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Maine Women's Lobby, Maine Women's Policy Center

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The MAINE WOMEN'S ADVOCATE

Winter 2002

Number 33



a joint publication of the

MAINE

WOMEN'S

LOBBY

and the

MAINE

WOMEN'S

POLICY

CENTER

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

A promise or reality?

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) was the first national policy designed to make it possible for workers to fulfill both their work and family responsibilities. FMLA guarantees covered employees twelve weeks of unpaid leave each year for the birth or adoption of a child, recovery from a serious personal health condition or that of a family member. In 1988, before FMLA was passed on the national level, the Maine Women's Lobby worked on a state-level FMLA that the state passed. Now, FMLA has placed Maine and the Women's Lobby at the forefront again.

According to the 2001 U.S. Department of Labor study of FMLA, it "has been a great success allowing an estimated 4 million working family members a year" to use FMLA to care for family members or themselves without the fear of putting their jobs at risk. The downside is that "more than three in four employees (78%) who have needed but have not taken family or medical leave say they could not afford to take the leave." With this in mind, Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts and other states have begun to think of alternatives.

On June 21, 2001, a committee was created to study the benefits and costs of a paid family and medical leave program. Laura Fortman has been appointed to the committee along with representatives from the business community, labor, and insurance. The committee report recommended that it be allowed to continue its work for another interim. Several states and interest groups (including the Women's Lobby) are working on creating models for estimating costs and benefits of paid family and medical leave, which the committee may be able to use in 2002.

There are many options available when dealing with the issue of paid leave versus unpaid leave. As Lissa Bell of the National Partnership for Women and Families discussed at our Breakfasts in Portland and Bangor, states such as New York, California, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico all have temporary disability insurance (TDI) systems in place. TDI can take the stress off both employers and employees when

PAY EQUITY RULES!

Maine's Equal Pay law requires that men and women in both private and public sector workplaces be paid comparable wages for comparable work. That law has been around since 1965, but it took a hard fought five-year campaign to bring the promise of fair pay closer to reality for Maine women. The Maine Department of Labor has just produced guidelines that will strengthen enforcement of the law and provide employers with guidance and incentive to comply. These rules were adopted on November 13, 2001. If you would like a copy, let us know.

Maine's law is one of the few in the country that go beyond "equal work for equal pay." It requires equal pay for work that has comparable levels of skill, effort and responsibility. As Fair Pay, a document produced by the Women's Policy Center last June, reports, many jobs are segregated by gender, and female-dominated jobs - nursing, clerical work, bookkeeping, teaching - tend to be undervalued by the labor market. "Far from being objective," wrote Fair Pay author Nancy Goldstein, "the pay determinations in today's labor market originate from more than fifty years of attributing lower value to women's workforce contributions and less importance to women's financial needs."

In the last several years, the issue of equal pay has gained momentum across the country. Maine's law is the most comprehensive and is being touted as a model for fair pay advocates in other states.

The first stage in our campaign, passing a rule, was successful because it was a collaborative, multi-dimensional effort that *pay equity continued on pg. 4*

medical emergencies arise. Other states have also proposed programs that would extend unemployment insurance to new parents during leave, programs that would establish tax credits for employers who provide leave benefits, or establish and expand TDI systems. Regardless of what the committee recommends for the state, it will have the previous research, experience and support of many other states and committed organizations across the country.

The committee is looking at an important question of whether or not Maine and its workers are in need of paid family and medical leave. The Women's Lobby will be monitoring the committee, closely working in partnership with the Maine Equal Justice Project and the Maine AFL-CIO. We are excited to work on this issue and will continue to give this issue the attention it needs. Please contact us with your interest or your stories concerning FMLA.

State Round-Up: State Family Leave Benefit Initiatives in 2001: Making Family Leave More Affordable. National Partnership for Women and Families.

Inside this issue

- The Lobby's 2002 Legislative Horizon
- In Memory of Linda S. Dyer
- Term Limited Senators and Representatives

NEW FACES IN THE OFFICE

MEET KAYLYN PALMELLA, OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS!

