

President's Commission on the Status of Women
2005-2006
Year End Report
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The following summary is organized by the 2005-2006 workgroups. This has been an incredibly productive year, and I feel fortunate to have worked with each member of the Women's Commission and the staff of the Commission's office.

Childcare Study Workgroup

A Childcare study was initiated last year during the Women's History celebrations. A number of people voiced their concerns during the open-mike forum in 2002 about the issue of affordability, quality and availability of childcare on and near campus. In 2004-2006, focus groups were held for staff, faculty, and students. From this information Dr. Banach and Dr. Kazura created a survey. The childcare study workgroup hired Andy Smith, Director of the Survey Center to convert the survey to a website. In January 2006 a mass emailing went out to everyone with an UNH email address. In addition, an announcement of the website was placed in *The New Hampshire* and *Campus Journal*. To date 522 responses have been received (67 faculty; 157 staff; and 298 students). The Survey Center has sent the raw data to the workgroup and they will be analyzing the data and submitting a report next year.

Lactation Room and Policy Workgroup

A lactation room in the library has been constructed at Dimond Library. President Hart's office paid for supplies and construction. The room has been advertised on the library website and in the *Campus Journal*. By October the room had a full schedule and Pam Lehman was looking at alternative places for women to use. This workgroup also developed a lactation and breast feeding policy that addresses the issues of lactation space design, allotted time for travel to and from lactation space, and parking issues. Donna Marie Sorrentino submitted the policy to Sharon Demers in Human Resources. They have embraced the idea of a lactation and breastfeeding policy to help promote UNH as a family friendly campus. The policy is still under review.

Parental Leave/Family Leave Workgroup

The goal of the parental leave/family leave workgroup is to evaluate the effectiveness of the faculty parental leave policy, and suggest changes to and/or creation of a similar policy for staff. Unfortunately, due to other commitments of the commission, some members had to step down from this workgroup to focus on other issues. Information is still being collected from Human Resources on the number of faculty who have taken advantage of the parental leave benefit.

Programming and Awards Ceremony Workgroup

The programming and award ceremony workgroup has accomplished a great deal with limited resources. The workgroup organized the "Sharing the Journey, How to help people with Alzheimer's/Dementia," held on February 1st in the MUB. The workgroup collaborated with Planned Parenthood in Connecticut to provide a program called "Try

again doc—The things the medical field doesn't tell you." Speakers provided awareness education on posing questions to the medical profession. Organized the showing of the film "Writing Women's Lives" in collaboration with the English Department. Finally, they organized the annual awards ceremony and Superior Court Judge Kay McGuire agreed to be the keynote speaker. The workgroup has a number of ideas for programming next year.

Violence Against Women Committee/Workgroup

The VAWC presented their recommendations to President Hart and her Cabinet in January. The presentation focused on prioritizing the information in their 2004-2005 report on decreasing incidents of violence against women on campus, with a number of recommendations for changes on campus. The VAW's top concern was to see an administrative position created to centralize and coordinate the recommendations of their report, and a women's center to support women on campus. The committee had a follow-up meeting with President Hart. President Hart stated that no new position would be created. However, the Office of Vice Provost for Diversity would help coordinate the recommendations of the VAW report. An agreement was reached that the VAW would be a continuing group housed within the Women's Commission. The chair of the VAW would receive quarterly reports from all of the relevant offices on issues of violence against women on campus. Study groups will be organized next year to look into the need for a women's center (or gender equity center). Other focus groups may be organized to address additional issues outlined in the report. On May 12, 2006, with consultation from Dr. Wanda Mitchell, the Women's Commission agreed to convert the committee into a permanent workgroup, and voted to reduce the number of members from 12 to 6 with one member acting as chair to align with other workgroups of the commission. The VAW workgroup chair will be expected to attend the Women's Commission's meetings to provide monthly updates.