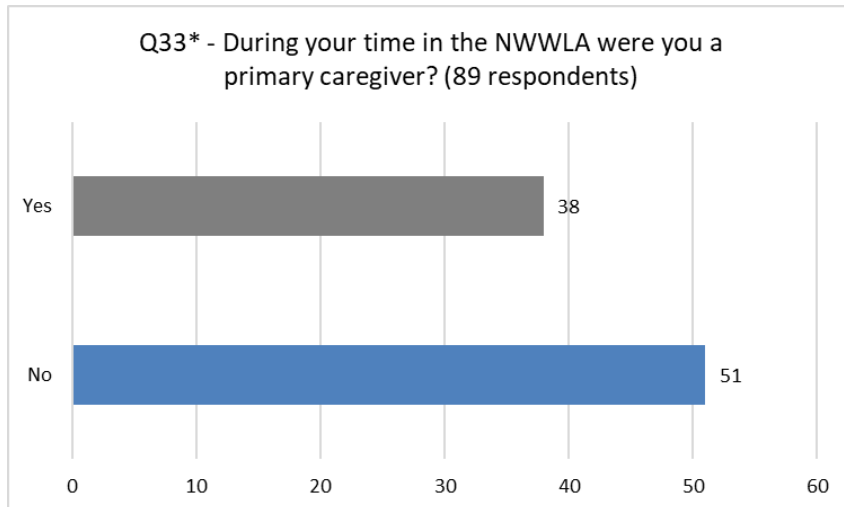


Q21* - Which of the following curriculum topics did you find least helpful? Mark all that apply. (62 respondents)



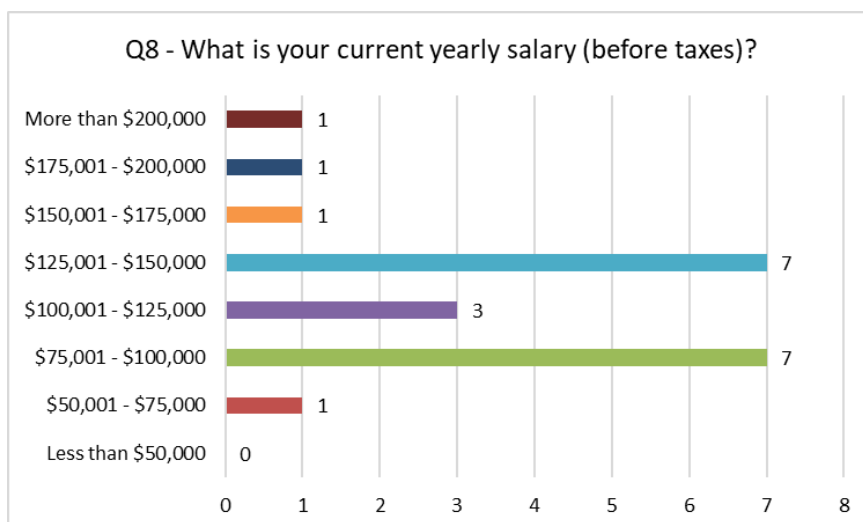
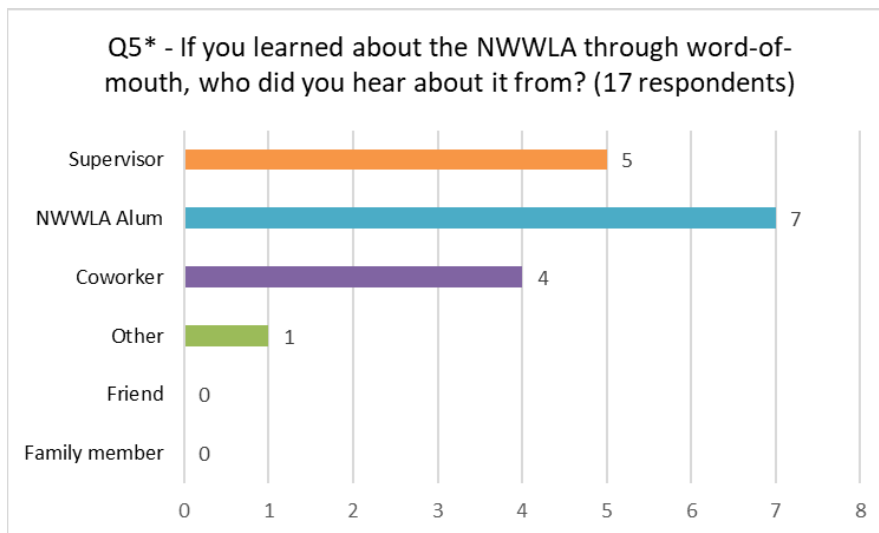
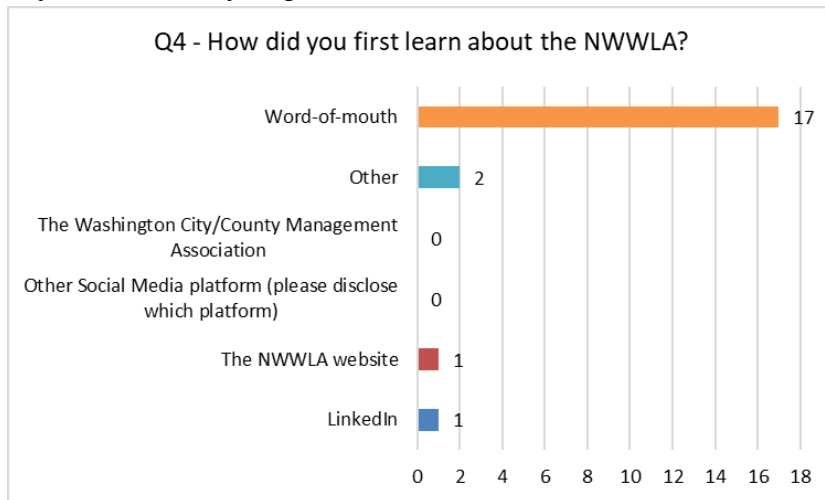


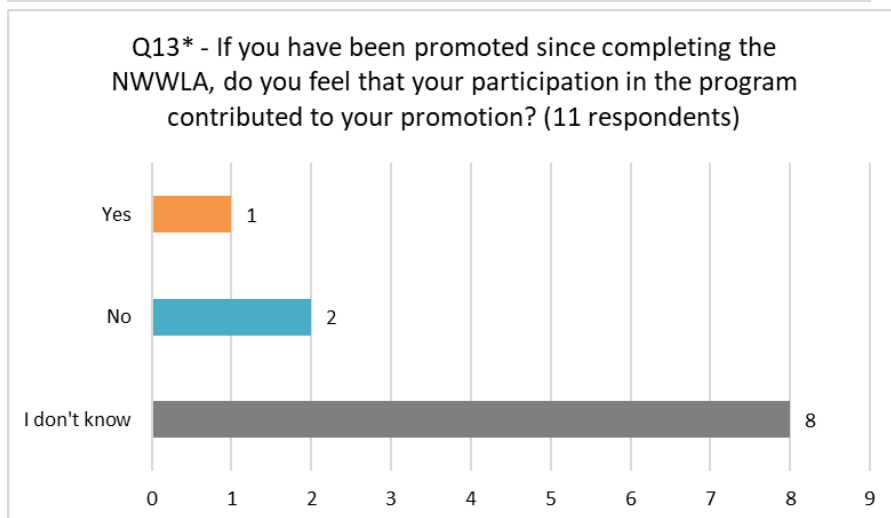
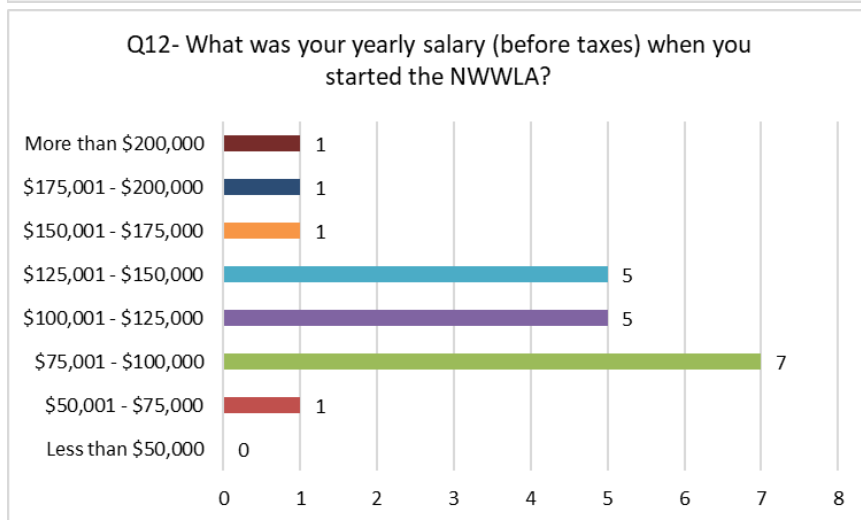
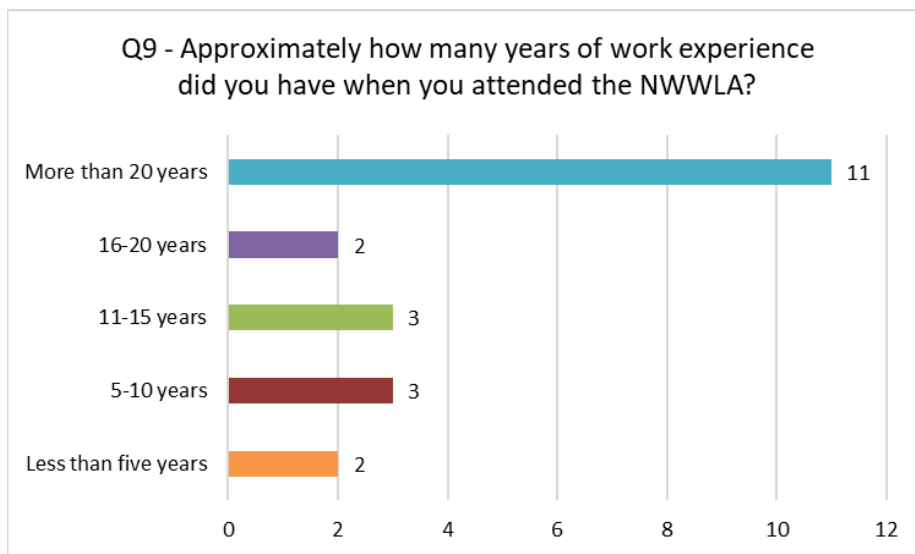




