



**COUNCIL ON THE
STATUS OF WOMEN**
NC STATE UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL REPORT, 2005-06

Summary

The NC State University Council on the Status of Women is advisory to the Provost. The Council's mission is to advocate for the rights and progress of women at NC State. This year, the Council began discussions on how to be more responsive to the needs of women on campus. In addition, the Council hosted an annual Sisterhood Dinner and Women's Professional Development Conference. Celebrating and showcasing the many accomplishments of women and providing women with development opportunities are the ways that we publicly demonstrate our dedication to the needs of women.

Included in this report are recommendations that will strengthen our advocacy for women in new ways. We ask for support from the Provost in ensuring this success.

Membership

The Council is constituted and representative of all professional levels of the University (See the 2005-06 membership).

Celebrating Our Community of Women

Annually for a number of years, the *Council on the Status of Women* has organized two campus-wide events to celebrate and empower women on campus and give the Council more visibility: the *Sisterhood Dinner* and the *Women's Professional Development Conference*. Both events are typically held in the spring. The condensed reports of those events are below.

Sisterhood Dinner

The event was held on Wednesday, February 8, 2006 at the Jane S. McKimmon Center. There were approximately 262 students, faculty, and staff in attendance total, including the speaker and committee members. The attendance of the dinner broke records from the years before. Provost Larry Nielsen gave the opening remarks. Dr. Susanne Gaddis presented, "All Stressed Up (And No Place To Go)." Sheila Bolden, the NC State University Employee Appreciation IDOL gave an a cappella rendition of "Precious Lord," and Pat Caple performed the Sojourner Truth Monologue.

Women's Professional Development Conference

The Council on the Status of Women Professional Development Conference was held on Friday, March 31, 2006 at the Jane S. McKimmon Center. There were approximately 270 people in attendance total, including speakers, invited guests, and committee members. More individuals registered on the day of the event making this the most highly attended conference ever. In addition to the participants from NC State, there were more than 30 guests from outside the NC State campus. The theme of the conference was "Make it Happen!" which tied into the workshop topic titles. Provost Larry Nielsen, substituting for Chancellor Oblinger, gave a warm morning welcome. The keynote speech took place during lunch; Cheri Britton, noted keynote and motivational speaker, gave her address entitled "BOOM Thinking: Break Free From Your Limiting Beliefs."

Refocusing for the Future

The mission of the Council on the Status of Women is to support equitable treatment for female faculty, staff and students by advocating their rights, values and professional principles and by providing opportunities, counsel, and leadership to promote a diverse and inclusive university community. We envision the university community as an environment in which equity, diversity, and inclusiveness enhance opportunities to attain professional goals, aspirations, and achievement.

This year, the Council began reexamining its charge to truly monitor the pulse of our great institution. This step will lead us to accomplish our charge of advising the Provost and the Chancellor on the institutional perspective for women. In past years, we have focused on showcasing the advancements and achievements of women in a programmatic way, actually planning and hosting the two campus events: 1) Sisterhood Dinner, and 2) Women's Professional Development Conference. Our efforts were successful in that it brought awareness to our Council, but little to enhance the environment for women at NC State. Though we recommend the events continue, we would need more planning support from upper administration.

The Council understands the need to celebrate the many accomplishments of women and provide professional development opportunities for women. To be more effective, a conference consultant/manager was hired in 2005-2006 to plan the conference with minimal programmatic help from the Council's Conference Committee. The conference evaluation forms revealed that the conference consultant made a difference. The attendees related that the event was the "best ever!" We are looking to extend this assistance into organizing the Sisterhood Dinner event.

The Council endorsed hiring an event manager to plan both the Sisterhood Dinner and the Women's Conference so that we so that we may continue to celebrate women's achievements, provide professional development for women, and refocus our attention on the advisory mandate of the Council.

One workgroup was formed during this academic year, which will be carried forward to next year. The Restructuring Committee, led by Shannon Johnson, Director of the Women's Center, will engage in a study on the needs, expectation, power structure, and other factors relevant to being an effective council for women at NC State. This study will be designed and implemented by a select group of female faculty, staff, and graduate students. At the conclusion, the Chancellor and the Provost will receive a report citing action items that will need to take place in order for this Council to be more effective and responsive to its constituents. At present, the Committee is examining other (peer) institutions.

