



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Commission on the Status of Women

DATE: March 4, 2008
BOARD MEETING DATE: March 11, 2008
SPECIAL NOTICE/HEARING: None
VOTE REQUIRED: Majority

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: Patricia Marques, President *PM*
Honora R. Miller, Director, CSW *HRL*
SUBJECT: 2007 Annual Report

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept the 2007 Annual Report from the Commission on the Status of Women.

VISION ALIGNMENT:

Commitment(s): Realize the potential of our diverse population. Provide equal access to educational opportunities. Ensure basic health and safety for all.

Goal(s): 1- Our diverse population works well together to build strong communities, effective government and a prosperous economy. 4- Residents have many educational and training opportunities beyond high school. 5- Residents have access to healthcare and preventive care. 8- Help vulnerable people- the aged, disabled, mentally ill, at-risk youth and other- achieve a better quality of life.

BACKGROUND:

Since 1982, the Commission on the Status of Women of San Mateo County has served the Board of Supervisors by keeping actively informed about how women are doing in our county. The Commission identifies policies, programs and legislation to address the needs of women, girls and families and makes recommendations to the Board for consideration. The Commission also addresses women's needs directly by helping create partnerships that ignite positive change. We also continue the tradition of honoring the achievements of women through the annual Women's Hall of Fame, now in its 24th year.

In 2007, commissioners were busy on a number of fronts from reaching out to

women in the Women's Correctional Center, to spearheading the development of a local chapter of the California Elected Women's Association, to organizing a women's health conference and continuing an ongoing listening tour to learn directly from women of all ages about their quality of life in San Mateo County. The following is a brief overview of the commission's activities:

DISCUSSION:

Women's Correctional Center

- Laid the foundation for partnerships with the Service League, Sheriff's Department, Health Department and others to explore developing contact visits between incarcerated women and their children.
- Developed an ongoing relationship with the CHOICES recovery program in the Women's Jail; raised \$3,000 through a drawing for quilts made by CHOICES participants for the purchase of a professional grade sewing machine for the program; collected quilting materials; connected CHOICES with quilting instructors and the Career Closet to provide "dress for success" workshops for CHOICES participants.
- Held two "What do Women Want" Speak Up! sessions with CHOICES participants to learn about the needs of the women while in jail and upon release. Follow up with the Sheriff's Department resulted in the increase of commissary choices for inmates. Purchased library books for use by the CHOICES participants.
- Co-sponsored the Women's Criminal Justice Summit, led by Mary McMillan, Deputy County Manager, to both learn from experts and share information about gender responsive correctional programming as part of planning for upcoming criminal justice system changes.
- Kept abreast of the changing needs of the county's correctional system through Commission representation on the Jail Overcrowding Task Force.

2008 Women's Health Conference

Initiated and planned the region's first major women's health conference titled: Feeling Great in '08 to be held on April 5, 2008 focused on helping women make small changes that lead to life-long benefits. Successfully created a working collaborative that includes the area's most influential health-focused organizations – the County Health Department, County Medical Center, major hospitals and the Bay Area Parent Magazine.

Women's Leadership Development

Orchestrated the development of a local chapter of the California Elected Women's Association (CEWAER), which has recently taken the name California Women Lead,

to provide a forum to encourage, train and support women to seek appointed and elected positions throughout San Mateo County and beyond.

Assessing the Status of Women

In 2007 the Commission continued its ongoing "What Do Women Want?" Speak Ups campaign with targeted groups in the county and provided a report to the Board of Supervisors highlighting our findings in November. Our listening tour included focus group sessions with the Human Investment Project's Self Sufficiency Program, Coastside Health Clinic Promotoras, and the CHOICES program at the Women's Correctional Center. These sessions enable us to collect information about the needs of women in the community and offer a chance to provide "on-the spot" answers and resources for issues that are raised by participants.

Events

2007 Women's Hall of Fame: This event has recognized extraordinary and dedicated women throughout the years and continues to be a time honored San Mateo County tradition. Betty Carlson, May Gee, Judy Heyboer, Jenny Horne, Roz Koo, Georgi La Berge, Shirley La Marr, Barbara Liedtke, Karen Philip and Georgette Sarles were inducted into the 23rd Annual Women's Hall of Fame on March 22, 2007. The Young Women of Excellence honored were Lizeth Chavez, Kristen Costello, Tiffany Ling Ho and Jasmine Nachtigall.

Women's Art Exhibit: In collaboration with the Arts Commission, this exhibit, displayed in the gallery on the first floor of the Hall of Justice during the month of March, showcased the work of local women artists focusing on the theme of women's work.

Children's Memorial Flag Raising: An annual tradition in our county since 1998, the Fourth Friday of April has been proclaimed by the Board of Supervisors as "Children's Memorial Day" in memory of Children who have died as a result of violence. To commemorate this day each year, San Mateo County flies the children's memorial flag and the Commission coordinates a brief ceremony. The event was officiated by Supervisor Mark Church on Friday, April 27, 2007. Tim Gatto, Probation Services Manager, San Mateo County Gang Intelligence Unit and Alejandro Vilchez, Manager of Strengthening Neighborhoods & Violence Prevention at the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center spoke about the county's varied gang prevention and intervention efforts.

Women's Equality Day: Organized a Board proclamation for Women's Equality Day – August 26th; made a presentation to the Board of Supervisors and published an Op Ed in the Daily News to commemorate the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution granting women the right to vote and to promote awareness about the continuing need to work to achieve full equality.

Community Outreach

The Commission participated in various events in an effort to raise awareness and to reach out to members of the community, such as:

- Co-sponsored the Women's Criminal Justice Summit, February 2007
- Organizational sponsor of the Women on Writing (WOW!) Conference at Skyline Community College, February 2007
- Organizational sponsor of the San Mateo County Domestic Violence Conference, October 2007
- Organizational sponsor of a domestic violence awareness month event at Menlo College, October 2007
- Represented the CSW at quarterly meetings of the Association of California Commissions on Women.

Plans for 2008

The Commission recently developed our work plan for 2008-2010. In addition to the ongoing work described above, the plan includes:

- Development of a Status of Women Indicator that will provide data to assess how women are doing in San Mateo County. Collaboration with Sustainable San Mateo County is anticipated.
- Coordination of a clothing drive to collect work/interview/court attire for adolescent young women that will be distributed by the Career Closet.

FISCAL IMPACT:

All activities undertaken by the Commission are covered by proceeds from the Women's Hall of Fame awards banquet.

The Commission would like to thank the Board of Supervisors for your ongoing support and encouragement.