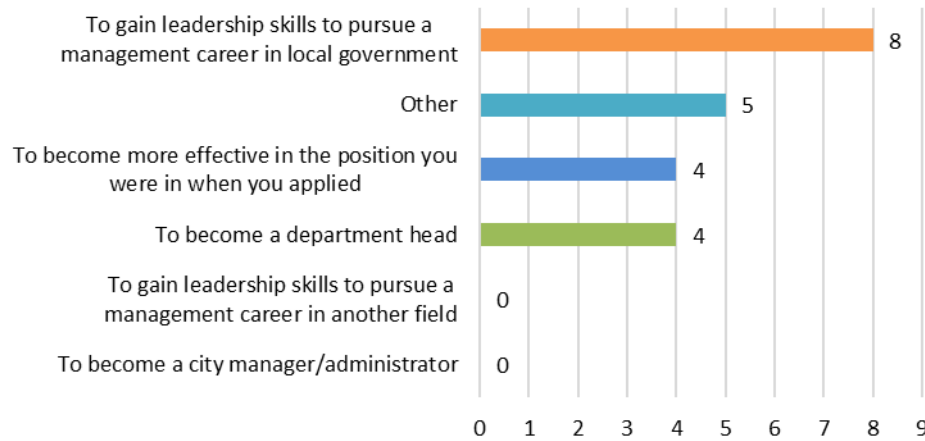
Appendix I – Survey 2 Statistical Results

Default number of respondents are 21, unless otherwise noted with *.

