



Full Speed Ahead:
Making the Workforce Work for Women
A Framework for the 21st Century

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Please Note

The proceedings represent our best effort to summarize the full discussion, but do not represent the exact words of the participants nor the specific views of all participants.

WOW's Agenda for Action was developed solely by WOW.

WOW's Vision and Mission

WOW envisions a society where all women and men can participate equally and fully in all aspects of their community. WOW works nationally and in its home community of Washington DC to achieve economic independence and equality of opportunity for women and girls.

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Executive Summary

The recognition that women historically were clustered in low paying jobs and indeed directed to those kinds of jobs when entering the workforce was the impetus for defining a category of jobs “nontraditional” jobs for women in the early 70s. The concept of “Nontraditional occupations” for women (NTOs) represents one of the most important strategies for affecting women’s economic self-sufficiency and assuring equal employment opportunity for women. These jobs can provide better pay and benefits, greater career and training opportunities, higher job satisfaction and positive results for employers than those jobs that are traditionally held by women. As either heads-of-households or partners in dual-income households, women have every incentive to seek employment in nontraditional fields; but there are significant barriers preventing them from doing so, including their roles as primary caregivers in families and stereotypes about “men’s jobs.”

Increasing access to nontraditional jobs for women stands at a critical moment, when many of the policy and program frameworks developed over the past two decades have been eliminated or weakened. Federal policies that held states accountable for ensuring access to nontraditional training and employment were eliminated as monies were passed through to the states. The climate demands new thinking, new tactics, new allies, and a new organizing effort to revitalize efforts to desegregate the workforce in light of new workplace and political realities.

Wider Opportunities for Women

Established in 1964—the same year as the Civil Rights Act which prohibited discrimination in employment—Wider Opportunities for Women

(WOW) has advocated successfully on local and national levels locally for women’s entry into high-wage/high-demand occupations. WOW has been at the forefront of successful legislative, advocacy and programmatic efforts to improve women’s economic advancement through participation in nontraditional occupations for women, particularly in the trades.

The Roundtable

In April 2002 WOW convened a cross-section of national leaders from the movement to open historically-male trade, technical, and uniformed service occupations to women. Meeting over two days, participants shared perspectives and experiences in order to review the gains and impasses of the national effort to move women into “nontraditional occupations” and to develop a new strategic framework to increase women’s access to these high-wage/high-demand occupations. The roundtable discussion brought together job training program directors, tradeswomen, state and federal policy makers, academics, attorneys, union representatives, community activists, and WOW board and staff members.


The goal of the roundtable was to explore ideas, identify points of agreement and disagreement—as well as areas that need further investigation. In so doing, WOW would develop a public record that could be used by participants, policy makers, funders and allied organizations to stimulate renewed momentum on this major policy issue, informed by past practice and grounded in present circumstance. At the same time, the discussion would inform WOW’s own program and policies.

A complete report of the findings and recommendations from the roundtable is included here. A significant part of the second day was

devoted to developing strategies to “Change the Norm in the Workplace; Utilize Government Resources,” and “Attain a Critical Mass of Women in High-Wage/High-demand Occupations.” In summary, there was consensus that dramatic change could result from the synergy of these efforts. Since occupational segregation results from deeply-held cultural notions of gender roles and hierarchies, as well as educational/training expectations and opportunities, creating a new framework involves not only practical solutions in the workplace, but the participation of educational, media, and other cultural institutions.

WOW’s Agenda

Building upon the roundtable’s discussions and recommendations, WOW set forth a 15-point agenda that it would undertake to increase women’s participation in the high-wage/high-demand jobs that can lead to their economic self-sufficiency. The full agenda is included in the report and establishes strategies to:

- ✓ Reframe “nontraditional” occupations as high-wage/high-demand occupations;
- ✓ Work with appropriate allies (business, unions, community-based organizations, and WOW’s National Women’s Workforce and Family Economic Self Sufficiency Project) to:
 - ✎ conduct national research on fastest-growing high-wage sectors and local research to identify local regions’ future job growth;
 - ✎ build a solid pipeline that provides access to learning-ready apprenticeships and employment;
 - ✎ increase union programs to recruit, train, promote, and retain women;
 - ✎ address barriers such as transportation and childcare;
 - ✎ implement programs and policies in local communities to increase women’s participation in high-wage/high-demand jobs;
- ✓ Safeguard existing legislation and policy, working for new laws, and assuring full and appropriate implementation of current laws;
- ✓ Educate girls, women and the media about women’s participation in high-wage/high-demand occupations, the benefits thereof, and how to pursue appropriate training;
- ✓ Address needs of women of color in all activities;
- ✓ Work within the current workforce development system, particularly the One-Stop Career Centers to educate staff about serving women seeking high-wage/high-demand jobs;
- ✓ Identify innovative collaborative strategies among businesses, government, labor, and job training programs to increase women’s access to high-wage/high-demand jobs and disseminate a “Best Practices” report; and
- ✓ Enhance WOW’s efforts in its local Washington, DC community to increase opportunities for women and girls to prepare for and successfully participate in high-wage/high-demand jobs. 

Proceedings

Increasing Women's Participation in Nontraditional Occupations: An Agenda for Action

April 11–12, 2002

written by Susan Eisenberg for WOW

Background

In April 2002 WOW convened a cross-section of national leaders from the movement to open historically male trade, technical, and uniformed service occupations to women. Meeting over two days, participants shared perspectives and experiences in order to review the gains and impasses of the national effort that originated in the 1970s; and to develop a new strategic framework to increase women's access to these high-wage/high-demand occupations referred to by the government as "nontraditional occupations" (NTOs)¹. The roundtable discussion brought together job training program directors, tradeswomen, state and federal policy makers, academics, attorneys, union representatives, community activists, and WOW board and staff members.²

“ We refuse to accept the notion that there is such a thing as women's jobs and men's jobs. ”

At the outset, WOW Executive Director Joan Kuriansky charged the group to “explore the feasibility of establishing a new policy and program framework for nontraditional employment for women” from a broadened perspective that included trades, technical, uniformed services, and professional occupations. It was not expected that consensus would be achieved, but rather that points of agreement and disagreement—as well as areas that need further investigation—would be clarified. The goal was to inform WOW's programming priorities, and to stimulate renewed momentum on this major policy issue, informed by past practice and grounded in present circumstance.

Overview of the Current Economic, Legal, and Political Climates

Eliminating women's underrepresentation in high-wage/high-demand occupations will require a strategy

Creating the opportunity for women to successfully compete in high-wage/high-demand occupations has been understood as key to women's economic advancement since the 1970s. Over the past three decades various strategies have been undertaken at both the national and local levels to achieve this goal. Although much has been learned and accomplished, women in many occupations and occupational categories continue to be underrepresented and underutilized. In this new millennium, a convergence of heightened opportunity and compelling need has engaged a fresh dialogue and a renewed commitment to tackle this pressing issue.

¹There was group consensus that this terminology should be updated.

²See Participant List in Appendix.

that combines economic, legal, and political tools. For each of these areas, presenters shared their expertise and points-of-view, followed by a full group discussion that clarified key ideas, or brought to light a divergence of opinion based on difference in perspective or experience.

Economic Context

Presenter: Brigid O'Farrell, Affiliated Scholar, Institute for Research on Women and Gender, Stanford University

Key Ideas:

- ✓ **Anticipating growth patterns of both existing and emerging industries is key to dismantling gender and racial workforce barriers.**

Only long-lasting jobs can provide the opportunity for advancement and, eventually, pensions, that are essential to lifetime financial self-sufficiency. Strategies of the 1970s targeted jobs with high hourly wages but failed to anticipate industry changes, as exemplified by the short-lived success for women in both the steel and telephone industries.

In the steel industry, a major lawsuit resulting in a consent decree that established innovative recruitment/training programs brought significant numbers of women, minority workers, and women of color into the steel industry; however, within roughly four years fewer women worked in the industry than before the consent decree due to the closure of huge steel plants. Women, who benefited

from a similarly successful lawsuit against Ma Bell, were shortly displaced by technological change.

Government budget allocations for a wide range of programs, such as hiring police or building new highways, can be used to anticipate openings for entry-level jobs that do not require years of training. We need to find new ways to pressure employers, unions and government agencies to ensure that women benefit from these expenditures.

“ While the shape of our economy is moving from blue collar to white collar to service economy, there are still an enormous number of jobs in the traditional areas of manufacturing, construction, and mining. While declining as a percentage overall, they are still an important part of our economy. ”

- ✓ **Economic strategies need to be based on regional, as well as national, data.**

Although national data are important, economic situations within industries vary widely across the country. States need to go further in conducting sectoral analyses that link local area job projections to people's skills. Emphasizing that detailed sectoral analysis is useful to both men and women strengthens our argument.

- ✓ **While their percentage of the total labor market has declined, jobs in the traditional areas of manufacturing, construction, transportation, and mining remain important.**

Sectoral analyses assess regional labor markets to identify industries or occupations that need workers; identify the entry-level education and skills requirements for those industries or occupations; and analyze the entry-level wages and benefits in those industries or occupations; create a profile of the characteristics of the states' unemployed and underemployed residents—including self-sufficiency income needs, educational attainment, barriers to employment, geographic concentrations, and access to needed support services; and create a profile of the state's education, training and support services already in place to prepare workers for the identified industries or occupations. The assessment then compares industry and job seeker needs with the job preparation infrastructure.

These older industries are still an important part of our economy and represent significant job opportunities. For example, the projected increase in truck driving is 14%, or roughly 80,000 new drivers per year. The projected ten-year growth in construction jobs is 12%.

Future transportation projects will be more localized and closer to population centers—requiring less travel—which will make these jobs more attractive to women with dependent care responsibilities.

- ✓ **Job openings or a strong economy do not by themselves translate into jobs for women absent political, legal, or cultural pressure.**

Despite the need for “new” workers, industries whose traditional white male workforce is declining have not invested in the recruitment/training of women. For example, although there has been a need for new workers in construction and firefighting jobs in New York City, women have not been able to gain significant footholds. One exception is a group of non-union builders who have established a training center in Florida. They include women in their outreach efforts, but it is not clear that women will transition past entry- and mid-level jobs.

In science and engineering, women’s repre-

sentation has fluctuated in response to shifting economics and cultural perceptions about gender. Example: in the 1920s, 20% of science Ph.D.’s were awarded to women; by 1960, slightly above 6%; in 2000, 42% of Ph.D.’s in science, engineering, and math fields were awarded to women.

“ Sectoral analysis is extremely useful for jobs for men as well. We’re not talking about doing something here that’s just going to help women. It’s a really solid analysis that will benefit everyone. ”

Legal Context

Presenter: Yolanda Wu, Senior Staff Attorney, NOW Legal Defense

Key Ideas:

- ✓ **Currently, legal strategies can be carried forward under Title VII or Title IX.**

Cases under Title VII, the primary employment discrimination law, can proceed under one of two theories: 1) disparate treatment, where discriminatory intent must be shown; or 2) disparate impact, where a facially neutral policy or requirement can be shown to create discrimination. Sexual harassment, first recognized by the Supreme Court in 1986, is an example of disparate treatment, whether by means of quid pro quo or hostile environment. Strict timelines must be adhered to.

