

Caucus of Women Legislators



ROOM 460 STATE HOUSE BOSTON MASSACHUSETTS 02133 617 722 2266

2nd Quarter 2009

Caucus Tours Women-Owned Businesses



l-r: Representatives Katherine Clark, Kathi-Anne Reinstein, Kate Hogan, Kay Khan, Elizabeth Poirier, Alice Wolf, Lida Harkins and Jody Adams

House Chair Alice K. Wolf recently sponsored a tour of the women-owned businesses of Harvard Square to cap off the Caucus's spring "small business" theme. Harvard Square, with scores of celebrated restaurants and shops run by women, epitomizes women's growing and pivotal economic role in the Commonwealth.

Prior to the tour, Representative Wolf, whose district includes Harvard Square, welcomed Caucus members and business owners at Rialto, owned by celebrated chef Jody Adams. Denise Jillson, Executive Director of the Harvard Square Business Association, facilitated the event where members of the Caucus met and spoke with the women-owners of dozens of local restaurants, shops, and real estate agencies in the Square.

The businesses toured included Lemlem's Gallery owned by Lemlem McCrary, Marley Brush's Crema Café, Passport Boutique owned by Jessica Good, and TistiK run by Perla Brito Cuevas, all women of different ages, eth-

nicities and backgrounds who are thriving in some of the best locations the Square has to offer.

While gathered after the tour at the Cambridge Artists Cooperative, Caucus members received a visit from Cambridge Mayor E. Denise Simmons, who welcomed Representative Wolf and her colleagues with great enthusiasm about the particular successes of the women of Cambridge. Jinny Nathans, President of the Cambridge Historical Society, also gave Caucus members an account of the area's first women - professors' wives and immigrants - who opened shops of their own, essentially creating the culture of innovation for which Harvard Square is now known.

SAVE THE DATE!

**Caucus Retreat
July 17th**

**Paid Sick Days
Brown Bag Lunch
July 14th**

**Dr. Karen Antman, Dean
BU Medical School
Brown Bag Lunch
September 16th**

Task Forces Hard At Work

The Caucus's Domestic Violence Task Force, chaired by Representative Mary Grant and Representative Cory Atkins, will hold a meeting in July with Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) and domestic violence experts from the offices of Middlesex District Attorney Gerry Leone and Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley to assess any gaps between the legal

process and the state's services to victims of domestic abuse. The Domestic Violence Task Force is also focusing on dating violence prevention by producing a packet of free educational programs to be distributed to all high schools in Massachusetts.

The Women in Prisons Task Force Chairwoman Kay Khan is organizing a preliminary visit to the Massachusetts Correctional

Institution at Framingham in order to review the condition of the women's facilities there. Undersecretary of the Executive Office of Criminal Justice Mary Beth Heffernan met with the Women in Prisons Task Force recently to discuss her plan to inform members of the Caucus about the several issues surrounding the plight of incarcerated women in the Commonwealth.

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Caucus of Women Legislators

A Message from the Co-Chairs



Senator Patricia D. Jehlen (D-Somerville) and Representative Alice K. Wolf (D-Cambridge)

Dear Colleagues, Staff and Friends,

Since April, the House and Senate have progressed toward sweeping changes in the way state government does its business. This has been a season of vigorous debate and wrenching assessments as well as innovative solutions to difficult issues.

Through Transportation, Pension and Ethics Reform, the people of Massachusetts will greatly benefit from accountable, transparent and cost efficient government. These significant reforms provide a giant step toward assuring a future devoid of many of the specific challenges facing us today. Although the weakened economy forced a dire budget process, it also forced an awakening reassessment of priorities for the future.

In all of this, the women of the Legislature have stood firmly for their beliefs on every side of tough issues. We are trusted to make sound and considered judgments by our constituencies and have fought hard to maintain that trust, especially during this demanding time. Particularly admirable has been the stamina and courage exhibited by our newest members, the women of the freshman class. We applaud the spirit that each of these women has shown under such pressure.

We look forward to continuing our hard work in the months to come with our colleagues of the Caucus.

