



# IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

January 2017

## News from the Office on the Status of Women

### Coffee with a Commissioner

Join us every month for an interview with one of the commissioners of the [Iowa Commission on the Status of Women](#) (ICSW) to learn more about how and why they got involved in women's advocacy. Each month we will focus on a different commissioner.



This month, I had the pleasure of interviewing [Sean Bagniewski](#), commissioner and member of the ICSW's Public Policy committee to talk about himself, his work, and the "why" behind the work that he does with the Commission.

### *Sean Bagniewski*

#### Commissioner, Iowa Commission on the Status of Women



#### **How long have you served on the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women?**

This is my first year serving on the Commission and I'm enjoying it thoroughly.

#### **What was one of the things that called you to serve on this specific Commission?**

I was raised by a bunch of strong women. I come from pretty humble circumstances and my mother and grandmothers raised me. I know the issues they faced with family leave and with equal pay. My mother currently serves as the deputy director for the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence and she's responsible for my love of public service. I feel very responsible to help make things better because of all of them.

**What is one accomplishment you've been proud of since your start on the Commission (or one thing you've been proud to be a part of in your work outside of the Commission)?**

I'm proud that the Commission is refocusing on a legislative package for the next session of the General Assembly. I look forward to talking with legislators about the good work of the Commission and what we think can be priorities for the coming year.

**What is an issue that affects women and girls that you are passionate about?**

Equal pay for equal work is important to me. Well over a majority of Americans are concerned that women make 70 cents on the dollar for the same job as a man. For young women, I'm passionate about getting more of them interested in science, technology, engineering, and math. We have several decades of bias to get over, but I've been amazed that women are already filling up more community college and college classes. That's a good thing for all of us.

**What do you do in your spare time (if you have any)?**

I'm the father of an amazing baby, Teddy. I serve as the president of the Beaverdale Neighborhood Association and Des Moines Neighbors. I'm also active in local politics and serve on the board for Planned Parenthood of the Heartland.

*To connect with commissioner Sean Bagniewski, find him on [LinkedIn](#).*

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## Did you know...

### The History of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women

In the 1960s, a recommendation was made by the U.S. Commission on the Status of Women, established by President Kennedy, that Governors set up Commissions on the Status of Women in their states. In 1972 the Iowa General Assembly voted to create the [Iowa Commission on the Status of Women \(ICSW\)](#), making it statutory.



In 1986, a state government reorganization placed the ICSW as a division within the newly-created umbrella agency, the [Iowa Department of Human Rights \(DHR\)](#).

Until 1987, there were 24 members of the ICSW. In 1987, legislation passed to require nine public members (appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate), four non-voting ex officio legislative members, and the director of the DHR, ex officio.

In 2009, legislation passed to restructure the ICSW to require seven public members and the director of the DHR, ex officio, which is the structure that exists today. Around that time, the [Office on the Status of Women \(Office\)](#) was created to house the staff to support the work of the ICSW.

Both the Office and the ICSW were placed within the [Division of Community Advocacy and Services](#) in the Iowa Department of Human Rights, which also houses six other Commissions/Offices (all are structured similarly to the ICSW and the Office on the Status of Women):

- [Office/Commission of Native American Affairs](#)
- [Office/Commission on the Status of African Americans](#)

- [Office/Commission of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs](#)
  - [Office/Commission of Latino Affairs](#)
  - [Office/Commission of Deaf Services](#)
  - [Office/Commission for Persons with Disabilities](#)
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## Calling all young women in grades 7-12: Don't forget to sign up for Capitol Girls!



In partnership with the [Girl Scouts](#), the Iowa Department of Human Rights' [Office on the Status of Women](#) hosts an annual event for girls in grades 7-12 throughout Iowa called [Capitol Girls](#). On February 9, 2017, girls from across Iowa will convene in Des Moines at the Iowa State Capitol to learn about the workings of the Iowa General Assembly and will have an opportunity to meet with the Lt. Governor, female legislators, and other key government

leaders to learn about how state laws and budgets are developed and passed.