Title IX may offer as-yet unmined potential for litigation, as it broadly applies to training and education programs that receive federal funding. Vocational high schools, apprenticeship and other training programs, as well as on-the-job training on jobsites receiving federal funding fall under its umbrella.

- ✓ **Litigation is necessary that would have major national implications, that would have an impact on all crafts and both union and right-to-work situations.**

Unresolved points:

- ✓ Increased immigration resulting from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has led to a significant non-union immigrant construction workforce that competes with women and workers of color. How does a progressive strategy address all three of these population groups?
- ✓ Can the federal dollars going into the development of new technologies be linked to equity for women in hiring for the jobs that will result from that investment?

Increased litigation on behalf of tradeswomen should be explored. Any lawsuit requires women willing to be plaintiffs and bear the consequences of that action. A legal strategy, therefore, needs to link with a grassroots organizing strategy.

Achieving gender equity in the workplace requires vigilant defense of its legal foundation on the national and state levels, where it has been under attack.

Many legal precedents, changes in state laws through initiative efforts (Washington and California), and actions of state governors (Florida) now undermine implementation of affirmative action policies and have successfully limited its scope. Even diverse recruitment is under attack. Pre-training programs for women in firefighting, for example, now need private funding to avoid discrimination claims.

At some point—likely soon—a major affirmative action case will be heard by the Supreme Court. The outcome will crucially affect efforts toward occupational desegregation, highlighting the importance of attention on court appointments and an increasingly conservative judiciary.

✓ **Legislative and judicial gains made by working women have benefited women in trades, technical, and uniformed service occupations.**

The recognition of sexual harassment as employment discrimination, the Pregnancy Disability Act, and the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) benefit all women.

Advocacy and the Political Climate

Construction and Transportation Perspective

*Presenters: Kathy Augustine, Executive Director Hard-Hatted Women, Cleveland, Ohio
Public Policy Chair, Tradeswomen Now and Tomorrow
Dale McCormick, Treasurer, State of Maine*

Key Ideas:

✓ **There have been significant losses of federal protections and incentives to hire and train women.**

When first enacted in 1978, federal guidelines issued under Executive Order 11246 created an important incentive for employers to hire women and for apprenticeship programs to enroll them. Since the Carter administration, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCCP) in the U.S. Department of Labor has not fully enforced compliance, under any subsequent Administration. There is significant concern that the federal government will fail to fully mandate compliance without the political support of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the Building and Construction Trades Division (BCTD), and/or strong individual unions.

✓ **Some of the federal programs that have funded effective local recruitment and retention projects for women in high-wage/high-demand jobs have been lost, while others are at risk.**

Across the country, a wide variety of innovative and effective projects have been funded through Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional

“ By virtue of women going into some of these occupations, they become safer because certain kinds of safety guidelines are put in place on behalf of women. ”

Unresolved point:

How might litigation join the issues of gender and race?

Occupations (WANTO), Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW), Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency ACT (ISTEA) dollars.

For example, in Cleveland, WANTO funded a Midwest coalition that met quarterly to share affirmative action strategies for targeted sites using a model that brings together unions, contractors, government representatives, community-based organizations, tradeswomen, and educational institutions; and technical assistance to unions and contractors for better recruitment and retention of women. These programs have direct local impact and provide blueprints that could be applied nationally.

The NEW Act and crucial provisions of WIA have been lost and a large potential source of funds is at stake with the reorganization of ISTEA.

✓ **Blueprints, models, and mentors are available for a vigorous and effective national affirmative action program.**

Due to the persistent efforts of frontline tradeswomen groups and allied community based organizations, a successful model exists for just about every aspect of an affirmative action program, including: building a major construction project that meets hiring goals; involving women both individually and collectively in the leadership structure of a local union; graduating a high percentage of women from an apprenticeship program; and bringing together tradeswomen, employers, government officials, and labor union representatives to jointly address affirmative action initiatives.

Although women's percentage of the construction workforce has not grown, the increased size of the workforce means that the number of women in these jobs has increased. Women can be found in virtually every construction trade, and serving in all capacities, from apprentice to general foreman, union steward to contractor, providing a resource of role models and mentors.

✓ **Local (city/county/state) government officials have been important partners in opening opportunities to women.**

During a federal climate hostile to affirmative action, local governments have played an important role in increasing women's workforce participation either through vigorous enforcement of federal or local guidelines (Washington State) or through leadership in developing voluntary partnerships between private sector employers and a community-based organization acting as a referral agent (Maine Department of Transportation). These strategies must be tailored to the political realities of the area and depend on local networking.

✓ **Unions continue to offer higher wage opportunities.**

Women in construction earn an average hourly wage of \$17.30 in a union job compared to \$10.30 in a non-union job. There is neither monolithic support for, nor monolithic opposition to, the full and fair inclusion of women in the industry from building trade unions. Individual building trade unions have made progress, demonstrated by the recognition of women members as a constituency group with particular priorities and needs, the hiring of women on staff, significant increase in the percentage of female apprentices, or support for women's committees and other mechanisms of representation.

Occupations that Parallel the Trade and Technical

Firefighting and Other Uniformed Services

Presenter: Brenda Berkman, Captain, New York Fire Department

Key Ideas:

✓ **Strong parallels exist between the uniformed services and the trades, suggesting that the organizations representing women in these occupations**

would benefit from better communication and the sharing of information and strategies.

Both sets of occupations involve physical, skilled work with good pay; both have histories of nepotism; in both women face similar problems of recruitment, training, and retention. For example, women were not allowed to apply to become firefighters in NYC until 1977. Women are .2% of firefighters in NYC and less than 3% nationally (including fire safety educators and Emergency Medical Technicians [EMTs]), as compared to 2.5% women in construction.

As in the trades, asserting one's rights individually or organizing as a group risks repercussions; violence against women firefighters from men they work with has been a serious problem. For women who want to continue as firefighters, lawsuits are not an option. Although violence is less than it was twenty years ago, backlash has been immediate following efforts to raise women's issues or increase women's visibility.

As in the trades, women in uniformed services benefit when procedures for entry, training, hiring, and advancement in the occupation, are standardized and publicized. There are no national standards—only local ones—for firefighting, creating an additional burden on women or persons of color trying to break in.

Successful models exist, but there is no national program to replicate them. Minneapolis, for example, has 16% female firefighters,

including women in positions of leadership. This gain, however, is fragile, dependent on the particular individual who holds the position of fire chief.

✓ **Due to the nature of the work, public perception is an important factor in the success of women in uniformed service occupations.**

An additional barrier for women in uniformed services is a public perception that standards have been lowered and safety compromised for women to work in those occupations. In that context, the invisibility of women first responders on 9/11 is particularly significant.

In some jobs, like community policing, public opinion has shifted to accept that having women improves safety.

Unresolved points:

- ✓ Since the federal government no longer disseminates “best practices,” how do model projects become nationally implemented programs rather than isolated or short-term examples of success?
- ✓ To what extent are alliances with local government entities replicable models?
- ✓ In an industry where the grassroots voice risks physical and financial retribution, and where many unions oppose any interest-group organizing independently, how does a strategy empower this front-line leadership? What is the role of advocates in supporting the leadership of front-line workers and being accountable to them?
- ✓ Have pre-apprenticeship or pre-employment training programs sponsored by community based organizations and government agencies like the Women's Bureau/DOL been a winning or a dead-end strategy?
- ✓ Should pre-apprenticeship training programs be directly linked to apprenticeship slots or existing jobs?
- ✓ Do we only focus on the union sector as consistent with the goal of high wages and safety standards, or do we focus on both union and non-union sectors? If both, are there any caveats?
- ✓ Do we address labor law reform as a way to strengthen unions and thus women's ability to use the unions?

- ✓ **Many women in trades, technical, and uniformed service occupations belong to organizations, some that have long histories.**

These include local grassroots organizations; state and national organizations (such as Women in the Fire Service and Tradeswomen Now and Tomorrow); and AFL-CIO-encouraged women's committees in individual unions. Unofficial networks and organizations also exist.

- ✓ **Women of color in trades, technical, and uniformed service occupations are most at risk for discrimination and harassment.**

For decades of affirmative action in trades, technical and uniformed service jobs, women of color have not equally benefited from advancements made either by communities of color, or by women. Successful strategies by communities of color in various cities (e.g., preventing project labor agreements unless there is affirmative action) have not included benefits for women of color.

Computer Science and Other Male-Dominated Technological Professions

Presenter: Eleanor Babco, Executive Director, Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology

- ✓ **Despite the greater progress women have made in professional fields, some professions remain strongly male-dominated, particularly at the higher levels.**

For example, only 10% of engineers, and 3.5% of airline pilots and navigators are female. Getting into a career is easier than moving up the career progressions; that women earn 44% of PhD's, for example, does not translate into full professorships.

- ✓ **Even in new industries that have emerged in the post-Civil Rights era, women face prob-**

- lems of underrepresentation, lower retention, and unequal opportunities to advance, with progress sometimes reversing.**

In the computer industry, women have not maintained job gains. From entry-level to sophisticated systems analyst jobs, the percentage of women is declining. Women's percentage of BAs awarded in the computer science field has dropped from 37% in 1984 to less than 20% in 2000. Women are not being drawn in and they are being pushed out; both issues need to be addressed. Girls' choices not to take computer science or high-level math in high school limit their options.

“ The women who have succeeded are twice as good as the men because we've been filtered all along the pipeline. If I have a dream, it's just that ordinary women can succeed just like the ordinary man. ”

- ✓ **Women's success in the professions is linked to changes in workplace organization and investment in the individual.**

Very flexible work schedules and active mentoring programs are hallmarks of professional employers ranked high by women as good places to work. A study shows that “nontraditional computer science students”—those who begin a BA program after age 20 or take more than 6 years to complete it—are more committed students despite full-time jobs and dependent care responsibilities.

Reframe of Current Goals

In the 1970s, affirmative action was part of a larger feminist strategy to fulfill the promise of the previous decade's civil rights legislation to end gender-based discrimination in the workplace. Twin efforts were pursued: to raise the value of labor traditionally performed by women and to open access for women to high-wage/high-demand jobs traditionally performed by men. Affirmative action was also part of a larger civil rights strategy—adopted by the federal government with the slogan “Affirmative Action—Results”—that asserted that women and

workers of color were entitled access to any occupation.

Women were more successful at building inroads into professional occupations than into trades and technical occupations, although across the board retention and advancement have been more difficult to achieve than access. This highlights the level of commitment required to identify and uproot barriers that remain deeply embedded within the culture and organization of many occupations and occupational categories. For example, there has been a minimal increase in the percentage of women who are in construction despite a comprehensive plan at the start, a demonstration by women of interest and merit, and the persistent efforts of frontline women in the industry and allied community based organizations.

