

Scott Confirmed

Rachel Scott appointment by Governor Chet Culver as administrator of the Division on the Status of Women, Department of Human Rights, was confirmed by the Iowa Senate on February 25 by a 49/0 vote. Scott has served as division administrator of the ICSW since 2007.

Endowment Grants Available

Friends of ICSW will be accepting applications until July 1, 2008 for assistance grants to low-income women to improve job skills, update professional licensing, enroll in English as a second language class, or attend occupational seminars leading to increased employment opportunities.

Applicants must demonstrate financial need and that other funding sources are not available to them or are insufficient to meet a critical educational need.

An application form and further details will be available from the ICSW office at women@iowa.gov, www.friendsoficsw.org, or www.women.iowa.gov in mid-May. For a printed copy, telephone 515/281-4461 or 800/558-4427.

Wage Equity Study

The ICSW and Iowa Workforce Development have released a Wage Equity Study, which found that when looking at employment within specific industries, women in Iowa earn an average of 62% of what men earn monthly.

Go to www.women.iowa.gov for the full report.

Legislation Affecting Iowa Women

The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women (ICSW) tracks many bills based on its proposals. During the second session of the 82nd General Assembly, there was much action. A full report is available on at www.women.iowa.gov.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SUCCESS AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

1. Participation of girls and women in STEM and other non-traditional occupation
 - HF 2679 (see SSB 3294 and HSB 787) PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS. This bill requires that the State Board of Regents direct the universities to report on the proportion of girls and women in STEM, and in high school programs such as Project Lead the Way. Also directs universities to take "every reasonable measure" to improve the proportion of women and girls in STEM
 - HF 2331 FAILED TO PROGRESS PAST THE FIRST FUNNEL WEEK. Provide for a Math and Science Improvement pilot program and appropriation which would have been available for Area Education Agencies to assist teachers with the cooperation/participation of targeted businesses.
2. Support the federal Child Support Protection Act of 2007 which would restore funding cut by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005
 - SF 2425 PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS. Provides budget appropriations for DHS and others, including general fund money to backfill the some of the loss created by DRA of 2005.
 - SCR 103 and HCR 108 PENDING Concurrent resolutions urging US Congress to adopt a budget that meets the needs of Iowa's children and families
3. Appropriations for Women, Workforce and Money Program and restoring Iowa New Choices funding to prior levels.
 - SF 2400 PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS WITH AMENDMENTS. (Includes an additional 14,000 for ICSW over FY2008 budget level.)

WOMEN'S SAFETY AND HEALTH

1. Amend code of Iowa Chapter 724.26 into alignment with federal law prohibiting persons convicted of a domestic violence misdemeanor or subject to a no-contact order from possessing firearms.
 - SF 491 FAILED TO PROGRESS PAST FIRST FUNNEL WEEK. Prohibits above people from possessing firearms.
 - HF 2613 DID NOT PROGRESS. Relating to issuance of weapons permits. Language from this bill and related to text of SF 491 was submitted as an amendment that did not get adopted.
2. Strengthen rights of sexual assault victims
 - SF 2335 SIGNED BY GOVERNOR. This bill relates to the rights of a victim of an alleged sexual assault and notification of these rights by a police officer.

Keep Watching, Keep Listening

Last weekend I stood in the computer games section of a store, looking for a birthday present for my soon-to-be stepdaughter who is turning six. This was quite a task as she is quite a “girly-girl,” drawn to about anything so long as it’s pink. Of course, I take my role seriously as one shaper of her tastes and experiences, but at the same time, I didn’t want her to be so wholly unconnected to the game that she wouldn’t play it. Among so few choices not aimed clearly at one gender or another, the winner by default was *Animal Doctor*, since *Climbing Everest* would be perceived as “for boys.” Sigh.

But something else happened last weekend that didn’t really hit me until I was looking at several TVs at the gym Monday morning. On one screen, I saw Iowa-native Dr. Peggy Whitson being helped off a plane after she and two colleagues landed 295 miles off course in Kazakhstan on the way back to Earth from the International Space Station, where she has been Commander. In their 3 ½ hour descent to the Earth, these three experienced, among other things, the force of gravity at ten times the Earth’s rate of gravity. And Dr. Whitson set an American record for the most consecutive days spent in space—377. You have likely also seen the footage of her being helped off the plane. She looks tired and a little pale, of course. But there is strength in her eyes.

At the same time on a second screen appeared Danica Patrick, who took this weekend’s Indy Japan 300—the first time a woman has ever won an Indycar racing event. Last year, she placed fourth in the Indy 500- better than any female driver ever has. In her footage, she emerges from her car window pressing her fingers against her eyes to stem the flow of tears.

