

## Organization Biographies

### *Economic Security for Women Across the Generations: Workforce Development Issues* *October 2, 2007*

#### ***Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW)***

Founded in 1964, Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) has helped girls, women, and their families achieve economic security through a series of innovative training and education projects. For more than 40 years, WOW has helped women learn to earn, with programs emphasizing literacy, technical and nontraditional skills, the welfare-to-work transition, career development, and retirement security. WOW opened the first employment resource center for women in the United States, played a leadership role in establishing the concept of 'nontraditional' occupations for women, piloted contextual education for women, and advocated for the passage and implementation of key federal policies to increase education, training, and employment opportunities for women. WOW's work is grounded in the experience of its local project in Washington, D.C. and that of its partners across the country.

WOW is recognized nationally for its skills training models, technical assistance, and advocacy for women workers. WOW leads the National Women's Workforce Network which is comprised of organizations committed to increasing women and girls' access to well-paid work, the Family Economic Self-Sufficiency Project (FESS), and the national Elder Economic Security Initiative (EESI). For the last several years, a major part of WOW's work has been its Family Economic Self-Sufficiency Project (FESS), through which WOW put tools in the hands of community organizations, public agencies, and policy makers to address the needs of low-income families. Through this project, WOW has helped to reframe the national debate on social policies and programs from one that focuses on poverty to one that focuses on what it takes families to make ends meet. WOW partners with key state organizations to develop and implement this project. Today, WOW has partners in 35 states and the District of Columbia. In turn, these partners form or participate in state-wide coalitions organized around the concept of self-sufficiency. These programs focus on a range of issues including employment, aging, welfare, tax policy, child advocacy, and women's issues; more than 2,000 organizations are part of this network. For more information on WOW, please visit our website at [www.wowonline.org](http://www.wowonline.org).

#### ***National Council of Women's Organizations (NCWO)***

The National Council of Women's Organizations (NCWO), a non-partisan, non-profit organization, is the nation's largest coalition of women's groups. Our 230+ member organizations represent women from all socioeconomic and demographic groups, and collectively represent over 11 million women nationwide. NCWO's eight active Task Forces bring together leading women's experts for strategy, activism and substantive policy work on Younger Women (YWTF), Domestic Priorities, Global Issues, Corporate Accountability, Older Women and Economic Security (OWES), Women's Health, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), and Media and Technology. In addition, NCWO provides on-going policy work, public education and leadership development through programs such as the Women's Equality Summit and Congressional Action Day, New Faces, More Voices Leadership Training Program, the Coalition on Diversity and Dignity in the Media, and Engaging Women in Civic Participation.

NCWO has taken an increasingly active and powerful role in the policy arena, bringing women's groups together to collaborate on issues such as reproductive rights, child care, Social Security, political participation, health care and global progress toward women's equality. Throughout the past decade, NCWO's membership expanded steadily as research institutes, grassroots organizations, legal advocacy groups and direct service providers active at national, state and local levels joined the coalition. NCWO has developed a wide range of constituents including girls, young women, middle-aged and older women, women of color, women of faith, business and professional women, lesbians and bisexual women, homemakers, and retired women. NCWO plays a unique role in today's women's movement by enabling women's groups to speak collectively, as stated by our tagline: "Many Voices, One Vision." Maintaining this infrastructure is outside the core competence of any one member organization, yet it is indispensable to the movement. Now more than ever, women must speak with a unified voice against the well-organized and well-funded forces that oppose women's equality. Please visit our website at [www.womensorganizations.org](http://www.womensorganizations.org).