

POLITICS

R. Darcy, Robin Hudson, Barrett Shipp, Kara Cook and Lori Allen

Oklahoma Women Elected, and Appointed Political and Judicial
Firsts

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**Oklahoma Women Elected and Appointed Political
and Judicial Firsts**

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Federal

Presidential Electors: Republicans Mrs. Abbie B. Hillerman and Mrs. Daisy A. Riehl, 1920

United States Representative: Republican Alice Robertson, Muskogee, Second District, 1920

State

Statewide Office: Democrat Kate Barnard, Commissioner of Charities and Corrections, 1907.

Statewide Office Restricted to Males Until 1942: Republican Claudette Henry, State Treasurer, 1990.

Superintendent of Public Instruction: Democrat Sandy Garrett, 1990.

Lieutenant Governor: Republican Mary Fallin, 1994.

State Auditor: Democrat Gladys E. Rogers Warren appointed by Governor Johnson Murray, 1954.

Attorney General: Democrat Susan Loving, appointed by Governor David Walters, 1991.

Commissioner of Labor: Republican Brenda Reneau Wynn, 1995.

Corporation Commissioner: Democrat Norma Eagleton, appointed by Governor George Nigh, 1979, elected 1980.

Clerk of the Supreme Court: Democrat Jesse Elizabeth Moore, 1926 (position abolished in 1967)

Insurance Commissioner: Democrat Kim Holland, appointed by Governor Brad Henry, 2005

Legislature

State Senator: Democrat Mrs. Lamar Looney, Hollis in Harmon County, 1920

State Representative: Republican Bessie McColgin, Roger Mills County, 1920

District

County, District or Superior Court Clerk: Ada B. Smith, Republican, Clerk of the District Court, Beaver County; Miss Maude Kimbell, Democrat, Jackson County, Hattie E. Seeman, Democrat, Harper County, 1912

District Supervisor Caney Valley Soil Conservation District Board: Margaret Riney, 1959.

County

County Assessor: Audrey Briscoe, Democrat, Osage County, 1918

County Attorney: Amelia Patterson (Fry), Democrat, Sequoyah County, 1948.

County Clerk: Mrs. John (Vashti) Stone, Washita County; Charla Cricher, Comanche County; Democrats, 1914

County Commissioner: Thelma Van Dorn, Republican, Harper County, 1952

County Register of Deeds: Cora Diehl, Populist, Logan County, 1891

Superintendent of Schools: Miss Olivet Thornley, Payne County, 1894

County Sheriff: Mrs. Emma M. Bond, Democrat, Grady County, 1939

County Treasurer: Miss Jo Dooling, Democrat, Okfuskee County, 1916

Municipal

Mayor: Patience Latting, Democrat, Oklahoma City, first woman mayor of a city 350,000 or over in the United States, 1971.

Mayor: Lelia Foley-Davis, Taft in Muskogee County, first Black woman elected mayor in the United States, 1973.

Judicial

Oklahoma Supreme Court: Alma Wilson appointed by Governor George Nigh 1982; Chief Justice 1995.¹

Court of Criminal Appeals: Reta M. Strubhar appointed by Governor David Walters July, 1993.²

Court of Appeals: Patricia Dougherty Robinson MacGuigan 1983.

District Judge: JoAnn McInnis Oklahoma and Canadian County 1962.³

County Judge: Democrat Marle Dunn, Murray County 1946.⁴

U.S. Federal District Judge, Robin Cauthron, Western District, appointed by President George Bush, 1991.

U.S. Federal Appellate Judge: Stephanie Seymour, Tenth Circuit, appointed by President Jimmy Carter, 1979, Chief Judge 1994-2000.

United States Senator, Governor: none to date

¹Jayne Nash Montgomery temporarily sat on the Supreme Court as a Special Justice for a case in 1967 and again in 1978.

²Grace Elmore Gibson temporarily sat on the Court of Criminal Appeals for one case in 1936.

³Grace Elmore Gibson temporarily replaced a vacationing District judge in 1930.

