

Gloucester's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual National Women's Equality Day forum  
Aug. 26, 2024 ~ Breakout group responses to: "What resonated with you from the panelists and/or inspirational women who were recognized?"

The majority of responses, as shown below, express gratitude for taking time to recognize and uplift local women, acknowledges the value of mentoring and diversity, support the need for more collaborative meetings and networking among women, and applaud the range of professions and accomplishments of our panelists and the women who were recognized during the program. The comments, separated by asterisks, show that they were made within one breakout group . Many thanks to our wonderful discussion facilitators and their diligent "scribes" for these notes.

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Takeaways – I realized that I'm surrounded by generations of strong, inspiring women  
I have recognized, later, how much a previous boss helped me not only understand my job but also how to treat people  
You can always learn something from anyone – take the time to listen

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Range of people's professions recognized.  
So many women leaders in the room working for Gloucester and women's issues / rights  
Inspired by the honorees and no person alone in their journeys  
Not always aware of when mentoring, when having an impact  
Thinking about intent was interesting  
Takes an event like this for women leaders to pause and meaningfully discuss their practices, common experiences  
Nourishing experience to witness other women in the community / celebrate and honor them  
More community events should have time for reflection and discuss the experience

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Variety of contributions that women have made  
Intentional, ways different roles were woven into the program  
Mentorship – sometimes you learn from the roadblocks / negatives, in addition to the positive  
Positioning others for success (mentorship)  
Being artificially assigned a mentor vs a mentor "emerging" (value in both, but helpful when more organic) hard to find a good fit sometimes  
Work goes into growing and maintaining a mentoring relationship  
When / how young should children be to be mentored? Elementary kids look for this, trusted adults in a child's school  
We learn differently from our non-family members than our family.

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We don't take the opportunity to recognize each other – 1 to 1 or at larger groups and it is extremely empowering, we should do more events like this

I know that the people we recognize are terrific, but as a society we are not really nice. We work really hard but take each other for granted. Nice to hear what people were saying. It is cool that we can have this opportunity.

Lived in Glo. Since 1968, I have had contact with a lot of the individuals – community action agencies – I'm just amazed that we have so many women in leadership positions in this city. I came to celebrate with others.

Maybe we can continue to lead the way to continue this movement

Recognize the competition at times between women and identify ways to support each other

Feel like I was mentored and didn't realize what was happening. I'd like to take a moment and actually say *thank you*.

Mentorship can look different in different situations.

Sometimes our friends are actually our mentors.

More chance to mentor and be mentored as women participate in leadership roles

We should acknowledge each other even with a simple "great job." Acknowledgement of participation in groups. Take the opportunity to listen to each other and find ways to lift each other up and support.

Leadership happens in all different ways.

Great event. Looking forward to next year.

Possible to have more group meetings like the "Ladies who Launch" group.

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Discussed discovering other sides to the women honored

Discussed accepting or giving feedback. Examples: Boss advocating and/or acting as a buffer ...

A place to reset during a challenge is important

How to balance relationships in the workplace that delineate between objective feedback vs feeling like it is a personal judgment (feedback needs to be objective) – Ask: How does this relate to our goals or what we are supposed to be doing)

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We need more opportunities to come together to share our stories

Need to learn from others

Panel resonated with me - I feel grateful for all these women in our community

We have very powerful women in this community

We need to lift women up, not tear them down

[from a man:] I came to listen ... I've been mentored by a woman and now I am thinking about how to help mentor others

Someone used the word "brave" – to have courage.

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Hurting each other in work places – being competitive for the one open spot – instead fight together to broaden the number of opportunities – stronger together

Mentoring can be quiet, not loud

Sharing professional experience and background – female leaders can't do it alone – anti-patriarchal – need to include men to help make the change

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Unique, important to see collection of women leaders and mentors

We all structure supportive, build up, how to navigate the world, her role as woman in male-dominated world

Variety of age, experience, job, work

The fight – women fighting

Being intentional to connect, uplift, recognize women

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Solving problems, fighting injustice,

Ways different businesses / organizations reach out to engage community mentorship – pay it forward, empower, connecting and talking with each other, women leaders

The importance of vulnerability, softness, women leaning into non-masculine characteristics

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Impressed by the diversity of the women awarded in terms of the roles they play and the impact they have had in our community.

Impacted by the power of women talking to each other and the support, encouragement and growth opportunities fostered.

Discussion about the isolation women feel or have felt in the past while working in male dominated and male led organizations.

Working in a woman-led organization in contrast feels so supportive, growth focused, and comfortable.

Remote work has been isolating for some and does not always lend itself to the support women are more able to offer each other in an in-person environment.

There is so much diversity in terms of race and ethnicity in the women leaders awarded tonight. This was wonderful!

Encouraging to see the growth in this event from last year to this year.

Cape Ann has historically been a very collaborative and very connected community. This feels unique and was evident tonight