

ALL EYES ON KAMALA

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Today all eyes will be on the history making inauguration of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. We know we don't have to remind you of the turmoil that was 2020, but it would behoove us to take a minute to celebrate that a woman of color will hold the second highest office in this country for the first time ever. Ase' (So Let It Be, for those that don't speak Yoruba).

The absence of Black women in roles as leaders, top managers, and executives across the professional and political spectrum has been glaring for decades; and yet, we continue to press to make our voices heard. In a response of excitement and optimism to the news of Harris as Joe Biden's running mate, Black women across the country mobilized to lift up and support Harris in the race for the White House. In fact, Harris' sorority sisters, the ladies of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, launched its own campaign in support of Biden's running mate to encourage donations in the amount of \$19.08 (a tribute to the year the sorority was founded). That campaign alone raised over \$200,000! This was just one more example of how Black women continue to show up for each other and the country.

But we can't stop there. We also have to be vocal about our concerns as women, and especially Black women. As the Capitol Riot on January 6th proved, there are many in this country who wholeheartedly support Trump and his racist rhetoric. We cannot ignore what it may mean for Harris as she works with Biden and Congress to rebuild democracy and lay the foundation for the our future.

A genuine seat at the table for a

woman of color, unfortunately, raises many concerns for her safety and well-being. However, it is very clear that our readers don't want VP Harris's time in office to be a display of tokenism. They want her to be a fully participating and influential leader in our government. One person wrote: "If she fades into the background like other [vice presidents] before her, she won't have a chance. She needs to be as influential as Dick Cheney was to George Bush." In other words, she needs to carve out a clear role for herself and execute with determination and fearlessness.

In her role as Senator, Harris was often criticized for her perceived "liberal" ideology as well as policies that were enacted while she served as the 32nd Attorney General for the state of California. Regardless of criticism, Harris has a solid track record of advocating for healthcare, paid family medical leave, student loan forgiveness, gun control, women's rights, and so much more. With the Democrats in control of the House, the Senate, and the White House, they have a chance to enact progressive policies that benefit marginalized communities, women, and children, and improve the quality of life for Americans overall.

While this will not be an easy feat for the Democrats, Harris appears ready to lead the charge. We hope that this administration will result in even more leadership roles across the board for women and people of color. We hope that we will begin to get real action behind issues that impact Black and Brown people, because as we know, increased access for the disenfranchised means that we all win. We hope that all women and girls across the country have the opportunity to see themselves as leaders, assets in the political arena, and empowered problem solvers. And why not? Many other countries have had women leaders in their highest offices for decades. It's now time for the United States to catch up.

Black suit on. Converse laced. Madam Vice President, America is ready for duty.

