



Women's Voice

Illinois State University

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From the Director

Sandra D. Harmon, Acting Director

Report on Enhancing Women's Capabilities in Central Illinois Conference

During this academic year, Director of Women's Studies Dr. Valentine Moghadam will be on sabbatical leave as a Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C., where she will be completing research and writing as well as participating in programs and discussions at the Center. (Please see accompanying article.) During her absence, I will serve as Acting Director of the Women's Studies Program.

I want to use this space this month to report on the conference Enhancing Women's Capabilities in Central Illinois that took place at the beginning of June. The conference was part of the Women's Capabilities Initiative (WCI), an academic, training, and community outreach program that addresses the situation, needs, and prospects of low-income women in Central Illinois with a focus on low-income minority women. The WCI is a joint venture of the School of Social Work and the Women's Studies Program.

Eighty people attended all or part of the conference. The majority were health care or social service providers primarily from McLean County. The others were Illinois State University faculty, staff, students, low-income women associated with some of the social service programs, and community activists. We recruited childcare workers from Womyn's Coalition.

The concept of women's capabilities comes from the work of University of Chicago philosopher Martha Nussbaum who gave the keynote address at the conference. The capabilities approach asks what people are actually able to do and to be. It is based on the idea that there are certain basic prerequisites for a truly human life and for maintaining human dignity. The approach treats each person as an individual in her/his own right and as someone who has value. This is especially important for women who often are seen, not as individuals, but as members of a family or some other social unit and,

therefore, not accorded the same individual rights. It is the role of government and social services to provide the material and institutional requisites to allow people to achieve the basic capabilities such as life, bodily health and integrity, education, freedom of expression and affiliation, non-discrimination, play, participation in political and civic life, employment and property rights.

The morning conference session was devoted to two panels. Panel 1: Involving Government, the Private Sector and the Voluntary Sector in Enhancing Women's Capabilities, included Connie Griffin, Program Manager, City of Bloomington Community Development Division; Beth Johnson, Manager of Employee Relations, State Farm Insurance Companies; Becky Hines, Executive Director, YWCA of McLean County; Sister Marcelline Koch, Project IRENE; and Karen Zangerle, Associate Executive Director, PATH. Members of Panel 2: Best Practices were Jan Weber, Maternal Child Health Services Supervisor, Marilyn Cunningham, Nurse Case Manager and Joyce Adelekan, Teen Parent Services Case Manager, all from the McLean County Department of Health; Juliana Harms, Public Service Administrator, Department of Children and Family Services; Msgr. Stuart Swetland, S.T.D., Director of Social Justice, Catholic Diocese of Peoria; Jeri Andrew, Coordinator, McLean County Chamber of Commerce-Job Partners Collaborative; and Cristina Deutsch, Hispanic Outreach Director, Western Avenue Community Center.

In the afternoon, five break-out groups discussed the challenges and made recommendations related to each group's topic: Women's Wellness; Work, Wages and Dignity; Opportunities for Girls from Low-Income Households; Welfare to Work; and Rural Women. Common themes that emerged from the discussions included the following needs: more collaboration between and among agencies; better access to services; more client involvement in setting goals and plans of action; wraparound personal support systems; child care; affordable housing; transportation; education and training; health care and insurance; and changes in community attitudes. While these are neither new nor surprising findings, participants did recommend a variety of solutions from the short-term to the long-term, but with an emphasis on the need for longer-term assistance to help people stabilize their lives.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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We were able to provide each participant a resource directory of services in McLean County relating to women's capabilities. The directory was prepared by PATH and published by the Women's Capabilities Initiative. In addition, each participant has received a conference report. Both publications are available at Women's Studies, Campus Box 4260.

