

Women and Leadership in Omaha – 2011 Update

The number of women in leadership positions in the Omaha area remained relatively stable from 2009 to 2011, according to the latest update to the Women’s Fund “Women and Leadership in Omaha” report. Overall, the number increased from 33.5 percent in 2009 to 35 percent in 2011. Although progress could be seen in some areas, decreases in the percentage of women represented occurred in others.

The study is an update to the comprehensive “Women and Leadership in Omaha” report published in 2006. As a follow-up, the Women’s Fund measured the representation of women in leadership positions in the community in 2009 and again this year.

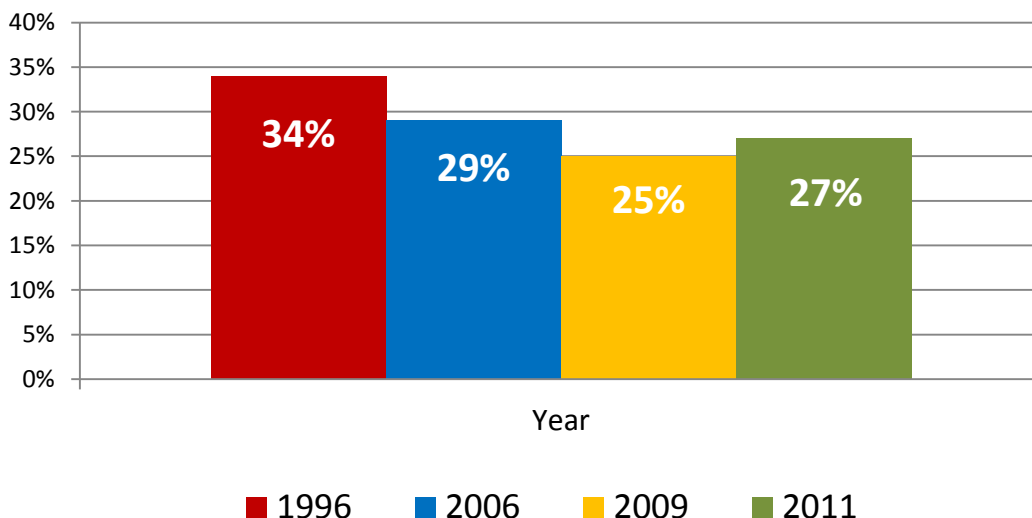
The Women’s Fund first began researching the topic of women in leadership in 1996, and the historic reports are available on the Women’s Fund website.

Following is a recap of the 2011 findings for the Omaha area:

Elected Offices

- The number of women in elected offices increased only slightly between 2009 and 2011, from 25 percent to about 27 percent.
- City council boards including Omaha, Ralston, Valley, and Bennington, have 14 percent of the positions filled by women.
- Women have the greatest presence on boards of education. Across the city, women hold 39 percent of board of education seats. Women are especially well represented in Omaha, with 11 out of 12 seats held by women.
- Four out of 20 (20 percent) state legislators are women.

Women in Elected Office- Douglas County (percentage compared to total positions)



