

Women's
Center



Voices

University of
Connecticut

September 2004

Did you know you were missing?

I am not missing! Or am I? What does that mean? The Women's Center released a separate, similar report (see *Slip-Sliding Away* below). This year the Women's Center has decided to focus our programming around this missing information and ways that individuals can take action to prevent further erosion of rights that women have worked so hard to achieve.

On April 28, the National Council for Research on Women (NCRW) released "MISSING: Information About Women's Lives." Also in April, the National Women's Law Center released a separate, similar report (see *Slip-Sliding Away* below). Both reports document the many ways in which information, policies and research around this missing information and ways that individuals can take action to prevent further erosion of rights that women have worked so hard to achieve. Also in April, the National Women's Law Center eliminated.

(Continued on page 2)

Slip-Sliding Away...

(Washington, DC) The National Women's Law Center has released a comprehensive report that documents the ways, both well-publicized and carefully hidden, glaring and subtle, that the Bush Administration is rolling back women's progress in every aspect of their lives. The report, *Slip-Sliding Away: The Erosion of Hard-Won Gains for Women Under the Bush Administration and an Agenda for Moving Forward*, shows that many of the Administration's actions with harsh effects on women are occurring almost completely without public scrutiny, and some of its more well-publicized actions have a particularly harsh impact on women that is not widely known.

The report includes recommended actions that should be taken to expand and protect women's rights and opportunities.

"The Administration's policies are reversing progress for women and girls across the board—their opportunities to succeed in work and in school, their economic security, and their health and reproductive rights," said Nancy Duff Campbell, NWLC Co-President. "The few positive steps the Administration has taken to help women are overshadowed by the overwhelming number of proposals that hurt them."

"It is no accident that many of the Administration's policies have a low profile. These actions are out of sight because they are out of touch with the beliefs and aspirations of American women — and men — and would not be tolerated if they were commonly known," said Marcia D. Greenberger, NWLC Co-President. "It is critically important that these policies change to make opportunity and equality part of our daughters' futures. We call upon the Administration to fully enforce our civil rights laws, increase retirement security, and adopt fair tax and budget policies that adequately fund services women and their families rely upon."

The report focuses on ten key areas: women at work; girls at school; child care and other supports women need to work; tax and budget policies; retirement security; health and reproductive rights; violence against women; women in the military; judicial nominations; and government offices that are charged with safeguarding women's interests. Some of the steps backward for women include:

- The Department of Education, without explanation, "archived" Title IX guidance on preventing sexual harassment in schools, making it unavailable to administrators and parents trying to protect children from sexual harassment.
- The Administration ended the Equal Pay Initiative and has removed all materials on narrowing the wage gap from

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

Calendar Highlights 3

Thursday Night at
the Movies 4

The Library Corner 4

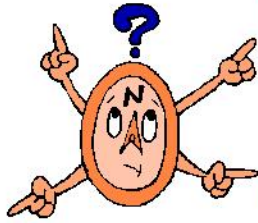
Discovering the
Intuitive You Series 4

Women's Center
Group Offerings 5

Reminders... 5

(Continued from page 1)

First, throughout the fall semester, there will be voter registration forms and information available at all of our programs. This information is also available at the Women's Center anytime. It is not enough to register to vote; you must be informed, get to the polls and cast your vote! Regardless of your political affiliation, your voice and concerns must be heard. Every vote counts!



Second, we have three theme programs scheduled for the fall that will address some of the major topic areas of the NCRW's report (For a full copy of the report, visit <http://www.ncrw.org/misinfo/index.htm>). On September 20, we will host "The Fight for Women's Lives: Do You Know What is at Stake?" at the Dodd Center, which will focus on the status of women in society, the importance of civic engagement and what is at stake regarding women's rights as human rights. On

October 4, the Women's Center and United Services Domestic Violence Program will host an interactive play about relationships entitled, "Four Hearts Changing," also at the Dodd Center. We are in the process of confirming our November program, which will focus on the need for, and access to, accurate and reliable information on women's health. Information about this program, as well as details about the others, will be posted on our website as soon as it is available.

Finally, in addition to these programs, we are also offering several program series. The goal of these series is to provide resources for women to affect change in their personal lives and assist in finding direction and/or meaning in various aspects of life. *Investing in Ourselves* is a brown bag lunch series aimed at supporting women in taking control of their financial lives. *Discovering the Intuitive You* is designed to encourage self awareness and self confidence (see details on page 4). *Time for Me* is intended as an opportunity to take a break from everyday stressors and do something just for you. This series will include aromatherapy, massage and an introduction to the Shamanic Journey.

