

**Indiana Commission for Women
Hoosier INsight
Pilot Listening Session Report
Indiana State Library - Boardroom
Thursday, February 17, 2011
9:00a.m. – 11:00a.m.**

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Overview

The Indiana Commission for Women (ICW) embarked upon a pilot listening session on the morning of February 17 in order to test the process for the statewide listening project that the commission will be undertaking in the spring. This session was held for two primary reasons:

1. To determine if the specific process that ICW chose to utilize is the most effective way to engage constituents in Indiana
2. To jump start the project by asking women from various professional experiences to participate in the session.

As a group, the participants identified (32) issues facing women in Indiana. By consensus, the group voted and determined that the top three issues facing women that should be addressed first were: access to healthcare, more women in policy-making careers, and pay equity. An in-depth discussion of these top three priorities was completed in small groups. Each group was asked to answer specific questions regarding their issue and to start developing a plan of action for addressing the issue in Indiana. The results of the discussions are detailed in later in this report.

Participants

A diverse group of women were invited to participate in the pilot listening session. ICW invited 50 women from various backgrounds and experiences to attend the session. Diversity in professional experience and ethnicity were considered in the selection of the invited women. The goal was to have at least 15 participants for the session; 16 women were able to attend the program. While there was a diverse group of women that were able to attend the event, the ethnic diversity was not as varied as ICW had hoped. When the agency holds the sessions statewide, demographic information will not be gathered, but ICW will make an effort to try to get the information to various demographic groups in order to encourage more diversity at the public sessions.

Participant Evaluations

Overall, the participant evaluations were very positive. The comments indicated that the participants felt that the session was meaningful and effective and were optimistic about the potential of the project. The suggestions for improvement were:

- Encourage more diversity in participation (ex. Racial, ethnic, age)
- Allow more time for discussion of issues
- Allow participants to comment on other issues that were not discussed in their small groups
- Categorize topics before voting
- If group is much larger, do a pair-share before opening a large group brainstorming session
- Send out a FAQ sheet prior to the session to allow for less explanation during the session and more time for discussion
- Discuss progress that is being made
- Share list of participants and contact information to encourage further discussions outside the session

The suggestions for improvement will be taken into consideration in order to better identify the best way to carry out the Hoosier INsight project.

Issues Identified

The participants of the pilot listening session identified the issues that they believed were barriers to women's full participation in society. These issues were then voted on to determine the top three issues facing women in Indiana. The numbers next to the issue represent the number of votes that issue received from the participants.

Access to healthcare – 9
 Addiction
 Affordable care (all ages)
 Differences between rural/urban needs
 Don't know own history
 Education – 2
 Gender pay equity – 5
 Generational poverty – 2
 Good paying jobs – 1
 Housing – 1
 Issues of safety
 Issues returning to the workforce
 Issues with Sandwich generation – taking care of children and aging parents
 Lack of access to healthy, affordable food & physical activity
 Lack of care giving resources
 Lack of female representation (business, government, etc.)
 Lack of interest in math/science (STEM) – 3
 Lack of knowledge about where to go for information/resources – 4
 Lack of providers for services/health
 Lack of self-care (women tend to take care of others first)
 Lack of women in leadership positions
 Male-dominating roles in society
 More positive role models – 1
 More women in policy-making careers – 8
 Needs at different states of life – 2
 Opportunities for advancement – 1
 Opportunities for women business owners – 1
 Other minority issues (race, disabilities, etc)
 Stereotypical gender roles – 2
 Transportation
 Violence against women
 Work/life balance – 2

Top Three Issues & Discussion

The top three issues that were identified by the participants were: 1) Access to healthcare, 2) More women in policy-making careers, and 3) Pay equity. Once these issues were identified, the participants broke up into small groups of 5-6 people to further discuss the components of each issue. Participants were asked to consider a series of questions regarding these issues in order to start developing a plan of action for how we should work to overcome these challenges in Indiana. The questions were divided into five categories and are listed below.

Frame It

1. What are the critical components of this issue?
2. What should be addressed first?

What's in Place Now?

3. Are there any existing programs in place to help solve this issue?
4. Are there any agencies or organizations who currently deal with this issue?