Fresh from her duties as co-founder of the Farmington Area Citizens to End Sweatshops (FACES) and organizing for the Maine Clean Clothes Alliance (MECCA), Kaylyn was one of three statewide grassroots organizers who helped lobby for the Maine Anti-sweatshop Purchasing Law, which passed last session.

In November, she received a Leadership for Change Award from the Dirigo Alliance in recognition of her commitment to social justice through the anti-sweatshop campaign.

To formalize her desire to work toward progressive social change, Kaylyn is a Women's Studies major at the University of Southern Maine.

OUR INTERNS FOR 2002:

Anna Diaz, was chosen as a Fellow from the Maine Community Foundation's Maine Public Policy Scholars program. Each year, one student from each U. Maine system campus is selected to research an area of Maine public policy. Anna will focus her research on Family and Medical Leave. While interning at the Maine Women's Lobby, she will follow the activity of the state committee studying the costs and benefits of a paid leave program for Maine. In May 2002 the scholars will present their research. Anna is a senior Women's Studies major at the University of Maine at Farmington. After graduation, she hopes to continue her education and activism.

Ariel Ricci is a senior Political Science major at the University of Southern Maine. She will graduate in May after her year-

long service to the Lobby and Policy Center where she has been organizing programs such as the 2002 Women's Leadership Forum (Jan.) and Girls' Day at the State House in March. Next fall, Ariel hopes to exercise her progressive passions at the University of Essex, England, where she is applying for graduate school.

WHO ME? RUN FOR OFFICE?

Yes, You! For the Maine State Legislature!

Unfortunately, women consistently make up a minority of elected officials in state and national governments, despite their numerical majority in the general population. Fortunately, YOU have the power to change that by running for office as well as encouraging other community minded women to run for office.

Perhaps you have thought about policies that have a deep impact on your community which you would like to see changed. Action, rather than talk, is the best way to foster meaningful change in your community. Are you concerned about your community and wish that those who make laws would listen to your input? Here is your opportunity to not only make your voice heard but also to shape those laws.

The year 2002 offers significant opportunities to run for office and WIN. It is easier to run for an open seat than compete against an incumbent. Because of Maine's term limit laws, 28 seats in the House of Representatives and 8 seats in the Senate will be open in 2002, making it significantly easier for an ordinary citizen, such as yourself, to run for and win a seat in the Maine Legislature. The only way to create change is to be the change you desire!

Find a useful list of term limited legislators on page 4.

SPECIAL THANKS TO JACKIE GUIMOND

Without her, this newsletter would not be possible. We are thankful for her generosity and expertise and hope you enjoy her efforts!

young girls to ensure that there will be another generation prepared to take up the banner and fight for women's rights in the future."

Now in its 16th year, the Maryann Hartman Award has recognized 50 Maine women for their strong records of public service and "exemplary work" in contributing to the quality of

life in the state and beyond. Sponsored by the University of Maine's Women in the Curriculum and Women's Studies Program, the award is named for the late distinguished UM educator, feminist, scholar and humanist, Dr. Maryann Hartman, who died in 1980.

"Maine has a number of astounding women who can serve as role models for Maine women of all ages," said Mazie Hough, chair of the awards committee. "There are a lot of wonderful things going on created by and for women, and they deserve to be celebrated."

Fortman attended an awards banquet on October 23, where she received high praise for her "tireless work to strengthen and advance the cause of Maine women

and girls through advocacy for higher minimum wage, welfare reform and women's right to choose." Girls Day at the State House, anti-discrimination, pay equity, and open access to training and education were listed among her accomplishments.

"This is truly quite an honor," she said.

Also is it truly quite an honor to work with you. Thank you and congratulations, Laura!

CONGRATULATIONS, LAURA!

Honored for her tireless work and passionate dedication to Maine women and girls

When word got out that Laura Fortman would be honored with a Maryann Hartman Award, she began receiving phone calls from the press. One reporter who has followed her lobbyist work asked bluntly: "Laura, why are you getting such a prestigious award? I mean, you're no Mother Theresa."

Our executive director just laughed: "You're right!" she said. "Doing direct service is incredibly important, but I also think some people need to be putting their time and energy into changing the system."

