

Annual Report of the Indiana Commission for Women
.. 1993-1994

Introduction

This annual report of the Indiana Commission for Women is prepared for Governor Evan Bayh as required in Executive Order 92-15. Commission members met four times during the year as directed by the order, on February 8, April 12, June 14 and October 15. This executive order identifies the following duties and responsibilities of the Commission:

Conferring with agencies regarding the impact upon women of current and emerging policies, procedures, practices, laws and administrative rules and regulations.

Maintaining information about state agencies, private agencies and organizations serving women, as well as lists of names and vitae of women available to serve as agency appointees.

Cooperating with agencies and with private groups to combat discrimination against women, including referral of complaints to the appropriate agencies or organizations.

Gathering and disseminating information concerning women and women's issues through publications, public hearings, conferences and other means.

Strengthening quality of home and work life for women as mothers, wives, homemakers, caregivers, professionals and workers.

Promoting the consideration of qualified women for all levels of government, private, and public organization positions.

Publicizing the purpose and activities of the Commission.

1993-94: The Year in Review

1993-94 was a year of significant accomplishments for the Indiana Commission for Women. As a Commission, as committee members and as individuals, members spent approximately 1,450 hours, or nearly one day per month per Commission member, on Commission activities. In the process they made concrete progress on nearly 60% of the objectives they identified in September, 1993.

The list of accomplishments reflects the diverse geographical, racial, ethnic, age, education, volunteer, economic and employment populations that the Commission members and its volunteers represent. This diversity is a strength of the Commission because it ensures that many viewpoints are represented, but the geographical diversity makes it difficult for many Commission members outside of Indianapolis to attend regularly Commission meetings and committee meetings. As a result, many of the most impressive accomplishments of the Commission can be attributed to individual members, working as a representative of the Commission. These individual and collective accomplishments of the Commission include:

Conferring with agencies regarding the impact upon women...

Connie Rufenbarger has been working with the Indiana Department of Health on the implementation of a Centers for Disease Control grant for the increased detection of breast and cervical cancer among Indiana women. As a representative of the Commission, Connie has helped build a public/private partnership to ensure that the State of Indiana develops a program that reaches as many Hoosier women as possible. She serves as a member of the Advisory Council for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Program and a member of the Council's Data and Surveillance Committee.

Ruth Vignati, a volunteer on the Economic Status of Women Committee, has led a group to explore the feasibility of establishing a data base of women-owned businesses in Indiana. Her efforts have included consultation with Lieutenant Governor Frank O'Bannon and his staff and staff of the Indiana Department of Commerce. Ruth has supervised extensive research into other states' efforts to identify women-owned businesses, and, together with Barbara Cook and Jeanne Kelsay from the committee, she has discussed the data base with a variety of state and federal agencies, women's organizations and business groups. As part of this initiative, Carolyn Coukos, another committee member, has contacted the Indiana Department of Revenue regarding the possibility of revising tax forms which would make it easier to identify women-owned businesses.

Anne Nobles completed work on a project begun in late 1992 to simplify compliance for employers of domestic employees. This joint effort of the Commission, US. Internal Revenue Service, the Indiana Department of Revenue, Department of Workforce Development and Workers Compensation Board created simplified state tax forms and a comprehensive packet of forms and instructions to assist employers of household employees with federal and state legal compliance. The joint effort also produced pamphlets targeted to both employers and employees explaining the legal requirements that applied to them. Both pamphlets were translated into Spanish to reach as broad an audience as possible throughout Indiana. This unprecedented federal-state collaboration will form the basis for future joint projects by Indiana and federal revenue agencies.

Maintaining information about state agencies, private agencies and organizations serving women...

Stacy Loveall, a Governor's Fellow assigned to work with the Commission during part of her fellowship, developed a fact sheet on women and children in poverty to help separate myth from fact in this area of public concern.

Linda Edington, a volunteer member of the Economic Status of Women Committee, will serve as the Commission's liaison to the National Committee on Pay Equity and will coordinate activities in Indiana.

Gathering and disseminating information concerning women and women's issues...

Harriet Chalfant represented the Commission and the Indiana Breast Cancer Coalition in Washington, DC. in an effort to secure additional federal funding for breast cancer research. Harriet and other women from around the nation presented hundreds of thousands of petitions to President Clinton and members of Congress as part of comprehensive effort to fight breast cancer.

Barbara Hanson and Ginny Grissom, members of the Economic Status of Women Committee, are leading an effort to design a prototype "Women's Economic Summit" which could be held in locations throughout Indiana to identify local economic concerns of women. Their objective is to hold the first summit in 1995.

