

Newsletter Fall 2009

Department on the Status of Women

Fall 2009 Newsletter

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Department Shares Expertise with White House

Are Commissions Equitable? Department Report Analyzes Commission Appointments

In September, the Department released the Gender Analysis of San Francisco Commissions and Boards, 2009. The Department first analyzed the gender make-up of commissions, boards, and task forces in 2007, leading to the voter-approved charter amendment requiring an analysis of City appointed bodies every 2 years. Of the 416 seats available among both commissions and boards, the Department found:

- 53% male and 47% female appointees
- 1% (4) transgendered appointees
- 45% minority appointees
- 4% (17) appointees with an identified disability

Recommendations in the report include the need for greater transparency and demographic data collection among appointed bodies. [Take a look at the full gender analysis](#) on our website.

Access Gender Equality - Right Online!

Thanks to a generous grant from Symantec, companies will soon be able to measure their progress in creating gender equality right online. The San Francisco Gender Equality Principles (GEP) Initiative is making significant progress in determining best practices and benchmarks for the private sector to use to create gender equitable businesses. When these indicators are complete, the new website will allow companies to log on, conduct a self-assessment, track their progress, and access resources and tips for improvement, providing hundreds of resources including articles, policies, practices, websites, and tools on gender equality issues. These resources will be an invaluable collection of materials covering many hot button women's issues, such as discrimination, equal pay, work life, career development, recruitment for non-traditional fields, workplace violence, health and safety for women in the workplace, living wage, harassment, management and governance, civic engagement, and many more.

The new web-based phase of the initiative is set to go live in early 2010. Learn more about the [GEP Initiative](#) and find out how your company can get involved by visiting our website, and bookmark www.genderequality.com for the 2010 launch.

New Partnership for Workplace Equality - Northeastern School of Law

The Department has been selected in a competitive process to participate in the Northeastern University School of Law Legal Skills in Social Context Social Justice Program. A team of 10 - 15

law students based in Boston will work on legal research and field investigation as part of our Gender Equality Principles Initiative in the upcoming academic year. Providing employers with legal justification for workplace equality practices will help remove barriers to women's advancement in all areas of employment. We look forward to sharing the results of this exciting project next summer.

Highlight: CEDAW in the News

The Department's work implementing the Women's Human Rights Ordinance (based on the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) set a national and international precedent. San Francisco remains the only city to have a local CEDAW ordinance, and the Department continually provides technical Assistance and information to cities, counties, and countries around the world based on our expertise in this field. This work has been recognized in 2 recent publications:

- Recommendations for Advancing Opportunity and Equality through an International Human Rights Framework by Columbian Law School, Human Rights Institute International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies, includes a case study about San Francisco. <http://cts.vresp.com/c/?DepartmentontheStatu/600f9acadf/TEST/d2a3c66991>
- American City and County featured the Department's work training and supporting Fulton County (Atlanta), Georgia in conducting gender analysis and gender budgeting at the county level: Locals adopt U.N. gender equality rules, <http://cts.vresp.com/c/?DepartmentontheStatu/600f9acadf/TEST/3d47a6bf97>

An International Focus: Director Presents to United Nations on Gender-Based Violence

Did you know that gender equality is one of the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations? [Check it out](#). This goal is among the eight overall goals that include ending hunger, providing universal education, ensuring child and maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, promoting sustainability, and advancing global partnership. Based on the notion that we are the first generation where ending poverty in the world is even a possibility, 189 leaders of UN member states made a pledge in 2000 to fulfill the Millennium Development Goals designed to achieve this ambitious goal.

Since 2006, the UN Institute for Training and Research, through CIFAL Atlanta (International Training Center for Government Authorities and Civil Society Leaders), has convened a select group of senior government officials from cities throughout the world to share best practices in promoting gender equality. The Department has been a participant and presenter for the past 3 years.

At this year's conference in October, Dr. Emily Murase, Executive Director, presented on gender-based violence, an all too pervasive problem throughout the hemisphere. In the audience were delegations from Belize, Canada, Ecuador, Jamaica, and, for the first time, South Africa.

Dr. Murase states, "Conference participants were amazed at our work in gender-based violence. Many wanted to know more about the Domestic Violence Victim Safety and Accountability Audit that we completed a few years ago which created a clear road map for policy reforms. I was very proud to report on the strong collaboration between criminal justice agencies and community-based organizations that formed the basis for the audit process." The Department continues to garner national and international attention for our groundbreaking human rights work.