Dr. Moghadam and I would like to thank the other members of the planning committee who worked very hard through the spring semester to bring the conference into being. They are Jeri Andrew, McLean County Chamber of Commerce-Job Partners Collaborative; Lucinda Beier, College of Arts and Sciences Research Office and Applied Social Research Unit; Mary Campbell, School of Social Work; Ann Haugo, Women's Studies Program; Becky Hines, YWCA of McLean County; Katherine Jones, School of Social Work; and Rozel White, Women's Studies Program.



Dr. Moghadam at the Enhancing Women's Capabilities in Central Illinois conference held in early June.

Moghadam Chosen as Woodrow Wilson Fellow

Valentine M. Moghadam, Director of the Women's Studies Program, has been selected as a Fellow of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C. The Center awards fellowships annually to individuals "whose proposals intersect with questions of public policy or provide the historical framework to illuminate policy issues of contemporary importance." Chosen through international competition, the scholars have the opportunity to work with policymakers in Washington and with Wilson Center staff.

Dr. Moghadam is one of twenty Fellows—thirteen men and seven women—chosen for the academic year 2001-2002. They come from the United States and Canada, India, Japan, Mongolia, Pakistan and Tunisia and represent a variety of academic disciplines and professions. She will be completing research and writing a book manuscript on Globalization, Transnational Feminist Networks, and Public Policy. The book examines the origins and activities of six women's organizations that bring together women from three or more countries around a common agenda—the promotion of women's human rights or a feminist critique of economic policy. How transnational feminist networks engage with each other, with international organizations and intergovernmental bodies, and with public policy, is a major focus of the research. The book also seeks to theorize the relationship between the multifaceted process of globalization and the global mobilization of women.

The United States Congress created the Woodrow Wilson Center in 1968 as a living memorial to President Woodrow Wilson. It serves as "Washington's nonpartisan meeting ground between the world of ideas and the world of public affairs. The Center is an institute for advanced study where vital current issues and their deep historical background are explored through research and dialogue." Information about the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and the Woodrow Wilson Fellows can be found at <http://wwics.si.edu/START.HTM>.

Guest Speaker for Women's Studies

The Women's Studies Program will host a campus visit by Anne Grethe Jantzen, Head of the Career Counseling Service and Equal Opportunity Officer within the European Parliament in Luxembourg. Jantzen will meet with faculty, staff and students, talk to classes, present a Women's Studies lecture and a program for Global Review during her visit from September 4 to 7. She will also visit Illinois Wesleyan University and Heartland Community College during her stay.

Jantzen began her career as a European civil servant in 1978 as a translator in the European Commission. She transferred to the European Parliament in 1979, where she held a variety of posts before she was appointed to her current position in January 1999.

She is the author of a range of internal reports, in particular on the subject of equal opportunities and human resources management in public institutions. Within this framework she takes special interest in the impact of cultural differences, including gender aspects, on working styles and working environments. In addition, she was staff representative and president of the local European civil service union, Union Syndical.

Her Women's Studies public lecture will deal the idea of "gender literacy in the work place," a concept she is developing in her work with the senior managers of the 3,500 staff members of the European Parliament. The lecture, which is free and open to the public, will be Wednesday, September 5, at 3:30 p.m. in the Founder's Suite, Bone Student Center.

Her Global Review presentation will focus on the trafficking of women, particularly in Eastern European countries, and the resolutions adopted by the European Parliament to deal with the issue. Her presentation will be Thursday, September 6, at 7:00 p.m., in the basement of Atkin-Colby Residence Halls.

The Women's Studies Program invites you to meet Anne Grethe Jantzen, Head of Career Counseling Service and Equal Opportunity Officer within the European Parliament in Luxembourg at the following events:

Tuesday, September 4
3:00-4:30 p.m., Rachel Cooper 234
Reception at Women's Studies

Wednesday, September 5
3:30-4:30 p.m., Founder's Suite, BSC
Public Talk on Gender Literacy in the Workplace

Thursday, September 6
7:00 p.m., Atkin-Colby Basement
**Global Review
Talk on Trafficking of Women in Eastern Europe**

