

**New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission
Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education**

Meeting Minutes

December 3, 2009

Labor Education Center, Rutgers University

New Brunswick, New Jersey

10:30-12:00

Attendees: Christine Amalfe, Eileen Appelbaum, Marie Barry, Terri Boyer, Suzanne Eng, David Finegold, Judy Formalarie, Mary Gatta, Glenda Gracia-Rivera, Grace Hamilton, Dianne Hartshorn, Linda Houser, Andrea Karsian, Janice Kovach, Barbara Lee, Dianne Mills McKay, Ana Montero, Sarah Pallone, Henry Plotkin, Sondra Sen, Virginia Treacy, and Robin Widing

Chair Dianne Mills McKay opened the meeting with a welcome to all. The Council was asked to review the draft minutes from the October 5th meeting. The October minutes were approved and will be posted online.

Economic Recovery Forum: What Women Need to Know:

Dr. Mary Gatta updated the Council on the November 7th forum, *Economic Recovery: What Women Need to Know*. The forum (funded by the Department of Labor Women's Bureau Region II, and carried out by the Center for Women and Work) brought together representatives from local, state, and federal workforce and educational sectors to deliver resources and information to women in Monmouth County, with the focus being on women who are unemployed or facing educational or career transitions. Dr. Gatta noted that the forum had approximately 70 participants, and that there has been a substantial degree of follow-up, including the dissemination of resource lists via email and individual contacts around specific attendee needs.

Dr. Gatta reported that Linda Houser has presented on the forum to the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) directors and operators, and that three or four are interested in having the forum replicated in their regions/counties. Grace Protos of the Women's Bureau has indicated her interest in seeing this first *Economic Recovery* forum used as a model for a program that could be replicated in other locales; Dr. Gatta and Ms. Houser will begin working on a model program description.

Meeting packets included a copy of the event report issued by the Center for Women and Work.

Transition Paper:

Dianne Mills McKay facilitated a discussion of the priorities of the Gender Parity Council as New Jersey approaches transition to the administration of Governor-Elect Chris Christie. The group agreed that the transition, within a context of economic recovery, presents numerous opportunities to the Council, and that a paper outlining the Council's achievement and priorities should anticipate and respond to these opportunities.

Robin Widing, Acting Director of the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), updated the Council on the inclusion of the SETC and Gender Parity Council in a transition paper submitted earlier in the week by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Council members indicated an interest in developing a paper specific to the Council, its activities, and its priorities.

Linda Houser reported on a transition planning meeting held on Monday, November 30th, with participation by Judy Formalarie, Grace Hamilton, Dianne Hartshorn, Linda Houser, Dianne Mills McKay, Ana Montero, Henry Plotkin, and Robin Widing. This meeting resulted in a series of bullet points reflecting proposed Council priorities going forward. Ms. Houser read the list, and general discussion followed.

Christine Amalfe and David Finegold suggested that the Council review opportunities for funding. A subcommittee was formed to begin discussing Council funding; volunteers for the subcommittee included Christine Amalfe, Terri Boyer, David Finegold, Judy Formalarie, Mary Gatta, Linda Houser, Janice Kovach, Dianne Mills McKay, Ana Montero, Henry Plotkin, Virginia Treacy, and Robin Widing. The subcommittee will hold its first meeting via conference call in December or early January.

Marie Barry suggested that the transition paper be mindful of the Council's accomplishments, but focus on the impact and importance of extending current work into the future. Council members noted the value of emphasizing connections and collaborations between the Council and its university and state government partners. An active discussion of the transition plan led to several changes and additions to the points initially presented. These will be incorporated into the transition paper by Linda Houser.

Update on the Nontraditional Career Resource Center and *Legal Talent at the Crossroads*:

Dr. Terri Boyer and Glenda Gracia-Rivera from the Center for Women and Work updated the Council on recent activities of the Nontraditional Career Resource Center (NCRC). They distributed fliers for The Academy of Leadership and Equity (TAKE) program, which targets seventh and eighth grade students in New Jersey. The Academy provides early exposure to nontraditional careers, and offers students a direct pathway into the popular summer NCRC Career Summer Institute high school program. Dates include January 29-30 (New Brunswick); February 19-20 (Camden); and March 26-27 (Newark).

Marie Barry asked about advertizing for the program given the challenges of connecting to a range of middle school-aged students. Dr. Boyer and Ms. Gracia-Rivera noted that NCRC has done a mass mailing and email distribution, as well as established a Facebook group. Sarah Pallone suggested adding program links to Congressional websites. Overall demand for NCRC student programs continues to be very high.

There have also been a couple of new developments with the *Legal Talent at the Crossroads* report. Dr. Boyer announced that she and Dianne Mills McKay presented to the Monmouth County Bar, and that one firm in attendance requested a presentation for its Women's Initiative. In addition, Holly English of the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL), has requested and received permission to place both the full *Legal Talent* report and the *Legal Talent Blueprint* on the NAWL website, giving the reports additional national exposure.

Update on Focusing a Gender Lens on New Jersey during Economic Recovery:

Linda Houser updated the Council on areas identified for the proposed GPC research project on the status of women and men in New Jersey during economic recovery. She is planning to focus on five key areas: Legal Profession, Health Care, Building Industry, STEM, and Green Jobs, each within the context of broader national and state trends in industry, legislation, and demographics.

Ana Montero noted that disparities in the construction and building sector are broader than in the trades alone, and that an examination of disparities in the industry (i.e., including other occupations such as architects and engineers) may be warranted. She also updated the group on apprenticeship programs operated by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, including NJ Build. As discussed in the last Council meeting, NJ Build is an initiative that will provide training in the building trades to women and minorities from funds set aside for this purpose by the Department of Treasury.

Discussion followed on the spending of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, with Sarah Pallone noting that states that do not spend their allocations within the specified timeframe are at risk for needing to return those funds.

NJ Women in Science and Technology Summit:

Suzanne Eng reminded the Council that the fourth annual Science and Technology Summit will be held on May 21st, 2010, at The Conference Center at Mercer in West Windsor. Suzanne Eng announced that the first subcommittee meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 6th, at 1 pm, at the Labor Education Center. All Council members are invited to join the planning subcommittee and should contact Ms. Eng if interested. Meeting packets included a "Save the Date" flier.

Next meeting of the Council is scheduled for Thursday, February 4th, from 10:30 to 12:00 at the Labor Education Center, Room 115.