Sincerely,
Senator Patricia D. Jehlen and Representative Alice K. Wolf

LEGISLATORS RALLY FOR PAY EQUITY

Many Massachusetts State Legislators marked the importance of the 28th day of April as Pay Equity Day. The date was in no way arbitrary. It had the special significance of being the date to which the average woman had to work past the end of the calendar year to earn as much as her male counterpart did in the previous calendar year.

The issue has been a serious focus for members of the Caucus of Women Legislators, who maintain that until there are laws in place to rectify the shocking disparities in pay for women, the issue will not resolve itself. Senator Harriette L. Chandler (D-Worcester), Senator Patricia D. Jehlen (D-Somerville) and Representative Alice K. Wolf (D-Cambridge) have all weighed in heavily on the subject, filing comprehensive legislation designed to define compara-

ble work in order to close existing loopholes which compound the problem. In a study released recently by the American Association of University Women, census data revealed that, although women with college degrees earned more than those without, the average annual wage gap between men and women with degrees neared \$10,000 nationally. Mi-

nority women are hit hardest with African American women earning 67 cents compared to a white male's dollar, and Hispanic women earning only a little more than half at 58 cents to the male dollar. Though the gap is widest in the private sector, even in the federal government women's pay trails men's by seven percent.

Did You Know?

This year, April 28th marked the day that the average working woman finally earned as much as her male counterpart had in the previous calendar year.



Caucus members joined Jane Doe, Inc. during their Advocacy Day April 13th.

Front row (l-r):
Rep. Mary Grant, Kourou Pich (HarborCOV), Debra Robbin (Jane Doe Inc.), Rep. Jennifer Benson, House Chair Alice Wolf, Sen. Jennifer Flanagan, Rep. Katherine Clark.

Back row (l-r):
Gina Scaramella (BARCC), Laura Van Zandt (REACH), Isa Woldegiorguis (Jane Doe Inc.), Mary Lauby (Jane Doe Inc.), Sheridan Haines (Governor's Council Addressing Domestic Violence), Sen. Susan Tucker

Did You Know?

According to a recent study from the Boston Public Health Commission, 1 in 11 Boston high schools students report being physically harmed by a date, friend, or acquaintance.

Ardent supporters of victim assistance and rights joined Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray, public safety officials, district attorneys and key service providers April 23rd during the 25th anniversary event celebrating the Massachusetts Victim Bill of Rights at the State House.

Caucus members from left are:
Rep. Ann-Margaret Ferrante, Rep. Ellen Story, Rep. Denise Provost, Rep. Mary Grant and Laura Teicher (for Sen. Susan Tucker)



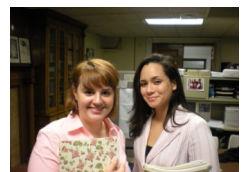
THERE WERE FIFTEEN KNOWN DOMESTIC HOMICIDES IN MASSACHUSETTS IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2009 ALONE

Caucus of Women Legislators Interns

MaryRose Mazzola, interning for the Caucus and the Domestic Violence Task Force, is entering her sophomore year at Merrimack College where she is a Political Science and French double major. She has worked on local, state, and national campaigns since age fourteen and was the youngest volunteer at the DNC in 2004. Outside of her interest in politics, she runs cross country, plays tennis, sings, and handles dogs in American Kennel Club dog shows.

Matiely Lugo and **Kimberly Cotter** have joined the Caucus this summer to continue in-depth analysis for the Women in Prisons Task Force. Mattie recently completed her Associate degree in Criminal Justice from

North Shore Community College and has been accepted to attend Salem State College this fall. Fluent in Spanish, Mattie brings extra dimension to the issues surrounding the diverse population of women in state correctional facilities. Kimberly, a Holy Cross graduate, previously interned with the Massachusetts League of Women Voters and brings a multi-faceted and clear understanding of women's issues of all kinds. Among countless other accomplishments, she is notably the Director of *The Vagina Monologues* sponsored by the Holy Cross Women's Forum at the beginning of March.



