

COMMISSION F O R WOMEN

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Spring 1994

Every woman should have the opportunity to develop her ultimate potential as a contributing member of society. She should have access to education and employment that would aid her in developing her talents and abilities. She should be allowed to pursue her goals without outside hindrance or harassment.

Unfortunately, many women are denied these basic rights strictly on the basis of gender. While some women individually have made great personal strides in business and leadership roles, women in general are still in a "catch-up" position.

The Commission for Women was created to help remove the obstacles that prevent women from achieving

WHY A Commission for Women ?

these goals: to correct injustices and inequities against women, to improve options for women, and to alert women to emerging opportunities. To paraphrase a popular quote, "People should pull themselves up by the bootstraps, but sometimes you've got to supply

them with the bootstraps in order for them to do so."

Our roles in society are evolving and being redefined today as they have throughout history. The "rule of thumb" in Olde England stated that a man could not beat a woman with a stick any larger in circumference than his thumb. Such an attitude today would be outrageous. There are however, examples of violence against women that persist. Rape, domestic violence and sexual harassment occur in all segments of our society.

Women continue to battle the glass ceiling: men still outnumber women in top executive positions by a huge margin and continue to hold a disproportionate percentage of seats in the House and Senate.

WHAT DOES THE COMMISSION FOR WOMEN DO?

Our goals are to help women develop skills for jobs with advancement potential and to encourage business to provide these employment opportunities; to help women develop leadership qualities they need to assume leadership positions in both private enterprise and public service; to reinforce the concept of fair and respectful treatment of women; and to work toward greater emphasis in the medical community on women's health is-

suues. In general, work to improve the quality of life for women, and by doing so, improve the quality of our society.

In addition to the broad purpose and efforts of the Commission, we are involved in several specific projects of note. At the request of the Ventura County Board of Supervisors, we are spearheading a task force to address the issue of teen pregnancy in Ventura County. Over 70 people represent-

ing schools, county agencies, cities, private-not-for-profits, churches the medical community and parents have been participating in the project. The committee has spent the past year studying existing reports and data and interviewing teens from throughout the county who represent a wide range of backgrounds and circumstances.

We are now in the process of putting together a comprehensive
continued

COMMISSION EFFORTS, cont.

set of recommendations for the Board of Supervisors and the residents of Ventura County. We hope to have the report ready for presentation by summer.

During the past year, we formed an "Assembly of Representatives" for area groups that address women's issues to encourage more joint efforts on projects and events. Working together, we can draw on each other's resources and expertise to better serve the residents of the county. The assembly is currently compiling a master calendar of events and a directory of ser-

vices of its members.

Each March, the Commission sponsors a Women's History Awards Program to increase awareness of the contributions of women in history and to recognize educators and community activists who promote women's history locally.

We also sponsor an annual "Salute to Women" awards program to honor women of exceptional achievement in various fields of endeavor including business, education, health/science, law and community service.

We have co-sponsored a number of Family Law Forums throughout the county, providing free legal

information from experts on family law issues.

Our Women's Political Appointments Coalition has presented several workshops to inform women about the opportunities to serve in local government at the appointments level on boards and commissions. The coalition maintains a "talent bank" for individuals interested in appointments to boards and alerts them to openings.

Additionally, the Commission for Women continues to monitor several other areas of concern including housing, legislation, child care and battered women's shelters.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

GET INVOLVED! When you recognize inequities or identify opportunities for women, talk about it. Spread the word. Write letters. Join a group that has similar concerns. There really is power in numbers. And things aren't going to get better

until we voice our objections to the status quo.

Call the Commission for Women for more information about the organizations and services for women in our area. 805/652-7611

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

MAIL TO:

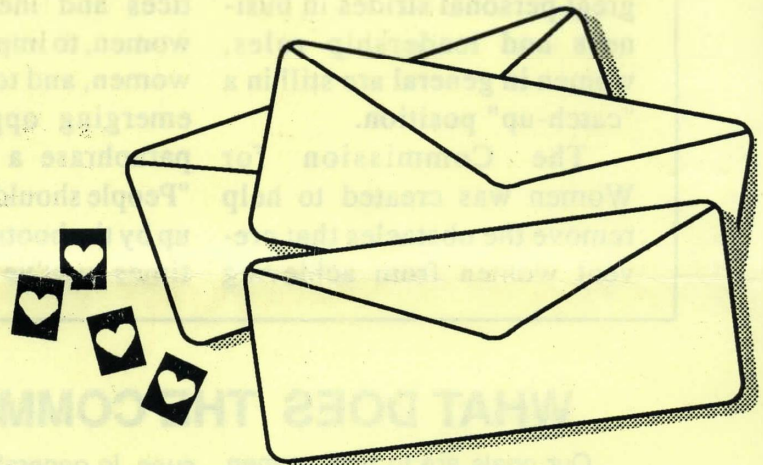
COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

P.O. BOX 6762

OXNARD, CA 93031

Please accept my donation to the Women's Activity Fund - CFW, in the amount of

\$ _____ in support of Commission for Women events and this newsletter.



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