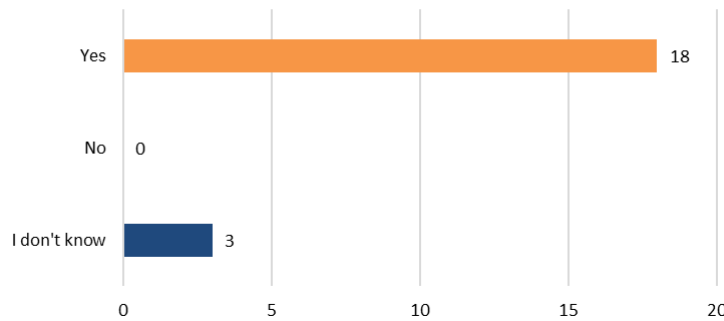




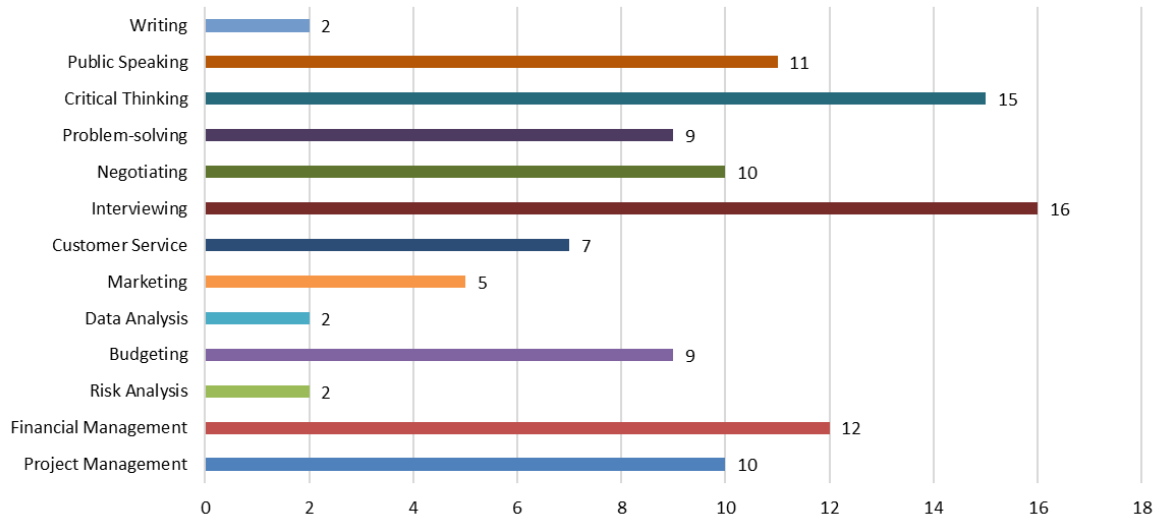
Q14 - What was your primary motivation for applying to the NWWLA?