Top: MaryRose Mazzola
Bottom: Kimberly Cotter and Matiely Lugo

Caucus of Women Legislators

Celebrating over 20 Years of Service!

Five esteemed members of the Caucus of Women Legislators - Representative Gloria Fox, Representative Lida Harkins, Senator Joan Menard, Senator Susan Tucker, and Senator Marian Walsh - have served twenty or more years in the state legislature.



Representing the Seventh Suffolk District including her adopted hometown of Roxbury, Representative **Gloria L. Fox** is the longest serving Caucus member in the state legislature. Since 1985, she has conscientiously served her city constituency as a champion for community activism, human services and economic development. She's held a variety of distinguished leadership roles while in the Legislature and is currently the Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on Housing as well as a member of the House Committees on Rules and Ways and Means. In addition to being a member of the Women's Caucus, Representative Fox is a former Chairwoman of the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus.

Representative **Lida E. Harkins** of Needham has been a member of the House since 1989. Early in her tenure, she led the fight for women's equality in the Legislature. Not only did she successfully gain the women of the House a restroom in the Members Lobby where previously there had only been facilities for men, but insisted and won the fight for having at least one woman on every committee during a meeting with House Speaker Charles Flaherty and Senate President William Bulger. Prior to that most women served on committees considering more traditionally female issues such as Education, Human Services and Health Care, with none serving on the Judiciary, Taxation or Insurance Committees for example. She is currently Vice Chair of the House Committee on Ethics, and serves on both the Joint Committee on Education and the Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development.



Senator **Joan M. Menard** of Fall River serves the First Bristol and Plymouth. She was a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 1979-99, serving as Majority Whip in 1984 and again from 1992-96, and was elected to the State Senate in 2000, serving as Majority Whip from 2003-2008. Currently the Assistant Majority Leader, Senator Menard is also a member of the Committees on Ethics and Rules, Election Laws, and Labor and Workforce Development.

Senator **Susan C. Tucker** of Andover represents the Second Essex and Middlesex. After serving in the Massachusetts House from 1982-92, she was elected to the State Senate in 1999. She chairs the Joint Committee on Housing and is the Vice Chair of the Joint Committee on Telecommunication, Utilities, and Energy. In addition, Senator Tucker serves as a member of the Joint Committees on Education, Ways and Means, Economic Development and Emerging Technologies, Financial Services, and Revenue. "After all these years, I still consider Chapter 403 of the Acts of 1990 the Caucus's finest hour. Women legislators from both parties came together and spoke over and over again with one voice: it is time to make domestic violence and the violation of restraining orders serious crimes. The Caucus ran into some "hefty" opposition from defense lawyers, particularly in the Senate. Unlike today, few Caucus members were in leadership positions, and we had to beg, struggle, and shame our way through every step of the bill's passage."



Senator **Marian Walsh** of West Roxbury represents parts of both Suffolk and Norfolk counties. She served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 1989-92 and has been a member of the Senate since 1993. Senator Walsh was Assistant Majority Leader from 2003-2008, and she now serves as Senate Majority Whip. She is Vice Chair of the Committee on Mental Health and Substance Abuse as well as a member of the Committee on Community Development and Small Business and the Committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development.

The Caucus of Women Legislators celebrates and honors these phenomenal women for their dedicated service of at least two decades to the Commonwealth!

THE CAUCUS OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS IS A BIPARTISAN, BICAMERAL GROUP OF FEMALE LEGISLATORS, THE MISSION OF WHICH IS TO ENHANCE THE ECONOMIC STATUS AND EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND TO ENCOURAGE AND FOSTER WOMEN IN ALL BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

SUPPORT THE TROOPS WITH THE WOMEN'S CAUCUS
Christmas in July
 Military Drive
 July 13—July 24
 Room 460

Caucus Hosts Policy Brief on Women's Educational Disparities

The Caucus of Women Legislators invited research analyst experts to address the release of a significant study crafted by the Wellesley Centers for Women regarding the persistent inequalities in the postsecondary education system for women, especially those who are low-income.



