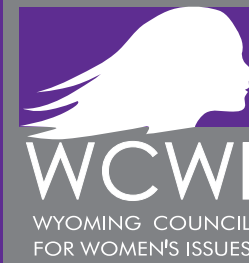




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WCWI News

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Documentary film focuses on Wyoming women

CASPER - On April 25, more than 150 guests gathered in Casper for an evening spotlighting Wyoming women. Hosted by Equality Initiatives and the Equipoise Fund, the evening included the premier of the documentary film, "Don't Fence Me In," which tells the inspiring stories of 13 Wyoming women living and working in the state today.

The film focuses on the diverse ways women make a living in Wyoming, the struggles they face balancing career and family, and the importance of having a voice to gain power and independence.

In May and June, Equality Initiatives hosted film screenings and community dialogues with community partners in Laramie and Jackson. Future events are planned for Cheyenne, October 10; Cody, October 18; and Sheridan, November 8. More events are planned for other venues, with dates yet to be finalized.

The purpose of showing the film and engaging citizens in community dialogues is to raise awareness about women's issues as community issues in Wyoming. During the next year, Wyoming residents will have the opportunity to learn more about the challenges facing women in the Equality State through a series of print and radio ads, screenings of "Don't Fence Me In," and community conversations.

Equality Initiatives' campaign targets all Wyoming residents. Changing attitudes among Wyoming residents results in

stronger advocacy for policies that provide real opportunities for Wyoming women to achieve economic and social independence. Independence lifts families out of poverty, increases the size and productivity of the state's workforce, and provides hope. The theme of the campaign is, "If she succeeds, we all succeed."

For more information, please visit www.equalityinitiatives.org or contact sarah@equalityinitiatives.org.



Photo by Garrett Growney

The documentary "Don't Fence Me In" focuses on the lives of 13 Wyoming women facing modern challenges of work and family. The film attracted more than 150 guests in Casper on April 25.

Women's Council Board plans to revise 2004 women's issue survey

CHEYENNE - The Wyoming Council for Women's Issues Board has decided to revise the 2004 Survey of Women's Issues in Wyoming and provide updated information on the issues that women believe are most important to them.

The University of Wyoming Survey Research Center will conduct the study which will help to guide the activities of the Council.

The original survey, conducted by telephone during a one month period in 2004, was geared to identify the issues that affect most Wyoming women. A total of 1,011 adult women were surveyed.

Respondents were asked general questions about whether they see various issues as a problem for women in their community.

They were then asked a series of specific questions about whether they personally experience problems with the same issues.

Substance abuse and employment were selected as the top issues Wyoming women see as problems affecting other females in their communities. When asked if they personally experience any of the issues within the survey, the majority of respondents faced problems with health care, followed by the family, employment and child care.

The complete Wyoming Women's Issues Survey and executive summary are available on the Wyoming Council for Women's Issues Web site, www.wyomingwomenscouncil.org.

Women of Distinction Award garners seven nominees

CHEYENNE -This year seven women from across Wyoming have been nominated for the Wyoming Council for Women's Issues Woman of Distinction Award.

The Wyoming Woman of Distinction Award recognizes one woman each year who has had significant positive impacts on women and families.

This "once-in-a-lifetime" award is for women who have impacted women and families in the areas of: education or employment; community outreach; health and wellness concerns; or legal issues.

This year's nominees are Mickey Babcock of Jackson; Charlene Bodine of Sheridan; Connie Cocoa of Laramie; Diana Enzi of Gillette; Karla Fiebelkorn of Gillette; Nema Martin of Rock Springs; and Anne Young of Cody.

The winner will be announced in late summer 2008 and honored at a luncheon in the fall in her hometown.

Willadeen Chamberlain of Cheyenne received the award in 2007.