At times since I started at the ICSW, I have heard from some that the women’s movement is passé, divisive, or irrelevant—that women in Iowa don’t go further in business or politics because “they don’t want to.” According to these folks, women are too busy, too committed to their families, or one of my favorites, “too smart to take on a thankless job like X.” If even one of these is true, how sad for the girls and the young women in our lives, who see us as role models. And how sad for us!

As I watched the two screens with Whitson and Patrick, it occurred to me that *something is happening here*. Women can’t afford to believe that women’s equality and achievement is something that’s already done. The data, for one, tells us this just isn’t so. But even deeper, there’s a voice inside each one of us expressing a yet-realized desire. It might be a desire to be paid what we’re worth or to have more time freedom to spend with family or friends, or to do something new that our heart of hearts tells us we can. Let’s practice listening to that voice and not living by default. Let’s help the women and girls in our lives discover it, and keep listening. If that comes with some tears or “space” fatigue, well, we can’t be surprised. -- RS

Women You Know Event a Success

Friends of ICSW, on a snowy March evening, held the 2008 Women You Know Women You Want to Meet fundraising event at the Fort Des Moines Museum and Education Center.

Sponsors of the event were MJ Dolan, Jacqueline Easley, Betty Grundberg, Linda Hanson, Dianne Liepa, Joanne Parker, Rachel Scott, Lu Spaine, Mary Ann Spicer and AFSCME/Iowa Public Employees (Marcia Nichols). Lt. Governor Patty Judge was a special guest.

Thanks to all who came, especially our sponsors!

-- Legislation Continued from Page 1

3. Increase funding to ICSW for issues of violence against women.
 - SF 2400 PASSED BOTH CHAMBERS WITH AMENDMENTS. (Includes an additional 14,000 for ICSW over FY2008 budget level.)
4. Increase funding for women’s health issues.
 - HF 2145 SIGNED BY GOVERNOR. Requires insurers to cover HPV vaccinations.
 - SF 2177 SIGNED BY GOVERNOR. Provides for health-related activities and regulation by Dept. of Public Health, including treatment and prevention of STDs available to minors.
 - HF 2292 FAILED TO PROGRESS PASSED FIRST FUNNEL WEEK. Provided for time/space for employees to breast-feed.
 - SF 2377 PASSED SENATE. Allows victims of stalking, domestic violence to qualify for unemployment should they have to leave their jobs.

GENDER EQUITY AND EQUAL JUSTICE FOR WOMEN

1. Extend gender balance requirements on boards and commissions to political subdivisions of the State of Iowa
 - NO BILL INTRODUCED.
2. Extend deadline for filing civil rights complaints.
 - SF 2292 WAS SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR. This extends filing deadline from 180 days to 300 days.
6. Establish gender-specific continuum of care for females in the juvenile justice system, starting with restricting ALL placements at Iowa Juvenile homes for females only.
 - SSB 3254 DID NOT PROGRESS PAST FIRST FUNNEL WEEK. Would have restricted all Iowa Juvenile Home placements to females.

Calendar of Events

May

Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month

- 2 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.
- 2 Iowa Preventing Abuse Conference. 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Marriott Hotel, Cedar Rapids. Fee varies. To learn more, visit www.preventingabuse.org or call 866/454-1776.
- 3 First Lady Mari Culver's Shelter Volunteer Day. To learn more, go to www.governor.iowa.gov/administration/bios/shelter_cleaning.php.
- 3 Walk Me Home...to the Place I Belong. Grays Lake, Des Moines. \$30 National Foster Parent Association, www.walkmehome.org/site/TR?fr_id=1042&pg=entry.
- 7 **Iowa Dropout Prevention Leadership Summit: Destination Graduation. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Polk County Convention Complex, Des Moines. Free. Go to www.regonline.com/iowadropoutsummit to learn more.**
- 9 ICSW Policy Lunch and Learn. 12 noon - 1 p.m., Legislative Dining Room, State Capitol, Des Moines. Free and open to the public. ICSW, 800/558-4427, 515/281-4461 or women@iowa.gov.
- 9 3rd Annual Mother's Day Soiree. 5-8 p.m. 432 East Locust Street, Des Moines. \$25. Chrysalis Foundation, 515/255-1853 or info@chrysalisfdn.org.
- 11 - 17 National Women's Health Week
- 13 Iowa Commission on the Status of Women Meeting. 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Ola Babcock Miller Building, Des Moines. Free and open to the public. Call or write for special accommodations, 800/558-4427, 515/281-4461 or women@iowa.gov.