The Executive Orders that opened the construction industry in 1978 set guidelines for women's representation on jobsites (3.1% at start; 6.9% in 3 years; intended to keep increasing) and in apprenticeship slots (20 – 25%). Detailed plans envisioned and addressed many problems, such as: women would be hired for the full duration of the job; women hired would reflect the community's racial balance; women would be placed on jobsites together; an oversight committee would suggest corrective measures, and so on. In practice, enforcement and funding for implementation were short-lived and "good faith" replaced "results." Without the sustained commitment of government and without the industry as partner, programs trained women to be job-ready but access to jobs was limited, while those women who did enter faced numerous points of derailment.

Now, as those concerned with women's right to earn a family-supporting wage and to be self-sustaining in retirement, renew focus on the issue of occupational segregation, the past not only provides important lessons and models, but has laid a foundation. Public opinion has shifted to accept that women work for needed income, whether as heads of households or by providing essential earnings in two-income households. It is now a commonly held expectation that any occupation can be performed capably by at least some women. Moreover, changing demographics incline far-sighted employers and labor unions to consider the financial advantages of a gender-neutral workforce.

There was agreement that a strategy should:

- ✓ Have maximum effect in increasing the recruitment and retention of women across occupations and occupational categories where high wages and high demand are anticipated, based on regional, national and global economic data;

Unresolved points:

- ✓ While there are strong similarities between the obstacles facing women within professional occupations and women within trades/technical occupations (hostile work environment, advancement), women's workforce percentage gains are very dissimilar in many occupations. Can a strategy address both these occupational groups at once, or use the gains professional women have made to leverage gains for women in trades/technical occupations? Do we focus only on jobs that require minimal education to enter?
- ✓ Could we use an industry strategy to address the full spectrum of occupational categories within a single industry, such as computer or airline, that includes professional and trades/technical jobs? For example, data processing equipment repair is a job growth area, but only 13% of such repairers are women; could this be linked to professional women in the computer science field? In the airline industry, men are now common as flight attendants, while women pilots and airline mechanics remain rare.
- ✓ How do we influence those industries that are beginning to consider women, workers of color, and immigrants in their plans for workforce expansion?

-
- ✓ Expediently achieve a critical mass of women who remain long term and have a clear path and the necessary mentoring to advance to all levels;
 - ✓ Achieve—whether by carrot or stick—a partnership among 1) government and other developers; 2) employers; 3) unions; 4) community-based organizations and other allies; and 5) frontline organizations;
 - ✓ Address issues—with unions and employers—of job organization and culture to reflect the notion that women are the norm in that workforce and that women’s concerns (dependent care, bathrooms, ergonomics, uniforms that fit, sleeping accommodations, etc.) are industry concerns, with particular attention to the training and support needs of the target populations: young women, displaced homemakers and welfare recipients.
 - ✓ Use imagery and language that vibrantly reflects our ultimate goals; that is sensitive to differences in age, culture, and history; and that is responsive to the current political and social climate;
 - ✓ Take steps including keeping statistics that separately track women of color to ensure that women of color equally benefit.

Strategies to Create a New Framework

Roundtable participants divided into three groups to deal with the following strategies: 1) creating a paradigm shift; 2) utilizing government better; and 3) increasing the number and long-term retention of women. There was consensus that dramatic change could result from the synergy of efforts to change the workforce norm and to attain a critical mass of women, if those efforts had sustained government support committed to achieving results. Since occupational segregation results from deeply held cultural notions of gender roles and hierarchies, as well as educational/ training expectations and opportunities that begin at

birth, creating a new framework involves not only practical solutions in the workplace, but the participation of educational, media, and other cultural institutions.

Creating a Paradigm Shift: Changing the Norm in the Workforce

It is time to approach the issue of promoting women into high-wage/high-demand jobs with new assumptions. First, the absence of or the low representation of women in an occupation or occupational category reflects a management failure and the existence of unfair obstacles. Second, such absence or low representation sacrifices sound business sense to habits of discrimination. Third, it deprives young girls of role models.

This includes:

- ✓ Saturating society—through media and education—with visual images of a diverse workforce and success stories of women in occupations where they have been underrepresented;
- ✓ Preparing girls for the employment opportunities being opened to women;
- ✓ Expecting workplace practices to be consistent with family responsibilities for women and men;
- ✓ Improving workplace health and safety standards, especially bathroom facilities;
- ✓ Refuting—through media and education—notions that there is such a thing as “men’s work” or “women’s work,” or that men deserve preference in employment; and
- ✓ Employing language and imagery consistent with our goals.

Utilizing Government Better

The government must employ the full weight of its power and leadership to eliminate gender and racial barriers that limit the full participation of a major segment of the country’s workforce. It is critical to affirm that government has a responsibility to uphold—locally, nationally, and interna-

tionally—the principle of economic equity, including setting, communicating and enforcing policy; collecting data; and bringing all parties to the table.

This includes:


- ✓ Targeting all existing or emerging funding streams (WIA, WANTO, Carl Perkins, Homeland Security) and building into them measures that would ensure affirmative hiring, as in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) model;
- ✓ Closing the loophole of “good faith effort,” strengthening and funding compliance and other mechanisms of enforcement, and creating bonuses for achieving goals;
- ✓ Tracking the intersection of race and gender in and within occupational categories;
- ✓ Addressing not only access to high-wage/high-demand jobs but also, the issues that affect annual and lifetime earnings: training, steady employment, advancement (that is, not only an equitable % in workforce but earning an equitable % of total wages paid).

Attaining Critical Mass: Increasing the Number and Long-Term Retention of Women

It is past time to recognize women’s ability and right to enter and succeed in all occupations and occupational categories. It is essential for government and industry to eliminate any policies and practices that make a workplace unready

for women. Society must not be satisfied by achieving the token participation of women. Rather the workplace should reflect the need of working women, their family circumstances, physiology, and their safety concerns.

This includes:

- ✓ Supporting the ability of front-line women in these industries to organize and encouraging them to contribute to policy planning;
- ✓ Standardizing and publicizing procedures for entry, training, hiring, and advancement in the occupation, with particular attention to women of color;
- ✓ Building on effective models, such as job bank referrals, standardized pre-apprenticeship programs that have modular competencies, and mentoring;
- ✓ Creating equitable and transparent pathways from lower-paying to higher-paying jobs;
- ✓ Informing new workers and union members of their legal rights and responsibilities; and
- ✓ Requiring supervisors to be trained in diversity. 

WOW's Agenda for Moving Women into High-Wage/High-Demand Occupations

For almost 40 years, Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) has advocated locally and nationally for women's entry into nontraditional occupations (NTOs), today reframed as high-wage/high-demand jobs. WOW has been at the forefront of successful legislative, advocacy and programmatic efforts to improve women's economic advancement through participation in these jobs, particularly those in the trades.

Although much has been accomplished, women in many occupations continue to be underrepresented and underutilized. Women are concentrated in a few lower-paying, traditionally female jobs, while men are concentrated in jobs that pay higher wages. Nontraditional jobs pay 20 to 30 percent more on average than traditionally female occupations. This additional income can make the difference between family well-being and family poverty.

The current economic, political and cultural climate demands a resurgence of effort and a refining of strategies to recapture and continue the momentum established by WOW and our many allies in previous decades.

WOW advocates for a number of strategies to help families move out of poverty and into lasting economic security. Two of these strategies directly focus on high-wage/high-demand occupations: targeting high-wage jobs in growth sectors that lack trained workers and focusing on those NTOs that can provide better pay and benefits and more established career ladders. A third—the Self-Sufficiency Standard—calculates how much money working adults need to meet their families' basic needs without subsidies of any kind. The Standard provides important guidance for policymakers and program providers

regarding how to target their education, job training, workforce development, and welfare-to-work resources.

WOW sets forth the following agenda to increase women's participation in the high-wage/high-demand jobs that can lead to their economic self-sufficiency.

- ✓ **Reframe “nontraditional occupations” as high-wage/high-demand occupations**, to signal an expansion beyond the old definition of NTOs as those in which less than 25% of the workforce is female. Instead, the new focus is on high-wage occupations in which women are less than 47%¹ of the workforce and in which businesses have a high demand for trained workers. Preparing workers for high-wage/high-demand jobs is good for both women and business.
- ✓ **In conjunction with leaders in an array of industries (uniform services, high tech, telecommunications, transportation etc.), conduct national research on the fastest-growing high wage sectors to learn about women's presence, training opportunities, wages, and career ladders.**
- ✓ Based on these findings, **use gender sector analysis to predict a local region's future job growth and to identify the best avenues to move women into good entry-level jobs with career ladders leading to self-sufficiency.**
- ✓ **Establish new and protect existing legislation and policy at the federal**

¹47% represents true parity, as 47% of the overall workforce is female.

and state levels designed to increase women's participation in high-wage/high-demand occupations.

These federal laws include the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (Perkins), the Higher Education Act (HEA), the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA).

- ✓ **Assure appropriate implementation of all relevant federal and state laws** to ensure that women are receiving their fair share of training funds and other supports designed to increase their participation in high-wage/high-demand occupations.
- ✓ **Address needs of women of color in all activities, especially those which evaluate programs' success in moving women into good jobs.**
- ✓ **Educate girls about the wages necessary to be self-sufficient, the likelihood that many traditionally female jobs will not pay that wage and inform them about high-wage/high-demand occupations and the training and education required to enter them.**
- ✓ **Support WOW partners through its National Women's Work Force Network and its Family Economic Self Sufficiency (FESS) Project to implement programs and policies in their communities to increase women's participation in high-wage/high-demand jobs.**
- ✓ **Build fruitful partnerships among businesses, unions, and organizations serving girls and low-income women.** This will build a solid pipeline that first provides learning-ready candidates for apprenticeships and other training and eventually job-ready women for hiring and promotion. Explore building on existing voluntary collaborations, such as those stemming from highway construction Major (or Mega) Projects.²
- ✓ **Work creatively and closely with unions to increase their programs to recruit, train, promote, and retain women in their workforces.**
- ✓ **Produce and broadly disseminate a "Best Practices" report of innovative ways that businesses, government, labor, and job training programs have collaborated to increase women's access to high-wage/high-demand jobs.**
- ✓ **Work within current workforce development system, particularly the One-Stop Career Centers, to educate both jobseekers and career counselors about 1) using the Self-Sufficiency Standard as a tool to calculate a realistic wage to meet family demands and 2) choosing job training and apprenticeship programs that will lead to employment in high-wage/high-demand occupations.**
- ✓ **Work with allies to address the important barriers, including transportation and childcare that keep women out of the high-wage/high-demand workforce. Develop incentives for employers and unions to pool resources to address barriers.**
- ✓ **Work with allies to increase media coverage of women in high-wage/high-demand occupations.** This will help create a more supportive environment for women to explore, obtain, and thrive in high-wage/high-demand jobs.
- ✓ **Enhance WOW's efforts in its local community to increase opportunities for women and girls in the Washington, DC metropolitan area to prepare for and successfully participate in high-wage/high-demand jobs.**

² Major or Mega Projects are defined by the Federal Highway Administration as projects with an estimated total cost greater than \$1.0 billion or projects approaching that threshold with a high level of interest by the public, Congress, or the Administration.