Commission members have contributed to a joint effort with the Indiana Department of Health to develop a fact book on women's health. This publication is designed as a tool to educate the people of Indiana about women's health issues and to inform the public policy debate on health. Its publication is scheduled for the first half of 1995.

Jan Ellis represented the Commission in planning the Women & Legislative Process Conference on September 10, 1994. The Commission was a co-sponsor of this annual event to educate women about current legislative issues.

Harriet Chalfant and Sandra Leek participated in panel discussions at a preparatory meeting for the United Nations 4th World Conference on Women. The meeting, held in Chicago, Illinois in May, was sponsored by the Women's Bureau of the US. Department of Labor and the US. State Department to solicit issues from US. women to be presented at the United Nations conference next year.

For the second year in a row, the Commission was a co-sponsor of the October Women and Work Conference in Indianapolis. Ruth Vignati, Melissa Martin and Jan Ellis helped plan the conference and participated in panel presentations.

Anne Nobles represented the Commission in May at the US. Department of Health and Human Services/United States Public Health Service--Region V Women's Health Conference. The purpose of the meeting was to set goals for women's health in each of the states in the Public Health Service's Region V. As a result of this meeting, Indiana's Department of Health planned a series of hearings around the state to permit citizens to discuss women's health issues. Commission members Harriet Chalfant, Sarah Morgan and Anne Nobles and volunteer Betty Lawson represented the

Commission at these hearings in the fall of 1994 in Indianapolis, East Chicago, Evansville and New Albany.

In an effort to focus attention on women's health issues, the Commission invited two speakers to its meetings to discuss their work. Maureen McLean, from the Indiana Department of Health's Maternal and Child Health Program, discussed planned efforts to solicit information from Indiana women about their health concerns. Mary Marrs, project director for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program of the Indiana Department of Health, discussed the state's efforts to promote cancer detection among women. As a result of these presentations, Commission members became active in helping to organize the cancer detection program and in collaborating with the Department of Health on other women's health issues.

Anne Nobles is representing the Commission on a Women's Health Task Force sponsored by the Department of Health. The task force was established to provide assistance in the development of women's health systems. Its recommendations will be based in part on the information presented in the public hearings the Department held in the fall of 1994.

Strengthening quality of home and work life...

Jean Luse has worked with the Altrusa Club in Bedford to provide support to poor women in the community. The program they have started teaches women how to budget monthly income and balance a checkbook. The women also have learned crafts. The goal is to enable women to leave public assistance.

Sarah Morgan is leading an effort in Austin, Indiana to secure a \$500,000 grant for a community daycare center. Sarah has sought technical assistance from businesses in Indianapolis who have sponsored similar facilities for their employees and is hopeful that funding will be approved by the end of 1994.

Judy Jackson has started a family issues series at the Indiana Business College in Columbus. This series, which includes guest speakers, meets 10 times a session.

Publicizing the purpose and activities of the Commission...

Jeanne Kelsay, a Commission volunteer, designed a fact sheet about the Commission that has been used at conferences and the women's health hearings throughout the State.

Commission members have publicized the Commission this year through participation on conference panels and membership on task forces addressing specific public policy issues. In addition, two newspaper articles have appeared about the Commission, one discussing the household employer project and the other discussing general issues affecting the Commission.

Planning for 1994-95

In September, 1994, members of the Commission met at Morgan's Farm in Austin, Indiana to develop objectives for 1995 and identify ways to improve the operation of the Commission. Stacy Reifels and Janet Miller, performance improvement engineers from Eli Lilly and Company facilitated the discussion at the retreat.

Commission members developed the following strategy for 1994-95:

- Improve communication
- Increase visibility
- Narrow the focus of activities
- Encourage broader involvement of Commission members
- Increase the Commission's impact on women in Indiana

As part of this strategy, Commission members agreed on the following goals and objectives for the 1994-95 year:

1. Work with the National Committee for Pay Equity
2. Coordinate a public education campaign on women's preventive health care
3. Continue work on the child care initiatives begun by the Women and Their Families Committee
4. Strengthen communication among members
5. Prepare the 1993-94 annual report
6. Work with the Department of Health on the publication of a women's health fact book

In order to accomplish these objectives, Commission members agreed to modify the committee structure that had been in place during the previous year. The Health Care, Women and Their Families, Legislative and Public Relations Committees were eliminated. They will be replaced with task forces as needed to address specific objectives. Two task forces were established at the retreat, including one to work on the child care initiatives and another to coordinate the women's preventive health care campaign.

The Economic Status of Women Committee will remain in place with the goals of continuing efforts to establish a women-owned business data base in Indiana, developing a prototype economic summit and sponsoring at least one summit in 1995, and affiliating with the National Committee for Pay Equity.