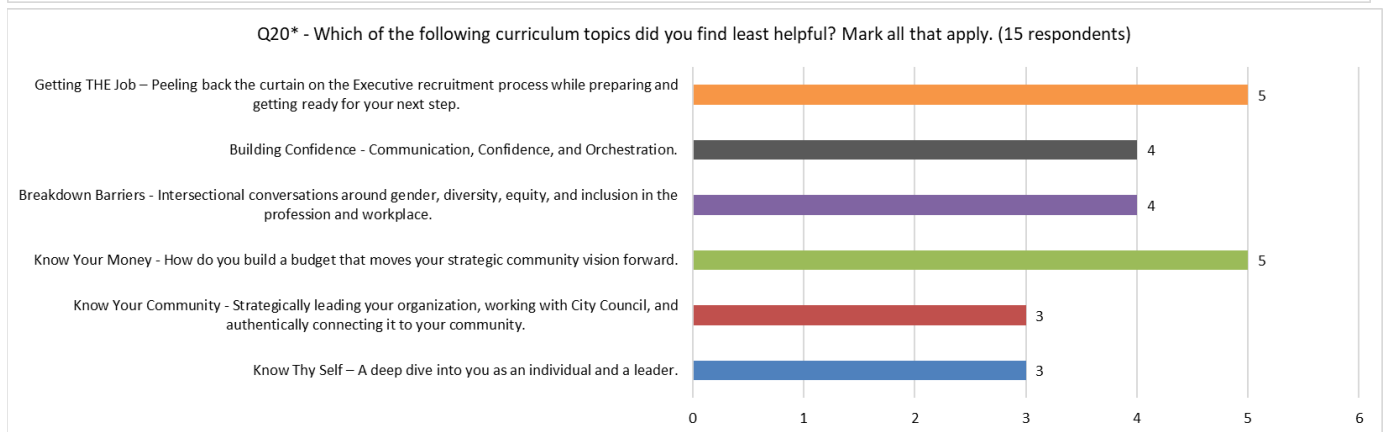
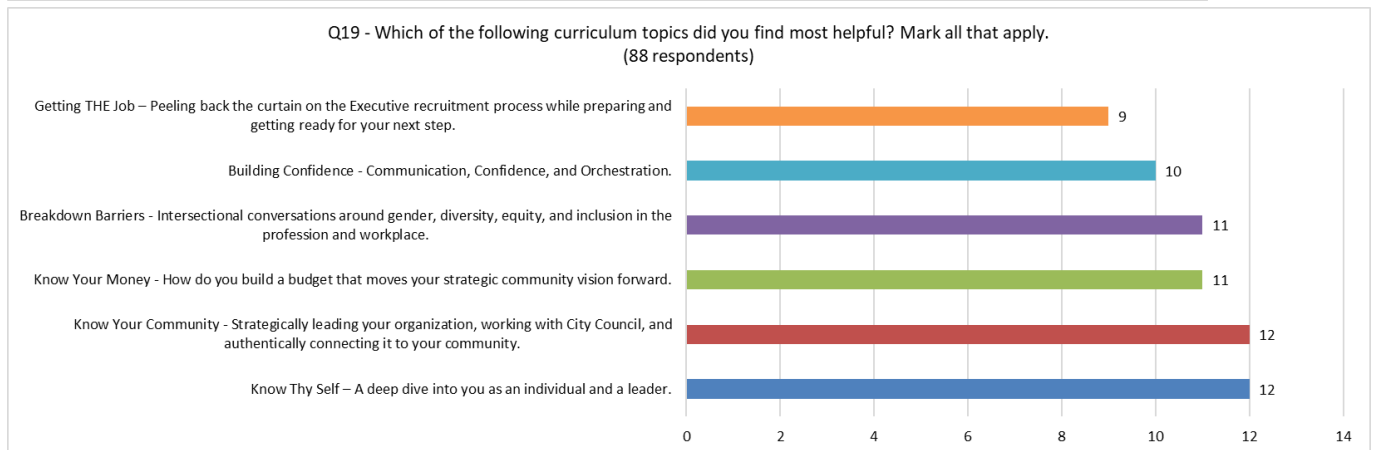
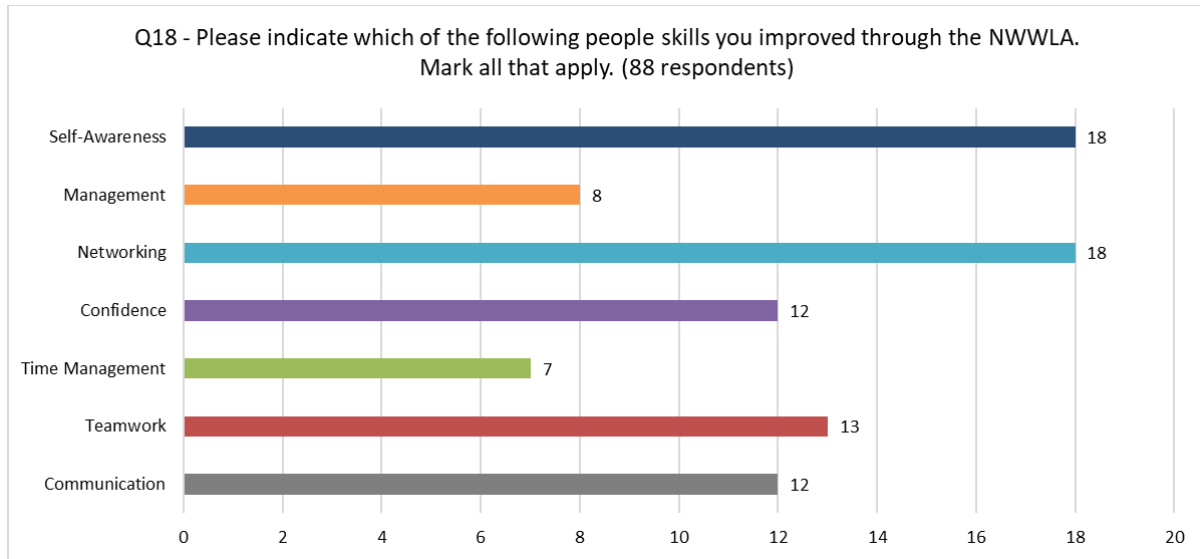


