



ND Women's Voice

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 1

SPRING 2011

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

WE: Rise 2

Women Empowered: Women's Lobby Day

Economic 4

Security: Childcare Subsidies for Mothers Attending College

Reproductive 4

Health: Bill challenges Roe V. Wade

Education: 5

Sex Education in ND Schools

Up Coming 6
Events

WE Rise 7

Advocacy Training & Progressive Women Networking Event

From the Director's Desk



Recently, the eyes of the nation have turned to Wisconsin as the Governor and public sector unions have become embroiled in a battle that cannot be seen as anything less than a fight for survival: survival for unions and

workers' rights. The rallies have been inspiring, but at the same time I ask why North Dakotan's aren't also rallying? We are in the enviable position of having lots of money. So, why were our teachers pensions on the chopping block (barely squeaking by the House), why has funding for higher education been cut (and thereby raising tuition), why

aren't we able to make positive policy changes for the people most in need (like increasing the number of children with health insurance)? Why aren't we rallying to change the direction of the North Dakota session? Let's get fired up and demand better of our policy makers. **Come to WE Rise March 13 & 14!** Let your voice be heard.

Member's Corner: Featuring Berta Sauvageau

As a statewide organization, the North Dakota Women's Network is comprised of a talented and remarkable group of individuals across the state with limited opportunities to meet one another.

The Member's Corner was created for you to become acquainted with a fellow member of the Women's Network. Say "hello" to this issue's featured member...

My name is Berta Sauvageau. As a senior in the social work program at Minot State University, I am volunteering at the Network for my community change project.

When I first learned about the Network and its mission, I was relieved to learn an agency advocating for women's issues was at work in North Dakota.

I attended my first Feminist First Friday gathering this February and found it to be a new and interesting experience. It was refreshing to meet women and men fighting for legislation that empowers oppressed populations in North Dakota.

Women's equality and rights are issues that must be addressed in North Dakota. Currently women make up only 14.9% of North Dakota's legislature. There will be a more accurate representation of North Dakota's needs and wishes when more women are in leadership roles, participating in decision making processes.

My work is focusing on the upcoming advocacy training and WE Rise events. I have found my work at NDWN to be a

learning and enriching experience. I am excited to attend the advocacy training.

As a young woman at the brink of my social work career, meeting women who have experience in political and policy leadership will serve as a guiding force and encourage my future endeavors. Exposure to the North Dakota Women's Network has opened my eyes to new possibilities for my personal and professional future.



WE Rise: Women Empowered

March 14th, 2011 marks the second WE Rise: Women Empowered event, a women's lobby day held by the North Dakota Women's Network (NDWN). For one day our members as well as women from across the state will be in the epicenter of our state's legislative activity. WE Rise, women's lobby day, is an amazing hands-on opportunity for women to learn about the legislative process.

Women's Empowerment is a core component of the Network's efforts. WE Rise empowers women by demystifying the legislative process as the first step to women's political participation. WE Rise is that step where women will learn, participate, carry their enthusiasm home to the other women in their lives and have the opportunity to say "represent me".

WE Rise will offer behind the scenes insight, meeting with our local representatives and training on how to lobby. The four focus areas of: freedom from violence, reproductive health, economic security and education allow and encourage women to advocate for strong public policy in the social justice areas that they care the most.

There is much work to do to improve the lives of women across the state. The last election cycle resulted in a drop in the number of women in the legislative body to a disappointing 14.9%. The time has come for the women of North Dakota to unite and have our voices heard. **WE Rise: Women Empowered** is *this opportunity and will be a truly historic day for our state!*



Transportation to attendees from across the state will be provided. Buses will run round-trip from Fargo, Grand Forks, and Jamestown. Attendees from other areas are urged to contact Amy Jacobson to arrange other travel arrangements.

If you will incur other costs that may be prohibitive, scholarships may be available. Please contact Renee Stromme at (701)223-6985 or visit www.standupnd.org for more information.