Who should be involved?

5. Who are the people/organizations that should be involved in this issue?
6. Who should be responsible for strategizing ideas and implementing solutions for this issue?

Community/State Actions

7. How can the community work on solving this issue?
8. Is this an issue that should be addressed statewide? How?

Next Steps

9. What resources are needed to work on this issue?
10. What are the next steps that should be taken to address this issue?

Access to Healthcare

Access to healthcare was the number one priority for the participants of this listening session. There were nine votes for this issue. The discussion of this topic is below.

Frame It

The participants felt that the top two challenges within this issue were:

1. A lack of providers (especially female-friendly providers)
2. The cost and lack of insurance

Other challenges that were identified were:

- Lack of locations/clinics
- Full range of services and accessible hours of operation
 - Women often have to take PTO (or unpaid time off) to get care
- Lack of knowledge about resources
- Transportation
- Childcare

What's In Place Now?

The participants identified the following programs/organizations that currently exist to help improve access to healthcare.

- Indiana University School of Medicine Rural Medical Track in Terre Haute – this program helps to encourage medical students to pursue medical careers in rural areas of the state and has incentives to help students pay off their school loans.
- Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC)
- Planned Parenthood
- Pharmacy minute clinics and discounts on prescriptions (Wal-Mart, Target, etc.)
- Indiana drug card, which gives discounts on drugs
- Health Indiana Plan (however, it is currently closed for new enrollments)
- State Children's Health Insurance Plan (SCHIP) – this is for children's health, 250,000 currently enrolled
 - 18% in poverty
- Mobile care

Who Should Be Involved?

The participants identified the following organizations/groups that should be involved to help improve access to healthcare.

- Indiana State Medical Association
- Indiana State Nurses Association
- Indiana General Assembly
- Health professionals
- Health schools
- Consumers
- Youth development organizations
- Mental health and addiction organizations
- Coalitions
- County level officials – including infrastructure

- Purdue Extension
- County Health Departments
- Indiana State Department of Health
- NGO's and nonprofit organizations
- Faith based organizations

Community/State Action

The participants determined that the following actions should be taken in order to help address the issues surrounding access to healthcare.

- Promotion of a culture/mindset shift – healthcare as a right, not a privilege
- Education for policy makers and consumers
- Professional development for providers
 - Women's health – IU Center on Excellence in Women's Health
- Development of a non-partisan healthcare advocacy coalition

Next Steps

The participants proposed the creation of a state-level “Preventative Services Taskforce” coalition as the next step needed in order to start addressing the challenges of access to healthcare.

- The coalition must be non-partisan
- Membership would be rotating
- The purpose would be advocacy and education
- Potential leadership sources for the coalition could be:
 - IU School of Medicine
 - Indiana State Department of Health
 - Local hospitals, health systems (Indiana Hospital Association)
- Potential partners could be:
 - Indiana State Nurses Association
 - Visiting Nurses Association
 - Healthcare law
 - Purdue, Notre Dame, Life Sciences Initiatives
 - Consumers

More Women in Policy-Making Careers

Getting more women into policy-making careers was the second priority identified by the participants of the pilot listening session. This issue received eight votes. The discussion of this topic is below.

Frame It

The participants of this discussion identified the following challenges in getting more women into policy-making careers.

- Knowledge and education for women about policy making careers
- Available positions and recruitment of women
- Leadership skills; resources/networking
- Funding for campaigns, etc.
- Building a foundation – lack of experience

What's In Place Now?

The participants identified the following programs that help to get more women in policy-making careers.

- United Way of Central Indiana & the Central Indiana Community Foundation – Women focused training programs
- Lacy Leadership Association
- Indiana Commission for Women Resource Guide
- Interest-based groups
 - Women's Caucus
 - IU Center for Excellence in Women's Health
- The White House Project
- University groups

Who Should Be Involved?

The participants identified the following organizations/groups that they believe should be involved in helping to get more women into policy-making careers.