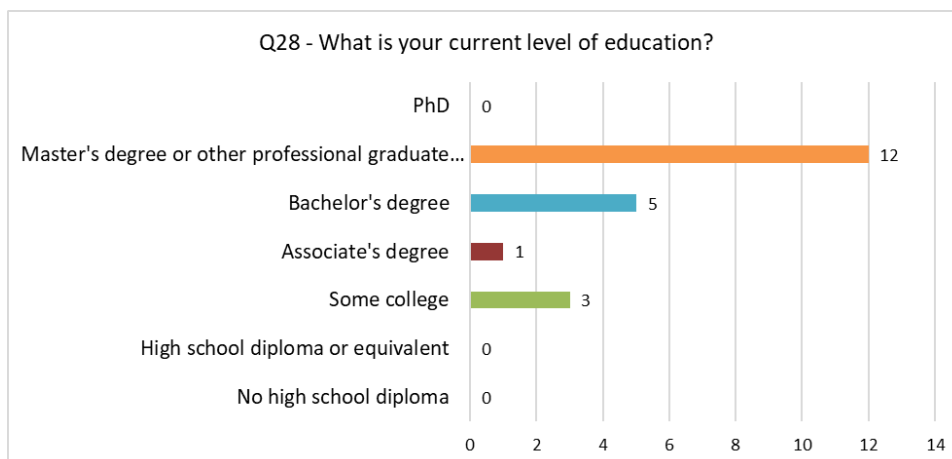
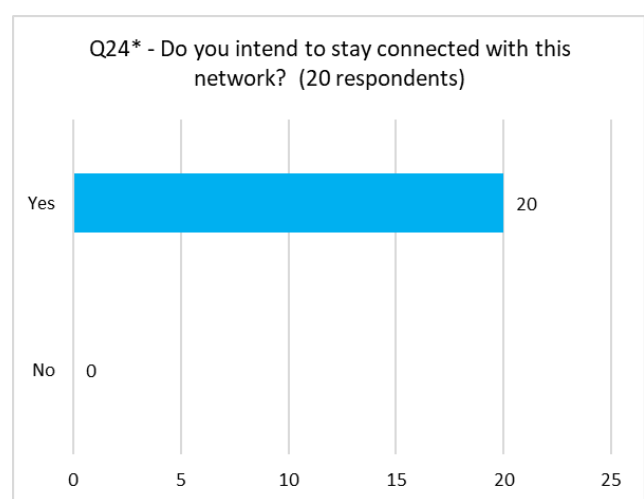
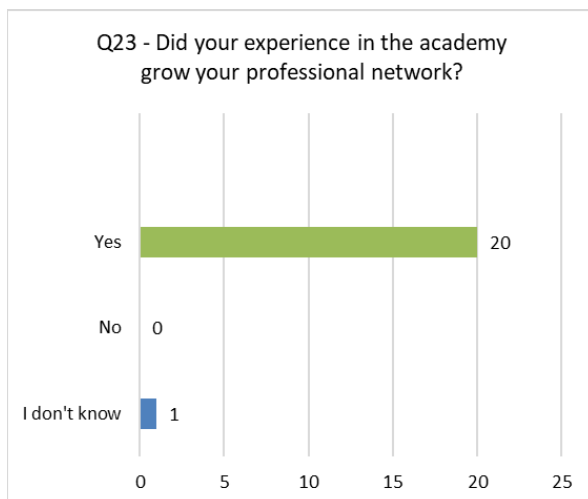
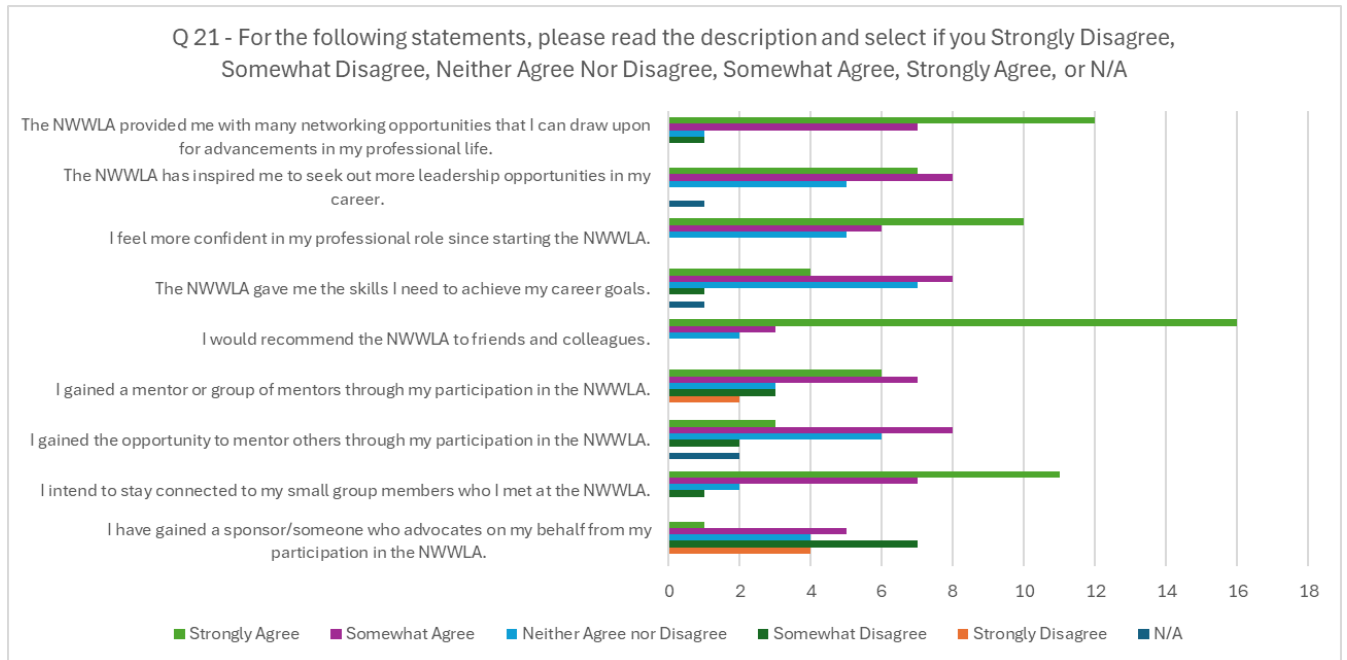
Q15 - Do you feel that participating in the NWWLA allowed you to achieve that goal or has set you on the path to eventually achieve that goal?