The day's agenda will be as follows:

8:30 am—9:00 am:
Registration in the Great Hall

9:15am:
Welcome and Review the Events of the Day

9:15am:
Team leaders take participants to committee hearings and on Capital tours

12:00pm:
Lunch with leaders in the Great Hall

1:00pm:
Observe session

2:00pm:
Convene in Brynhild Haugland Room, discussion of day's events

3:00pm:
Closing with the Group that Opened the Box

3:30pm
Dismiss and transportation depart

Contacting our North Dakota Senators and Representative

Kent Conrad (D)

DC Address:

The Honorable Kent Conrad
United States Senate
530 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
DC Phone: (202) 224-2043
DC Fax: (202) 224-7776

Email Address:

<https://conrad.senate.gov/webform.html>

Homepage:

<http://conrad.senate.gov/>

US Federal Building, Room 228
220 East Rosser Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58501
Phone: (701) 258-4648
FAX: (701) 258-1254

US Federal Building, Room 306
657 Second Avenue North
Fargo, ND 58102
Phone: (701) 232-8030
Fax:(701) 232-6449

33 S 3rd St., Suite 104
Grand Forks, ND 58203
Phone: (701) 775-9601
Fax:(701) 746-1990

US Federal Building, Room 105
100 First Street SW
Minot, ND 58701
Phone: (701) 852-0703
FAX: (701) 838-8196

John Hoeven (R)

DC Address:

The Honorable John Hoeven
United States Senate
G11 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington DC, 205010
DC Phone: (202) 224-2551
Fax: (202) 224-7999

Email Address

http://hoeven.senate.gov/contact_form.cfm

Homepage

<http://hoeven.senate.gov/>

US Federal Building
220 East Rosser Avenue, Room 312
Bismarck, ND 58501
Phone: (701) 250-4618
Fax: (701) 250-4484

1802 32nd Avenue South, Room B
Fargo, ND 58103
Phone: (701) 239-5389
Fax: (701) 239-5112

Federal Building
102 North Fourth Street, Room 108
Grand Forks, ND 58203
Phone: (701) 746-8972

Rick Berg (R)

DC Address

The Honorable Rick Berg
323 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515
DC Phone: (202) 225-2611

Email Address

<https://berg.house.gov/contact-me>

Homepage

<http://berg.house.gov/>

220 East Rosser Avenue, 328 Federal Building
Bismarck, ND 58501
Phone: (701) 224-0355

3003 32nd Avenue South, Suite 6
Fargo, ND 58103
Phone: (701) 235-9760

Our delegates have offices in multiple locations, improving the access for constituents. When you reach out to any of them, you will first speak with their staff. Most often, that is the most reasonable approach. For example, if you want to let the Senators or Representative know your preference on a particular piece of legislation, calling the office and voicing your opinion through a staff member is quite effective. The staff will record the information and pass it along to the office holder. There is no need to have detailed talking points for this call. Your call can be as simple as "I would like him to vote no" with perhaps a small mention of the reason: the bill disregards the needs of women, etc. In a few weeks you will receive a follow up letter from the Senator or Representative sharing his perspective on the issue.

As a constituent you can also request an audience with a Congressman. Because of their busy schedules, it is important to be prepared and concise in your discussions. These meetings require more preparation and details. Meeting with the office holder can be the most influential form of contact, followed by postal letters, then calls and finally email. If you mail a letter to the Washington office, it will take a good length of time to get to him due to the mail sorting process in DC, so plan accordingly.

Being an active participant in the legislative process is really quite simple and effective. Go out there and let your voice be heard. That is how we collectively improve the lives of women.

Economic Security

By: April Fairfield,
Senior Policy Analyst, North
Dakota Economic Policy Project
(NDEPP)



Attaining a bachelor degree as a parent on TANF is almost an impossible task. Child Care for one infant costs \$7500 on average for one year. A parent can spend \$30,000 on childcare before the child reaches 1st grade.