Appendix 1

Background Materials for Roundtable

Developing A Framework to Increase Women's Participation in NTOs

April 11–12, 2002
 Washington, DC
 The Lombardy Hotel

Thursday, April 11, 2002

- 5:00 PM Registration and Open House
 ~Fortuny Room
- 6:30 Dinner Meeting
 Welcome by Joan A.Kuriansky, WOW Executive Director
 Board Member Introductions
(Each member will be asked to introduce herself and identify one opportunity and one barrier to increasing women's participation in non traditional jobs that offer high wages and benefits)
- 8:30 Presentation of video "Women of Ground Zero," produced by NOW LDEF, Maureen McFadden, Vice President of Communications
- 9:00 Meeting Adjourned for evening

Friday, April 12, 2002

- 8:00 AM Continental Breakfast ~International Room
- 8:30 Review of Agenda
- 8:45 Reviewing the Political Climate
*Discussants: Dale McCormick, Treasurer, State of Maine
 Kathy Augustine, Executive Director, Hard Hatted Women, Ohio*
- 9:15 Reviewing the Economic Climate/Occupation Trends
Discussant: Brigid O'Farrell, Institute for Research on Women and Gender, Stanford University
- 9:45 Reviewing the Legal Climate
Discussant: Yolanda Wu, Senior Attorney, NOWLDEF
- 10:15 Break
- 10:30 Reframing the Concept of Nontraditional

Occupations to Meet Today's Climate—Where do We Want to Go?

*Discussants: Brenda Berkman, New York Fire Department
 Eleanor Babco, Executive Director, Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology*

- 11:00 How Do We Get There—What Steps Must we Take to Create a New Framework?
(Dot Voting to Set Issue Priorities)

- 11:30 Break Out Sessions:
 Assess the following Implementation Strategies from both the federal and state/local perspectives:

- 1) Policy activities including proposed legislation and administrative policies
- 2) Program initiatives to enhance relationships among unions, apprenticeship programs, employers, and community based programs and identification of Best Practices
- 3) Legal Strategies and Legal Framework in which to do the Work
- 4) Building New Allies

- 12:30 PM Lunch

- 1:15 Break out groups continue
(Moving to implementation)
- 1:45 Report Back from Breakout Sessions
- 2:45 Next Steps In the Design and Implementation of a New Framework
- 3:30 Dot Voting on Priority Steps
- 3:45 Feedback and Closing
- 4:00 Meeting Adjourned

NTO Project

Advisory Board Members

April 2002

Verelett Allen

YWCA Nontraditional Employment Program for Women
Washington, DC

Kathy Augustine

*Executive Director
Hard Hatted Women*
Cleveland, OH

Eleanor Babco

*Executive Director
Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology*
Washington, DC

Rubie Coles

*Director of Poverty Program
The Moriah Fund*
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*Treasurer
State of Maine*
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Kathleen McKirchy

Metropolitan AFL-CIO
Washington, DC

Shireen Mitchell

*Chief Executive Officer
Digital Sisters, Inc.*
Washington, DC

Brigid O'Farrell

*Stanford University
Institute for Research on Women & Gender*
Stanford, CA

Kathy Patrick

Alexandria, VA

Merble Reagon

*Executive Director
Women's Center for Education & Career Advancement*
New York, NY

Sarah Reynolds

*Executive Director
Supporting Our Sisters*
Suitland, MD

Joycelyn Samuels

*Vice President
National Women's Law Center*
Washington, DC

Elizabeth Skidmore

*New England Regional Council of Carpenters
South Boston, Mass.*

Debra Smith

*Equal Rights Advocates
San Francisco, CA*

Judy Smith

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Nontraditional Employment for Women

An overview of the Changing Political, Economic, and Legal Environments

Excerpted from material prepared in April 2002 for Wider Opportunities for Women by Sharon H. Mastracci, Ph.D., The University of Texas

Introduction

Over ten million families in the United States live in poverty and over half of them are single-parent households headed by women. In order for women to obtain and retain jobs that will give them high wages and adequate benefits, women and girls need enhanced access to education and training. While a growing number of women pursue the traditional, four-year college degree route, many others are either not interested in or able to pursue that path, or that path is not relevant to their career goals. Public financial assistance, as well as private-sector investment vehicles, exist to subsidize the pursuit of a college degree, but there are fewer programs available for women who have every incentive to pursue employment in higher-wage, higher-skilled occupations, but who are not on the four-year degree path. These women can fall through the education and training cracks and end up in lower-wage, lower-skilled, traditionally-female, “pink collar” occupations. Moreover, in occupations where women are highly concentrated, wages are lower, and in those jobs where women become more concentrated, wages fall relative to other occupations.

Nontraditional employment for women represents one of the most important strategies for affecting women’s economic self-sufficiency and assuring equal employment opportunity for women. Nontraditional occupations (NTOs) for women are jobs in which less than 25% of the workforce is female. Nontraditional jobs can

provide better pay and benefits, greater career and training opportunities, higher job satisfaction and positive results for employers than those jobs that are traditionally dominated by women. As heads-of-households and partners in dual-income households, women have every incentive to seek employment in nontraditional fields; but there are significant barriers preventing them from doing so, including their roles as primary caregivers in families and stereotypes about “men’s jobs.”

Yet, *nontraditional employment for women stands at a critical moment, when many of the policy and program frameworks developed over the past two decades have been eliminated or weakened.* Federal policies that held states accountable for ensuring access to nontraditional training and employment were eliminated as monies were passed through to the states. The climate demands new thinking, new tactics, new allies, and a new organizing effort to revitalize efforts to desegregate the workforce in light of new workplace and political realities.

Political Landscape: Gutting of Federal Programs

Government intervention has been necessary to mitigate the significant barriers women face in accessing NTOs, as well as to provide support services to unions and employers, where few resources currently exist. Government-funded programs have been needed to encourage

women's participation in NTOs because information gaps exist between potential women workers, job centers, employers and unions about the benefits of facilitating women's access to these jobs. Women who might be interested in these jobs either do not know about them, or if they do, believe that they are unable to perform the tasks necessary to get the job done. This belief is often based on stereotypes of women's abilities, and not on an objective evaluation of their skills.

Government programs have been necessary to fill these information gaps—to raise women workers' awareness of the job possibilities in NTOs and to inform employers and unions as to this willing and able, yet untapped, labor force. In short, *government policy has been necessary to unite labor demand—the demand for workers by employers and unions—with labor supply—women workers who are unaware of their potential for working in these occupations—to increase women's participation in high-wage, high-mobility jobs to which they have not had access in the past.*

Since the mid-70s, there have been some federal policy handles for promoting nontraditional employment for women:

- ✓ Set-aside monies in the vocational education system in

NTO History

World Wars I and II

Increasing the numbers of women in NTOs has historically required government action, and it has been a part of the larger employment policy agenda in the U.S. for several decades. As NTO scholar Brigid O'Farrell observed, the current programs to increase women's participation in NTOs represent "the third time the government sought to encourage women into nontraditional fields"¹—the first two being WWI and WWII, when women were needed in factories due to labor shortages. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) studied the industrial distribution of wage-earning women after WWI, and reported that there had been "decided upheavals in the traditions of women's employment."² The significant change was from employment as domestic workers and in personal service jobs to clerical occupations, teaching and nursing, where women had not been working previously.

In high-wage, high-skilled manufacturing and mechanical industries, however, "it was apparent that women had not gone into absolutely new occupations to any great extent."³ Again, changes occurred, but in clerical, nursing and teaching jobs—not in heavy industry. Later in the period, Boris and Honey observed, "The New Deal improved the lives of women and minority male workers, but its programs ultimately reinforced the division of the labor market by gender and race."⁴ Skilled jobs in Depression-era make-work programs tended to go to white men. After WWII, the U.S. Department of Labor conducted research on industries employing women during the war and their prospects for postwar employment and found that "Women are and will continue to be barred from employment, if current hiring practices are continued, in 84 percent of the anticipated skilled jobs, 82 percent of the professional and managerial, and 63 percent of the unskilled openings."⁵ Despite government initiatives to increase women's participation in heavy industry during WWI and WWII—and despite women's success in these jobs—gender distributions across occupations returned to the previous status quo.

Post World War II

In the 1960s and 1970s, more and more women earned post-secondary degrees, which allowed them slightly greater access to nontraditional white-collar occupations, but the high-wage, high-skilled jobs that did not involve a college education were still largely inaccessible to women. The 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibited discrimination in employment and the 1972 Title IX amendments prohibited sex discrimination in education and training.

1980s-Today

See page 38 for Landmarks in WOW's History and in Federal Involvement in Nontraditional Employment for Women.

¹ O'Farrell, Brigid. "Women in blue collar and related occupations at the end of the millennium." *Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance* 39 (1999): 699-722.

² Eleventh Annual Report of the Secretary of Labor, 1923. 1923: 80.

³ Boris, Eileen and Michael Honey. "Gender, Race and the Politics of the Labor Department." *Monthly Labor Review* 111(1988): 28.

⁴ Boris, Eileen and Michael Honey. "Gender, Race and the Politics of the Labor Department." *Monthly Labor Review* 111(1988): 28.

⁵ "Survey of Employment Prospects for Women in War Industries, January to June 1942." (microfilm) Records of the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor, 1918-1965. Frederick, MD: University Publications, 1986.

place since 1976 for supporting programs to educate and train women for nontraditional jobs and support gender bias training to improve the way in which teachers and administrators in the system provide support for the entrance of women and girls into higher wage, occupationally segregated vocational training;

- ✓ The Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW) Act, which required states and locales receiving Job Training Partnership Act Funds to plan for and document their progress in training women and girls for nontraditional jobs and provided federal demonstration funds to JTPA programs designing and developing new efforts;
- ✓ Equal opportunity language in the federal highway legislation, allowing states to use a portion of their highway funds to train and place women and minorities in highway construction related jobs; and
- ✓ The Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) Act set aside monies to assist employers and unions to gain technical assistance to recruit and retain more women in their nontraditional workforces.

Since 1998, nearly the entire policy framework for women's entry into and success in traditionally male jobs has been eliminated. The set-asides of training resources in vocational education legislation ended with the block granting of the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1998. The Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW) Act was time limited. There have been periodic efforts to eliminate the WANTO program for employers and unions. Each time significant advocacy efforts protected the program although resources were reduced. While transportation monies have been used in a few states to support nontraditional training for women and minorities, the "allowance" to use transportation monies for this purpose has generally not been tapped by states, even after national advocacy by tradeswomen groups and

nontraditional employment advocates to use these monies for this purpose.

Legal Environment: Anti-Affirmative Action Climate

The anti-affirmative action climate, passage of state legislation restricting affirmative action, and less supportive courts have also had a negative impact on occupational de-segregation. In California, Washington State, Florida, and other states, anti-affirmative action policies were put in place that have resulted in closure of outreach and recruitment programs targeting women and girls for nontraditional employment opportunities.

Recent high-profile Supreme Court decisions have undermined efforts to increase women's participation in NTOs by signaling that certain race-based (and perhaps gender-based) set-asides are unlawful.