⁴Georgia Nelson, "Seven Women Judges win Place in Man's Profession." *Oklahoman*, October 13, 1957. p. 1.

Table 1. Women in Oklahoma County Office: 2005

Office	Percent Women
Court Clerk	100
Clerk	99
Treasurer	79
Assessor	69
Commissioner	5
Sheriff	0
Overall	44

Source: R. Darcy calculations from *Roster of Oklahoma State and County Officers: 2005* (Oklahoma City: State Election Board).

Table 2. Women in State Legislatures 1974-2005

Year	National		Oklahoma	
	Women Legislators	% of Total Legislators	Women Legislators	% of Total Legislators
1974	424	5.6	6	2.0
1984	996	13.4	11	8.1
1994	1,547	20.8	13	8.7
2004	1,655	22.4	19	12.8
2005	1,663	22.5	22	14.8

Note:

Oklahoma in 2005 was above only *South Carolina, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming* in the percent of legislators that were women.

Source: Barrett Shipp, R. Darcy, Lori Allen calculations from the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), National Information Bank on Women in Public Office, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University Published 1975, 1984, 1994, 2004, 2005. www.cawp.rutgers.edu/facts/stbyst/

Table 3. Oklahoma Women in the State Senate

State Senators	Party	District/ County	Year	Legislature	Terms
Mrs. Lamar Looney	D	4	1921	8	2
Mary Alnita Helm	R	Oklahoma	1975	35	1
Mary Bernice Shedrick	D	Payne	1981	38	4
Billie Jean Floyd	D	Ponotoc	1985	40	1
Helen G. Cole	R	Cleveland	1985	40	3
Kay Dudley	R	Oklahoma	1987	41	1
Maxine Horner	D	11	1987	41	4
Vicki Miles-LaGrange*	D	Oklahoma	1987	41	2
Penny Baldwin Williams	D	33	1989	42	4
Trish Weedn	D	Cleveland	1989	42	3
Angela Monson	D	48	1993	44	3
Carol Martin	R	Stephens	1995	45	2
Kathleen Wilcoxson	R	45	1997	46	3
Nancy Riley	R	37	2001	48	2
Daisy Lawler	D	34	2003	49	1
Debbe Leftwich	D	Oklahoma	2004	49	1
Mary Easley	D	18	2004	49	1
Susan Paddack	D	13	2005	50	1
Judy Eason McIntrye	D	11	2005	50	1
Connie Johnson	D	48	2005**		

**Miles-LaGrange*: resigned Nov. 21, 1993, replaced by Monson

**Won special election to replace Monson, September, 2005

Sources: Barrett Shipp and R. Darcy examined the *Oklahoma Almanac*, published by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, listing state office holders from 1907 to the present. All ambiguous names were checked against various sources to determine the sex. Sources checked include Elizabeth M. Cox, *Women State and Territorial Legislators, 1895-1995: A State-by-State Analysis, with Rosters of 6,000 Women*. McFarland & Company, Inc., Jefferson, North Carolina, 1996; Martin Gruberg, *Women in American Politics: An Assessment and Sourcebook*. Academia Press, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, 1968; *Oklahoma Almanac*, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 2001-2002 edition.

