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Connections



Newsletter of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women

June 2009

Dear Kelly,

Welcome to the Summer 2009 edition of FCSW Connections, the e-newsletter of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women. We sincerely hope that you will find this publication a useful and informative resource. Please share with us your thoughts and suggestions by e-mailing us at info@fcsw.net.



Message from the Chair, Dr. Mona Jain, M.D., Ph.D.

As Chair of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women, I'm thrilled that we could serve as host of the inaugural [Florida Conference for Women](#) on May 12, 2009 at the Orange County Convention Center. An energetic crowd of more than 1,000 women from across Florida came together for a day of networking and learning. "Rethink. Resolve. Renew." was a fitting theme that unified attendees who were inspired by the many speakers on topics from career and finances to health and wellness. In these uncertain times, it was refreshing and energizing event for everyone. We hope

that all who took part will return next year and if you missed this year's Conference, be sure to attend in 2010!

It will be a busy summer for the Commission, as we begin the selection process for the [Florida Women's Hall of Fame](#) and celebrate Women's Equality Day in August. In addition, the Commission is pleased to support the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee and the American Association of University Women's Girls STEM Summit on June 20, 2009 an event geared toward encouraging girls to explore and consider the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields. Plans also underway for our second Gender Bias in the Media Roundtable Discussion on September 26, 2009 at Florida International University in Miami, FL. Be sure to check our website at <http://www.fcsw.net> for the latest details on all of these events.

Now is the Time to Nominate Outstanding Women to the Florida Women's Hall of Fame!

by Commissioner Carrie Estevez Lee, Hall of Fame Committee Chair

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women is honored to announce the process of selecting the



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Message



Nominations for the 2009/2010 Florida Women's Hall of Fame must be postmarked no later than 5:00 p.m. July 15, 2009.

2009/2010 nominees for the [Florida Women's Hall of Fame](#). This annual event celebrating the accomplishments of outstanding Florida women is scheduled for Tuesday, March 23, 2010 at the Florida State Capitol in Tallahassee. Held in conjunction with Women's History Month, the Hall of Fame commemorates Women's History by honoring and remembering those women whose lives and contributions have positively affected both Florida and the nation.

Call the Commission Office at 850-414-3300 for more information.

Since 1982 distinguished women of Florida have been nominated by the citizens and selected by the Governor for this prestigious designation. As officially mandated by the Florida Legislature in 1992, the Florida Women's Hall of Fame recognizes and honors those women who, through their work and dedication have made significant improvements to the lives of women and to all the citizens of Florida. [READ MORE](#)

Gender Bias in the Media Roundtable

by Commissioner Shellie Sachs Levin



We are pleased to announce that The Florida Commission on the Status of Women will host its second Gender Bias in the Media Roundtable discussion on September 26, 2009, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Florida International University in Miami, FL.

The Commission is convening these roundtable conversations as a response to the media's treatment of women candidates in the 2008 election.

The Roundtable participants will include elected officials and community leaders and representatives from the media, academia, local women's groups and students. They will share their perspectives and experiences in dealing with gender bias or stereotyping in the media, particularly political coverage. [READ MORE](#)

Sarasota-Manatee Regional Women's Equity Day Celebration

by Gini C. Hyman, Chair, Sarasota County and Vicki Waters, Manatee Sarasota-Manatee Regional Women's Equity Day Celebration County, Commissions on the Status of Women

To celebrate the 89th Anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution granting women the right to vote, the Sarasota Commission on the Status of Women and the Manatee Commission on the Status of Women as well as both the Sarasota and Manatee Leagues of Women Voters, are hosting the 14th Annual Women's Equity Day Celebration. This year's event will be the first held in Sarasota on Saturday August 22, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency Sarasota, 1000 Boulevard of the Arts, Sarasota.

More than 50 exhibit tables are expected this year. Lunch will be served at Noon with Keynote Speaker Florida Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink. More than 450 women community leaders and organizations, as well as local and state elected officials are expected to be in attendance. Full details will be available on our website, <http://cswsarasota.googlepages.com/2009women'sequitydaycelebration> as well as our Facebook Events page.

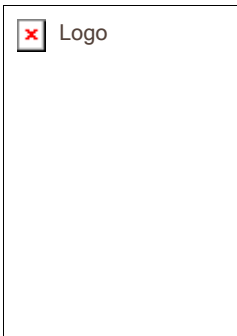


Haiti Days at the Capitol

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women was honored to take part in Haiti Days on April 2, 2009 at the Capitol in Tallahassee. More than 50 Haitian leaders were in attendance to hear from Florida

leaders including Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp, on various topics from health care to community involvement. The Commission was honored to speak to the group, organized by Representatives Yolly Roberson and Ronald Brise, regarding the work of the Commission including the Florida Women's Hall of Fame. Each attendee received copies of the most recent Commission publications, and lunch was hosted by former Commissioner Marie Flore Lindor-Latortue.