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), has been the long standing program in North Dakota for providing assistance to low income families who want to attain a higher education. In 2004, the funding for CCAP was lowered effecting many families

across North Dakota. This cut made it possible to receive money for the first two years of college, but no further. After the cut in funding, North Dakota was ranked fiftieth in child care assistance.

However, there is another source of financial assistance available to help families in need. That is Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Money from TANF can be transferred to CCAP to help parents with child care so they can go back to school. In fact this is encouraged on a federal level because 4 percent of money given through the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to the CCAP is required to be spent on quality, which is an area child care would fit into.

Proponents of providing childcare

subsidies to mothers receiving TANF say if they give money to help low income parents going back to school, they will have to cut funding in other areas.

This is the dilemma North Dakota is currently facing. Statistics show that people with four year degrees make 75 percent more than people with a high school diploma. Families with a head of household with a four year degree are thirteen times less likely to be poor than their high school counter parts. Child care is beneficial to families and improves economic stability and structure. These are all reasons having funding for parents to attain their bachelors degree would be beneficial to North Dakota. Unfortunately, ND's Senate voted against increasing child care subsidy options.

“Families with a head of household with a four year degree are thirteen times less likely to be poor than their high school counter parts.”

April Fairfield

By: Amy Jacobson,
Planned Parenthood, MN, ND, SD

A bill that could make women liable for the death or miscarriage of their fertilized egg has passed the North Dakota House of Representatives. HB 1450 gives the rights of personhood to a fertilized egg. The goal of this Bill is to make obsolete the ruling of Roe vs. Wade.

Under HB1450, a fertilized egg would have the full rights of liberty, life and the pursuit of happiness. This Bill makes all forms of abortion illegal, yet could effect more areas than just abortion. It would leave a woman

Reproductive Health

liable for a fertilized egg upon conception. It could mean that any woman who has a miscarriage or difficulty in pregnancy would be investigated for murder, manslaughter or reckless endangerment. In vitro fertilization would be banned because fertilized eggs would have full rights. The same could happen for certain birth control pills. All forms of abortion would be illegal no matter the circumstances.

While this Bill would give a fertilized egg full rights, it would take away over half of our population's rights. That is the right for a woman to choose what to do with her body and life

in a reproductive hardship. Women's choice to decide what is best for herself, her family and the future of her fertilized egg would already be decided for her in the state of North Dakota if this Bill is passed.

A similar Bill was passed in the house in 2009, but was defeated in the senate because of medical testimony. A defeat of HB 1450 can happen again with the voice of supporters for women's rights in North Dakota.



Bill Seeks to Regulate Sex Education in ND

House Bill 1229 was introduced to the North Dakota House of Representatives by Representatives Grande, Rohr, Schatz, and Hunsakor and Senators Luick and O'Connell.

This bill will require all ND public schools to include abstinence-based concepts in their health curriculum.

Originally, some, but not all, of the required positions of this curriculum are:

1. abstinence is the expected standard for all students
2. A mutually faithful monogamous relationship within the context of marriage is the expected standard of human sexual activity
3. Sexual activity outside the context of marriage is likely to have harmful psychological and physical side effects
4. Bearing children out of wedlock is likely to have harmful consequences for the child, the child's parents, and society;
5. It is important to attain economic self-sufficiency before engaging in sexual activity (HB 1229).

Sex education centering on abstinence without providing education on safe sex techniques and birth control has not been shown to decrease incidence of pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases. In fact, it leaves youth more vulnerable because they are armed with the knowledge of safe sex techniques and birth control options.

Connie Hildebrand, representing

the American Association of University Women, provided factual information about the impact of sex education to decision makers about this issue.

Since its founding in 1881, AAUW has been committed to protect programs that "meet the needs of girls in elementary and secondary education," and guarantee "the separation of church and state," as well as "choice in the determination of one's reproductive life."