In 1995, the Court in *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Peña*⁶ chose to apply the most rigorous standard of judicial review—strict scrutiny—to federal highway construction programs. The Court's decision led to the most comprehensive review of federal affirmative action programs in history; this review culminated in the Clinton Administration's "Mend it, don't end it" policy.⁷ The *Adarand* case stayed in the courts for several more years, until recently when its most recent iteration, *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Mineta*—was dismissed as improvidently granted because the part of the DBE programs that the case challenged had been changed and the part that the petitioners still challenged was not under consideration by the Court^{8,9}. According to some legal commentators, the next affirmative action case that does not suffer from *Adarand's* procedural problems could result in a devastating effect not

⁶ 515 U.S. 200 (1995)

⁷ Verdugo, *Affirmative Action in Public Contracting: The Final Years of the Clinton Administration*, Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights, (2001)

⁸ "Supreme Court Reverses Its Decision to Review Discrimination Suit." *Government Contract Litigation Reporter* 15(12): 5. December 6, 2001.

⁹ "Supreme Court Dismisses Adarand Case." *Federal Human Resources Week* 8(33): December 10, 2001. See also Coyle, Marcia. U.S. Supreme Court Rulings. *National Law Journal* 24(15): December 10, 2001. Page B6; and "Supreme Court Reverses Its Decision to Review Discrimination Suit." *Government Contract Litigation Reporter* 15(13) December 13, 2001. Page 8.

only on public contracting, but on government programs in employment, education and other sectors.¹⁰

Several factors confound the interpretation of *Adarand* with respect to gender-based set-asides. The case leaves open several questions regarding how federal programs like the one in the case might be viewed if they were challenged today. These questions persist, even if we focus solely on race-based programs. Second, observers differ on the impact of *Adarand* in relation to the level of scrutiny that would be applied to gender-based affirmative action programs. In addition, other observers believe that recruitment and outreach efforts would be protected because they can be justified as programs that are created to offer economic opportunities and are ones rooted in economic need. Finally, it is not clear how state and local service providers will react to even the suggestion by the Supreme Court that such set-asides should be subject to strict scrutiny. These unknowns foil most attempts at foretelling the consequences of future court decisions on training and outreach gender-based set-aside programs.

Economic Environment: Depressed

Several changes in the economic context have affected the NTO environment and will continue to do so. First, as always, some jobs and industries have grown, some remain stable and others are projected to experience declines in the coming years. Because NTO employment and training programs are intended to place women onto career ladders that provide future opportunities, any declines in jobs or industries are very important to NTO programs. Second, federal budget priorities made a complete about-face after September 11th, as national security concerns took precedence over domestic policy issues. All this occurred just as the nation headed into economic recession. Federal cuts in domestic policy programs like NTO employment and

training programs, plus an economic downturn, have the potential for seriously curtailing state and local efforts on behalf of NTO issues. State legislatures may cut their state and local employment and training programs upon feeling the pinch of lost federal revenue.

Positive Impacts of Previous Policy Interventions

A recent analysis of the 1991 Women in Apprenticeships and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) Act and the 1991 Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW) Act by Sharon Mastracci examined their impact on women's participation in NTOs. Note, the WANTO program has been in place since 1992, but the \$1 million earmarked for these grants have never been increased, and in fact have been subject to across-the-board budget cuts. Moreover, although the amount earmarked for WANTO is small relative to the entire federal budget, it is in jeopardy every year and advocates must rally to secure the federal government's continued support for this program. NEW was a four-year program that awarded its last funds in 1996.

WANTO and NEW awarded modest grants to state agencies and nonprofit, community-based organizations for outreach and direct training to women seeking employment in nontraditional fields, as well as for technical assistance to employers and unions in these industries. Mastracci found a positive "global impact" of these programs—that is, in the general case, they were effective in increasing women's participation in NTOs. After implementing employment and training projects that were funded by these grant programs, women were far more likely to hold a nontraditional job—compared to women who did not have access to these training programs, and compared to changes in men's employment, as well. The significant contribution of this study is that it uses an external data source—rather than strictly grantee-funded information—and widely-recognized methods of analysis to arrive at the findings.

¹⁰Savage, David G. "Adarand Didn't Add Up: Lawyers now wonder which Affirmative Action case the Court will take." *ABA Journal* 88(26): January 2002.

In addition, case study analysis of grant recipients built upon earlier analyses by Brigid O'Farrell^{12,13}, revealed how several grant recipients were able to bring about positive outcomes with the modest grants awarded through these programs. Together, both the Mastracci and O'Farrell research demonstrate the effectiveness of NTO programs that follow these best practices:

- ✓ Emphasize networking and advocacy among relevant policymakers;
- ✓ Conduct local labor market analyses to target employment opportunities;
- ✓ Set measurable goals to which program implementers are accountable;
- ✓ Develop specific training, pre-training, recruitment and retention strategies to guide NTO projects;
- ✓ Acknowledge the importance of filling information gaps that prevent workers and employers from getting together;
- ✓ Recognize the importance of obtaining leadership buy-in in the form of continued government involvement in implementing grant-funded projects; and
- ✓ Leverage resources—both financial and human.

In sum, recent research shows that these programs work, and the effect is statistically significant. Second, by revealing grantee best practices, this research provided information that can be used by other service delivery organizations. Finally, these results provided evidence to support the feasibility of smaller, alternative training and employment programs, which may prove important as effects of the recent economic downturn on employment are realized.

¹² O'Farrell, Brigid. "The NEW Demonstration Program: Informational Materials for The Workforce Investment Community: Draft." Document prepared for the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor. Women's Research & Education Institute, May 2000.

¹³ O'Farrell, Brigid. "The WANTO Technical Assistance Program: Informational Materials for Employers and Unions: Draft." Document prepared for the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor. Women's Research & Education Institute, May 2000.

Employment Projects in 2010 and NTO Training Policy

The changing economic context over the past ten years or so has brought about growth in some occupations and industries and declines in others. In this section, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) employment projections to 2010 are reviewed.¹⁵ In brief, not only are there some clear opportunities for NTO employment and training programs to prepare women for work in high-wage occupations that are predicted to grow, but also, the BLS trends point out the decline in several occupations that have traditionally employed high concentrations of women. That is, several lower-wage, low-opportunity, traditionally-female occupations are among those with the largest predicted job decline, including bank tellers, word processors and typists, sewing machine operators, switch-board operators, telephone operators, and some secretaries. In addition, women's labor force participation is projected to increase faster than that of men, and therefore "women's *share* of the labor force is projected to increase from 47 percent to 48 percent," an increase of approximately 1.3 million workers.¹⁶ The BLS projections to 2010 note that there will be more women than men entering the labor force, and fewer women than men leaving.

Women are projected to continue increasing their levels of educational attainment over the period. Several factors will make NTO employment and training policy especially pertinent in the coming years:

- ✓ Increased numbers of women in the workforce;
- ✓ Increased growth in certain occupations that would be appropriate program targets; and,
- ✓ Declining employment in some occupations in which lesser technically skilled women have been highly concentrated.

¹⁵BLS projections are made every two years. The most recent is from November 2001, but as those publications note, "These projections were completed prior to the tragic events of September 11. BLS will continue to review its projections and, as the long-term economic consequences of September 11 become clearer, will incorporate these effects in subsequent releases of the occupational outlook." No new projections have been released yet.

NTO employment and training programs have always sought to prepare women for high-wage, high-growth occupations, and should continue to do so. The BLS estimates that employment in computer and data processing services will grow significantly faster than average and health care occupations are also estimated to grow rapidly. Security and public safety occupations are also projected for continued growth. Although women are highly represented in many health care occupations, there are opportunities for training programs to take advantage of these projected growth trends and prepare women for work in some higher-paying occupations with growth potential, such as registered nurses.

NTOs that are projected to experience fast or sustained growth by the BLS that would be appropriate targets in addition to the occupations already targeted by NTO employment and training policies include the following:

Changing Language/Changing Targeted Jobs for Women

The strict definition of nontraditional occupations for women (NTOs) are occupations where women comprise 25 percent or less of total employment. This definition includes many occupations that have never been targeted by NTO employment and training programs. For instance, NTOs such as machinist, construction worker, construction inspector, mechanic, police and firefighter, and welder, have been targeted occupations for NTO training and employment programs, but NTOs like taxicab driver, truck driver, forestry and logging, rail transportation, air traffic controller, broadcaster and broadcast equipment operator, and funeral director, have not.

Some occupations, like architect, dentist, physicist, and atmospheric and space scientist, have never been targeted by these employment and training programs because they involve four-year college degrees or even post-graduate degrees, which are beyond the scope and purpose of these programs. Others, like upholsterer, elevator operator, clergy member, meter reader, and pest control occupations, have never been targeted because they are not necessarily associated with higher wages and better opportunities for career advancement, which lies at the very heart of these programs.

Moreover, there may be some occupations where women comprise slightly more than 25 percent of employment that do not require extensive post-secondary education and do involve higher wages and future opportunities for career advancement, which may have been perfectly appropriate for an NTO employment and training program. Clearly, NTO programs have targeted high-growth, high-wage jobs where women are underrepresented, whether the occupations strictly adhered to that definition or not. And some jobs that have fewer than 25 percent women are not appropriate for these employment and training programs.

WOW proposes reframing nontraditional occupations as high-wage/high-demand occupations, to signal an expansion beyond the former definition of NTOs. Instead, the new focus is on high-wage occupations in which women make up less than 47 percent of the workforce and in which business have a high demand for trained workers.¹⁴

¹⁴Fullerton, Howard N. and Mitra Toossi "The U.S. Economy to 2010." Monthly Labor Review November 2001. p.34. Emphasis original.

¹⁴ 47% represents true parity, as 47% of the overall workforce is female.

-
- ✓ Computer and data processing occupations;
 - ✓ Selected transportation occupations, including light trucks and delivery truck drivers and semi truck drivers, packers and packagers, and warehouse occupations;
 - ✓ Public safety and protective services occupations, including police and fire.

The BLS also identifies occupations that are projected to decline from 2000 to 2010, including order clerks, tellers, word processors and typists, sewing machine operators, switchboard operators (including answering service), telephone operators, secretaries (except legal, medical, and executive), and office machine operators (except computer). Women with lower levels of educational attainment are particularly affected by the declines in these occupations, and it is precisely these women whom NTO programs can benefit.

Conclusion

In assessing the best framework to address the goals of increasing access of women to non traditional occupations, the interactive effects of federal, state and local policy, legal decisions, evolving social norms and economic changes must be considered. The barriers to addressing the problem facing nontraditional employment advocates are substantial with a *convergence* of decisions and events that affect NTO programs and policies:

- ✓ Economic conditions that provide the rationale for reducing or eliminating a host of domestic programs on the federal and state level;
- ✓ Anti-affirmative action legislation that both reduces funding and eliminates regulations including set-asides and gender-specific objectives;
- ✓ Anti-affirmative action legal decisions that provide the rationale for reducing or eliminating programs that have less funding and involve far fewer incentives, given policy changes;


- ✓ Lack of training monies and “work first” philosophies of the Workforce Investment Act and federal and state welfare laws;
- ✓ Reduced federal funding for vocational education and scrambling in the states to meet state administrative budgets in vocational education;
- ✓ Lack of support for nontraditional programming by several federal administrations; and
- ✓ Public sentiment that the problem of occupational segregation has been solved.