Safe in our Homes? Report on Family Violence Shows Scope of the Issue

In June, the Family Violence Council released the First Comprehensive Report on Family Violence in San Francisco, 2009. The alarming statistics give an indication of how wide-ranging the problem of domestic violence, child abuse, and elder/dependent adult abuse really is in San Francisco.

- There were over 25,000 calls to domestic violence shelters in FY07-08, and over 11,000 calls to the TALK Line, a parenting support line. There is no dedicated line for victims of elder abuse.

- 911 received over 6,000 domestic violence calls in FY07-08. Child Protective Services received over 5,000 calls, and Adult Protective Services received over 6,000 calls.

The Family Violence Council will be working in the coming year to address some of the issues identified in the report, and to better track, and end, the violence that is happening in our homes. To get a full view of the scope of family violence in San Francisco, visit the Department's website and [download the complete report](#).

The Digital Camera: A New Tool for Justice in Family Violence Cases

A photo is worth a thousand words, and an accurate digital photo of a victim's injuries can support that victim in finding justice in court. Since the discontinuation of Polaroid film, practitioners responding to cases of family violence are moving to the use of digital cameras to document the injuries received by children, domestic violence survivors, and elders or dependent adults. But the digital medium brings its own challenges, such as the need for a clear protocol for storing and transferring the files.

The Family Violence Council, staffed by the Department, has partnered with the California Clinical Forensic Medical Training Center based at UC Davis to train medical, social work, and law enforcement staff responsible for documenting the injuries of family violence victims. The training provides useful, hands-on instruction to ensure that photos are accurate, high-quality, and usable in court. The Department hopes to train 70 participants this November, and will offer additional trainings if necessary. We are very excited for the partnership, and for the opportunity to bring this valuable training to San Francisco.

If you or your organization regularly documents family violence injuries, visit the Department's website for [more information and for a registration form](#).

Cell Phone Drive Highlights Domestic Violence Awareness Month

The Department is coordinating the 2nd Annual Recycle a Cell Phone and Help a Woman in Need cell phone drive for City Departments and City employees during the month of October to highlight Domestic Violence Awareness Month. When cell phones and accessories are in good working order, they may be refurbished and donated back to local non-profits and distributed to women escaping domestic violence. Other cell phones are sent to a recycling facility where reusable materials (e.g., nickel, iron, cadmium, lead and cobalt from the batteries) are reclaimed. All unusable phones are disposed of in accordance with local and national environmental standards. Donations are not tax-deductible, but serve a dual purpose of decreasing toxic waste in the environment and helping those in need. Last year the Department collected almost 700 cell phone for recycling and this year we hope to collect even more. The Department collects cell phones year round at our office: 25 Van Ness Ave. (at Market), Suite 130, San Francisco, CA 94102.

New Resources Available Online

The Department is happy to provide a number of resources for the public on our website, www.dosw.

Our newest resource is the [Directory of Services for Survivors of Human Trafficking, 2009](#), a guide developed in partnership with the Human Rights Commission and the Jewish Coalition to End Human Trafficking.

New from our Partners

In August, Mujeres Unidas y Activas (MUA) released a new bilingual report, *Echoes from the Silence: Raising Our Voices*, that shares the results from a 2008 study conducted by MUA members to understand the experiences of Latina immigrant survivors of domestic violence in the Bay Area, explore the types of domestic violence services currently offered, and evaluate the barriers that impede Latina survivors from accessing these services. The report also offers recommendations on how to improve services for Latina immigrant survivors of family violence. The report can be accessed at

<http://cts.vresp.com/c/?DepartmentontheStatu/600f9acadf/TEST/7f2466a1b9>. For a hard copy or to schedule a presentation by MUA members and staff of the report's findings, please call 415-621-8140 415-621-8140 .

Commission Meetings

Visit the [Commission's website](#) for meeting agendas, minutes, and announcements. Meetings are held at City Hall Room 408 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm unless otherwise noted.

- October 28, 2009
- November 20, 2009, 9:00 am (Strategic Planning Retreat, location TBD)
- December 16, 2009
- January 27, 2010

Community Events

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and many community partners are hosting events to raise awareness of the issue. For a partial listing of events, visit the Department's website.

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