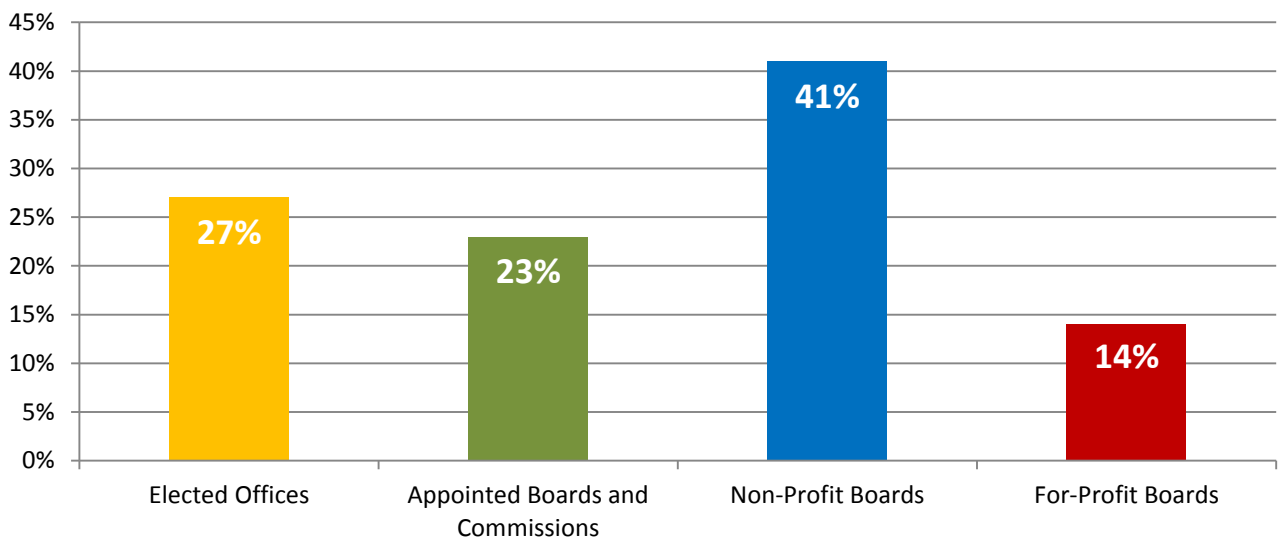
Appointed Boards and Commissions

- Of the 269 positions surveyed on appointed boards and commissions, 62 (23 percent) are held by women. This number is a slight increase from 21 percent in 2009.
- Out of the 36 appointed boards surveyed, 10 (27 percent) have no women members. However, there are some boards in which women are in or near majority. For example, the Omaha Housing Authority board (60 percent women), Parks and Recreation (57 percent), Library Board (56 percent), and Personnel Board (50 percent) all have strong women representation.
- Women held only 21 percent of appointed judicial positions in Douglas County, up slightly from 19 percent in 2009.
- Women who are interested in serving on an appointed board can visit the Women’s Fund website to view open positions and find information about how to apply (<http://www.omahawomensfund.org/media-room/more/details.aspx?ID=82>).

Non-Profit Boards

- Women are better represented on non-profit boards in general. Out of 39 total boards surveyed, 352 of the 866 positions (about 41 percent) are held by women. This is an increase over 2009’s total of 39 percent.
- Women have greatest representation in health organizations (48 percent of board members are women), followed by foundations boards (45 percent) and human service boards (42 percent). Women are far less prominent on art organization boards (34 percent) and civic boards (26 percent).
- Women’s presence on non-profit boards has increased by about 2 percent from 2009, and it has gone up slightly in each category.
- The number of women serving on non-profit boards has risen by nearly 10 percent since the Women’s Fund first began studying the issue of women’s leadership in Omaha. In 1996, women made up 31 percent of non-profit board members, and that number is nearly 41 percent in 2011.

Women in Leadership Positions in Omaha (percentage compared to total positions)



For-Profit Boards

In 2011, the Women's Fund surveyed 48 of the largest employers headquartered in Omaha, as defined by the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce. Surveys were sent out to these employers to determine the gender composition of their board of directors (if applicable) and senior management. After receiving a response rate of 80 percent, we aggregated the data into three industries: business, healthcare, and higher education.

- Women hold only 14 percent of board seats in these corporations and make up 18 percent of executive management.
- Women hold 21 percent of board seats in healthcare companies and 22 percent of executive management positions.
- In higher education institutions, women hold 26 percent of the board seats and comprise 39 percent of senior leadership.
- Of 37 businesses surveyed, only two (5 percent) had female CEOs.
- According to Catalyst, an international nonprofit that specializes in women's leadership, women hold about 3 percent of CEO positions in Fortune 500 companies nationwide.
- Catalyst also reports that women fill 16 percent of board seats and Fortune 500 companies and make up 14 percent of executive management.

Women Leadership in Omaha Across Three Industries (percentage compared to total positions)