(Continued from page 1)

has removed all materials on narrowing the wage gap from the Department of Labor's website. The Department of Justice has also dropped cases challenging sex discrimination in employment.

- The Labor Department repealed a rule to help employees obtain paid leave for the birth or adoption of a child.
- The Department of Education reduced Title IX enforcement while it established a Commission to weaken athletics policies that open opportunities for female students.
- The Administration's budget would cut 300,000 children from child care programs by 2009.
- The Administration's tax cuts and resulting budget cutbacks are a double whammy for women because they cut services and programs women rely on while providing little tax assistance to low- and moderate-income women.
- A plan to privatize Social Security that the Administration supports would require deep cuts in Social Security benefits for all future retirees, whether they participate in a private account or not. For example, by the Administration's own analysis, a woman retiring in 2075 (working at an average wage) would receive benefits 46% below current levels if she did not participate in a private account and 69% below current levels if she participated in a private account. Even if she received an average return on a medium-risk portfolio from her private account, her combined income would be 21% below current benefit levels.
- The Administration's plan to "restructure" Medicaid, changing it from an entitlement program to a block grant, will result in more women without health insurance.
- Women's reproductive rights are being taken away by Administration-backed laws criminalizing abortion and giving the rights and status of "personhood" to fetuses and embryos.
- Medical research is being undermined and scientific information distorted to serve an anti-abortion and anti-family planning agenda. For example, the National Cancer Institute posted information on its website that falsely suggested there may be a link between abortion and breast cancer.
- The Administration limited the role of a 55-year-old advisory committee designed to promote recruitment and retention of women in the military and appointed new members to the commission who do not support opening new opportunities to women – one of whom called the Army "a vast day-care center, full of unmarried teen-age mothers using it as a welfare home."
- The Administration has selected judicial nominees opposed to critical rights for women and girls. One judicial nominee wrote that wives must "subordinate" themselves to their husbands.
- The Administration proposed funding emergency shelters, crisis hotlines and other domestic violence services at 26% below authorized levels.



Read the Executive Summary at www.nwlc.org/pdf/AdminRecordOnWomenExecSummary2004.pdf.

For a full copy of the report, please visit www.nwlc.org/pdf/AdminRecordOnWomen2004.pdf.

This article was originally released on April 8, 2004 by the National Women's Law Center, a non-partisan, non-profit legal organization. This article is provided for informational and educational purposes only. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the University of Connecticut or the Women's Center.

Fall Calendar Highlights

Voter Registration

The next election will set the country's course on women's rights, civil rights, health care, jobs, welfare, the environment and SO much more! **Your vote counts!!** Register now! Open to *anyone* wishing to register to vote in *any* state. Absentee ballot applications are also available. Materials are offered in English and Spanish. Ongoing at the Women's Center.

September

20th The Fight for Women's Lives: Do You Know What is at Stake?

Join Silvia Henriquez, Executive Director of the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, Melanie Campbell, Executive Director and CEO of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation and an executive from MTV's Rock The Vote for a panel discussion on the importance of being informed about the status of women in society, the importance of civic engagement and what is at stake regarding women's rights as human rights. Monday, 3 – 5 pm, Konover Auditorium, Thomas J. Dodd Research Center

23rd Women's Center Open House

Are you interested in women's issues? Do you want to make a difference in our community and in our world? Do you want to learn more about ending violence against women? Are you a feminist? Womanist? Mujerista? Humanist? Are you HUNGRY? Meet the staff and students of the Women's Center and find out what is going on at the Center and how you can become involved. Refreshments will be served. Thursday, 3 – 6 pm, 417 Whitney Road

October

Thursdays in Black

Thursdays in Black is a campaign to raise awareness about abuse in relationships. Students, faculty and staff are asked to wear black to acknowledge the impact that relationship violence has on our community – the emotional and physical suffering it causes our friends, relatives, colleagues and neighbors, the valuable contributions its victims get to make to our community and the pervasive fear it causes all women in our culture. Buttons, stickers and information will be handed out every Thursday in October (location TBD). Please join us in wearing black every Thursday in October.