Florida's Education System Makes Great Gains



by Commissioner Nancy Peek McGowan

In looking for bright spots around the country, Floridians should be proud; not only for a recent college football National Championship (Go Gators!), but in education reform we are a role model for the nation.

Education Week's Quality Counts graded the state of Florida 31st in the nation in 2007 overall in education, 14th in the nation in 2008 and 10th in 2009. According to Stuart Butler in an article published in the January 15, 2009 edition of the Washington Times, "Over the past decade, the National Assessment of Education Progress reading scores for Florida fourth graders have soared nine percentage points - more than twice the national gain. Florida's eighth-grade reading gains were also almost double the national average. Math scores also registered solid gains, exceeding the national average."

Even more impressive are the gains made by minorities. According to Butler, "Scores among Florida's low-income black and Hispanic students have risen much faster than the national average. Hispanic fourth-graders in the Sunshine State now boast reading scores higher than the all-student average in 15 states, including California."

Florida has achieved these gains by increasing school accountability, ending social promotions, expanding school choice options for all, and rewarding great teachers.

We have much to be proud of in the Sunshine State, and the progress of our education system is certainly among the top!



2009 Legislative Wrap-Up

by Commissioner Nancy Acevdo, Legislative Committee Chair

The Legislative Committee of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women is proud to present the [2009 Summary of Florida Laws Affecting Women and Families](#), an annual publication designed to encourage women from across the state to become educated about the legislative process and new laws that affect Florida's families.

The 2009 session of the Florida Legislature was once again dominated by the demands of a dwindling budget. Already strapped by cuts made in an earlier special session, many bills with a fiscal impact were simply not heard in either the House or the Senate.

Although this Legislative session was marked primarily by bills not passed the Legislature, 262 bills did pass that address a number of other issues including growth management, property taxes, college tuition, seatbelt safety, Florida KidCare, and Guardian Ad Litem.

The 2009 Summary of Florida Laws Affecting Women and Families will soon be available on the Commission's website, www.fcsw.net. Histories, committee analyses and voting records on all of the bills included in this summary can be obtained by visiting www.myfloridahouse.gov or www.flsenate.gov.

Students Visit Capitol and Learn About FCSW



by Michele Manning, FCSW Staff

More than fifty students and chaperones from the fourth grade class of Deane Bozeman School in Panama City, Florida enjoyed a day at Florida's Capitol April 27, 2009. FCSW Staff member Michele Manning participated event which included a visit to the R.A. Gray Museum, Governor's Mansion, and the New and Old Capitols. Included in the day was a visit to the wall of the Florida Women's Hall of Fame. Commission materials regarding the Women's Hall of Fame and Women's History were provided to each student.

One of the highlights of the day was a visit and photograph with Lieutenant Governor Jeff Kottkamp, who fielded questions from the curious group, such as: "Do you have to wear a suit all the time? Are you running for President? Do you have a hard job? Just what do the two guys (security) with you do?"

The Commission received a warm thank you note from the class, lead by teachers Emily Greggs and Ashley Edwards, who learned a lot of about Florida Government and Women's History.



You Have the Power to Donate Life. Be an Organ and Tissue Donor.

Organ Recovery Agency

Provided by the Life Alliance Organ Recovery Agency, a program aims to educate the community about organ and tissue donation through educational efforts in the workplace.

Transplantation is one of the most remarkable success stories in the history of medicine. It provides hope and life to thousands of people with organ failure. In addition, transplanted tissue offers hundreds of thousands of people an active and renewed life. But transplantation can only happen with the generosity of organ and tissue donors. Unfortunately, the need for donors is much greater than the number of people who actually donate. In fact, due to a lack of available organs, about 20 people die each day waiting for a life-saving organ transplant.

You have the power to change someone's world by giving the most precious gift: Life. If you decide to be a donor, sign and carry a donor card or place "organ donor" on your license and share your decision with your family.

Did you know:

- Every organ donor can save the lives of up to 8 people and tissue donors can enhance the lives of up to 50 others.
- People of all ages and medical histories should consider themselves potential donors.
- Tissue is needed to replace bone, tendons and ligaments lost to severe trauma, cancer and other diseases. Corneas restore sight, heart valves repair cardiac defects and damage, and skin grafts help burn patients heal.
- All major organized religions support organ and tissue donation and view

it as an unselfish act of love and generosity toward others.

For a registration form and/or more information, please call Life Alliance Organ Recovery Agency at 305-243-9660 or visit their website www.laora.med.miami.edu.

For the latest on other Commission activities, including:
Florida Women' Hall of Fame
2009 Florida Legislative Session
visit the FCSW website.

Sincerely,

Kelly Sciba
Florida Commission on the Status of Women

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