AAUW supports the right of every woman to obtain medically accurate information, and to access safe and comprehensive reproductive health services. We strongly oppose school health curriculum that limit young people's information and choices by promoting "abstinence-only" education. Abstinence-only programs censor information on contraception, pregnancy prevention, and sexually transmitted infections.

AAUW supports "abstinence-plus" or comprehensive sexuality education programs that include information about both abstinence and contraception. After years of abstinence-only education, the United States has the highest rate of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections in the developed world. Over 80 percent of abstinence-only curricula contain "false, misleading or distorted information about reproductive health." Abstinence-only programs have never been proven effective in delaying the onset of sexual activities of young people, and often result in

riskier sexual behavior by teenagers.

AAUW believes that in the best health curriculums abstinence is always stressed, but information with regard to sexual activity and pregnancy must be included, as well as ways to deal with peer pressure on the issues. School health curriculum needs to include medically accurate, age appropriate, comprehensive sex education. Studies indicate "abstinence-plus" curriculum can help young people delay sexual activity, increase contraceptive use among those who are sexually active, and help prevent spread of sexually-transmitted infections.

It is short-sighted to withhold medically accurate and comprehensive information from young people. AAUW believes individuals should have complete and accurate information about their reproductive health and family planning options. Only with complete reproductive health information can young people make informed and appropriate decisions.

"After years of abstinence-only education, the United States has the highest rate of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections in the developed world."

Connie Hildebrand



Upcoming Events

FREE Advocacy and Grassroots Organizing Training

Empower yourself to be your own advocate!

Date: March 13, 2011

Time: 1:00pm-5:00pm

Location: Doublewood Inn

City: Bismarck, ND

Learn about lobbying tips, political structure and testimony preparation

For more information and to register: www.standupnd.org

WE Rise: Women Empowered, Women's Lobby Day

Join us for this incredible hands-on learning experience for women!

Date: March 14, 2011

Time: 8:30am-3:00pm

Location: Capital Building

City: Bismarck, ND

Gain behind the scenes insight, meetings with our local lawmakers, and training on how to lobby

For more information and to register: www.standupnd.org



The North Dakota Women's Network is made possible through the generous support of the Chambers Family Fund and member support.

Freedom From Violence

By: Janelle Moos,
Executive Director ND Council on Abused Women's Services, Coalition Against Sexual Assault in North Dakota

The North Dakota Women's Network advocates for women's rights, including the right to freedom from violence.

Freedom from violence is one of four topic areas included in the women's lobby day, WE Rise: and an important topic of legislative action in the 2011 session.

This legislative session, in the area of domestic violence and sexual assault, numerous bills are crucial to improving the lives of women through

research, education, and action. Two of these bills include:

Senate Bill 2247 or the domestic violence fatality review bill

The domestic violence fatality review bill will create a commission that will analyze deaths caused by, related to, or somehow traceable to domestic violence.

The review creates a greater understanding of the tragedy and ideally leads to the implementation of preventive interventions. Comprehensive fatality review allows us to make sense of the death(s) by recreating the experiences of the victims, perpetrators, and other

parties involved in the case, exploring the compromises and challenges parties faced in accessing services, making decisions, and exploring strategies.

SB 2195 or the termination of a lease due to domestic violence bill

This bill will create a process in which applicants will be able to have complaints investigated and processed by the Department of Labor for reported housing discrimination cases.

It is important that North Dakotan's support these and other efforts to end violence against women.

"The review creates a greater understanding of the tragedy and ideally leads to the implementation of preventive interventions."

Janelle Moos

We Rise: Women Empowered Advocacy Training and Progressive Women

Networking Event

By: Heidi Jacobs

Advocacy Training

Are you interested in meeting North Dakotans working toward change? Do you want to network and learn more about the political process? Are you interested in learning the process of grassroots organizing?