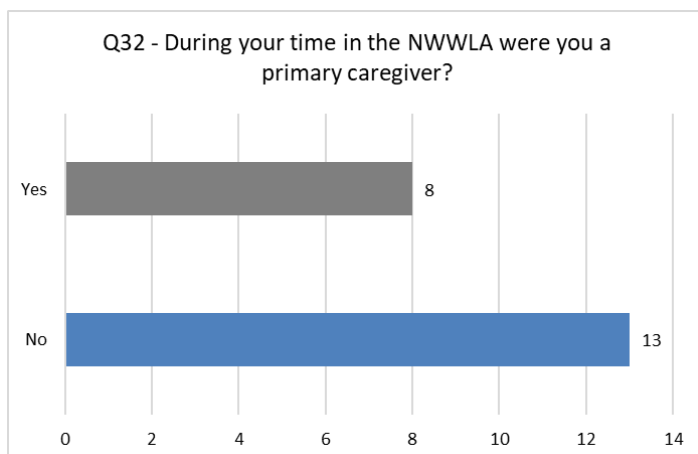
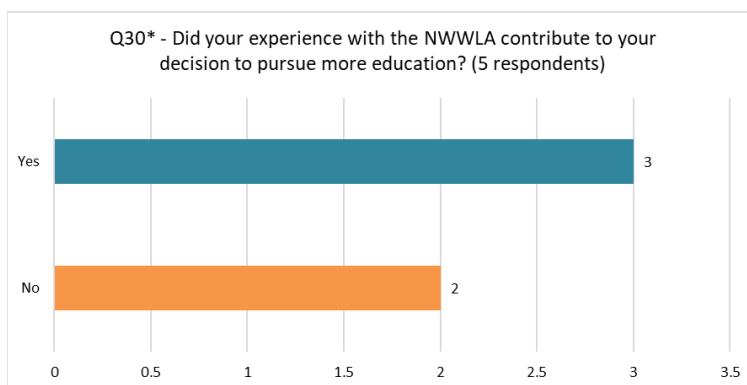
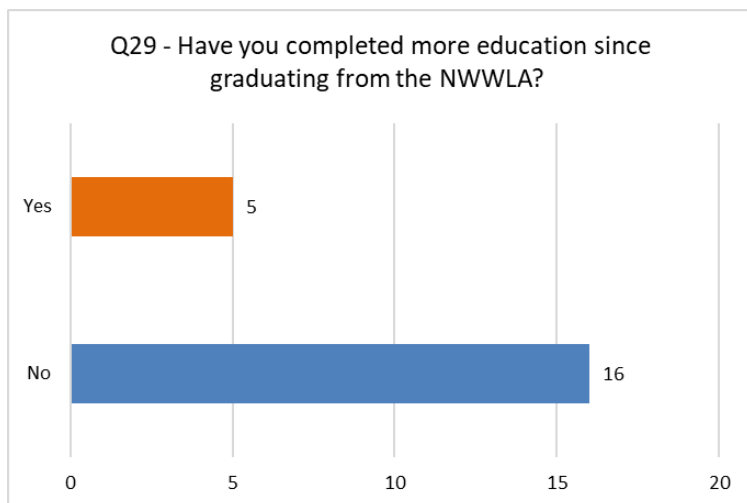