It's not too late to register! Visit the [Girl Scouts website](#) to register (go to the month of February 2017 and click on "Capitol Girls", then fill in your information) or email us at [women@iowa.gov](mailto:women@iowa.gov) with questions.

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## Are you a student/teacher in grades 5-12? Announcing the 2017 Women's History Month Video Contest

**Students and Teachers/Organizations:  
Compete for a chance to win prizes!**

To celebrate Women's History Month in March, the Iowa Department of Human Rights' Office on the Status of Women (with financial support from the [Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women](#)) is hosting its 2nd annual [Women's History Month video contest](#) to celebrate women's history. Entries are open to students in grades 5-12 and schools/organizations that work with students in grades 5-12.



**Video Submission Deadline:** Wednesday, March 1st, 2017

**Materials:**

1. Click [here](#) for a printable set of 2017 guidelines.
2. [2017 application form](#)
3. [A signed release form for every person appearing in the video \(students/adults\)](#)
4. [A signed copyright transfer agreement \(completed by teacher/school admin/adult\)](#)

**Questions?**

Contact Kristen Corey at [women@iowa.gov](mailto:women@iowa.gov) or 515-281-4470/800-558-4427 or visit the Iowa Department of Human Rights' Office on the Status of Women's website at: <https://humanrights.iowa.gov/cas/icsw>.

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## In the News: Women and girls in Iowa, the nation & the world

### Leadership, Accomplishments & Civic Engagement

- KCCI: [Reynolds poised to make history as Iowa's first female governor](#)
- Radio Iowa: [Governor-in waiting Reynolds says her lieutenant governor will be partner in governing](#)
- CNN: [The women who won: down-ballot candidates make history](#)
- Business Record: [GOP sweep affects number of females elected in Iowa](#)
- The Washington Post: [Michelle Obama - a First Lady who charted her own course](#)
- CNN: [U.S. Olympian Lolo Jones: 'I am a tough chick'](#)

### Family Supports at Home and in the Workplace

- Iowa AEYC: [2016 Working in Early Care and Education in Iowa](#) (report on the early childhood workforce in Iowa)
- Center for American Progress: [Breadwinning mothers are increasingly the U.S. norm](#)
- U.S. Department of Labor: [How working parents spend their time](#)
- Center for American Progress: [In the absence of U.S. action on paid leave, multinationals make their own policies](#)
- U.S. Department of Labor: [A delicate balance - work and caregiving](#)

### Health

- Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH): [IDPH releases 2015 summary for Iowa Barriers to Prenatal Care Project](#)
- CNN: [Women's cancer deaths expected to rise 60 percent by 2030](#)
- CNN: [Socially isolated breast cancer patients fare worse, study says](#)
- CNN: [Fallopian tubes may have big role in ovarian cancer fight](#)

### Military, STEM and Innovation

- BBC: [The women scientists who took India into space](#)
- NBC News: [White House announces support for requiring women to register for draft](#)
- BBC: [The Vietnamese women who fought for their country](#)

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## Upcoming Events/Seminars

- January 12: Next [Iowa Commission on the Status of Women](#) meeting, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., location: Wallace State Office Building, 2nd floor conference room, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines
  - January 17: [Registration opens for Ready to Run in Iowa](#)
  - January 18: [EPIC Corporate Challenge Annual Luncheon](#) in Des Moines
  - February 9: [Capitol Girls](#) in Des Moines
  - February 16: [Iowa Women Lead Change Annual Siouxiand Conference](#) in Sioux City
  - March 1: Women's History Month begins
  - March 1: [Women's History Month video contest \(entries due\)](#)
  - April 1: [Iowa Women's Hall of Fame nominations due](#)
  - April 26: [Iowa Women Lead Change Annual Eastern Iowa Conference](#) in Cedar Rapids
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