

**New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission  
Council on Gender Parity in Labor and Education  
Meeting Minutes  
March 1, 2012**

Rutgers University, New Brunswick  
Labor Education Center ~ Room 115  
10:00 to 12:00 Noon

Attendees:

Marie Barry	Linda Houser
Susan Bodofsky	Jill Jones
Terri Boyer	Andrea Karsian
Judy Formalarie	Dianne Mills McKay
Betsy Garlatti	Ana Montero
Glenda Gracia-Rivera	
Dianne Hartshorn	

**Dianne Mills McKay** opened the meeting with a welcome and introductions. A special introduction was made for Susan Bodofsky, as her first day on the staff of the Career Equity Resource Council at the Center for Women and Work at Rutgers. Minutes from the Council's last meeting were approved by all.

**Judy Formalarie** gave updates from the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission (SETC). She stated that the SETC is beginning the process of re-certifying all of the local Workforce Investment Boards. Baseline visits will be conducted this spring with the final re-certification application to be submitted in January 2014. She also stated that the Request for Proposal for research and reports on New Jersey economic security tables is being processed. The Council should have the results ready to be reviewed at the summer retreat, which will be held in August. Ms. Formalarie also provided everyone with a copy of the amended legislation for the Council. After a brief discussion, members agreed that the changes align with what we do currently.

Ms. Formalarie reported on the progress of the Science and Technology Subcommittee regarding their planning of the 6<sup>th</sup> annual workforce summit. The summit, which is to be held on June 15<sup>th</sup> at The Conference Center at Mercer County College, is entitled "Engage, Inspire, Connect and Collaborate". This title comes directly from the recommendations of last year's summit which encouraged us to *engage* young students in STEM curriculums, *inspire* them to continue STEM majors in college, *connect* them to STEM careers in the workforce and *collaborate* with their peers to help keep them in the workforce. Unlike other years, we will intentionally invite people to not only be speakers, but to attend the conference so that they can provide feedback to us for our report.

**Terri Boyer** discussed her testimony on the gender wage gap to the new Assembly Women and Children Committee. New Jersey has since passed resolutions to encourage national passage of a Paycheck Equity Law. The committee would like the Council to pass along any issues we believe they should examine. The Chairwoman is Assemblywoman Pam Lampitt.

Karen White mentioned that Senator Lautenberg is interested in doing an event for pay equity day on April 16th, the day before the actual date of April 17, so it will be in the news on April 17th. NOW and AAUW have resources for events and the United States Department of Labor Women's Bureau is holding a competition for young women to develop an application on pay equity. Everyone was encouraged to help publicize the day.

Dr. Boyer stated that younger people often do not see the pay gap and do not realize the difference it makes over a lifetime. Marie Barry suggested that this topic could create an excellent lesson/curriculum for mathematics. Dr. Boyer will check information and disseminate what she can find. It was also suggested that the pay gap be mentioned at the STEM workforce summit.

**Karen White and Linda Houser** gave a presentation on the Family Leave Insurance Program. Ms. White stated that national data on family leave from 1997-2009 was used for the study. Major findings include:

1. People with paid leave had a greater attachment to the workforce
2. People with paid leave had less reliance on public assistance
3. Women who took paid leave were more likely to experience pay increases when they came back to the workforce.

In 2008, the New Jersey law regarding family leave was enacted with payments beginning in January 2009 and benefits beginning in July 2009. Ms. White explained how the program works but noted that the maximum paid into the insurance plan by workers is only \$24.24/year for 2012. The maximum benefit is two-thirds of ones' weekly wage up to \$572 per week. The amount that is paid into the system is adjusted annually based on usage. There is a current balance in the fund and the fund cannot be used for anything else. Ms. White noted that one cannot 'opt out' unless a small employer (under 50 employees) has their own plan that is as good or better. This program is operated out of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) within their Division on Temporary Disability Insurance. Linda Houser, the researcher on the project, noted that only five states have Temporary Disability Insurance- New Jersey, California, Hawaii, Rhode Island, and New York.

NJ LWD reported that almost 80% of usage was for women for new births. It was also noted that over 27% usage was for care for illnesses in the family; however, not for children or spouses but for aging parents or domestic partners.

Recommendations include:

1. Expand national job protection
2. Document cost savings (improve data collection)
3. Provide outreach and education to employees and workers
4. Enlist employers to hire using this as an incentive

Regarding Family Leave, Dr. Houser noted that the longer these programs are in effect, the more they get used (California has had it since 2004). As a side benefit, the Family Medical Leave Act has broadened the scope of who you can take leave for by people in the military. A hard copy of the report was given to all but a link will be sent to Ms. Formalarie to send the state and national report electronically to all.

**Jill Jones**, a professor from the University of Nevada at Reno gave a presentation on the research behind her book, *Casino Women: Courage in Unexpected Places*. Dr. Jones mentioned that a study was done in Las Vegas and Reno on women casino workers. Las Vegas is highly unionized and most of Reno is not. Dr. Jones did a qualitative study over ten years that included 46 individual interviews, focus groups, and 75 other interested parties: advocates, researchers, legislators, etc. Most casino work is done by “gender role:” which means that for women, it is cleaning up after someone or related to sexual titillation. For this report, Dr. Jones discussed housekeeping as her example.

In Reno where workers are not unionized, housekeepers are almost all women and are paid under minimum wage, without benefits, or the hope of promotions or wage increases. The hours are longer and result in many worker injuries, especially with heavier mattresses, shorter times to clean the rooms, and more things in each room to clean.

In Las Vegas where workers are unionized, housekeepers earn 30%-35% more than their non-unionized counterparts and have benefits. They can take classes run by the employer to seek promotions into higher paid jobs. Citizenship classes are also available. Dr. Jones did note that industry-wide, there are many women in the base and mid-management but it is men who are in top management.

The meeting closed at 12:00 with a reminder that our next meeting date *has been changed*. The next meeting will be held on **May 10<sup>th</sup>** at Rutgers, Labor Education Center, Room 115 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon.