

# **Ventura County Commission For Women**

**Survey of the Needs of Women in Ventura County**

## **DISTRICT 2 OUTREACH**

**October 5, 1991**

**by**

**District 2 Commissioners:**

**Pat Harris-Murray, MN, RN.**

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The commissioners from District 2 would like to thank Kathy Long, as chair of the Women's Political Appointments Coalition, for her cooperation and support of this project. We would also like to thank Stacey Mac Donald for presiding over the day's activities; Therese Hughes for her help as liaison with the Thousand Oaks Chapter of the American Association of University Women. Celeste and Steve Weingardt were supportive and actively promoted this event with the production of a television interview and distribution of public service announcements. Peter Scovill produced the informative public service announcements and we thank him for his efforts. As always, Bonnie Warrington acted as our right arm; we thank her for reproducing, distributing and collecting the survey, and for her continued support of this effort. Most importantly, we wish to thank Supervisor Maria VanderKolk who has supported this effort from its inception and provided input for the survey. Her participation in the outreach is greatly appreciated.

**Ventura County Commission For Women**

**Survey of the Needs of Women in Ventura County**

**DISTRICT 2 OUTREACH**  
**October 5, 1991**  
**SUMMARY**

On October 5, 1991, the three District 2 Commissioners joined with the Ventura County Commission for Women's Political Appointments Coalition and the Thousand Oaks Chapter of the American Association of University Women to present a workshop for women on how to be appointed and how to be elected on a local, state and national level.

One of the duties of the Commission for Women is to make recommendations to the County Board of Supervisors regarding the needs of women. Recognizing the need for hard data, the commissioners of District 2 chose to conduct a written survey of the women present for this workshop and outreach. This was to be the first of a series of surveys conducted throughout District 2. The following is a summary of some of the findings of that first survey:

Of the 64 women attending, 29 surveys were returned (45%). The respondents are all English speaking and attended some college with the majority having completed a degree program. In addition, the majority are in the age group of 41 to 50 years; are married and living with their spouse. The overwhelming majority own their home with an average mortgage payment of \$1463. Their current combined yearly household income exceeds \$40,000. Most of the women worked outside the home (with 15 out of 28 or 54%) as a necessity. However, a substantial number of these women (21 out of 26 answering) also participated in volunteer work. Although the majority of these women did not have a personal unmet need for childcare, childcare was the number one need they stated on behalf of women in general. Most of the respondents stated their health was excellent or good and most had health insurance. Over half of the respondents stated they did not do monthly self-examinations of their own breasts yet 18 of the 29 had recent mammograms. Twenty six of the 29 had had a recent pap smear.

When asked *"What are the three most important issues facing women today?"*, the survey indicated that the women overwhelmingly agreed that the top three issues are: 1] Childcare 2] Equal Pay 3] Reproductive Choice. Other issues mentioned include: Health & Affordable Medical Care; Affordable Housing and Political Representation; Schools and Domestic Violence.

Fifty-two percent (15 of 29) of the women answering this survey are from District 2 with the next highest representation (6) being from District 1.

Although it was recognized from the beginning that surveys conducted at organizational meetings will reflect a narrow segment of the population, a concerted effort to visit diverse groups will ultimately more adequately reflect the larger population of women in District 2.

Therefore our recommendations for the continuation of this study would be to:

1. Expand the District 2 survey outreach to groups identified as typical of the population of this area reflected by the 1990 census results.

2. Make the following corrections in the survey tool:

- a) The question "Do you have Medical or Medicaid Insurance?" should read "Do you have Medi-Cal or Medicaid Insurance?"
- b) After, "Do you or any family member(s) need help with recovery from (alcohol/drug) substance abuse?" there needs to be Yes\_\_, No\_\_.
- c) "Do you have maid services or housekeepers? Needs to be changed to: "Do you have outside (paid) help with your house cleaning?"
- d) There needs to be a specific question asked to identify ethnicity so that we can better match the reflected 1990 census population.
- e) Under EDUCATION clarification of degrees completed (i.e., *Completed college* needs further information such as degree: BS, BA, etc.).

household  
maintenance  
pool/garage

3. Develop a survey tool to gather information on the needs and issues of women throughout the County of Ventura. District 2 offers its assistance towards this end.

In conclusion, the commissioners from District 2 are optimistic about the use of a survey tool in expanding our outreach throughout the district. In order to best perform our duties as commissioners we feel personal contact and communication with the women of our district is imperative. We see the tool as a "key" to gain entrance to the various places and organizations serving women. Supervisor VanderKolk has stated her keen interest in assessing the needs of all the citizens of her district and we hope that this tool will help serve part of that purpose.

S.P. add questions  
renters  
insurance  
source of  
employment  
in/out  
county

Survey in  
Spanish