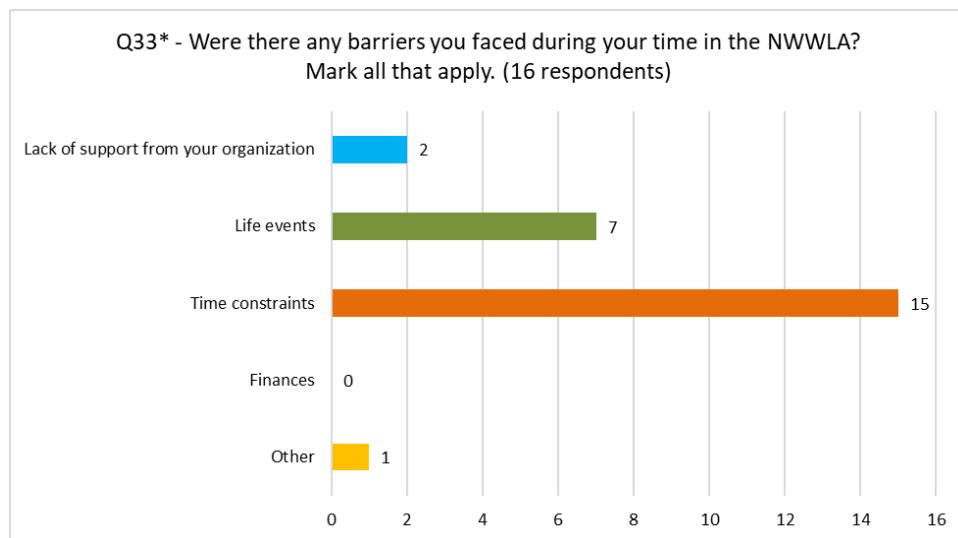
Q17* - Please indicate which of the following technical skills you improved through the NWWLA. Mark all that apply. (20 respondents)











WASHINGTON CITY/COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Statements of Activities

YTD Actual as a Percentage of Yearly Budget

For the Seven Months Ending July 31, 2024

REVENUES	Actual 7/31/2024	Yearly Budget	YTD Budget %	Notes
Membership Dues	56,015	43,000	130.3%	
Summer Annual Conf-meals/reg	82,915	45,000	184.3%	
Conference Sponsorships	27,000	40,000	67.5%	
ICMA Senior Advisor Reimbursement	1,477	3,750	39.4%	
NW Women's Leadership Academy		38,000	0.0%	
Total Revenues	167,407	169,750	98.6%	
EXPENSES				
Summer Annual Conference	6,373	60,000	10.6%	
Board of Directors Meetings	239	1,000	23.9%	
Senior Advisors	1,059	7,500	14.1%	
ICMA Student Chapter (UW Evans School)		2,000	0.0%	
Scholarships		5,500	0.0%	
Awards Programs		1,800	0.0%	
International Contingency		1,500	0.0%	
Travel Support-ICMA Conference		2,000	0.0%	
Women's Leadership Academy (NWWLA)	3,808	35,750	10.7%	
ICMA Professional Management Fund		1,000	0.0%	
ICMA Coaching Program		1,000	0.0%	
Professional Services	20,850	43,700	47.7%	
Office Supplies		1,000	0.0%	
Insurance	1,494	1,500	99.6%	
Bank Service Charge	3,842	4,000	96.0%	
State and City Taxes	422	500	84.4%	
Total Expenses	38,086	169,750	22.4%	
EXCESS REVENUES (EXPENSES)	129,321			
Add Beg. Balance on 01/01/24	\$85,236			
Ending Balance on 12/31/24	214,557			

WCMA Membership Report, June 2024

Number of Members

Year	February	March	June	August
2020	118		144	156
2021	94		136	172
2022	129		149	195
2023	135	180		194
2024	140	208	242	269