At the same time, there are potential areas of leverage that might be tapped to identify new supporters or new resources:

- ✓ Employers facing worker shortages in many nontraditional areas;
- ✓ Employers and policy makers engaging in labor sectoral analyses to assess high growth industries that provide career ladders leading to jobs with high wages and adequate benefits;
- ✓ The potential of reaching many women with NTO career information through the “one-stops” created in the Workforce Investment Act;
- ✓ The greater support of nontraditional employment efforts by unions;
- ✓ The emergence of women caucuses within unions and organizations like “Tradeswomen Now and Tomorrow” that can be a source of ongoing support and advocacy for women entering non traditional occupations, particularly in the trades;
- ✓ TANF monies, which could provide training dollars; the need to target higher-waged jobs to meet self-sufficiency for women on welfare facing time limits;
- ✓ The capacity to build a dramatic case in the press and with the public about what has been lost and why the problem continues.

Occupational growth trends can help guide NTO policy and state-level economic forecasts can shed light on the budgeting environments for states and municipalities. Understanding the legal climate and tracking imminent policy changes will also help protect gender set-asides and NTO employment and training programs. Together a series of voluntary and mandatory initiatives and incentives will be necessary. The following steps can be undertaken to begin the process of building a vision for expanding opportunities for women and girls in high-wage occupations where women have been traditionally denied meaningful access.

Recommendations for Next Steps:

- ✓ Assess the feasibility of redefining the concept of nontraditional occupations for women in light of social, political, legal and economic norms with renewed focus on moving women into jobs with high wages and good benefits;
- ✓ Explore industries and sectors within industries that can provide greater opportunities for women and that go beyond the current range of occupations considered to be “nontraditional”;
- ✓ Explore strategies that not only ensure the hiring of women, but retention and advancement within industries;
- ✓ Develop strategies to maximize existing state, federal and local policies and programs that include goals to increase women’s participation in the workforce and to increase individual’s access to training and education;
- ✓ Identify strategies to include provisions in governmental policies and future legislative initiatives, including the reauthorization of key legislation like TANF, WIA and the Perkins Acts, that can increase economic opportunities for women and girls;
- ✓ Explore strategies to address legal challenges and reinvigorate a legal framework to support the goals of affirmative action and reduce occupational segregation;
- ✓ Identify and disseminate models of best practices that offer alternatives to government mandates and create incentives to employers, unions, community-based and job training programs to increase women’s access to jobs that offer self-sufficiency wages for women and their families. Identify program like the “mega” projects that were federally funded and required compliance with Department of Labor’s Employment Standards Administration’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs guidelines;
- ✓ Identify new allies to promote the increased participation of women in industries that offer self-sufficiency wages and benefits to women and their families. 

Employment Projections in Detail

The following section examines employment growth trends projected by the Bureau of Labor Standards in greater detail.

Table I below is directly from "Labor Force Projections to 2010: Steady Growth and Changing Composition" published in the November 2001 *Monthly Labor Review*.¹ The author identifies projected growing occupations according to required education and earnings potential compared to median annual earnings across all occupations. The shading was added to emphasize potential NTO program targets.

Table I: Occupations with the Largest Projected Job Growth, 2000 to 2010

Occupation	Employment (in thousands)		Change		Quartile rank by 2000 median hourly earnings ¹	Education and training category
	2000	2010	No. (1,000)	Pct.		
Combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food	2,206	2,879	673	30	4	Short-term on-the-job training
Customer service representatives	1,946	2,577	631	32	3	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Registered nurses	2,194	2,759	565	26	1	Associate degree
Retail salespersons	4,109	4,619	510	12	4	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer support specialists	506	996	490	97	2	Associate degree
Cashiers, except gaming	3,325	3,796	474	14	4	Short-term on-the-job training
Office clerks, general	2,709	3,139	430	16	3	Short-term on-the-job training
Security guards	1,106	1,497	391	35	4	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer software engineers, applications	380	760	380	100	1	Bachelor's degree
Waiters and waitresses	1,983	2,347	364	18	4	Short-term on-the-job training
General and operations managers	2,396	2,761	365	15	1	Bachelor's or higher degree, plus work experience
Truck drivers, heavy and tractor/trailer	1,749	2,096	346	20	2	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	1,373	1,891	518	38	3	Short-term on-the-job training
Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	2,346	2,669	323	14	4	Short-term on-the-job training
Postsecondary teachers	1,344	1,659	315	23	1	Doctoral degree
Teacher assistants	1,263	1,563	300	24	4	Short-term on-the-job training
Home health aides	819	901	82	10	4	Short-term on-the-job training
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand	2,084	2,373	289	14	3	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer software engineers, systems software	317	601	284	90	1	Bachelor's degree
Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	894	1,154	260	29	4	Short-term on-the-job training
Personal and home care aides	414	672	258	62	4	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer systems analysts	431	689	258	60	1	Bachelor's degree
Receptionists and information clerks	1,078	1,334	256	24	3	Short-term on-the-job training
Truck drivers, light or delivery services	1,117	1,331	215	19	3	Short-term on-the-job training
Packers and packagers, hand	1,091	1,300	210	19	4	Short-term on-the-job training
Elementary school teachers, except special education	1,532	1,734	202	13	1	Bachelor's degree
Medical assistants	329	516	187	57	3	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Network and computer systems administrators	229	416	187	82	1	Bachelor's degree
Secondary school teachers, except special and vocational education	1,004	1,190	186	19	1	Bachelor's degree
Accountants and auditors	976	1,157	181	19	1	Bachelor's degree

¹ The quartile rankings of Occupational Employment Statistics annual earnings data are presented in the following categories: 1=very high (\$39,700 and over), 2=high (\$25,760 to \$39,660), 3=low (\$18,500 to \$25,760), and 4=very low (up to \$18,490). The rankings were based on quartiles using one-fourth of total employment to define each quartile. Earnings are for wage and salary workers.

¹ Hecker, Daniel E. "Occupational Employment Projections to 2010." *Monthly Labor Review* November 2001. Page 80.

The most job growth is projected to involve many computer-technology related occupations and some health care occupations. Although the computer and technology jobs are high-paying, fast-growing jobs, they tend to require four-year college degrees. Similarly, although many health care occupations are fast-growing, and require less than a college degree, they tend to pay lower-than-average wages. Therefore, neither would be appropriate targets for NTO employment and training programs. The shaded rows identify potential occupations that could be targeted by NTO programs. Appropriate targets for NTO employment and training programs might include registered nurses, computer support specialists, and drivers of heavy, tractor-trailer trucks.

Based on these BLS projections, not only do these jobs involve higher-than-average earnings, there will also be available job opportunities.

* Reprinted from "Nontraditional Employment for Women: An Overview of the Changing Political, Economic, and Legal Environments" by Sharon Mastracci, April 2002.

Occupations Projected to Decline in Employment

The BLS also identifies occupations that are projected to decline over the period. Below is directly from the same *Monthly Labor Review* employment projections.² Shading is added to highlight occupations where women are traditionally concentrated. As Table II shows, women with lower levels of educational attainment are particularly affected by the declines in these occupations, and it is *precisely* these women whom NTO programs can benefit.

Table II: Occupations with the Largest Projected Job Decline, 2000 to 2010

Occupation	Employment (in thousands)		Change		Quartile rank by 2000 median hourly earnings (1)	Education and training category
	2000	2010	No. (1,000)	Pct.		
Farmers and ranchers	1,294	965	-328	-25	2	Long-term on-the-job training
Order clerks	348	277	-71	-20	3	Short-term on-the-job training
Tellers	499	440	-59	-12	3	Short-term on-the-job training
Insurance claims and policy processing clerks	268	231	-38	-20	2	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Word processors and typists	297	240	-57	-19	3	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Sewing machine operators	399	348	-51	-13	4	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Dishwashers	525	483	-42	-8	4	Short-term on-the-job training
Switchboard operators, including answering service	259	218	-41	-16	3	Short-term on-the-job training
Loan interviewers and clerks	138	101	-38	-28	2	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer operators	194	161	-33	-17	2	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Dining room and cafeteria attendants and bartender helpers	431	402	-29	-7	4	Short-term on-the-job training
Electrical and electronic equipment assemblers	379	355	-24	-6	3	Short-term on-the-job training
Machine feeders and offbearers	182	159	-22	-12	3	Short-term on-the-job training
Telephone operators	54	36	-19	-35	2	Short-term on-the-job training
Secretaries, except legal, medical, and executive	1,864	1,848	-18	-1	3	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Press technicians and workers	101	90	-11	-11	2	Long-term on-the-job training
Office machine operators, except computer	84	68	-16	-19	3	Short-term on-the-job training
Cutting, punching, and press machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	372	357	-15	-4	3	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Postal service mail sorters, processors, and processing machine operators	285	270	-14	-5	2	Short-term on-the-job training
Railroad brake, signal, and switch operators	22	9	-13	-61	2	Work experience in a related occupation
Wholesale and retail buyers, except farm products	148	135	-13	-9	2	Bachelor's degree
Meter readers, utilities	49	36	-13	-26	2	Short-term on-the-job training
Butchers and meat cutters	141	128	-13	-9	3	Long-term on-the-job training
Part's salespersons	280	248	-32	-11	3	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers	802	591	-211	-26	3	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Eligibility interviewers, government programs	117	106	-11	-9	2	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Door-to-door sales workers, news and street vendors, and related workers	168	156	-12	-7	3	Short-term on-the-job training
Procurement clerks	76	67	-9	-12	2	Short-term on-the-job training
Railroad conductors and yardmasters	45	38	-7	-16	2	Work experience in a related occupation
Barbers	73	64	-9	-12	4	Postsecondary vocational award

¹ The quartile rankings of Occupational Employment Statistics annual earnings data are presented in the following categories: 1=very high (\$39,700 and over), 2=high (\$25,760 to \$39,660), 3=low (\$18,500 to \$25,760), and 4=very low (up to \$18,490). The rankings were based on quartiles using one-fourth of total employment to define each quartile. Earnings are for wage and salary workers.

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² Hecker, Daniel E. "Occupational Employment Projections to 2010." *Monthly Labor Review* November 2001. Page 81.

Nontraditional Occupations for Women based on Annualized 2001 CPS Data

The following chart highlights higher waged skilled occupations with growth potential through 2001 and the current percent of women employed in those occupations.