Nominating committee member Kristen Hurd said there were a number of reasons for selecting Fortman. "Most importantly, Laura seems to live and breathe social change. The diversity of her projects speaks volumes about her commitment to fundamentally changing the way we think about public policy. Rather than addressing issues with a short-term 'just-fix-it-so-we-can-move-on-to-the-next-issue' mentality, Laura advocates for long-term solutions that truly address how decisions on public policy affect actual individual women and girls.

"Not only is she working at the everyday level by wrestling with and deepening the discussions about public policy, but also providing leadership and mentoring for



2002 LEGISLATIVE HORIZON

A closer look at some of the issues the Women's Lobby is working on this session.

The Maine Women's Lobby works to optimize the lives of Maine women and girls through public policy, development and legislative action in the following areas:

Economic Security/Family and Work Issues:

MWL is committed to enhancing the economic position of all women.

- L.D. 2058 Resolve, to Continue the Study of the Benefits and Costs for Increasing Access to Family and Medical Leave for Maine Families. The committee recommended that it use the next interim to more deeply study its data. (Support)
- L.D. 1258 would expand access to unemployment insurance for part-time workers (only one in ten low-income women currently receives unemployment insurance when they lose their job). (Support)
- L.D. 1960: An Act to Promote Safety of Families through the Workplace-- This is a modest expansion of legislation passed in 1999 guaranteeing job protected leave to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. This bill provides the same protection if an employee needs to take time off because their child is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. (Support)

Health Care/Reproductive Rights:

Since 1978, MWL has been in the forefront of Maine's Pro-Choice movement and firmly believes in a woman's right to make reproductive decisions for herself. MWL is dedicated to continuing the ongoing struggle to keep those rights from being eroded.

- Protect funding for the Fund for a Healthy Maine. The Governor has proposed cuts to the fund in his Budget.
- Preserve health care coverage for childless adults. We worked last session to get Medicaid coverage for childless adults who have income below 100% of the poverty level. This coverage is being "delayed" in the Governor's budget.
- L.D. 1603: An Act to Expand Family Life Education in Maine schools. Provides resources for comprehensive family life education in Maine schools. (Support)
- L.D. 2013: An Act to Promote the Health of Maine Women and Girls. Asks for funds to continue the work outlined in the Women's and Girl's health action plans. (Support)

Violence Against Women:

MWL works to protect women against violence in our homes, relationships, communities, and workplaces.

- Protect funding of the Violence Intervention and Prevention Act, in which rape crisis centers and battered women's projects will receive money. Last year the legislature agreed to increase funding to these programs by \$3 million this year. The Governor is including only \$1.2 million in his budget.
- Support retention of the SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) position in the Attorney General's office.

- L.D. 1983: An Act to Protect Children from Sexual Predators --Original bill would have increased the age of consent from 14 to 16 (opposed). An amendment has been offered that makes the "sexual contact" portion of the criminal statute consistent with the language in "sexual act" portion of the law (monitoring).

Anti-Discrimination/Civil Rights:

MWL is committed to working against discrimination in any form and to promoting the contributions of women and girls in all areas of the economy and society.

- Work with the Girl's Collaborative and other advocates to highlight the unequal treatment of girls within the criminal justice system.
- Defeat all anti-gay and anti-affirmative action measures (if any are introduced).

The key issue in the 2002 Legislative session will be the budget. As we go to print, we are still analyzing the impact of the Governor's proposal on women and children. We intend to vigorously work to protect the most vulnerable Maine citizens during these difficult times. We are only as effective as our members, so please get us your email addresses so that you can quickly weigh in on these important issues.

CHEERS FOR ERIN CLARK!

Former Lobby intern wins prestigious award

A recipient of the 2001 Dirigo Alliance Leadership for Change Award, former Maine Women's Lobby intern, Erin Clark, is up to great things! She graduated in December 2000 from the University of Maine at Farmington, and now serves as a board member for the Women's Policy Center. On her way to joining the board, Clark organized the Women's Leadership Project, and coordinated the Lobby's 2001 Girls' Day at the State House.