REPORT

Governor's Commission on the Status of Women Report

By Rozel White, Women's Studies Secretary

The Governor's Commission on the Status of Women in Illinois was first established in 1997 for the purpose of examining the economic, societal and legal barriers to equity for women in Illinois, and was reestablished in 1999 to investigate and recommend measures to remove barriers to equity for the women of Illinois. The Commission studies existing laws and constitutional parameters; pay equity; mentoring and apprenticeship; affordable, high quality day care and elder care; child support; and retirement and other economic security issues. It examines and promotes utilization of public-private partnerships to raise awareness and develop collaborative solutions. It makes recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly for statutory and programmatic changes necessary to eliminate barriers to equity for women, and implements recommendations by working with the Governor's agencies, the General Assembly, the business community and other organizations.

The Commission is organized into eight working groups addressing key issues identified for each group and is chaired by one or two Commissioners, serving as members of the working group, all aided by relevant agency liaisons. The working groups meet monthly at multiple sites throughout Illinois. The working groups are: Balancing Work and Family, Education and Training, Employment and Pay Equity, Girls' Opportunities, Violence Reduction, Welfare to Work, Women in Business and Entrepreneurship, and Women's Health Issues. I am a member of the Education and Training Working Group and I regularly receive legislative updates. This report will describe the meetings that I attended in March and in June, and some legislative action.

The Education and Training Working Group

This Working Group recognizes that quality education and training are paramount to the success of women in the workplace, and must be assured that women have awareness of and access to educational and training support programs. The more education and training a woman has, the greater her ability to maintain economic self-sufficiency and uphold her familial responsibilities. The goal of the Working Group is to identify, review and recommend how the current and potential education and training systems can ensure the preparation of adult women for economic self-sufficiency and maximum self-development. The priorities involve access of post secondary education for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients, Illinois FIRST employment and educational opportunities for women, and learning how opportunities in education and technology are meeting the needs of women. The chair of the Working Group is Commissioner Anne Ladky, Executive Director of Women Employed, in Chicago, Illinois. Commissioner Ladky has stated: "The lack of child care, transportation, job training and education are the major obstacles for low-income women struggling to enter and stay in the workforce."

On March 14, 2001, I attended my first teleconference meeting of the Education and Training Working Group of the Governor's Commission at the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) V-Tel Room in Springfield, Illinois, with on-line connections with groups from Chicago, Black Hawk College in East Moline, and Shawnee Library in Carterville. One of the agenda items for discussion was the past and upcoming Commission's Community Days scheduled around the state. These were intended to facilitate interaction with the members of the communities and bring awareness of what the Commission and the individual working groups are about, garner information and ideas as how to best serve the women of Illinois, and distribute information on the programs and services available to them.

One of the items of discussion was the Monetary Award Program (MAP), administered by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) and funded

through the Illinois Board of Higher Education. MAP provides up to \$4,740 in tuition to low-income undergraduates who are Illinois residents and who attend Illinois colleges at least half-time. At the time of this meeting, students who attended college less than half time were not eligible for MAP, except for those in a pilot program which is currently funded at \$1.0 million dollars. The provision of tuition to women below half-time levels is critical to the pursuit of self-sufficiency. Since women need to balance their full-time job, school, and family responsibilities, most can only handle one class at a time. To address this situation, the effort was underway to lobby for an increase of dollars funded for the program and to change the requirement to include those who are attending less than half-time.

In mid-June, an update was issued on the legislative session with regard to women and family issues and they are:

- Monetary Award Program - Along with the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, WE-WIN participants and other advocates worked to obtain an increase of \$1 million in funding for financial aid to students who attend college one or two classes at a time. The General Assembly and the Governor approved the increased funding, which doubles the funding for the pilot program. The bill also included \$300,000 to market financial aid programs to adult students.
- Increase Funding for Adult Education - An increased funding of \$9 million was approved to help adults improve basic skills (literacy and numeracy), learn English or get a high school equivalency diploma (GED). For further information on Women Employed/WE-WIN updates and/or to get involved, contact Jennifer King of Women Employed at jkking@womenemployed.org or call 312-782-3902.