2008 Women of Distinction Award Nominees

Mickey Babcock of Jackson

Charlene Bodine of Sheridan

Connie Cocoa of Laramie

Diana Enzi of Gillette

Karla Fiebelkorn of Gillette

Nema Martin of Rock Springs

Anne Young of Cody



WCWI News is a quarterly publication focused on news and information of value to women in Wyoming. To be added to the mailing list, call 307-777-2800.

Visit www.wyomingwomenscouncil.org for more information.

WCWI Members

Carma Corra - Judicial District 1
 Evelyn Haskell - Judicial District 2
 Vacant - Judicial District 3
 Maureen Neavill - Judicial District 4
 Kim Capron - Judicial District 5

Vacant - Judicial District 6
 Lori Clifford - Judicial District 7
 Sherrill Helzer - Judicial District 8
 Teresa de Groh - Judicial District 9
 Donna Whitson - At-Large

Suzey Delger - At-Large
 Scarlet Skorcz - At-Large
 Pamela Downing - At-Large
 Annie Wood - Wyoming Business Council
 Ex-Officio Member

Calendar of Events

October 1 - 3

The Wyoming Library Conference will be held at the Parkway Plaza in Casper. For more information, please visit the Web site: www.wyla.org
~ Casper

October 3 - 4

Fourth Annual Wyoming Women's Expo will be held at the Casper Events Center. For more information visit the Web site: www.wyomingwomensexpo.com.
~ Casper

October 10

Quality Initiatives and The Equipoise Fund, showing of the documentary film, "*Don't Fence Me In*," 6 p.m., Laramie County Library
~ Cheyenne

October 18

Quality Initiatives and The Equipoise Fund, showing of the documentary film, "*Don't Fence Me In*," TBA, Cody Public Library
~ Cody

October 22 - 23

Nontraditional Career Fair
For more information, please contact Michelle Aldrich at (307) 433-0837 or by e-mail at teachwyo@yahoo.com
~ Cheyenne

October 24

Women of Distinction Luncheon
~ Cheyenne

Career Fair approaching third year

CHEYENNE - The Wyoming Council for Women's Issues is proudly sponsoring the third annual Young Women's Nontraditional Career Fair October 22 - 23 at Laramie County Community College in Cheyenne.

This is the first time the Women's Council has hosted the event in the state's capital.

The first career fair was held at Casper College in 2006. The second was held at Western Wyoming College in 2007, and the next one will be co-sponsored with Laramie County Community College in October.

The event has grown every year and there is no sign of this trend slowing down.

Hundreds of junior high and high school girls have attended to learn about the opportunities in Wyoming that are available to women in various non-traditional career fields including the high-tech industry.

Past Women's Council Board members, Dr. Michelle Aldrich, educator from

Cheyenne, and Jan Torres, Western Wyoming College, spearheaded the first career fair and were pleasantly surprised to see how many girls attended and took full advantage.


The Women's Council has added a second day to this year's conference being held in Cheyenne in order to accommodate the anticipated number of young Wyoming women planning to attend.

Not only is the career fair rich in educational opportunities, networking and mentoring, the career fair is fun.

Great speakers, fantastic opportunities and wonderful door prizes are the theme of the day.

This project is an effort to introduce students to high paying jobs that many may not consider until they actually visit with women who are in these careers.

It is an exciting and ongoing project of the Women's Council and which is proud to co-sponsor this event. Next year it will be held in Gillette.



3rd Annual

Young Women's Nontraditional Career Fair

Registration Deadline: September 1, 2008
To register, contact Michelle Aldrich at teachwyo@yahoo.com
or call her at (307) 433-0837

Chair's Column: Council welcomes new members

Wyoming Council for Women's Issues member appointments run for six years, beginning and ending with the state's biennium fiscal year. At the end of the 2007-2008 biennium, the Council bid farewell to two long-standing members. In addition, two other long-serving members resigned their seats during 2007. The Council would like to recognize these women for their efforts on behalf of the women and families in Wyoming.

