

HUSTLING TOWARDS EQUALITY

The #Metoo and #Timesup movements, along with the unprecedented number of women running for office in 2018 got me thinking about the real world impact this visibility has had on women's overall equality. The answer, sadly, is little to none. Its evidence lies in hard facts.

I spoke with Nathalie Molina Nino, CEO of Brava Investments about the subject. She pointed to data from the World Economic Forum that was astounding — it will take 170 years to achieve equality if we continue at the pace we're at now. We need to hustle. But how?

Nathalie's take made sense. "While the topic of gender equality has gained expansive media coverage, women can't feed or educate their children with talking points," she said. I agree with her that the timely topic helps sell ads and increase viewership, but all that attention has yet to yield results, particularly among women of color. We need to translate all this attention into real, lasting legislative change AND real monetary impact on women. Nathalie brought up some other good points. "No one with great power, success or wealth got there without finding innovative ways to circumvent the status

quo. That's how we leapfrog past obstacles and how we accelerate the path to gender equality."

It's not only more difficult for women to get funding for a start-up or political campaign, they also need to work harder than male counterparts to prove their ability to succeed and surpass the expectations placed on men.

Since we're in NYC let's talk about how women entrepreneurs fare in comparison to other cities and where there's room for improvement.

According to a Dell study, we top the list of international women entrepreneurs, and we've much to be proud of. The City offers a number of mentoring, role model and support programs for female entrepreneurs. But even if we rank first there, there's still an absolute need to expand access to Angel and Venture Capital. Investing is far from equal when it comes to women founded and run companies that are ready to launch or grow. In order to help increase the number of women entering the entrepreneurial world, more women (and men) Venture Capitalists and those with means need to step up to the plate.

The NYT recently came out with an article

that also helped confirm my thoughts on funding for women seeking political office. Until 2016, women donors seriously lagged. But when an undeniably qualified woman, that could break the ultimate glass ceiling ran, women donors spiked. That trend continues today as women vie for midterm congressional seats, but we still need more.

And last, let's not forget the discrepancy that still exists on corporate boards and in the C-suite. Women in management positions are not being paid as much as their male counterparts and too many large corporations don't acknowledge women for the role they play in driving the bottom line. According to Fortune Magazine, corporations with women on boards and upper management increase profitability and stock value.

We need to hustle on all these fronts, and we need to hustle up now.



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