At the meeting on June 27, 2001, the working group invited Ms. Barb Levin of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), for a presentation and discussion of the importance of ISAC to women and families in Illinois. Ms. Levin said that the mission of ISAC is to enable students to take advantage of the services available to those in need of financial assistance to enable them to obtain a higher education and/or training through the numerous grants, scholarships and loan programs currently available in Illinois. (To obtain brochures, telephone 1-800-899-4722, or go to their website at www.isac-online.org, which also provides detailed information on ISAC services.) In Illinois, approximately 250,000 students per year receive over \$1 billion dollars in loans and grants, with one-half of the package being loans due to an over demand of grant fund requests.

The issues taken up by the Governor's Commission are very similar to those addressed by Illinois State University's Women's Capabilities Initiative (WCI). The WCI, a joint venture of the School of Social Work and the Women's Studies Program at Illinois State University, is an academic, training, and community outreach program that addresses the situation, needs, and prospects of low-income women in Central Illinois, with a focus on low-income minority women. As part of the community outreach/service component of the WCI, a conference was held on 1st June 2001, on the theme of Enhancing Women's Capabilities in Central Illinois, and covered issues such as welfare-to-work, health, rural women, and work, wages, and dignity. Jennifer King (Working Group member) of Women Employed attended the WCI Conference and served as chairperson of the round table discussion on Work, Wages, and Dignity. For further information contact Rozel White at rwhite@ilstu.edu or call 309-438-2947.

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Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance

By avada douglas

Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance (FMLA) will be launched this month. FMLA is set up through Feminist Majority Foundation, which then gives us a link nationally to a group that is working to bring feminism into the light. There are many versions of Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance around the country working to raise awareness about different issues related to women.

Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance is replacing Womyn's Coalition as the feminist group at Illinois State. Meetings this semester will be every Monday night starting August 27 at 7pm in Stevenson 401A. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to come check out the meetings. Major projects for the semester currently include Take Back the Night (a rally and march to raise awareness about and to help end sexual assault), a monthly poetry night, and Rush to the Left (a week of promoting organizations on campus that are more left thinking). If there are any questions or thoughts or suggestions for the year, then please email the current FMLA folks at Illinois State University at isu_fmlla@hotmail.com or you can call/leave a message at 436.9561 with questions.

New Women's Studies Resources

Both Milner Library and the Women's Studies Resource Center have copies of the *Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women: Global Women's Issues and Knowledge*. The Encyclopedia comes in four volumes and is an excellent resource for teaching and research. Dr. Valentine Moghadam is the author of two entries: Fundamentalism and Public Policy (vol. 2), and Revolutions (vol. 4). Feel free to visit Women's Studies or Milner to browse through the new resource

Hate Crimes Symposium

Illinois State University and the School of Theatre in conjunction with the Governor's Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes will offer a hate crimes symposium at 7:00 p.m., September 20, 2001, in the Ballroom of the Bone Student Center.

"Hate Crimes in America: An Open Forum with Dr. C. T. Vivian, Nationally Known Civil Rights Activist" features Dr. Vivian, a personal friend of Martin Luther King, Jr. who served on King's executive staff and helped to organize King's march on Washington. Dr. Vivian's first use of non-violent direct action in 1947 desegregated public facilities in Peoria.

After his address, Dr. Vivian will be joined in a question-and-answer session by a panel of eleven students including avada douglas representing the Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance. In addition, the School of Theatre will present a five-minute cutting from its first fall production *The Laramie Project*, a play by Moises Kaufman based on the events surrounding the hate-motivated murder of Matthew Shepard. The symposium will be moderated by Vice President and Provost Al Goldfarb.

A reception will immediately follow. Admission to the symposium is free of charge.

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