4th Four Hearts Changing

Four hearts...Two couples...One dangerous secret. Join us for this interactive play about relationships, presented by the nationally touring educational group Equalogy, Inc. Co-sponsored with United Services Domestic Violence Program. Monday, 3 – 4:30 pm, Konover Auditorium, Thomas J. Dodd Research Center

20th Women's Center Pre-Conference

If you have enjoyed the annual Women's Advance Conference in the past...wait until you see what we have in store for you this year! Here's a sneak peek- Join noted author and business coach, Margot Larson, for a unique opportunity open to University of Connecticut staff and faculty. Margot Larson is the author of Jump Start Your Life: Choose your own lifestyle before someone chooses it for you. Ms. Larson will present a special lecture before the 3rd Annual Celebrate Women Conference. Wednesday, 2:30 – 4 p.m., La Renaissance; 53 Prospect Hill Road; East Windsor, CT

20th The Heart of a Woman: A Mind, Body, Spirit Connection

Join us for the 3rd Annual Celebrate Women Conference, co-sponsored by the Women's Center and the Celebrate Women Program, University of Connecticut Health Center. Our panel of experts will address how the Mind, Body, and Spirit are connected, and the role they play on a woman's heart. Fee includes dinner, program, and more! Call early to register. Wednesday, 4 – 8:30 p.m., La Renaissance; 53 Prospect Hill Road; East Windsor, CT

November

4th Faces of America

Written entirely from interviews and workshops held across the country *Faces* has been described as the first truly multicultural portrayal of Americans ever created, and "edu-tainment" at its best. Co-sponsored with the Asian American Cultural Center, African American Cultural Center, Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center and Rainbow Center. Thursday, 7 pm, von der Mehden

The Benefits of Support Staff Attending a Conference

By Carol Millette, Administrative Assistant, AFSCME

Support staff are not usually thought of when considering who will attend conferences, seminars or workshops. As a 17-year UConn employee working in a support role, I have had the ability to take part in professional development opportunities and my co-workers and I have seen the long-term benefits.

I attended the National Women's Studies Association's 25th Annual Conference this past June in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This was a wonderful experience and an enormous benefit to me in my position at the Women's Center. When first looking at the conference itinerary, it may not have seemed that the sessions were geared toward me and the work that I do. However, that was not the case at all. The first day was a pre-conference for Women's Center staff from around the country and the next two days was the National Conference. I attended sessions on: Ways Volunteers Can Contribute to the Women's Center; women's health issues; a panel of women rewriting "Our Bodies, Ourselves"; Second Wave Feminists; Activism Supporting Girls; and, Child Care for Women in Higher Education. These sessions were one part of the conference that was educational, but meeting new people and getting ideas and perspectives was something I could

bring back to my work as well. I came away with a better understanding of the kinds of things my co-workers deal with and that benefits the entire team. I am glad that I expressed my interest in attending and learning about the work of the Women's Center in a broader context. It also gave me a better understanding of what the student staff in the office are hearing in the classroom.

I also received many comments from Women's Center staff and Women's Studies faculty about how helpful it was for them to have insight into the support staff role.

I would encourage support staff to consider taking advantage of the benefits of attending a conference, workshop or seminar. Our jobs have changed over the years, and we are a critical piece of the team we each work in. Gaining experience outside of the routine makes you more of an asset to the people who rely on you.

Check with your Union for funding. AFSCME would pay up to \$400 (per session) for attendance at two (2) conferences, workshops or seminars per year. This amount was just doubled with the new contract approved last April. UCPEA also provides funding for conferences, but deadlines must be adhered to; check with them directly.

Discovering the Intuitive You Series

Intuition is not only for psychics. We are all intuitive in our own way. Come discover and develop your intuition and get in touch with your inner self. This series is full of fun activities, meditation, discussion, creativity, and play. Details on workshop content can be found on our website. All workshops will be held at 6 pm at the Women's Center Lounge on the dates listed below.



Increasing Your Intuition and Senses - September 22

Grounding 101 - October 13

Manifestation Boxes - December 1

The Library Corner

The Women's Center Library has an extensive collection of books, magazines, journals and periodicals by and about women. Our holdings cover a broad range of topics, including, but not limited to, Culture, Gender, Diversity, Dating/Domestic Violence, Sexism and the Media, Politics, and Women's Health. The Library is a great resource for students, faculty, and staff.