Table 4. Oklahoma Women in the State House of Representatives

Representatives	Party	County/ District	Year	Legislature	Terms
Mrs. Bessie S. McColgin	R	Roger Mills	1921	8	1
Lulu D. Anderson	D	Creek	1923	9	1
Anna Laskey	D	Oklahoma	1923	9	3
Edith Mitchell	D	Payne	1923	9	1
Ida L. Robertson	D	Creek	1925	10	1
Gladys Whittett	D	Pottawatomie	1925	10	1
Mrs. Elma R. Eylar	R	Oklahoma	1929	12	1
Holly L. Anderson	D	Tulsa	1939	17	2
Ila Huff	D	Oklahoma	1941	18	2
Grace Mitchelson	D	Ottawa	1945	21	2
Pauline Tabor*	D	Bryan	1963	29	1
Ruth M. Patterson	R	District 31	1965	30	2
Texanna L. Hatchett	R	District 84	1967	31	3
Anna Belle Wiedemann	D	District 43	1969	32	1
Hannah Diggs Atkins	D	District 97	1969	32	6
Mina Mae Hibon	R	Cleveland	1973	34	2
Jan Turner	R	District 81	1973	34	1
Dorothy Dell Conaghan	R	District 38	1975	35	6
Joan King Hastings	R	District 67	1975	35	5
Helen T. Arnold	R	District 71	1977	36	3
Cleta Deatherage	D	District 44	1977	36	4
Helen G. Cole	R	District 54	1979	37	3
Freddye Harper Williams	D	Tulsa	1981	38	4
Twyla Mason	D	District 23	1981	38	2
Penny Baldwin Williams	D	District 70	1981	38	4
Arlene Britton Baker	D	District 75	1981	38	2
Rebecca Hamilton	D	District 89	1981	38	5
Maxine Carol Kincheloe	R	District 96	1981	38	3
Nancy Starr Virtue	D	District 53	1983	39	2
Carolyn Ann Thompson	D	District 44	1985	40	4
Linda H. Larason	D	District 88	1985	40	5
Vicki H. White	D	District 46	1987	41	2
Claudette Henry	R	District 92	1987	41	1
Wanda Jo Peltier	D	District 93	1987	41	5
Joan Greenwood	R	District 54	1989	42	8

Table 4. Oklahoma Women in the State House of Representatives (cont'd)

Representatives	Party	County/ District	Year	Legislature	Terms
Alice Musser	D	District 91	1989	42	1
Betty Boyd	D	District 23	1991	43	5
Carolyn S. Coleman	R	District 53	1991	43	6
Mary Fallin	R	District 85	1991	43	2
Angela Monson	D	District 99	1991	43	2
Laura W. Boyd	D	District 44	1993	44	3
Barbara Staggs	D	District 15	1995	45	6
Jari Askins	D	District 50	1995	45	6
Odilia Dank	R	District 85	1995	45	6
Debbie Blackburn	D	District 88	1995	45	6
Mary Easley	D	District 78	1997	46	4
Susan Winchester	R	District 47	1999	47	4
Sue Tibbs	R	District 23	2001	48	3
Judy McIntyre	D	District 73	2003	49	1
Lee Denney	R	District 33	2005	50	1
Marian Cooksey	R	District 39	2005	50	1
Lisa Billy	R	District 42	2005	50	1
Ann Coody	R	District 64	2005	50	1
Jeannie McDaniel	D	District 78	2005	50	1
Sally Kern	R	District 84	2005	50	1

NOTES:

Tabor: re-elected in 1965 District 21, served 3 more terms

Wiedemann: re-elected in 1971 District 43, served 1 more term

Hibon: elected Oct. 2, 1973 District 44

Cole: elected to OK State Senate District *Cleveland Cty* 1985 to 2004

Mason: reelected as Twyla Mason *Gray* in 1983

Williams: Member, State Senate, 42nd Legislature, 1989 to 2004

Hamilton: Served 38th through 40th; Re-elected in 2003 to present

Monson: Member, State Senate, District 48 1993 to 2005

Sources: Barrett Shipp, R. Darcy, Lori Allen calculations from Cox, Elizabeth M. *Women State and Territorial Legislators, 1895-1995: A State-by-State Analysis, with Rosters of 6,000 Women*. McFarland & Company, Inc., Jefferson, North Carolina, 1996. Gruberg, Martin. *Women in American Politics: An Assessment and Sourcebook*. Academia Press, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, 1968; *Oklahoma Almanac*, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 2001-2002 and 2004 Oklahoma Election results.

