



Io Woman

A Publication of the Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women • Vol. XXXIV, No. 6, November/December 2004

Ask A Working Woman Results Released

Jobs with living wages and basic benefits are working women's priority, both personally and as public policy, the 2004 Ask a Working Woman Survey report shows.

Women contribute a majority of their families' incomes, and many work irregular hours to do so. However, women are worried about keeping their jobs. Almost half of working women have been out of work in the past year or have a family member or close friend who has been out of work. Women of color have even higher experience -- 61 percent of African-American women, 52 percent of Latinas, and 52 percent of Asian Pacific Islander women.

The Iowa-specific summary shows that Iowa is losing good jobs and gaining low-wage jobs. Average wages for jobs in industries that are growing in Iowa are 18.4 percent lower than those in industries that are shedding jobs. These new jobs are also less likely to provide health insurance (two-thirds of the industries losing jobs compared to one-half of new jobs).

Working women's legislative priority is support for laws to make health

--continued on page 2

Women Changing America

National Women's History Month has been celebrated in the United States since 1987. And, since 1985, middle school students in Iowa have been encouraged to *Write Women Back Into History*.

To give students a deeper and more relevant appreciation of women's role in history, the ICSW, the Iowa Department of Education, and the State Historical Society of Iowa are sponsoring the 21st annual statewide essay contest, "Write Women Back Into History," for students in grades 6-9. The 2005 theme is "Women Changing America."

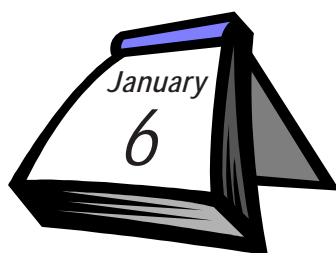
Whether you are a student, family member, teacher, or interested citizen, we ask all *IoWoman* readers to encourage their schools to participate in this contest.

This year's theme honors and recognizes the role of American women in transforming culture, history and politics as leaders, writers, scientists, educators, politicians, artists, historians, and informed citizens. Students are encouraged to choose a woman, preferably from Iowa, from any historical period including the present and write about the accomplishments of her life and how she has made a difference to the student and to society. A student's own thoughts on the significance of the woman's contributions are important. Essays should identify 1) why the woman should be written into history (i.e., what meaningful contributions has she made to her community, the state, nation, or world?), and 2) why she is important to the student. Students should consider what people would learn about us from this essay 50 years from now. A successful essay will discuss why the student researched, read about or interviewed, and found the subject to be a role model; it should not merely be a biographical sketch.

Prizes will be awarded, each finalist will receive a certificate signed by the Governor, and the winning essayists will be recognized at a special ceremony at the State Capitol during Women's History Month (March 2005). They will also be introduced in the Iowa Senate and House of Representatives. Sponsoring teachers of winning essays will receive classroom resources.

Guidelines can be found on the Women's History Page of our website, <www.dhr.state.ia.us/dhr/sw>. With questions, contact Lori M. SchraderBachar at ICSW, 515/281-4470 or 800/558-4427 or by e-mail, lori.schraderbachar@iowa.gov.

Make Plans to Attend



Priorities Lunch

January 6, 2005

12 noon - 1 p.m.

(bring your own lunch or Capitol Cafe is open)

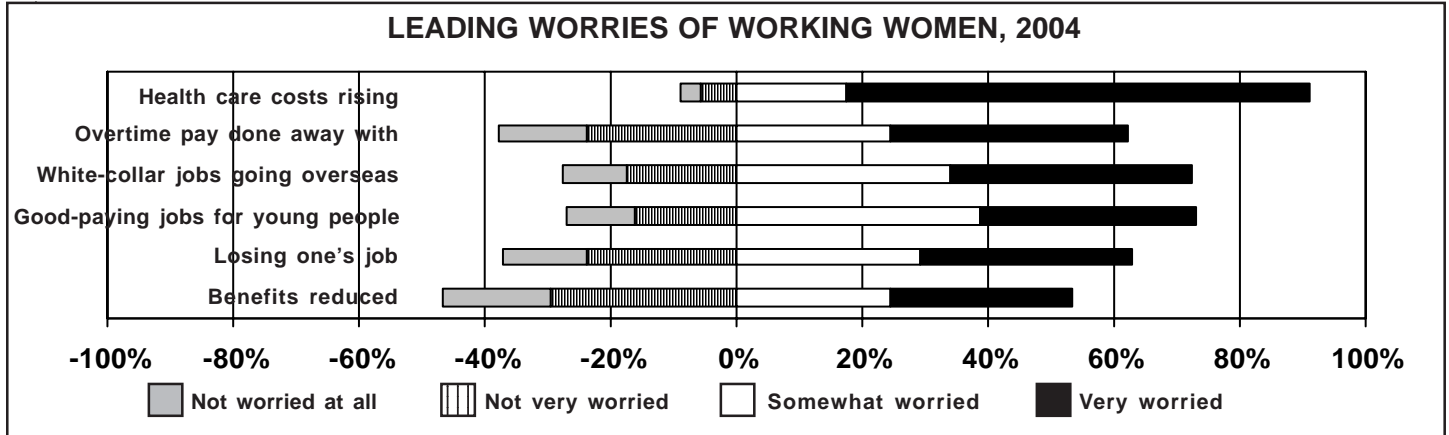
State Capitol - Legislative Dining Room, Des Moines

Join Charlotte Nelson, ICSW executive director, in discussing the 2005 ICSW Legislative Priorities.

care more affordable. Ninety-five percent of respondents say that health care is an important benefit. Yet, just under half of private-sector employers in Iowa offer health insurance to their workers.

Equal pay was also listed as an important benefit to 93 percent of working women. Women in Iowa had median annual earnings of \$27,100 compared with \$36,400 for Iowa men in 2002 (a ratio of 74.5 percent). Nationally, women were paid 77 cents for every dollar men received in 2002, which dropped to 76 cents in 2003.

The survey was conducted for the AFL-CIO by Lake Snell Perry & Associates. For more information, to read the entire report or to read the Iowa-specific summary, visit <www.aflcio.org/womenreport>.



Iowa Women's Hourly Wages Continue to Lag Behind Men's Wages

Women today appear to have more career options than ever before. Nonetheless, Iowa women are still overwhelmingly bound into traditional job areas that negatively affect their economic status. Workers in female-dominated jobs – such as secretaries, cashiers, nurses, child care providers – are paid less than similar jobs dominated by men. 2000 census data reveal that the largest percentage of Iowa's female wage-earners was in technical, sales, and administrative support positions. Those are commonly referred to as “sticky floor” occupations because pay tends to be low with limited potential for advancement. The largest percentage of male workers, on the other hand, were operators, fabricators, or laborers – jobs which tend to pay higher wages. In Iowa, a comparison of the top ten jobs held primarily by men and those held primarily by women show a difference of \$2.73 per hour pay difference. Below is a list of the jobs held primarily by one gender and the wage each receives. There is a difference of \$109.20 per week between jobs held by men and those by women. Women and their families lose over \$5,678 from this disparity each year.

CONCENTRATION OF WORKERS IN JOBS, IOWA, 2004*

| <u>OCCUPATION</u> | <u>%MALE</u> | <u>AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE</u> | <u>OCCUPATION</u> | <u>%FEMALE</u> | <u>AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE</u> |
|----------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| 1) Bus/Truck Mechanic | 99.6% | \$15.71 | 1) Dental Hygienist | 99.1% | \$25.45 |
| 2) Heavy Vehicle Mechanic | 99.3% | \$15.91 | 2) Dental Assistant | 99.0% | \$13.13 |
| 3) Mechanic/Repairer | 99.2% | \$11.13 | 3) Pre-K/Kindergarten Teacher | 98.7% | \$11.65 |
| 4) Cement Mason/Finisher | 99.2% | \$13.92 | 4) Secretary | 97.7% | \$13.12 |
| 5) Automobile Mechanic | 98.8% | \$14.03 | 5) Child Care Worker | 96.8% | \$ 7.47 |
| 6) Construction Supervisor | 98.6% | \$21.70 | 6) Registered Nurse | 95.7% | \$20.34 |
| 7) Plumber | 98.5% | \$18.46 | 7) Licensed Practical Nurse | 95.4% | \$14.67 |
| 8) Carpenter | 98.4% | \$15.05 | 8) Paralegal/Legal Asst. | 95.1% | \$18.35 |
| 9) Electrical Worker | 98.3% | \$21.84 | 9) Hairdresser/Cosmetologist | 95.1% | \$10.38 |
| 10) Brickmason | 98.0% | \$17.18 | 10) Typist | 94.9% | \$11.87 |

***Ten jobs held primarily by women pay a weighted average of \$13.79 an hour, compared to \$16.52 paid by ten jobs held primarily by men—a difference of \$2.73 per hour, or \$109.20 per week.**

SOURCE: Labor Market Information Bureau, Iowa Workforce Development

Calendar of Events

November

- 2 VOTE!**
- 4 Center for Excellence in the Arts and Humanities Race, Gender, and Spirit: Reclaiming Lost Histories through Art.** 7 p.m., Iowa State University. <www.lectures.iastate.edu>.
- 5 Coffee with Chrysalis: Aging With Attitude.** 7:30-8:30 a.m., Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, Des Moines. Free. RSVP to Chrysalis Foundation, 515/255-1853, pdavis@chrysalisfdn.org or <www.chrysalisfdn.org/events>.
- 5 Iowa Gender-Specific Services Task Force.** 10 a.m.-12 noon, Urbandale Public Library, Urbandale. Kathy Nesteby, ICSW, 515/281-6915, 800/558-4427, or kathy.nesteby@iowa.gov.
- 6 Planning to Live Your Best Life: Asian American Health & College Fair.** 8:15 a.m. - 1 p.m. Hoover High School, Des Moines. For more information, contact, Alyson Simmons at 515/288-9028 or asimmons@fpcouncil.com.
- 9 Interactive Imagery: Opening to Inner Wisdom.** 5:30-6:30 p.m., Plymouth Congregational Church. Free. RSVP to Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center, 515/274-4006.
- 10 Uncommon Network.** 1-3 p.m., St. Catherine of Sienna Catholic Student Center, Des Moines. Cece Arnold, National Catholic Rural Life Conference, 515/270-2634 or ncrlcca@mchsi.com.
- 11 Veterans' Day.** State Holiday: ICSW office closed.
- 12-14 Grass Roots Organizing Weekend.** University of Iowa, Iowa City. \$25. Women's Resource and Action Center, 319/335-1486 or <www.uiowa.edu/~wrac>.
- 15 Diversity Conference.** Scheman Building, Iowa State University, Ames. \$75. Friends of Iowa Civil Rights, Inc., 515/225-1051 or <www.iowadiversity.com/conference>.
- 16 Friends of Iowa Women Prisoners.** 12 noon. Wesley United Methodist Church, Des Moines. Bring a brown bag lunch. Speaker: Roberta Victor on art therapy in women's prisons. Anyone interested is welcome. 515/283-1911.
- 18 The Importance of Culture in Communication.** 8:30 a.m. - 12 noon, Hotel Fort Des Moines, Des Moines. Fee varies. Jennifer Smyser, Iowa Council for International Understanding, 515/282-8269 x. 15 or <www.iciu.org>.
- 18-19 Long-Term Living Town Meeting.** Hilton Gardens, Johnston. Free. Valerie Rasmussen, AARP Iowa, 515/697-1010 or vrasmussen@aarp.org.

- 19 Iowa Human Needs Advocates.** 9 a.m., Legislative Dining Room, State Capitol, Des Moines. Sharon Baker, cross.ministries@juno.com.

December

- 1-3 Investing In Iowa's Youth, Investing In Iowa's Future: Disproportionate Minority Confinement Conference.** Holiday Inn, Des Moines. To register, visit <www.uiowa.edu/~nrfcfp/dmcr>. Brad Richardson, 319/335-4965 or brad-richardson@uiowa.edu.
- 3 Iowa Gender-Specific Services Task Force.** 10 a.m.-12 noon. Urbandale Public Library, Urbandale. Kathy Nesteby, ICSW, 515/281-6915, 800/558-4427, or kathy.nesteby@iowa.gov.
- 4 Abusive Lending Summit.** 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Location TBA. For more information, contact Victor Elias at victore@cfpciowa.org or 515/280-9027.
- 4 Metro Des Moines League of Women Voters Luncheon.** 11:30 a.m - 1 p.m., State Historical Building. \$12. 515/255-1453 or info@lwvmdm.org.
- 7 Iowa Commission on the Status of Women Meeting.** 10:30 a.m. -2:30 p.m.. Location TBA. Free and open to the public. Call or write for special accommodations, 800/558-4427, 515/281-4461 or dhr.icsw@iowa.gov.
- 7 Labyrinth Walks: Journeying into the Sacred Center.** 5:30-6:30 p.m., College of Massage and Healing Arts Center. Free. RSVP to Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center, 515/274-4006.
- 16 In Their Shoes Diversity Training.** 8:30 a.m. - 12 noon, Hotel Fort Des Moines, Des Moines. Fee varies. Jennifer Smyser, Iowa Council for International Understanding, 515/282-8269 x. 15 or <www.iciu.org>.
- 16 Examining the Special Role of Leaders in Valuing Diversity.** 1 - 4:30 p.m., Hotel Fort Des Moines, Des Moines. Fee varies. Jennifer Smyser, Iowa Council for International Understanding, 515/282-8269 x. 15 or <www.iciu.org>.

March is fast approaching. Is your organization planning an event to celebrate Women's History Month? Please send information about events of your group or in your area that you would like to have included on the calendar. Send the information (date, time, short description, contact name/info) to Lori SchraderBachar at Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319 or lori.schraderbachar@iowa.gov.

Bits and Pieces

The ICSW was saddened by the death of Iowa Women's Hall of Fame member **Professor Mary Jaylene Berg**. Berg, a worldwide leader in pharmaceutical education and women's health, died on October 1, 2004.



Hey YAH!, a web-based project, will showcase the work of 365 Iowa artists. In conjunction with the University of Iowa's Year of the Arts & Humanities, the artwork will be featured as "The Daily Palette" on the university's web site, linked from its front page - <www.uiowa.edu> in addition to computers at various University of Iowa campus locations.



If you like to help others and are comfortable with a computer, consider volunteering to help low-income people fill out tax returns. As a **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)**

Program volunteer you will receive free tax training and learn to prepare basic tax returns. Training classes will be held in December and January. For more information, visit <www.ised.org>.



The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women held its **Public Hearing** on October 26. Eighteen people/organizations presented to the Commission on topics ranging from child support to drug abuse. Subsequent to the hearing, the ICSW is developing its 2005 Proposals to the Governor and General Assembly. Watch for a listing of these proposals in the January/February 2005 issue of the *IoWoman*.



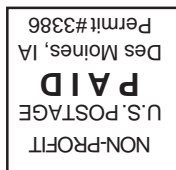
Ten outstanding women were inducted into the **National Women's Hall of Fame**: Florence Ellinwood Allen, who was a legal pioneer, breaking barriers for women in law; Ruth Fulton Benedict,

a highly influential anthropologist whose theories tremendously influenced the field of cultural anthropology; Betty Bumpers, former first lady of Arkansas; Hillary Rodham Clinton, the first First Lady ever to be elected to the United States Senate; Dr. Rita Colwell, the first woman and first biologist to head the National Science Foundation; Mother Marianne Cope, who helped found St. Joseph's Hospital in New York; Maya Lin, an architect who gained fame at the age of 21 as creator of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial; Patricia Locke, a pioneer in an effort to grant tribes greater authority in the education of their children; Blanche Stuart Scott, a pioneering aviatrix, the first American woman to take a solo hop into the air, although her flight is not regarded as official; and Mary Burnett Talbert, civil rights activist and suffragist. For more information about the National Hall of Fame or to learn more about these women, visit <www.greatwomen.org>.

Help save printing/postage costs!
If you no longer wish to receive
this newsletter, please write or
call the ICSW office. You may also
send your e-mail address. Thank you!

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on the Status of Women**
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Enclosure of items in the newsletter does not necessarily connote endorsement by the Friends of the ICSW. All information must be mailed or faxed to the ICSW no later than the 15th day of all even numbered months. The use of any submitted material is at the discretion of the editor. The *IoWoman* is mailed or e-mailed six times per year to 8,600 persons or organizations.

Vicki Brown, Executive Vice President • Charlotte Nelson, ICSW Executive Director • Lori M. SchraderBachar, Editor

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