Over the summer, we have acquired a number of new books, including the following:

- *Sbjfjng: The Double Lives of Black Women in America* (Charisse Jones and Kumea Shorter-Gooden)
- *Womankind: Faces of Change Around the World* (Donna Nebenzahl and Nance Ackerman)
- *Reinventing the Enemy's Language: Contemporary Native American Women's Writings of North America* (Edited by Joy Harjo and Gloria Bird)
- *Asian American Women: Issues, Concerns, and Responsive Human and Civil Rights Advocacy* (Lora Jo Foo)
- *Time to Rise* (Edited by Maylei Blackwell, Linda Burnham, and Jung Hee Choi)
- *The Woman That I Am: The Literature and Culture of Contemporary Women of Color* (Edited by D. Soyini Madison)
- *Twenty-First Century Feminist Classrooms: Pedagogies of Identity and Difference* (Susan Sanchez-Casal and Amie A. MacDonald)
- *It's Cold and Lonely at the Middle, Discrimination Against Female Graduate Teaching Assistants* (Joanne Ardovini-Brooker)
- *Women, Gender and Work: What is Equality and How Do We Get There?* (Martha Fetherolf Loutfi)
- *Real Girl/Real World: Tools for Finding Your True Self* (Heather M. Gray and Samantha Phillips)
- *What To Do When Love Turns Violent: A Practical Resource for Women in Abusive Relationships* (Marian Betancourt)

Thursday Night at The Movies!

Thanks to the generosity of the Asian American Cultural Center, our monthly *Thursday Night at the Movies* series can be viewed on our new big screen TV. On September 30th we will feature "Step by Step: Building a Feminist Movement;" October 28th will showcase the award winning documentary, "Standing on My Sister's Shoulders;" and November 18th will feature "Mai's America." All films begin at 6 pm at the Women's Center.



VOTE

Election Day is November 2

Voter registration information and forms, in English and Spanish, are available at the Women's Center.

Reminders...

Join Our Listserv!

Want to keep up with the Women's Center on a weekly basis? Then join the UWOMEN-L Listserv, a weekly updated email featuring Women's Center events, on and off campus events, announcements and local, national, and international news. To sign up, go to vm.uconn.edu/subunsub.html and enter UWOMEN-L. ♀

Check Out Our Website:

Visit our regularly updated website at: www.womenscenter.uconn.edu. You can find a complete list of events for the semester, learn about all of our ongoing groups, and get informed on issues such as dating violence and sexual assault. You can also find out what kind of resources we keep in our library. Past newsletters are also posted. ♀

Women's Book Club

Got books? The Women's Book Club is looking for new members. Come and explore the world through the eyes and words of women. Visit the "Groups" section of our website at www.womenscenter.uconn.edu to review past selections. We meet on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. All of the meetings will be held at noon in the conference room in the Office of Special Programs, located in the Wilbur Cross Building. Our first meeting will be September 14th, and we will discuss *Fall On Your Knees* by Ann-Marie MacDonald. ♀



Group Offerings

Graduate Women's Group

An ongoing group designed to meet the needs of graduate students on three levels: improve the social, emotional, and academic lives of graduate students by creating a network of contacts and building a supportive community; raise awareness about the presence of women in higher education; and encourage more women to obtain graduate degrees and pursue careers in higher education by mentoring, supporting, and advocating for women who are and will become role models for future generations of students and faculty. This is an ongoing, peer-led group that is intended to provide support, focus, ideas and problem-solving strategies for female graduate students at various stages in the process. The group meets the 2nd Monday of each month and topics will vary and may include issues of motivation, competence, procrastination, anxiety, goal setting, dealing with advisors/committees, bureaucratic struggles, and finding a mentor. Vent, relax, give advice, share stories...

1st meeting is Monday, September 13th at 6 pm at the Women's Center.

Between Women

A rap group for women who love women... or think they might. Come and discuss fun topics, movies and more with women who share your feelings and experiences. Meets every Wednesday at the Women's Center. For more information, email betweenwomen@hotmail.com.

1st meeting is Wednesday, September 15th at 6 pm at the Women's Center.

Sexual Assault Survivor's Group

A support group for women who have experienced actual or attempted sexual assault at any time in their lives. Co-sponsored with Mental Health Services. Contact Jenn Fox at 486-4705 for more information.



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Voices

Where all the pieces come together