Table III. Higher Waged Skilled Occupations and Percentages of Women Employed

	Total Employed (in thousands)	Percent Women Employed
Funeral directors	59	24.9
Precision production occupations	3,641	24.6
Freight, stock, and material handlers	2,003	24.1
Guards and police, except public services	786	24
Sales representatives, mining, manufacturing, and wholesale	1,480	23.7
Architects	214	23.5
Geologists and geodesists	50	23.5
Sales representatives, commodities, except retail	1,511	23.4
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	17,696	23.3
Metal and plastic processing machine operators	125	23.2
Upholsterers	62	22.8
Guards	62	22.7
Correctional institution officers	323	22.5
Production helpers	57	22
Farm occupations, except managerial	734	21.5
Printing machine operators	344	21.4
Engineering and related technologists and technicians	1,007	21.3
Sheriffs, bailiffs, and other law enforcement officers	169	21.2
Laborers, except construction	1,252	21.2
Farming, forestry, and fishing	3,245	20.8
Farm workers	671	20.7
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	5,326	20.5
Protective service	2,476	20.4
Drafting occupations	220	20.1
Metalworking and plastic working machine operators	313	20.1
Dentists	170	19.9
Supervisors	1,076	19.7
Electrical and electronic technicians	475	19.5
Other agricultural and related occupations	2,004	19.1
Butchers and meat cutters	223	18.9
Police and detectives	1,066	17.8
Related agricultural occupations	1,269	17.8
Industrial engineers	261	17.3
Data processing equipment repairers	316	17.1
Broadcast equipment operators	52	17
Grinding, abrading, buffing, and polishing machine operators	94	16.9
Printing press operators	278	15.5
Woodworking machine operators	111	15.2
Clergy	360	15.1
Police and detectives, public service	574	14.1
Sawing machine operators	58	13.9
Telephone installers and repairers	290	13.8
Mixing and blending machine operators	100	13.8
Surveying and mapping technicians	66	13.6
Vehicle washers and equipment cleaners	306	13.6

Separating, filtering, and clarifying machine operators	55	13.2
Horticultural specialty farmers	69	13.2
Meter readers	55	12.4
Supervisors	212	12.3
Taxicab drivers and chauffeurs	305	12.3
Motor vehicle operators	4,356	12.2
Engineers, architects, and surveyors	2,360	11.6
Sales workers, parts	170	11.5
Chemical engineers	78	11.4
Electrical and electronic equipment repairers	984	11.4
Precision woodworking occupations	123	11.2
Painting and paint spraying machine operators	173	10.8
Engineers	2,122	10.4
Transportation and material moving occupations	5,638	10.4
Police and detectives	111	10.3
Civil engineers	297	10.2
Electrical and electronic engineers	739	10
Sales workers, motor vehicles and boats	323	10
Furnace, kiln, and oven operators, except food	57	10
Parking lot attendants	61	10
Aerospace engineers	89	9.4
Drivers-sales workers	166	9.1
Supervisors	261	8.8
Precision production, craft, and repair	14,833	8.7
Forestry and logging occupations	90	8.3
Groundskeepers and gardeners, except farm	878	7.8
Garage and service station related occupations	173	7.4
Supervisors	179	7.1
Construction inspectors	62	6.8
Precision metalworking	858	6.7
Industrial truck and tractor equipment operators	542	6.3
Mechanical engineers	333	6.2
Insulation workers	60	6.2
Painters, construction and maintenance	638	5.8
Garbage collectors	58	5.8
Miscellaneous mechanics and repairers	975	5.7
Sheet-metal workers	117	5.6
Truck drivers	3,158	5.3
Mechanics and repairers	4,807	4.9
Electronic repairers, communications and industrial equipment	202	4.8
Material moving equipment operators	1,111	4.8
Helpers, construction trades	108	4.8
Mechanics and repairers, except supervisors	4,547	4.7
Machinists	465	4.6
Plant and system operators	267	4.4
Helpers, construction and extractive occupations	116	4.4
Cabinet makers and bench carpenters	86	4.3
Rail transportation	112	4.2
Firefighting and fire prevention	264	4.1
Aircraft engine mechanics	123	4.1
Stationary engineers	116	4.1
Pest control occupations	66	4
Industrial machinery repairers	448	3.6
Telephone line installers and repairers	53	3.6
Electrical power installers and repairers	138	3.6

Welders and cutters	529	3.6
Construction laborers	1,024	3.6
Airplane pilots and navigators	136	3.5
Transportation occupations, except motor vehicles	171	3.5
Milwrights	67	3.3
Firefighting	250	2.7
Drywall installers	191	2.7
Tool and die makers	113	2.7
Construction trades	6,253	2.5
Supervisors	986	2.5
Construction trades, except supervisors	5,266	2.4
Water transportation	59	2.3
Operating engineers	245	2.2
Timber cutting and logging occupations	55	2.2
Crane and tower operators	68	2.1
Extractive occupations	132	2
Heavy equipment mechanics	158	1.9
Carpet installers	122	1.9
Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters	569	1.9
Structural metalworkers	78	1.9
Electricians	874	1.8
Roofers	212	1.8
Grader, dozer, and scraper operators	60	1.8
Carpenters	1,486	1.7
Vehicle and mobile equipment mechanics and repairers	1,795	1.5
Automobile mechanics	817	1.5
Automobile body and related repairers	220	1.3
Brickmasons and stonemasons	235	1.2
Locomotive operating occupations	61	1.1
Water and sewage treatment plant operators	64	0.9
Small engine repairers	68	0.7
Heating, air conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics	326	0.6
Plasterers	58	0.6
Bus, truck, and stationary engine mechanics	344	0.5
Concrete and masonry finishers	117	0.3
Tile setters, hard and soft	93	0.2
Excavating and loading machine operators	94	0.2

- Shaded rows indicate occupations that would be targets of NTO employment and training policy, as they are higher-wage skilled occupations that the BLS projects for growth through 2010.
- These data are from annualized 2001 Current Population Survey (CPS) data, and can be found at <<http://stats.bls.gov/cps/home.htm#annual>>, under "Table 11".
- Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic origin.* The Standard Occupation Code (SOC) classification system was changed in 2001. The CPS will convert to the new SOC manual in early 2003.
- Generally, data for occupations with fewer than 50,000 persons employed are not published separately but are included in the totals for the appropriate category shown.

* Reprinted from "Nontraditional Employment for Women: An Overview of the Changing Political, Economic, and Legal Environments" by Sharon Mastracci, April 2002



Appendix 2

Information About WOW

About Wider Opportunities for Women

Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) works nationally and in its home community of Washington, D.C. to achieve economic independence and equality of opportunity for women and girls. For almost 40 years, WOW has helped women learn to earn, with programs emphasizing literacy, technical and nontraditional skills, the welfare-to-work transition and career development. Since 1964, WOW has trained more than 10,000 women for well paid work in the DC area. WOW leads the National Women's Workforce Network which is comprised of organizations committed to increasing women and girls access to well-paid work. WOW is recognized nationally for its skills training models, technical assistance, and advocacy for women workers.

Local Programs

Today, WOW is an appointed member of DC's Workforce Investment Council and serves on its Executive, One Stop Center and Labor Market Information subcommittees. WOW also co-convenes the DC Jobs Council, a coalition of job training and placement providers, community leaders, advocates, and individual job seekers that advocates for quality job training.

In 2002, WOW supported the D.C. Workforce Investment Council in its conduct of a sectoral analysis to link low-skilled job seekers with high-growth industries that will lead to self-sufficient wages. The analysis focused on expanding opportunities in the health sector and included convening focus groups of employers, job training providers and job seekers. WOW also conducted a thorough assessment of the opportunities and challenges for women who wish to participate in apprenticeship programs in the DC area. WOW is currently conducting a study of the One Stop system in DC to assess how job seekers are utilizing the primary government funded job training program in the District of Columbia. This study was designed to ascertain whether this resource is meeting the information and job-training needs of DC jobseek-

ers. Each of these discrete projects is linked to the greater goal of improving the workforce development system in metropolitan Washington, particularly for low-income women and girls.

National Programs

WOW leads the Family Economic Self-Sufficiency (FESS) Project, a multi-year initiative designed to change the national public debate from one focusing on poverty reduction to one of building pathways to self-sufficiency. WOW works with partner organizations and coalition in 35 states. The FESS project identifies Six Strategies for Self-Sufficiency, the cornerstone of which is the Self-Sufficiency Standard. The Standard, developed by Dr. Diana Pearce, is a measure of how much income families need to meet their basic needs depending on where they live and who is in their family. Through the FESS project WOW has developed a cadre of advocates who are influencing policy debates at the local, state and federal levels and have developed tools to help program managers and individuals move on a path toward self-sufficiency.

WOW continues its groundbreaking work in promoting the participation of women in non-traditional occupations for women through its analysis and research. Its websites, www.Work4Women.org and www.WorkplaceSolutions.org are ongoing resources for employers, job training programs, unions, women and girls.

WOW serves in a number of national leadership roles and works in coalition with allied organizations including the National Coalition of Women's Organizations, the Workforce Alliance, the National Campaign on Job and Income Supports, and the National Coalition of Women and Job Training.

WOW is governed by a Board of Directors. Claudia Withers, Esq. serves as the Chair of the Board. Joan A. Kuriansky, Esq. is the Executive Director of WOW.

Landmarks in WOW's History and in Federal Involvement in Nontraditional Employment for Women

WOW's Accomplishments	Federal Activity
1960s	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1964: WOW was born out of the development of the self-help book, <i>Washington Opportunities for Women</i>, which brought together more than 100 volunteers to research part-time job opportunities in metropolitan Washington, DC (1964) <p>1965-69:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ WOW pioneered peer-to-peer career development and employment services targeted to women through such projects as the New Careers Program, paraprofessional teaching and social work projects. ✓ WOW advocated successfully with the U.S. Civil Service Commission [now the Office of Personnel Management] for the accreditation of volunteer experience as a credential for civil service employment. ✓ WOW helped develop similar community-based women's employment initiatives in six communities: Atlanta, Richmond, Baltimore, Providence, Boston, and White River Junction, VT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1964: Civil Rights Act prohibited discrimination in employment
1970s	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1977: WOW expanded its mission, becoming a national organization, and established the Women's Workforce Network, with the first national conference of women's employment programs. ✓ 1977: Women's Work, the first national magazine for working women, which was developed and published by WOW, became an independent publication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1972: Title IX amendments prohibited sex discrimination in education and training. ✓ 1975: The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) replaced the 1962 Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA). CETA decentralized the provision of employment services from the federal level to state and local governments.

