

Summer 2009 Newsletter

DEPARTMENT ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN SUMMER 2009 NEWSLETTER

In this issue:

[Commission Hearing on Women during the Economic Crisis](#)
[Highlight: Commission Welcomes Julie Soo](#)
[National Recognition for Domestic Violence Institute](#)
[Sharing Our Work with the United Nations](#)
[Community Forum Shines a Light on Human Trafficking](#)
[24-Hour Count of Domestic Violence Survivors](#)
[New Resources on Our Website](#)
[Commission Information](#)

Commission Hearing on Women during the Economic Crisis

In response to a groundswell of community interest, the Commission on the Status of Women held a hearing entitled “**The Current Economic Crisis: Impact and recommendations for San Francisco 's Women and Girls**” on March 25, 2009. Over 75 women from the community participated in the hearing, including representatives from the Office of Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi, the California Commission on the Status of Women, the Women's Foundation of California, the San Francisco Business Times, and community-based agencies in the fields of workforce development, economic security, and anti-violence against women. Several key themes arose from the testimony:

- Families headed by single women are most vulnerable to economic hardship.
- Women represent a disproportionate number of low-wage workers, earn \$.78 on the dollar compared to men, and are more likely to use the public services that are being cut. Yet women also hold the key to economic recovery.
- Investing in low-income women can support families and jumpstart the economy.

A full [transcript](#) of the hearing, including [related recommendations](#), is on our website, as are [resources](#) and information related to the Federal Stimulus Package. The Commission plans to work closely with the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to ensure that the women of San Francisco benefit from the fiscal stimulus plan dollars the City is aggressively pursuing.

Highlight:

Commission Welcomes Julie Soo!

In April, the Mayor appointed a new Commissioner to serve a 4-year term on the Commission on the Status of Women. The Commission and Department are so pleased to welcome Julie Soo, a 4th-generation San Franciscan with a long history of service to her community. Commissioner Soo is a lawyer with experience in the private sector, as well as federal, state, and local branches of government. She is a former actuarial specialist, and very active in democratic clubs around the City. Commissioner Soo will bring a unique perspective to the work of the Commission, and we are thrilled she has joined the team. Former Commissioner Nicky Calma stepped down from the Commission after the March meeting to pursue other goals, and the Commission and Department wish her well in her endeavors.

National Recognition for Domestic Violence Institute

In June 2009, the National Association of Counties (NACo) announced the recipients of its 2009 Achievement Awards, a list that included San Francisco for the Department's [Domestic Violence Response Cross-Training Institute](#). In an innovative approach to improving the criminal justice

system's response to domestic violence, the Institute trained over 430 criminal justice personnel in 2007 and 2008 in a unique cross-training model that brought staff members from 5 criminal justice agencies together in one room to be trained about domestic violence and the system's response to the crime. The Department thanks all the participants and trainers that made this groundbreaking training possible. Learn more about the Department's ongoing strategies to reform the criminal justice response to domestic violence through the work of the [Justice and Courage Project](#) on our website.

Sharing our Work with the United Nations

From February 27-March 6, Policy Analyst Anu Menon represented the Department at 2 United Nations events in New York City. Ms. Menon participated in a UN Commission on the Status of Women panel entitled "Women in Leadership, Women Leaders," sharing information about how San Francisco's [CEDAW](#) ordinance came into being because of the advocacy of women leaders. This ordinance has led to a greater gender lens on local government policies. Ms. Menon also spoke at a United Nations' event sponsored by UNIFEM and the UN Global Compact to commemorate International Women's Day 2009 entitled "Advancing Women in the Global Marketplace." The progress San Francisco has made in implementing the UN CEDAW Treaty on a local scale continues to inspire national and international audiences. **San Francisco and the Department on the Status of Women remain at the forefront of this work.**

Community Forum Shines a Light on Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is an egregious violation of human rights. To help fight the crime and ensure that victims receive the supportive services they need, the Department partnered with the Human Rights Commission and the Jewish Coalition to End Human Trafficking to host a convening of service providers addressing this issue. On February 21, 2009, the Department co-hosted **the first San Francisco Community Forum on Anti-Trafficking**. Over 100 attendees participated in the community forum, receiving and sharing information about the City's preventive and protective measures for victims of human trafficking, the current needs of victims that remain unaddressed, and issues surrounding prosecution of traffickers. Representatives from Congresswomen Jackie Speier's Office and Assemblymember Fiona Ma's Office spoke, as did former Assemblymember Sally Leiber. San Francisco Board of Supervisors President David Chiu addressed the audience, and David Bastone, Executive Director of Not For Sale, provided the keynote address.

24-Hour Count of Domestic Violence Survivors Illustrates Ongoing Need

On Thursday, March 12, 2009, the Department on the Status of Women conducted a Census of Domestic Violence Services in San Francisco in order to ascertain community-specific help-seeking patterns, and the level of unmet need. The Department thanks the 15 agencies that participated in the 2009 Census. Highlights include:

- 601 individuals received services on March 12.
- Domestic violence hotlines answered a call every 4.5 minutes.
- During the one-day count, 199 individuals seeking services were unable to receive what they needed, with over 73% in need of emergency shelter or transitional housing.

To read more about the [Census](#) (Word) and its results, visit the Department's website.

New Resources Available On Our Website

[Report on the Status of Women in San Francisco, 2009](#): Want to know how women in San Francisco are faring? This latest report gives some benchmarks to show where women stand in 2009.

[Service Directory for Girls](#): This colorful directory is the go-to resource for girls in San Francisco, with everything from after-school programs to health and legal services. Take a peek!

Commission Meetings

The San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women meets monthly at City Hall, Room 408, 5 pm - 7 pm. All meetings are open to the public and comments are welcome. Visit [www.cosw](http://www.cosw.org) or call (415) 252-2570 (415) 252-2570 to confirm meetings times and locations.

Wednesday, July 29, 2009

Wednesday, August 26, 2009

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Friday, October 30, 2009 (full-day retreat, off-site location)

Commissioners

President Andrea Shorter

Vice President Kay Gulbengay

Commissioner Dorka Keehn

Commissioner Carolene Marks

Commissioner Katherine Munter

Commissioner Barbara Sklar

Commissioner Julie Soo

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