"Maine needs more dedicated young leaders like Erin," said Dirigo Alliance Executive Director George Christie. "Her passion for social and economic justice and her eagerness to do the hard work of organizing make her a rising star."

Dirigo represents 15 organizations across Maine and has over 80,000 members dedicated to promoting progressive policies and leaders from within the state.



Born in Buxton, Clark is recognized as an up and coming leader among Maine women. Besides working for the Lobby, she co-founded the Farmington Area Citizens to End Sweatshops (FACES),

which encouraged UMF to institute a socially responsible purchasing code. FACES also helped Maine be the first state to "go clean" and affirm its commitment to clean purchasing practices.

"From my experience with the Lobby, I have gained an understanding of public policy that I never had before," Clark said of her internship experience. "While observing Laura at the State House, I gained immense respect for both her and the process. While grassroots organizing is important, the legislative process is equally necessary to hold the line."

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS!



New Board Members (l-r): Kate Faragher (non-board Governance Committee), Vanessa Duquette (PC, Treasurer), Jeannie Matava-Mattson (PC board), Erin Clark (PC), Janelle Bainter (PC), Lisa Tuttle (PC), K Sawyer (MWL), Beth Kilbreth (MWL). Missing from photo: Jill Green (PC)

Reflecting on all that was accomplished last year and the prospect of upcoming projects, we are excited by and grateful for the

service and commitment of our board members. We would be nowhere without their guidance. Veteran Policy Center board members are Kate Dufour, Chair, PC/MWL; Barbara Crider, Vice Chair; Sharon Sudbay, Treasurer, PC/MWL; Elaine Cinciva. Lobby board members are Suzanne Brunner, Vice Chair; Barbara Alexander, Secretary; and Janet Mills. Joining them in 2002 are:

Janelle Bainter: New to Maine from Illinois, received her Master of Social Work from St. Louis University in December 2001. Janelle is now a Case Manager for the AIDS Project and resides in Portland.

Erin Clark: A 2000 UMF graduate and former Women's Lobby intern, Erin co-founded the Farmington Area Citizens to End Sweatshops. She works at Day One, an adolescent substance abuse program.

Vanessa Duquette: A 2000 graduate of the University of Southern Maine and intern in 1999 for Speaker Steve Rowe, Vanessa has done great work for the Consumers for Affordable Health Care and now lobbies for Mooseridge Associates.

Jill Green: Is an attorney at Pine Tree Legal Assistance, and is a very strong advocate for survivors of domestic violence.

Beth Kilbreth: Associate Professor of Health Policy Management at the Muskie School of Public Affairs. She serves on a legislative board to look at universal health coverage policies.

Jeannie Matava Mattson: Of Hallowell, has a strong Political Science background and currently directs the Civil Rights Team Project in the office of the Attorney General.

K Sawyer: A Nurse turned Social Worker. She received her MSW shortly before her 52nd birthday. She is a breast cancer survivor and works at the Bangor Outreach Office of the National MS Society.

Lisa Tuttle: Has worked extensively for social justice through promoting public health particularly for women. She previously worked at the Howard Bound Health Center in Chicago and now lives in Whitefield directing the Maine Immunization Program.

(pay equity cont. from pg. 1)

drew on the expertise and enthusiasm of dozens of groups and individuals, both in Maine and nationally. The next step of getting the information to the public will require similar strategy and investment. As a supporter of the Lobby and Policy Center, you helped provide the foundation for this remarkable success. A heartfelt thank you!

PORTLAND'S SENATOR JOEL ABROMSON DIES OF CANCER

Sadly, on January 14, our ally Senator Joel Abromson, 63, lost his battle with cancer. A strong supporter of women's reproductive choice, he is noted for sponsoring Maine's bill to outlaw discrimination against gays and lesbians. On his granite bench memorial overlooking his district, one can almost hear him saying, "My heart is on the left and my wallet is on the right." Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

TEN THOUSAND EAGLES

A poem by Representative Donna M. Loring of the Penobscot Nation in memory of the victims of September 11 and of those who suffer worldwide from the hatred and violence of oppressive regimes. *Ten Thousand Eagles* was read at our Bangor Breakfast of Champions, just days after the tragedy that has touched us all.