WOW's Accomplishments	Federal Activity
1970s (continued)	
<p>Also in 1970s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ WOW participated in a successful legal challenge to the U.S. Department of Labor which resulted in the establishment of monitored goals for women in the construction trades and in the opening of apprenticeship opportunities for women. ✓ WOW piloted the first nontraditional jobs program for women in the post-WWII era, in waste-water treatment at the Blue Plains Treatment Center. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1978: The Dept. of Labor (DOL) established goals and timetables for hiring women in apprenticeships in skilled trades. ✓ Also in 1970s: Creation of Dept. of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission – both of which have had key roles in promoting, monitoring, and enforcing affirmative action and equal opportunity for women in traditionally male roles.
1980s	
<p>In the 1980s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ WOW piloted survival strategies for women's employment programs which resulted in the sustainability of more than 90% of Workforce Network programs in the face of massive budget cutting in programs targeting women at the federal and state levels. ✓ WOW spearheaded landmark research and advocacy projects: A Territorial Issue which documented the barriers confronting women in four communities attempting to gain access to training and jobs in the construction industry and Bridging the Skills Gap which documented the continuing occupational segregation of women in high technology jobs. ✓ WOW established the National Coalition on Women, Work, and Welfare Reform, drawing together 37 organizations to advocate for welfare policies which would result in economic independence for mothers and children on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). ✓ 1984: WOW led efforts to strengthen Congressional policy provisions for women in the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act. This accomplished the largest set-aside of funds in history for women's vocational and training programs. 	<p>1982:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) replaced CETA and continued the decentralization to states, but placed a far greater emphasis on private sector involvement in providing training and employment services than did CETA or MDTA. Although JTPA required states, localities, and training providers to give equal opportunities to women and increase their participation in nontraditional occupations, but changes to JTPA actually made women worse off by placing greater importance on the private sector than did CETA. And, there were no provisions for targeting women in recruitment, job counseling, individualized needs assessment or daycare under JTPA. ✓ The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act passed as part of JTPA and included set-aside funds to eliminate gender discrimination in vocational education and to help women gain access to skills training. ✓ 1984: The Secretary of Labor created the Task Force on Women in Non-traditional Jobs in the Aerospace and Construction Industries. ✓ 1988: The Non-traditional Employment for Women (NEW) Act was passed, which amended the JTPA, and included funds to be awarded to states via competitive grants. The NEW Act's grant program was a four-year, \$6 million demonstration program for the purpose of training low-income women for placement in nontraditional occupations.

WOW's Accomplishments	Federal Activity
1990s	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1991: WOW led successful efforts to pass a vital policy for women in nontraditional jobs: the Women in Apprenticeship and Non-Traditional Occupations (WANTO) Act, which provided federal funds for technical assistance to employers and unions to make their workplaces more responsive to women in nontraditional jobs. <p>Also in the 1990s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ WOW initiated national literacy, technical assistance, and research projects which demonstrated the effectiveness of integrating literacy with employment training for low-income mothers and proved that investing in the education of mothers has a two-generation benefit. ✓ WOW launched the National Leadership Development Project to teach policy advocacy skills to leaders and human service providers in three states and several international settings. ✓ WOW's successful Nontraditional Employment Training Project, designed to model implementation of the NEW Act in the JTPA system, reached into 11 pilot communities with intensive technical assistance. It provided materials and training sessions to JTPA service providers in more than 20 states. ✓ 1999: With support of a WANTO grant, WOW established two important websites: www.Work4Women.org, an online gateway that provides information about high-wage jobs and support networks that help women and girls target careers that will lead to economic self-sufficiency, and www.WorkplaceSolutions.org, composed of resources and services designed to help employers unions recruit, train, and retrain women in high-wage nontraditional occupations and apprenticeships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 1991: The Women in Apprenticeship and Non-Traditional Occupations (WANTO) Act was passed which also amended JTPA and included funds to be awarded to states via competitive grants. ✓ 1991: The Non-traditional Employment for Women (NEW) Act was passed, which amended the JTPA, and included funds to be awarded to states via competitive grants. The NEW Act's grant program was a four-year, \$6 million demonstration program for the purpose of training low-income women for placement in nontraditional occupations. ✓ Also in 1990s: The National Commission on Working Women launched the Sexual Harassment Solutions Project, linking WOW with trade associations in broadcast, electric, and gas industries to document good practice in preventing and addressing sexual harassment. ✓ 1996: Welfare reform passed under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. The replaced AFDC with Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF). ✓ 1998: The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act was reauthorized. However, it eliminated many gender and sex-equity set-asides. The overall effect of the 1998 Perkins law (Perkins III) has been to decrease funding, decrease services for students, increase the amount of student needs going unmet and decreased support from state and local educational agencies. ✓ 1998: A provision of the Transportation Efficiency Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) gives states the option to use _ of one percent of their surface transportation and bridge monies on job training and supportive services to help women and minorities gain employment in nontraditional jobs.

WOW's Accomplishments	Federal Activity
2000s	
<p>2001:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ WOW was appointed to the D.C Workforce Investment Council, which provides money for the public employment training and workforce development system in the District of Columbia. ✓ WOW and the D.C. Workforce Investment Council (WIC) launched the Sectoral Employment Intervention Planning Project to help bridge the gap between the unemployed and low-income workers and workforce development groups, job training and education programs, and employers. ✓ WOW established partners for the Family Economic Self-Sufficiency (FESS) Project in 20 states and had released Self Sufficiency Standards in 15 states. ✓ 2002: An additional 13 states became involved in the FESS Project and standards were released in 12 additional states. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 2000: JTPA expired and the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) took its place. One major change was the consolidation of service delivery areas under JTPA to One Stop Career Centers. Another change was the de-genderification of the WANTO language—a change intended to maintain the program's status quo, without specifically targeting women.

The Self-Sufficiency Standard

What it is and Why it Works

The Self-Sufficiency Standard calculates how much money working adults need to meet their basic needs without subsidies of any kind. Unlike the federal poverty standard, the Self-Sufficiency Standard accounts for the costs of living and working as they vary by family size and composition and by geographic location.

The Standard defines the amount of income necessary to meet basic needs (including paying taxes) in the regular “marketplace” without public subsidies—such as public housing, Food Stamps, Medicaid or child care—or private/informal subsidies—such as free babysitting by a relative or friend, food provided by churches or local food banks, or shared housing. The Standard, therefore, estimates the level of income necessary for a given family type—whether working now or making the transition to work—to be independent of welfare and/or other public and private subsidies.

- ✓ The Standard assumes that all adults (whether married or single) work full-time and includes the costs associated with employment, specifically, transportation and taxes, and for families with young children, child care.
- ✓ The Standard takes into account that many costs differ not only by family size and composition (as does the official poverty measure), but also by the age of children. While food and health care costs are slightly lower for younger children, child care costs are much higher—particularly for children not yet in school—and are a substantial budget item not included in the official poverty measure.
- ✓ The Standard accounts for regional variations in cost. This feature is particularly important for housing. Housing in the most expensive areas of the country costs

four times as much as in the least expensive areas for equivalent size units.

- ✓ The Standard includes the net effect of taxes and tax credits. It provides for state sales taxes, as well as payroll (Social Security) taxes, and federal and state income taxes. Two credits available to working adults, the Child Care Tax Credit (CCTC) and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) are “credited” against the income needed to meet basic needs—thus reducing the income needed to become economically self-sufficient.

The Self-Sufficiency Standard Tool Kit: How The Standard Can Be Used

The Self-Sufficiency Standard is relevant to a range of issues and arenas, providing crucial information about wage adequacy to help design strategies for self-sufficiency. The Standard can be used in a variety of settings—from the welfare client choosing the best path out of poverty for herself and her family, to organizations weighing investment in various education and training opportunities, to state-level policymakers facing critical policy choices on tax policy, subsidies, welfare-to-work programs, economic development plans, education and training.

At a time when many policy and programmatic decisions are being made at the state and local levels, the Standard provides a tool and a means to evaluate many different options. The discussion below should be seen as a partial list, as new uses and applications of the Standard continue to emerge.

The Self-Sufficiency Standard as a Policy Tool

The Self-Sufficiency Standard has a number of uses in the development and evaluation of policy in different areas. The Standard is a key compo-

ment, for example, in the Targeting Higher-Wage Employment Strategy. This strategy uses the Standard to assess the ability of various jobs, occupations and sectors to provide self-sufficiency wages for workers. When combined with analysis of the current local labor market supply and demand (to determine jobs that have expanding but unfilled openings), an assessment of the available job training and education infrastructure, and an evaluation of the skills and location of current/potential workers.

The Standard has also been used to evaluate the impact of proposed policy changes such as restructuring subsidy programs, changing co-payment schedules or implementing policy reforms. With the Standard it is possible to not only show the direct impact of policy changes on family incomes, but to model the interaction effects of taxes, tax credits, and, where applicable, subsidies.

The Standard can also be used to target education and job training investments and can help make the case for investing in various types of post-secondary education. Education and training beyond high school provides access to a wide range of jobs paying self-sufficiency wages, and the broad range of skills that enable workers to move into jobs created by rapidly developing new technologies.

The Self-Sufficiency Standard as a Guideline for Wage-Setting

By determining the wages needed to meet basic needs, the Standard provides information for setting minimum and living wage standards. It was used precisely this way by the Center for the Child Care Workforce, which developed specific guidelines for each county/school district in California for child care workers' salaries. It has also been used by private agencies, such as community action agencies, to evaluate the adequacy of their own salary schedules.

The Self-Sufficiency Standard as a Benchmark for Evaluation

The Standard can be used to evaluate outcomes for a wide range of programs that result in employment, from short-term job search and placement programs, to programs providing

extensive education and/or job training. Such evaluations can help redirect resources to the types of approaches that result in improved outcomes for participants.

The Self-Sufficiency Standard as a Counseling Tool

The Standard can be used as a counseling tool, to help participants in work and training programs make choices among various occupations and jobs. The Pennsylvania Family Economic Self-Sufficiency (PAFESS) Project has worked with over 1,200 case managers and social service administrators across the state to use the Self-Sufficiency Standard as a counseling tool to demonstrate the real costs of becoming economically independent. Through use of the Standard, PAFESS has encouraged social service providers to talk about higher-wage and nontraditional jobs and the importance of career ladders with their clients.

The Self-Sufficiency Standard Budget Worksheet

The Standard has also been used to develop the Self-Sufficiency Standard Budget Worksheet, completed in Pennsylvania, pending in DC and California, which is a tool that counselors and clients can use to "test" the ability of various wages to meet a family's self-sufficiency needs. The Worksheet facilitates a dialogue between counselor and client around choice of an initial job, job training opportunities and career paths. With the information provided by the Standard, clients can make informed decisions about what kinds of training would most likely lead to self-sufficiency wages, which jobs would best provide the resources they need, and what types of Microenterprise or Individual Development Account strategies may, alone or together with paid employment, provide a path to self-sufficiency for themselves and their families.

For additional information about the Self-Sufficiency Standard, contact Jennifer Brooks, Director of Self-Sufficiency Programs and Policy at Wider Opportunities for Women, 1001 Connecticut Ave, NW, Suite 930, Washington, DC 20036, ph: 202/464.1596, fax: 202/464.1660 or email: jbrooks@wowonline.org.



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- ✓ **Cool Jobs for Girls section** with links to career exploration tools, books and profiles of women role models that will encourage young women to train for nontraditional occupations*
- ✓ **Online Communities & Support Group Database** that will help women and girls obtain the encouragement and creative strategies they need to succeed in male-dominated workplaces

Nontraditional Occupations are jobs in which women represent 25% or less of the workforce (e.g., jobs in information technology, construction, and other industries). These jobs usually pay 20-30% more than traditional jobs for women, offer excellent benefits and have defined career ladders.



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For More Information

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