House Caucus Chair Alice K. Wolf introduced experts on education for low-income women

Caucus Co-Chairs Senator Patricia D. Jehlen and Representative Alice K. Wolf introduced Dr. Erika Kates, a senior research scientist from the Wellesley Centers for Women, who stressed that far too little state funding of welfare services is being used for post-

secondary education. According to Kates, there is a broad disparity among Massachusetts women's level of education which directly correlates with income, and our nation-wide rankings show it: Massachusetts ranks among the top states in the country for its percentage of women holding a

higher education degree, yet ranks only 20th for its percentage of low-income women holding those degrees.

Tami Ohler of the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center and Ruthie Liberman, Vice President for Public Policy at Crittenton Women's Union, supported Kates's findings by offering hard evidence suggesting that if the state focused on providing low-income women with quality training and education, instead of cycling them through often futile job searches, the state would reap economic benefits in the long run. Not only would such education increase future revenue for Massachusetts by adding taxpayers to its rolls, but would also result in less necessary funding for the welfare system in the future.

All three experts agreed that if low-income women had access to postsecondary education without fear of losing welfare benefits, they could in fact pull themselves out of the system altogether. Ultimately, women earning better wages at higher skill level jobs don't need state aid.

INVESTING IN THE EDUCATION OF LOW-INCOME WOMEN WOULD RESULT IN REDUCED NEED FOR FUTURE WELFARE FUNDING

Awards and Recognitions



Representative Gloria L. Fox was honored in January by the Martin Luther King Committee with the Rev. Dr. Martin L King 22nd annual Memorial award. The service award was bestowed "In Honor and Recognition of Your Contributions to Communities of Color". Also, the Prince Hall Grand Chapter Order of the Eastern Star distinguished Representative Fox with their coveted "Women of Color: Changing Our World Award" and this spring, she was also awarded the 2009 "Fighting to End AIDS Award" by the Multicultural AIDS Awareness Coalition.

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CAUCUS OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS



MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE

CONTACT US:

Jessica Leitz
617-722-2266
jessica.leitz@state.ma.us

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Joan M. Menard
Therese Murray
Karen E. Spilka
Susan C. Tucker
Marian Walsh

Awards and Recognitions cont'd



The MA Coalition of School-Based Health Centers presented **Representative Alice K. Wolf** with the School-Based Health Center Legislative Champion Award on April 9th. The statewide organization leads the movement to put healthcare where kids spend the majority of their time – in schools. Their Legislative Champion award recognizes her unwavering commitment to health care for children and teens.



At the 3rd Annual Latina Women's Conference Celebrating International Women's Day, **Senator Susan C. Tucker** was presented with an award by the Consul General of the Dominican Republic for "her excellent example of respect, hard work, and advocacy for immigrant women". The award from the Consul General of the Dominican Republic was presented Friday, March 13.



Senator Jennifer L. Flanagan received the Distinguished Service Award in the Field of Public Service from the Perkins School in Lancaster. Perkins School Executive Director Dr. Charles P. Conroy presented the award at the school's year-end services to Senator Flanagan, recognizing her dedication and commitment to education at all levels.



Representative Patricia A. Haddad was recently awarded the highest honor bestowed by the Massachusetts Association of Chapter 766 Approved Private Schools (MAAPS). The MAAPS Award for Public Service was presented by Executive Director James Majors, who noted that "[it] is presented to an individual for outstanding public service and achievement in the advancement of education and treatment services to students with disabilities."



The Worcester County League of Sportsmen's Clubs presented **Representative Jennifer M. Callahan** with their esteemed Legislator of the Year Award in March. Representative Callahan was also honored by the Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) on June 18th with their prestigious State Award for Excellence in Advocacy.



Emerson College recently honored **Representative Kathi-Anne Reinstein** for her steadfast dedication and commitment to public service. Representative Reinstein delivered the 5th annual Walt Littlefield Distinguished Speaker presentation at her alma mater and was bestowed with this high honor for her dedication to public service and her resolve for taking on such vast and important issues especially at young age. Noted Richard West, Chair of the Department of Communication Studies, "Who could not respect someone so young willing to take on issues that are so old?"