Ten thousand eagles flew that day across the bright blue sky to meet the spirits on their way from fiery smoke filled tombs. They soared above the dark, black clouds billowing from the earth and hovered for a moment there and saw the face of doom.

Ten thousand eagles gathered and swooped down beneath the clouds.

They found the spirits one by one and plucked them from their plight.

They carried each new spirit through the black and hate filled clouds.

They gave them each a shelter wrapped in warm wings oh so tight.

They gave them strength and comfort too on their unexpected flight.

On swift wings they flew towards their final destination where each spirit knew without any hesitation

There would be peace and love and harmony they would forever be

wrapped within the eagles' wings through all eternity.

Ten thousand eagles flew that day as all the world stood still and watched in shock and horror as the tragedy unfurled.

Now we are left here on this earth to face the billowing clouds and our eyes search for the eagles as we way our prayers out loud.

May our spirits soar on eagles' wings above the dark, black clouds of hatred, murder and revenge that keep us hatred bound.

Ten thousand eagles flew that day as the world stood still.

The eagles flew above those clouds.

Perhaps some day...we will.

(continued from pg. 3)

Senators Term Limited in 2002

Name	Party	District	County
*(see left) Joel Abromson	R	27	Cumberland
Norman Ferguson, Jr.	R	24	Oxford
Jill Goldthwait	I	5	Hancock
Susan Longley	D	11	Waldo and (Appleton of Knox)
Michael Michaud	D	3	Aroostook and Penobscot
S. Peter Mills	R	13	Somerset and (Clinton of Kennebec)
Anne Rand	D	28	Cumberland
Mary Small	R	19	Sagadahoc and (Harpwell of Cumberland)

(continued on pg. 5)

WDI GETS A NEW NAME!

The Maine Women's Policy Center

In the last newsletter, we notified you of our newsletter name change. Even more changes have occurred recently! As planned, the Women's Development Institute completed its intensive year-long strategic planning process to evaluate operations and infrastructure. As part of our effort to build a stronger, more vital and visible organization, we changed the name of the Women's Development Institute to reflect our primary passion and focus: We are now called the **Maine Women's Policy Center**! Our mission has been reaffirmed: to optimize the lives of Maine women and girls to become full participants and leaders in our communities through the development of public policy, research, education, outreach, leadership and legislative action.

Representatives Term Limited in 2002 *(continued from pg. 4)*

Name	Party	District	Town/City
Randall L. Berry	D	93	Leeds, Livermore, Livermore Falls, and Canton
Gerald N. Bouffard	D	90	Lewiston (part of)
John T. Buck	R	44	Yarmouth
Howard A. Chick	R	6	Lebanon and Sanford (part of)
Nancy L. Chizmar	D	84	Lisbon (part of)
Mabel J. Desmond	D	146	Ashland, Castle Hill, Mapleton, New Sweden, Wade, Washburn and Woodland
David M. Etnier	D	51	Arrowsic, Georgetown, Phippsburg, and Harpswell
Charles D. Fisher	D	115	Brewer (part of)
Walter R. Gooley	R	78	Farmington and Industry
Bonnie Green	D	83	Monmouth, Sabbathus and Wales
Janice E Labrecque	R	23	Gorham (part of)
Chris P. Lovett	R	21	Scarborough (part of)
Lucy R. Madore	R	95	Augusta (part of)
Arthur F. Mayo III	R	54	Bath (part of)
Richard A. Nass	R	11	Acton, Alfred, Newfield, Parsonsfield and Shapleigh
Judith B. Peavey	R	55	Bath (part of), Dresden, West Bath, Woolwich and Westport
Royce W. Perkins	R	128	Blue Hill, Brooksville, Castine, Orland, Penobscot, Surry and Verona
William D. Pinkham	R	132	Eastbrook, Gouldsboro, Hancock, Lamoine, Osborn, Sorrento, Trenton, Waltham, and Winter Harbor
Edward J. Povich	D	127	Clifton, Dedham, Ellsworth, Mariaville and Otis
Shirley K. Richard	D	97	Athens, Cambridge, Harmony, Madison and Solon
Michael V. Saxl	D	31	Portland (part of)
Vaughn A. Stedman	R	108	Canaan, Cornville, Hartland, Palmyra and St. Albans
John L. Tuttle, Jr.	D	10	Sanford (part of)
Paul Volenik	D	129	Brooklin, Cranberry Isles, Deer Isle, Frenchboro, Isle au Haut, North Haven, Sedgewick, Stonington, Swan's Island, Tremont, and Vinalhaven
G. Paul Waterhouse	R	46	Bridgton, Denmark, Harrison, Lovell and Sweden
Elizabeth Watson	D	82	Farmingdale, Litchfield and West Gardiner
Edgar Wheeler	R	143	Bridgewater, Chapman, Hammond, Littleton, Ludlow, Presque Isle (part of), Smyrna and Westfield
Tom J. Winsor	R	68	Greenwood, Norway, Waterford and West Paris