- Women policy makers (helping to recruit and retain women in these positions)
- Educational institutions
- Corporations
- College State Government Association representation i.e. Hoosier Girls State, Hoosier Boys State
- Indiana Commission for Women
- Organizations that have youth training i.e. YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, etc.
- The women's political action committee

Community/State Action

The participants determined that the following actions should be taken in order to help encourage more women to pursue policy-making careers.

- Empowerment of women
- Distribution of information about opportunities and need for more women in field
 - Women respond to need

- Ask women to run for office
- Engage a network
- Develop a coordinating group to focus the needs and to identify opportunities

Next Steps

The participants determined that the next steps that need to be taken in order to begin making progress on this issue are:

- Funding for research and development
- Identify and organization/group to be accountable and responsible for launching/coordinating a campaign to get more women in policy-making roles at all levels
- Regular reporting of outcomes (financial/program)
- Gathering information on why having women in policy-making positions is good for Indiana

Pay Equity

Pay equity was the third issue that was identified as a barrier to the quality of life for women in Indiana during the pilot listening session. The issue received five votes. The discussion of the topic is below.

Frame It

The participants of this discussion identified the following challenges as barriers to pay equity for women.

- Education about pay in field
- Negotiation methods
- Benefits (things to negotiate)
- Process for pay raises
- Awareness (within county, region, state)
- Financial planning (literacy)
 - Retirement
- How to do your homework!
- Grievance process if you believe you have been discriminated against (current process is not very effective)

What's In Place Now?

The participants identified the following programs and organizations that are currently working to address the gender pay equity.

- WAGE (Women Are Getting Even) Project
 - \$start \$mart
- AAUW
- Laws (not enforceable)
- Some companies are okay
 - Promote the companies that have programs that work to ensure pay equity
- Push women towards high paying jobs (STEM), still need equality in pay equity in higher paying fields as well

Who Should Be Involved?

The participants identified the following organizations and people that they believe should be involved in helping to address gender pay equity.

- Policy makers
- CEOs
- Human Resource professionals
- Women business organizations
- Universities
- Women's organizations/Girls' organizations
- Public relations pressure
 - Make part of platform
 - Grassroots movement
 - Show how it negatively impacts families
- Investment companies

- Boards

Community/State Action

The participants determined that the following actions should be taken in order to help eliminate the gender wage gap.

- Promote education of pay equity and how to improve the wage gap
- Promote policies that reward companies who practice pay equity
- PR to help promote the issue
- Engage communities
- Raise awareness of Pay Equity Day
- Efforts in high school and universities to inform young women of pay equity challenges
- Continue \$tart \$mart
- Continue Bridging the Gap (past ICW program held in partnership with other organizations to raise awareness on pay equity)
- Raise money for programs
- Find champions for equality

Next Steps

The participants determined that the next steps that need to be taken in order to begin making progress on this issue are:

- Conduct research & promote awareness of pay equity
- Ignite the issue
- Get universities back on board
- Get companies to buy-in to pay equity practices
- Get commitments from policy makers to help address the issue
- Highlight why pay equity is good for business
- Encourage young people to force change
- Promote the value to families

Conclusions

Women in Indiana are confronted by many challenges in their daily lives that prevent them from being full participants in society. The pilot listening session is the first step that ICW is taking to better prioritize the issues facing women in Indiana to determine the actions that need to be taken to promote equality for women. The results of this session and the future sessions that will be held around the state will contribute to a report that will help to identify the top 3-5 issues that present major challenges to women in Indiana. These discussions are the beginning of a process to help move women in Indiana forward by engaging Indiana residents in public deliberation.

The evaluations completed by the participants of the pilot listening session will help to direct the process of the public listening session this spring. By identifying ways to improve the process, ICW hopes to be able to make the sessions more meaningful for the participants and to the commission.

The Hoosier INsight project will help ICW continue to voice the needs, concerns, challenges, and viewpoints of women in Indiana. By better understanding the specific needs and desires of women, the commission will be able to better identify the ways in which they can help to remove barriers that hinder their participation in all areas of society. A larger de-briefing event will occur once the results of the listening sessions, as well as the supplemental online women's issue survey, are compiled and will help promote the outcomes of the project. This will help to raise awareness for the issues and to aid in the development of a statewide action plan to deal with the top priority issues across the state.