Table 5. Women Appointed State Policy Leaders by State 1999-2003

State	2003				Rank in		
	Number		Percent		Appointed Women		
	Men	Women	Men	Women	1999	2001	2003
Alabama	25	5	83.33	16.67	39	45	49
Alaska	19	6	76.00	24.00	26	32	42.5
Arizona	28	13	68.29	31.71	30	13	27
Arkansas	19	7	73.08	26.92	35	41	37
California	50	24	67.57	32.43	45	30	25
Colorado	21	8	72.41	27.59	22	21	36
Connecticut	23	13	63.89	36.11	48	38	13
Delaware	18	10	64.29	35.71	24	31	15.5
Florida	16	13	55.17	44.83	4	2	3
Georgia	17	5	77.27	22.73	19	22	44
Hawaii	17	6	73.91	26.09	16	28	39
Idaho	19	6	76.00	24.00	37	43	42.5
Illinois	35	14	71.43	28.57	40	44	34.5
Indiana	35	17	67.31	32.69	29	23	24
Iowa	33	25	56.90	43.10	9	9	4
Kansas	17	11	60.71	39.29	18	19	6
Kentucky	19	11	63.33	36.67	10	17	11.5
Louisiana	17	6	73.91	26.09	47	50	40
Maine	20	9	68.97	31.03	21	34	28.5
Maryland	30	8	78.95	21.05	14	10	46
Massachusetts	10	10	50.00	50.00	5	5	1
Michigan	19	11	63.33	36.67	3	7	11.5
Minnesota	22	7	75.86	24.14	8	11	41
Mississippi	16	9	64.00	36.00	49	42	14
Missouri	12	9	57.14	42.86	41	18	5
Montana	21	9	70.00	30.00	6	47	32
Nebraska	24	14	63.16	36.84	46	20	10
Nevada	24	13	64.86	35.14	20	1	19
New Hampshire	28	5	84.85	15.15	31	33	50
New Jersey	18	10	64.29	35.71	7	15	15.5
New Mexico	22	12	64.71	35.29	15	37	17.5
New York	45	20	69.23	30.77	34	24	31
North Carolina	16	8	66.67	33.33	11	25	21.3

Table 5. Women Appointed State Policy Leaders by State 1999-2003 (cont'd)

State	2003				Rank in Appointed Women		
	Number		Percent		1999	2001	2003
	Men	Women	Men	Women			
North Dakota	19	9	67.86	32.14	36	40	26
Ohio	31	9	77.50	22.50	43	46	45
Oklahoma	14	5	73.68	26.32	50	49	38
Oregon	24	22	52.17	47.83	2	3	2
Pennsylvania	34	14	70.83	29.17	23	36	33
Rhode Island	19	10	65.52	34.48	33	29	20
South Carolina	23	6	79.31	20.69	38	26	48
South Dakota	19	5	79.17	20.83	27	48	47
Tennessee	22	13	62.86	37.14	12	14	9
Texas	65	29	69.15	30.85	32	35	30
Utah	20	10	66.67	33.33	25	6	21.3
Vermont	15	6	71.43	28.57	1	4	34.5
Virginia	10	6	62.50	37.50	44	39	8
Washington	32	16	66.67	33.33	17	12	21.3
West Virginia	20	9	68.97	31.03	42	26	28.5
Wisconsin	28	17	62.22	37.78	13	16	7
Wyoming	22	12	64.71	35.29	28	8	17.5

Source: R. Darcy calculations from *Appointed Policy Makers in State Government Five-Year Trend Analysis: Gender, Race and Ethnicity. A Report of the Center for Women in Government & Civil Society*, University at Albany, State University of New York (Winter, 2004): pages 7-8.



DID YOU KNOW?

Oklahoma elected its first female Presidential Electors in 1920? (Politics page 398)

Patience Latting (Oklahoma City) and Lelia Foley-Davis (Taft) were respectively the first female mayor of an American city over 350,000 and the first Black woman elected mayor in the United States? (Politics page 398)



DID YOU KNOW?



Gladys Rogers Warren was a civic leader, political volunteer and public servant. In July 1954, Governor Johnston Murray appointed her as state auditor to fill the remaining six months in Wilburn Cartwright's term. In 1964 she unsuccessfully ran for Oklahoma Senate Seat 17, finishing third among the eight Democrats in the primary race. In 1972 she was appointed director of Oklahoma's Bicentennial Commission and in 1978 at age 66 she ran for Lieutenant Governor. Although her bid failed, she became the first woman in state history to make the runoff in a race for either governor or lieutenant governor.

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