

Office of the Governor

NEWS RELEASE

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Gov. Whitman Addresses Governor's Conference on Women, Announces Winners of Governor's Leadership Award

Gov. Christie Whitman today told the Governor's Conference on Women that a growing New Jersey economy has translated into increased opportunities for women.

"With the percentage of women in the workforce nearly 50 percent and growing, it's clear that job growth is important for women and for the families that depend on their income," Gov. Whitman said. "That's why during my first term, my focus was on getting New Jersey out of the financial hole we were in. Four and a half years ago, when I took office, unemployment was at record levels."

Today, the unemployment rate in New Jersey has reached its lowest point in eight years, with more than 300,000 jobs added since Gov. Whitman took office.

Gov. Whitman added that in her second term, she will continue to strengthen the economy, but has also set her priorities on improving the quality of life in New Jersey by focusing on education, preserving open space, and redeveloping our cities.

"We all benefit from strong cities, good schools, a healthy environment, and a growing economy," Gov. Whitman said. "We have to recognize that these issues, although they are not traditionally considered to be women's issues, also need our special consideration. And the best thing we can do as women is to work together to improve the lives of those around us."

Also at the conference, Gov. Whitman announced the three winners of the annual Governor's Leadership Award. The award is given to three undergraduate students from Douglass College's Institute for Women's Leadership who are enrolled in the Leadership Scholars Program of Women's Leadership and Social Change.

The winners are:

- Jessica Roberts, a sophomore studying political science, lives in Denville. She was the vice president of her freshmen class and is a member of the Programming Committee of Douglass College's Bias Intervention Task Force and the Rutgers Multi-Cultural Peer Educator.
- Vivian Nwosu, of Piscataway, a junior majoring in molecular biology and biochemistry. She is a student in the Biomedical Careers Program at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and has volunteered in the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital emergency room and its surgical oncology unit.
- Jessica Hope Greenstone, of East Brunswick, a junior majoring in Women's Studies. She is a committee member of the 1998 Annual Women's Conference and a participant in the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity.

The winners were selected for demonstrating a commitment to social change and to women's leadership issues, thoughtfulness and depth of essay, and potential for a successful internship experience. The winners receive a \$1,500 stipend to support their internship projects.

Founded in 1996, the Governor's Conference on Women is hosted by the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce and is coordinated by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs and its Division on Women.