We have an exciting opportunity for you! The North Dakota Women's Network is sponsoring FREE advocacy training and progressive women networking event on Sunday, March 13th from 12:30 pm until 5:00 pm on Sunday, March 13, 2011 at the Doublewood Inn in Bismarck.

Empower yourself to be your own advocate! Linda Wurtz, a long time lobbyist in North Dakota, will preside over interesting and interactive advocacy training. Linda will walk through lobbying tips, political structure, and testimony preparation.

The day's agenda will include:

Leadership and Building Power as Women

Participants will gain a better understanding of the source of their own power and a more concrete basis of the need for women leaders in public office through interactive discussion of what leadership is and the five kinds of power as discussed in the Taxonomy of Power.

Building Relationships, Reputation, and Influencing Decision-makers

Panel members will focus on several areas including: building relationships, reputations, personal capitol, and coalitions. The panel will also talk about influencing decision makers.

Panel:

Doreen Riedman, North Dakota Association of Builders

Kayla Pulvermacher, North Dakota Farmers Union

Renee Pfenning, North Dakota Building and Construction Trades

Bonnie Palacek, Council on Abused Women's Services

Empower yourself to be your own advocate!

Committees and the power of personal testimony

This section of the training will focus on how to create a message to win on your issue.

- Committee process and what to expect
- Elements of powerful testimony
- five elements of a policy argument

Join us for this fun and informative day. For more information please contact Amy Jacobson at 701-261-4858 or ajacobson@ppmns.org. You can also RSVP online at www.standupnd.org.



Progressive Women Networking Event

The North Dakota Women's Network is sponsoring a Progressive Speed- Networking and social beginning at 5:30 pm after the advocacy training.

Progressive women from across the state will gather for dinner and an evening full of stimulating conversation and networking opportunities.

The evening will include a very unique and engaging round of speed networking and an amazing performance by Kirs Kitko. Join us for music, discussion and networking that will knock your socks off!

Register now or contact Amy Jacobson for more information at 701-261-4858 or ajacobson@ppmns.org. You can also RSVP online at www.standupnd.org.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jo-Nell Bakke
Co-Chair
Grand Forks

Laura Forde
Co-Chair
Bismarck

Melissa Gillett
Vice-Chair
Tolna

Kathy Osteen
Secretary/
Treasurer
Mandan

Amy Jacobson
Fargo

Aruna Seth
Bismarck

Brandy Randall
Fargo

Daphne Ghorbani
Bismarck

Mary Mitchell
Bismarck

Renee Stromme
Executive Director
Bismarck

Heidi Jacobs
AmeriCorps
VISTA
Bismarck

North Dakota Women's Network
 222 N. 4th. St.,# 215
 Bismarck, ND 58501
 Phone: (701) 255-6985
 (701) 226-1116
 E-mail: renee@ndwomen.org
 Website: www.ndwomen.org



As leaders, the North Dakota Women's Network will serve as the catalyst for improving the lives of women through communication, legislation and increased public activism.

NDWN Membership Information

Name: _____ Organization (if applicable): _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: __ Zip: _____
 Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Individual membership:

- \$30 Individual
- \$10 Student
- \$15 Daughter's Membership (Empower a young woman in your life!)
- A dollar amount more fitting for you (higher or lower).
- A financial contribution isn't possible at this time, but I lend my support.
 Availability (weekends, nights, days, certain times of year, etc...)

Organization membership (based on operating budget):

- \$100 for a budget under \$100,000
- \$150 for a budget between \$100,000 and \$500,000
- \$200 for a budget over \$500,000

Your membership contribution to NDWN: \$ _____
 Additional donation to NDWN: \$ _____
 Total enclosed: \$ _____

I support the mission of the North Dakota Women's Network and commit to the common purposes of NDWN to achieve full equality for women.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Make checks payable to **North Dakota Women's Network**. Memberships are requested on an annual basis. Send to:

North Dakota Women's Network
 222 N. 4th St., # 215
 Bismarck, ND 58501