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Women+s March on Spokane, January 18, at noon at The Red Wagon in Riverfront Park

For the fourth year and on the same day as the national women's march in Washington DC, Spokane women+ and the people who love them are gathering in Riverfront Park to advocate for women's rights.

Spokeswoman for the local Women+s March, Murphy Sullivan, said the Spokane march is not affiliated with the national march, but insists it is absolutely necessary for women to gather and support issues such as access to health care and reproductive justice. Sullivan is part of a small group of dedicated women who have worked on organizing the march since September.

"This is an important year. Roe versus Wade is being challenged in the courts again, as are the rights of many socially vulnerable groups," Sullivan said. "Also, 2020 marks the 100 year anniversary of when the first women won the right to vote in this country."

The Women+s March rally with speakers begins at 12:30 followed by the 3/4 mile march through Spokane.

Local **jive fusion musician, Pamela Benton**, will play at the pre-party before the rally. **The Angela Marie Project** will play after the march. For the second year, First Avenue Coffee is donating coffee for the event.

Rally Speakers:

Marleny Carmona, a Mexican-American woman raised in rural Washington, and a second year OBGYN medical student at WSU. Although working on her doctorate, Marleny is still asked what kind of nurse she wants to be, an inquiry that lights her fire and is the basis for her speech about how women – in particular those in the Latinx community – can achieve anything and must also insist other recognize that potential in women.

Ping Ping, a sociology professor at SFCC. Ping's experience growing up in China makes her uniquely capable of understanding why Asian people – Chinese in particular – often withhold their opinions, abstain from getting involved in politics and avoid social activism. Ping will share some of her story including the moment she realized she was "Chinese-American" and the choices she has made since to influence others.

Amanda Mead public school librarian and educator. Born and raised in rural Montana, Amanda was asked to leave her first teaching job when school administrators learned she was queer. Amanda moved to Washington seeking new opportunities, including for activism. Amanda will share her experience working with at risk youth and the power of their resilience and inspiration.

Bethany Montgomery, founder of Power 2 The Poetry. Montgomery is a Seattle-based African-American poet, rapper and performing artist. Power 2 The Poetry promotes freedom of expression and a platform for underrepresented demographics including but not limited to people of color, LGBTQ+, women, youth, people with different abilities and people with mental health issues.

Organizers encourage marchers to dress warmly, bring their own chairs, and prepare to be outside. Marchers are encouraged to bring handheld signs - no stakes allowed - that can be carried during the march.

"We want people to enjoy the day, embrace the message of equality, and show their support for women," Sullivan said. "This is a peaceful, supportive and positive event."

In previous years the rally and march began at the Spokane Convention Center, but the cost of the venue became fiscally prohibitive. Like a majority of other women's marches in the country and around the world,

this year's rally will be held outside and the march will begin at the Red Wagon.

The Women+s March on Spokane is making one last fundraising push to cover the approximate \$5000 in expenses. Donations can be made to the Smith Barbieri Progressive Fund in the name of the march or online at <http://tinyurl.com/marchspokane> or on the Women+s March on Spokane Facebook page.

Any surplus funds will be donated to Spokane's Mujeres in Action, a local organization committed to advocating for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, empowering them to reach their full potential, and educating our community to end violence against women and children.