COMING THIS SPRING...

We will be hosting benefit dinners around the state this spring! In April and early May, Flatbread Co. in Portland and Rogue River Food & Supply Co. in Damariscotta will donate a portion of food sales to the Policy Center during the events. It will be a great time for Lobby and Policy Center supporters to meet and share what we've built with other members of our communities. Call us for more info.

IN MEMORY, LINDA SMITH DYER

1948-2001

We are sorry to announce that Linda Smith Dyer, passionate leader for womens' issues, lost her long battle with cancer, Thursday, Sept. 27, 2001. She was one of the original

founders of the Maine Women's Lobby in 1978. In March 2001, Linda was inducted into the Maine Women's Hall of Fame and received the Sarah Orne Jewett (posthumously) from the Maine Women's Fund in October. Linda graduated from the University of Maine School of Law in 1980 and served as president of the Maine Bar Association in 1998.

In honor of her life and dedication to women, the Linda Smith Dyer Fellowship will allow the continuation of her strong example of public policy and public interest work. The Fellowship will support an internship by a law student from the University of Maine School of Law to work at the Maine Women's Policy Center on public policy initiatives and projects relating to Maine women and girls. We are excited to develop a project in memory of Linda, who remains an inspiration to us all. Donations in her name will go to the Linda Smith Dyer Fellowship.

INFORMATION REQUEST

History of the Lives of Maine Women in Industrial Towns

Betty Parker Duff is looking for letters, diaries, and journals of women who lived in Millinocket and East Millinocket prior to 1950 to include in a Ph.D. dissertation about the roles of women in company towns where only men were employed in the industry. Especially interesting are the stories of Franco-American women, western European immigrants, and wives of Great Northern's managers, engineers, and supervisors. Her interest lies in the day-to-day lives of women, their daily routine, friends, and kinds of food they served. If you know where information of this sort is available, please contact her: 27E University Park, Old Town, ME 04468 207-581-8918 bduff41@maine.edu

email Join our email action network!

Because so many legislative issues demand immediate action, we use weekly email alerts to keep our members posted about urgent policy issues during the legislative session. Throughout the rest of the year, we send occasional news and event announcements that we think will be of interest to our members. Signing up is easy! Just email us at MwomenL@aol.com and write "subscribe" in the text of the message!



ABOUT THE MAINE WOMEN'S LOBBY AND MAINE WOMEN'S POLICY CENTER

The Maine Women's Lobby (founded in 1978) is a statewide nonpartisan, nonprofit membership organization. Annual membership dues are \$35. However, MWL is committed to representing women of all economic means and any contribution you are able to make entitles you to membership. Because the Lobby is engaged in lobbying activities, contributions are not tax-deductible.

The Maine Women's Policy Center, formerly known as the Women's Development Institute (founded in 1990) is a non-lobbying organization focusing on public outreach, education, leadership development, and research. Contributions are welcome and are tax-deductible.

The Maine Women's Advocate is published jointly by MWL and WPC quarterly. MWL also produces printed and email legislative alerts during the legislative session. If you would like to receive email alerts, please email us at MWomenL@aol.com and write "subscribe to email alert" in the body of the message.

Staff: Laura Fortman, Executive Director; Kaylyn Palella, Director of Development and Communications; Carol Clapp, Administrative Assistant.

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