Merna Rierson was already serving on the Council when I was appointed in 2000 and she served on the Council until 2007. Merna served as a Committee Chair for many years. Merna's efforts to distribute Council materials are legendary to Council members. Merna distributed more of the Council's first edition of the Legal Handbook than any other member, as she left copies at the grocery store, the hairdressers', the auto mechanic's shop, and doctor's offices, to name a few. Merna also had a passion for women's history and she worked hard to get Wyoming women's stories on public radio and television during Women's History Month.

Michelle Aldrich has been a dedicated member of the Council for eight years and recently finished her last term on

June 30. Michelle says it is time for new members with new ideas to further the Council's work. Michelle served as chair of the Council for four years, leading the steering committee for the Wage Disparity Study commissioned by the state legislature and guiding the WCWI Issues Survey during her tenure. Michelle chaired working committees as well during her time on the Council. One of Michelle's greatest contributions, along with Jan Torres, was developing the idea of a nontraditional job fair for high school girls and bringing that idea to fruition with enormous success. The Job Fair or Career Day, as it is now called, has had two successful years. Community college partners are lining up to participate in this most successful event for the next several years.

Jan Torres served on the Council for six years, also finishing her term on June 30. Jan served as Secretary for three years during her tenure as well as a Committee Chair. She also demonstrated rare abilities in bringing the Girl Power training program to Wyoming and coordinating Woman of Distinction Award luncheons. Jan's abilities set a high mark for successful events.

Jenny Ingram joined the Council in 2005 and resigned from her seat in 2007. Jenny was a valued member of the Council who chaired a working committee for much of her time on the Council. Under Jenny's guidance, the Woman of Distinction Award program has reached new levels of success and continues to grow.

WCWI now welcomes two new members, **Carma Corra**, who lives in Cheyenne, and **Evelyn Haskell**, who lives in Laramie. The Council is looking forward to working with new members, discussing our current projects, and listening to ideas for making improvements and progress in our mission: To focus on the needs and concerns of women in Wyoming.

The Council still has two seats to fill, so we encourage women who are interested in women's issues to contact us, or the Governor's Office, regarding an appointment to the Council. Participate in pursuit of our vision: To improve the quality and equality of life for women in Wyoming.



Teresa de Groh

Win-Win Workplace Practices: Results and Quality

The 21st century workplace faces several challenges. The employer faces a serious labor shortage: as baby boomers age and contemplate traditional retirement, there will not be enough young people entering the workforce to replace them, and they certainly won't have comparable experience. In fact, current estimates on the U.S. labor shortfall range from 3 million to 10 million workers by 2010.

Finding the solutions that create a win-win for employer and employee is challenging. Given the diverse nature of the workforce, there is not a one-size-fits all solution.

How does an employer develop successful programs and benefits when there are so many factors to consider? A 2004 U.S. Department of Labor report gave the following findings:

1. Workplace practices that include support for "family-friendly" benefits produce solid economic results, including higher profits, higher productivity, and lower attrition.
2. The key barriers to successful implementation and utilization of "family friendly" policies are management and staff resistance, lack of training, and the employee's (often justified) fear of being marginalized. Conversely, there is a strong correlation between

organizations that embrace a culture of family friendly policies, and the overall productivity and loyalty of its employees.

3. The organizations that produce the greatest results in meeting the needs of the changing workforce tend to recognize and treat their human resources as capital investments and demonstrate an employee-focused philosophy through strong leadership, vision, strategic planning, and communication.
4. There is a direct correlation between employees that have access to and take advantage of benefits deemed to be "family-friendly," and their reported quality of life and job satisfaction.
5. There is an alarming disparity in the types of benefits offered to employees, depending upon their position and the size and function of their organization.

These findings demonstrate that--despite the challenges-- corporations of all sizes, academia, and governmental and non-profit entities can adopt win-win solutions that deliver improved organizational results as well as enhanced quality of life for employees.

Source: 2004 report sponsored the U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau.