



Texas Governor's Commission for Women
2005-2007 Biennial Report

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The Governor’s Commission for Women Turns 40

Since 1967, the Texas Governor’s Commission for Women has promoted issues affecting women and served as an information resource for Texas women. The Commission celebrated its 40th Anniversary on March 27, 2007. This special occasion was commemorated with a luncheon at the Hilton Hotel. The guest list included many prominent Texas elected officials including Governor Rick Perry and First Lady Anita Perry, State Representative Geanie Morrison, Texas Supreme Court Justice Harriet O’Neill, House Speaker Tom and Nadine Craddick; Amarillo Mayor Debora McCartt and Ellen Richards. The Governor presented Ellen Richards, representing the Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders, with a monetary donation on behalf of the Governor’s Commission for Women.

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Letter from the Chair

As Chair of the Governor's Commission for Women, I am pleased to present the 2005-2007 Commission biennial report. The Governor's Commission for Women is a division of the Office of the Governor that promotes opportunities for Texas women through outreach, education, research and referral services.

Established by executive order in 1967, the Governor's Commission for Women celebrated its 40th anniversary this year. To honor this important milestone, a resolution recognizing the 40th anniversary was read in both the House and Senate Chambers, and the Commission hosted a luncheon in Austin honoring the women of the 80th Texas Legislature. Governor Rick Perry and First Lady Anita Perry, House Speaker Tom Craddick, and Texas Supreme Court Justice Harriet O'Neill were special guests at this prestigious event. The Commission concluded the celebration by presenting a donation to the Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders, which opened to middle-school girls in fall 2007.

During the 2005-2007 term, the Commission continued its work for Texas women, focusing on three key areas affecting women: strengthening economic development; improving health and wellness; and preventing domestic violence.

The Commission partnered with numerous economic development organizations to help build women's position in the workforce. In an effort to provide assistance to a growing segment of our population, the commission joined with the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Foundation and their newly developed program called WorkSearch, which offers job and career information and services to Texans who want to stay in or re-enter the workforce. To support survivors of domestic violence, the Commission provides these individuals and their families with an opportunity to gain workforce skills that meet the needs of Texas employers, by offering workforce programs and services, training and resume-building and interviewing workshops. Together with *Count Me In* and the *Make Mine a Million \$ Business Initiative*, the Commission supported entrepreneurs in their goal of reaching a million dollars in revenue. And finally, the Commission honored some notable female business leaders at the Texas Business Woman of the Year Awards.

For the past several years, the Commission has also worked vigorously to combat violence against women. Most recently, we became involved in a teen-dating violence prevention initiative, in an effort to stop the cycle of violence and promote healthy dating relationships among teenagers. Collaborating with several domestic-violence and sexual-assault prevention organizations, we helped distribute hundreds of toolkits to schools statewide, launched a new web site (healthyteendating.org) and have reached more than 11,000 Texas students to date with this vital information.

In 2006, the Commission honored the achievements of four remarkable women who were inducted into the Texas Women's Hall of Fame. Texas First Lady Anita Perry officiated at the ceremony, held in the Senate Chamber of the Texas State Capitol. The honorees were also honored at a dedication ceremony at Texas Woman's University, home of the Texas Women's Hall of Fame permanent exhibit.

Since its inception, the Commission has been a supporting organization of the Texas Conference for Women. The 2007 Conference drew more than 7,500 participants, and the Commission partnered with the Texas Nurses Association to provide complimentary blood pressure, glucose and osteoporosis screenings to attendees. We also hosted a reception prior to the Conference for community leaders and members of local women's commissions, to exchange ideas and share best practices.

In an effort to combat childhood obesity, the Commission partnered with Texas Round-Up to host a statewide healthy eating recipe contest. The commission read, tested and judged all recipe submissions and helped produce recipe cards featuring the winning recipes. During the Texas Round-Up Expo, the Commission held a cooking demonstration and provided samples of the winning recipes as well as copies of the recipes for the public to take home.

While all this work has been happening, the Commission staff continued to handle hundreds of constituent requests, and the Commission web site was completely redesigned to offer Texans easier navigability for our state's women.

It has been an honor to serve as chair. I have enjoyed working with a talented, passionate and dedicated group of Commissioners, who are now some of my dearest friends. This tenure has been an incredibly rewarding experience, and a legacy that we all helped to create. I look forward to see what the Commission will accomplish in the next 40 years!

With gratitude,

Keely Appleton, 2005-2007 Chair
Governor's Commission for Women

Commissioners

The Governor's Commission for Women was established by Executive Order in 1967. Commissioners are appointed by the Governor to two-year terms and meet on a quarterly basis. Commissioners are selected based on their leadership attributes and community involvement.

Keely Appleton, Chair



Keely Appleton of Fort Worth works as a political fundraiser and event/project manager. Appleton also serves as a board member for several organizations, including Cook Children's Hospital and the Fort Worth/Tarrant County A&M Club. She is a charter member of the National Cowgirl Museum, and a member of the Texas A&M Association of Former Students, the American Quarter Horse Association and Christ Chapel Bible Church. Appleton has facilitated special projects such as state chair for Laura Bush Breast Cancer Awareness, and has served as co-chair for civic events such as "Puttin' on the Pink," benefiting the Doris Kupferle Breast Cancer Center, the Charles Goodnight Gala and the Fort Worth Zoo Ball. Keely earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science at Texas A&M University.

Wendy Taylor, Vice-Chair



Wendy Taylor is an account director with Sanders/Wingo Communication's Austin and El Paso offices. Wendy has more than 15 years of experience in communications strategy, with special expertise in health care, governmental affairs and economic development. She also served as Texas First Lady Anita Perry's press secretary. Wendy is a member of the Advertising Federation of El Paso and the Texas Exes. Wendy earned a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism at the University of Texas at Austin.

Peggy Hairgrove



A retired elementary-school teacher of 29 years, Peggy Hairgrove of Haskell divides her time between volunteering in her church community and assisting her husband at his veterinary clinic with surgeries and medication. At the First United Methodist Church of Haskell, Peggy attends Sunday school and has played piano accompaniment for more than 20 years. She holds a master's degree in education from Texas Tech University, an additional master's degree in family studies from Abilene Christian University and earned her bachelor's degree in education at Texas Tech.

Commissioners

Cynthia Jenkins



Cynthia Jenkins of Irving is vice president of CTJ Maintenance, Inc., a commercial building maintenance corporation where she also serves as a board member, and vice president of Janitors Market, LLC, a corporation that markets and sells to custodial firms and other accounts. Additionally, Cynthia is the executive director of Bear Creek Development Corporation, a real-estate development company that builds residential home for low-to-moderate-income families. Cynthia is actively involved in civic community outreach programs, is the Chief Operating Officer for Community Praise and Worship Church, and is a graduate of Leadership Irving. She earned her bachelor's degree in computer science at Texas A&M at Commerce.

Christie Leedy



Dr. Christie Leedy is a practicing dentist and co-owner of Abilene Dental. Leedy serves as founder of the Angel Smiles program, and a member of the 17th District Dental Society and the Texas Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry. Within her community, Christie is involved in the Junior Achievement Board of Directors, the Abilene Chamber of Commerce and the Junior League of Abilene. Christie received the Salute to Small Business Award from Small Business Administration; she was also named West Texas Business Woman of the Month. Christie attended college at Tarleton State University and Western Texas College; she has a doctorate in dental surgery at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio Dental Branch.

Sue Chiang



Sue Chiang of Sugar Land is a community relations representative for Crystal Children and Teacher Supply. A retired teacher, Sue was selected by Who's Who Among America's Teachers as an educator who "made a difference in the lives of the students." She serves as a board member for the Fort Bend Education Foundation and Sugar Land Methodist Hospital. Sue is a member of the Sugar Land Mayor's Advisory Committee, the Sugar Land Parks and Recreation Board and the Fort Bend County Judge Advisory Committee. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Education at the University of Houston.

Becky McKinley



Becky McKinley of Amarillo owns Dining by Design, a catering and event planning service, and serves as a food columnist for the Morrison News Group. A member of the International Association of Culinary Professionals, Becky writes a food column for Accent West magazine. As an active community volunteer, she organizes and caters many nonprofit fundraising events, and is also an involved member of the Baptist St. Anthony's Health System board, the Amarillo Samaritan Counseling Board and the KACV Public Television board. She also volunteers by teaching nutrition at the Food Bank Kids Café organization. Becky earned a Bachelor of Science in Fine Arts at Texas Tech University, with a special-education endorsement.

Commissioners

Carmen Pagan



Carmen Pagan of McAllen co-owns Milestones Therapeutic Associates, a comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation clinic. A certified speech pathologist and member of the American Speech and Hearing Association and the Texas Speech-Hearing Association, Carmen serves as her firm's chief operating officer and executive clinical director. She has been a regular speaker for organizations like the University of Texas - Pan American, Region One Educational District and various public school districts. Carmen is past-president of Beta Sigma Phi service sorority, a sustaining member of the Junior League of McAllen and an active member of Harvest Church. Carmen earned her bachelor and her master's degree in communications disorders at the University of Texas - Pan American.

Lisa Lucero



Lisa Lucero of Austin is a public-affairs assistant for Exxon Mobil Corporation. Previously, Lisa spent over 12 years working for the State of Texas, the Texas Senate, the Governor's Office, the Texas Racing Commission and the Texas Department of Agriculture. She is an assistant troop leader for Daisy Girl Scouts and a member of St. Austin's Catholic Church. Lisa attended college at the University of Texas at Austin.

Tresa Rockwell



Tresa Rockwell is a cultural marketing manager for Red Bull North America. Tresa is the past president of the Rotary Club of El Paso Foundation, a member of the Las Palmas Hospital Women's Advisory Board, Advertising Federation of El Paso, Executive Forum, Leadership El Paso (she is a Class 9 alumna) and Texas Lyceum Association. She has served on the executive committee of the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association and El Paso's public television station, KCOS, and is past president of the Rotary Club of El Paso and the Junior League of El Paso. Tresa earned her bachelor's degree in management with a minor in marketing at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Carol Peterson



Carol Peterson of Alpine is the marketing and event director for Marathon's historic Gage Hotel, where she has also served as the food beverage director and executive chef. Previously, Carol spent over 26 years in the fashion industry, leading a New York City manufacturer of private-label clothing for major catalogue companies. She also was a divisional vice president for Neiman Marcus in Dallas, and a buyer for Foley's in Houston. Carol volunteers with the Pilot Club service organization. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Human Sciences from Texas Tech University and also graduated with honors from New York's French Culinary Institute.

Commissioners

Connie Weeks



Connie Weeks of Austin is a freelance educational consultant for National Evaluations Systems. Previously, Weeks worked as an art teacher in the Round Rock and Austin school districts. She is a member of the Austin High School Parent-Teacher-Student Association and Tarrytown United Methodist Church. Connie volunteers with Hospice of Austin and the Alzheimer's Association. She earned her bachelor's degree in art education at Baylor University and her graduate degree as a reading specialist at Hardin Simmons University.

Daisy White



Daisy White of Houston is the president of Daisy Sloan White, Inc., a company currently consulting for The Events Company. A member of Meeting Professionals International, Daisy also serves as a board member for the Texas A&M University Press and as committee member for the American Heart Association. Her active volunteer involvement included chairing the Cattle Baron's Ball for the American Cancer Society, the Race for the Cure for the Susan G. Komen Foundation, and serving as the first president of the Cypress Woodland member of the 2003 Governor's Inaugural Committee. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Education at The University of Texas, and her master's degree in speech pathology at Southern Methodist University.



Lesley Guthrie, Executive Director



Lesley Guthrie of Austin has served as the executive director of the Governor's Commission for Women since 2001. Prior to joining the Office of the Governor, Lesley worked on Capitol Hill for Congressman Sam Johnson. She moved back to Austin in 1999 and worked for Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn and Vignette Corporation. Lesley serves on the board of directors for the Texas Girls Collaborative Project and Girlstart, a non-profit that empowers girls to pursue math, science and technology. She has previously served as a board member for the Young Women's Alliance, Young Women's Alliance Foundation and Executive Women in Texas Government. Lesley received a bachelor's degree in government at the University of Texas at Austin.

State Agency Council

The State Agency Council was established by Texas Governor Mark White in 1983 to support the goals of the Governor's Commission for Women. The Council offers state agency representatives professional development trainings, community service opportunities and a forum to discuss women's issues. The Council also provides volunteer assistance at Commission sponsored events.

State Agency Council members are appointed by the director of each state agency at the Governor's request. One member and one alternate member are appointed by each agency to serve a two-year term. The Council currently consists of 75 members and 70 alternates. The executive director of the Governor's Commission for Women appoints an Executive Board from the Council's membership.

State Agency Council Projects

Outstanding Women in Texas Government Awards

The Outstanding Women in Texas Government Awards were created by the State Agency Council in 1984 to honor women who work in state government, who do not hold elected or appointed positions, and who have helped shape Texas by contributing their talents and skills to state service. Honorees are nominated by state agency directors and chosen by an independent selection committee.

Caritas Austin

State Agency Council members volunteered at the Caritas Austin Community Kitchen for two days in December 2006. Caritas provides meals to Austin's poor and homeless everyday. The state agency council prepared and served more than 450 meals. Additionally, members donated canned goods to the food pantry.

Bears that Care

"Bears that Care" is a program of the Center for Child Protection, an accredited children's advocacy center serving Travis County. Children are referred to the center exclusively by law enforcement and brought to the center by a caregiver for a recorded interview, forensic medical exam, counseling and crisis intervention. Bears are given to children as they enter the shelter. These children are suspected victims of sexual and physical abuse; or may have witnessed a violent crime. The supply of stuffed animals at the center was critically low so council members donated over 1,200 bears and other stuffed animals to the Center for Child Protection in July and August 2007.



"I have thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to serve as a State Agency Council Member. The time has flown by! I learned so much from all the monthly speakers (and their) presentations.