- 13 HerStory Celebration: Chrysalis After-School Program. 4-6 p.m. Drake University, Des Moines. Free. Chrysalis Foundation, 515/255-1853 or info@chrysalisfdn.org.
- 15 Aging to Perfection. 4:30 - 8 p.m. Iowa Methodist Medical Center, Des Moines. Free and open to the public. For more information go to www.iowahealth.org/livewell.
- 15 Fathers Matter Too: A Father's Place in Strengthening Families. 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Drake University, Des Moines. For registration materials, visit www.dhs.state.ia.us/consumers/child_support/fatherhood/home.html. To obtain a registration form or for questions, e-mail fathersmatter2@q.com or contact Morgan Streeter at **515/558-9762**.
- 22-23 Whispers & Screams are hard the hear: creating an audience for girls' voices. Chapter 12: Sisterhood. The Hotel at Gateway Center, Ames. Fee varies. Registration materials available at www.women.iowa.gov or by contacting Kathy Nesteby, ICSW, 515/281-6915, 800/558-4427, or kathy.nesteby@iowa.gov.
- 22 **White House Project Meeting. 4 - 7:30 p.m., Des Moines. Details to be announced soon.** Free and open to the public. ICSW, 800/558-4427, 515/281-4461 or women@iowa.gov.

June

- 3-4 Unity and Diversity: The Challenge for Change. 10th HIV/AIDS Conference **Holiday Inn Conference Center, Des Moines.** Fee varies. For more information, go to www.trainingresources.org/displayconvention.cfm?conventionnbr=5107.
- 6 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.

Iowa Women Running

On June 3rd, primary elections will narrow down the candidates who will run for election on November 4th. The ICSW recognizes that when women come to the table, women's issues get discussed. Furthermore, women's issues are everyone's issues, especially families'.

Iowa is one of two states (with Mississippi) to have never sent a woman to Congress or had a female governor. Iowa has had four lieutenant governors, three secretaries of state, one attorney general, and one secretary of agriculture who were female. No female has even ever run for election as Iowa's auditor.

Women were only 23 percent of legislators serving this Iowa General Assembly. Six women are Senators and twenty-eight serve as Representatives.

Fifty-six candidates who filed by the deadline for listing in the primary elections include:

U.S. Congress: 2 women (1 Republican and 1 Democrat)

Iowa Senate: 9 women (5 Democrats and 4 Republicans)

Iowa House of Representatives: 45 women (29 Democrats and 16 Republicans)

Bits and Pieces

The ICSW extends a thank you to intern **Allison Amphlett**, who worked during the spring. Amphlett is a senior at Grinnell College and worked primarily on advocacy issues.

The ICSW welcomes new commissioners: Chad Leonard, Judy Stafford, Phyllis Peters, J. Marc Ward, and Rizwana (Nina) Amjed. The July/August newsletter will provide more information on the new commissioners as well as the newly elected chair.

Save the date! The **Iowa Women's Hall of Fame Ceremony** will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, August 23 at the State Historical Building in Des Moines. The Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women Fundraising Luncheon will be held following the ceremony at Embassy Suites featuring

former ambassador Mary Kramer.

Do you have a clever title for the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women's newsletter? If so, please e-mail your suggestions to women@iowa.gov.

Beginning with the October 2008 edition, the newsletter will primarily be sent electronically. To ensure you continue to receive the newsletter and other updates from the ICSW, please give us your e-mail address: women@iowa.gov. You may opt to still receive it by mail by calling the office: 515/281-4461 or 800/558-4427.

Mother's Day is May 11. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates there are 82.8 million mothers in the United States. There are 10.4 million single mothers living with children under 18. Over 6 million mothers are entitled to child

support. Eighty-three percent of mothers went back to work within a year of their child's birth and returned to the same employer. Seven in 10 of these women returned to jobs at the same pay, skill level and hours worked per week. Non-mothers earn 10% less than their male counterparts; mothers earn 27% less; and single mothers earn between 34% and 44% less.

The number of women in United States Congress reached a new record with the April 8 election of Jackie Speier, a Democrat from Hillsborough, CA. Eighty-seven women now serve in Congress: 16 in the Senate and 71 in the House, according to the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. Of these, 20—or 23 percent—are women of color.

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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Matt Wissing, Executive Vice President • Rachel Scott, ICSW Division Administrator • Lori M. SchraderBachar, Editor

Friends of ICSW
Iowa commission on the status of women

Vol. XXXVIII, No. 3 May/June 2008

Iowa Woman