The Council must continue its representative nature of all constituencies and refrain from monopolizing within factions or classifications. This is critical to the Council's advocacy role. Within the Council's structure, the Chair is succeeded by the Vice Chair in the following year. An alternating system of leadership between faculty and staff (EPA non-teaching or SPA) as Chair and Vice Chair provides a mechanism to maintain the goals and mission of the Council. Therefore, the Council will establish an alternating leadership pattern of faculty (chairing odd-numbered years) and staff (chairing even-numbered years). The Vice Chair position will be the reverse.

Assistant Vice Provost for Faculty and Staff Diversity

A new Assistant Vice Provost for Faculty and Staff Diversity was named effective July 1, Marcia Gumpertz. The Council participated in the campus-wide interviews of the final candidates and recommended to Vice Provost Picart that the search be reopened to include more individuals with prior diversity experience and knowledge.

New Opportunities

An opportunity for the Council on the Status of Women to partner with an outside agency surfaced this academic year. We have been invited to be a sponsor of the Speaking of Women's Health Movement (<http://www.speakingofwomenshealth.com/>). The Council is considering this partnership as it may help both organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Lactation Stations

The Council discussed the Child Care Survey and wanted to express its support of designating Lactation Rooms for nursing mothers at NC State University. Strategic assignment of lactation rooms in university facilities and the marketing of these rooms will improve campus climate and will not be costly to implement within the next academic year.

Therefore, the Council recommends to the Provost and the Chancellor that Facilities Services begin designating rooms for lactation stations beginning next fiscal year 2006-07.

Women Initiatives Fund

Another big and exciting venture is obtaining funding that will replenish itself annually, and aid in the financial needs of women we serve (such as conference attendance of female employees and students and co-sponsorships with other groups on campus) of the women we serve.

The NC State University Women's Center, on behalf of the Council on the Status of Women, seeks to establish the first Women's Endowment Fund. This will be a permanent endowment established through fundraising efforts beginning Fall 2006. The University seeks to establish affiliated funds through charitable gifts and bequests from individuals, families, organizations and corporations committed to making a difference in the community for generations to come. The purpose of the endowment is to foster an environment that values and actively supports an equitable and diverse community in which the university's teaching, learning, research, management or administration practices value and promote the progress of women at NC State and the larger community. Endowment fund donors and recipients will sustain efforts undertaken to promote this purpose.

Programs or initiatives seeking funds from the endowment will address one or more of the following objectives:

- Creative new programs or initiatives
- Collaborative efforts between different organizations
- Coordination of services
- Enhancements to existing programs
- Expanding services that address immediate problems to include education or awareness that would have a long-lasting impact
- Support professional development for women

The outcomes of the endowment are the following:

1. Promote increased participation in areas generally underrepresented by women;
2. Increase the recognition of NC State women who make remarkable contributions to society;
3. Enhance NC State's outreach efforts through promoting progressive efforts by women in our community;
4. Increase the recruitment, retention and upward mobility efforts of women on the NC State faculty;
5. Improve the relationships of women and men through events that educate and promote the value of diversity.

A Women's Endowment Fund Forum will be held every two years consisting of the Council on the Status of Women and a wide range of representatives from the university's administration, governance committees, alumni, faculty, staff, student bodies and community partners. The Forum will engage in intense dialogue on topics generated by the group, sharing ideas and developing opportunities for collaborative efforts to support the goal of gender equity for NC State and the surrounding community.

Therefore, the Council recommends that a Women's Endowment be established with the help of the Provost for the aforementioned objectives and outcomes.

Conclusion

The work begun and sustained by the Council this year has enriched campus dialogue about the workplace climate and professional growth opportunities for women. Events sponsored and co-sponsored by the Council have fostered a sense of community among women and friends of women. Members are convinced that the Council's existence is an important part of campus advocacy. We hope to align ourselves as one of the cited reasons female faculty, staff, and students choose NC State. Our Council and our community of women are grateful for the support of the Provost and the Chancellor in the past and continued support is critical to attaining future goals.

*Submitted by
Samara Fleming Burnette, Chair
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