Cindi King
Texas Animal
Health Commission

State Agency Council

State Agency Council Speakers

The State Agency Council holds monthly meetings on topics of interest to female state employees. Below is a list of the 2005-2007 speakers:

2005

Marty McCartt, Executive Director, Texas Round-Up
Greg Davidson, Executive Clerk, Office of the Governor
Ann Fry, Coach, Humor University
Sandra Martin, Executive Director, Center for Child Protection
Dr. Nancy Oelkaus, The Success Accelerator
Rebecca Powers, Founder, IMPACT Austin
Renee Trudeau, Career and Small Business Coach
Jim Comer, Comer Communications
Angela English, Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities
Susan Weddington, Executive Director, One Star Foundation

2006

Honorable Mark Strama, State Representative
Ann Fuelberg, Executive Director, Employees Retirement System
Shelly Kochhar, Certified Motivational Trainer
Meredith Garcia, Professional Development Manager, State Auditor's Office
Darline Lee, Owner of Next Step Fitness
Connie Ryan, Central Family Practice
Sue Cullen, Founder, Sue Cullen & Associates
Christina Carosella, President, Bold Strategies
Melanie True Hills, American Heart Association
Michelle Segovia, Texas Organ Sharing Alliance

2007

Adelaide Horn, Commissioner, Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services
Thomas Kerbow, Staff Attorney, Texas Workforce Commission
Audrey Selden, Senior Associate Commissioner, Texas Department of Insurance
Dr. Deanna Hoelscher, Associate Professor, University of Texas at Austin School of Public Health
Renee Trudeau, President, Renée Trudeau & Associates
Bill Kuntz, Executive Director, Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation
Joyce Sparks, Director, Governor's Center for Management Development
Dr. Michael Hawkins, Chair, Council on Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke
Marsha Kelliher, Dean, Graduate School of Management at St. Edward's University
Rose Batson, President, Women's Chamber of Commerce of Texas
Jenny McKay, Review Director, Sunset Advisory Commission

State Agency Council

Executive Board

Gabriela Klein, Chair



Gabriela Klein currently serves as chair of the Council and has also held the positions of Secretary and Treasurer. She works as a Financial Analyst for the Texas Public Finance Authority.

Gabriela has been employed with the Authority since September 1995. She attended Texas A&M University at Kingsville and Austin Community College.

Shelley Harris-Curtsinger, Vice-Chair



Shelley Harris-Curtsinger has been a member of the Council since 1995 and currently serves as vice-chair. She is employed at the Texas Racing Commission where she serves as the chief financial officer. Shelley has also

been a member of the Executive Women in Texas Government since 1995. She graduated from Southwest Texas State University with a degree in home economics.

Avis M. O'Reilly, Membership Director



Avis M. O'Reilly has served the State Agency Council for ten years and is the Council's membership director. As a certified public accountant, she is the field tax operations manager for the Texas

Workforce Commission's Tax Department. Avis graduated from the University of Texas at Arlington with a degree in accounting.

Carolyn Mezger, Secretary



Carolyn Mezger has been a member of the Council since 1993 and serves as secretary. She is employed by the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services-Division for Blind Services as

the supervisor of the Vocational Diagnostic Unit, overseeing four of the division's statewide programs. Carolyn has been employed in the Division for Blind Services for thirty-six years. She graduated from Sam Houston State University with a degree in sociology and certification in Criminology.

Raette Smith Hearne, Treasurer



Raette Smith Hearne is the Director of Agency Administration at the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and serves as treasurer. Her volunteer activities include the American Cancer Society and the Komen for the Cure and Sisters Network. She received a

Bachelor in Business Administration in Marketing from the University of North Texas and a Master in Business Administration from the University of Texas of the Permian Basin. She also is a graduate of the Intermediate School of Banking at Texas Tech University.

Wyonda Garrett, Special Events Chair



Wyonda Garrett has been a member of the State Agency Council since 2004 and currently serves as special events chair. She was employed at the Texas School for the Deaf for six years as a Houseparent Manager. She is employed by the Texas Veterans

Commission as the Executive Assistant to the Executive Director. She attended Southwest Texas State University and St. Edward's University.

State Agency Council

Outstanding Women in Texas Government Award Recipients

Outstanding Management Award



Angela Lucas is the director of financial services for the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC). She provides leadership and support to the budget and accounting staff and serves as an advisor to executive management on all fiscal matters. Under her direction, TAHC consistently processes timely and accurate payments, produces precise and reliable financial information and ensures compliance with all state and federal rules and regulations. Angela is a respected liaison and intermediary with the United States Department of Agriculture. She manages and monitors a growing list of diverse cooperation agreements that fund a variety of animal health programs in Texas. A graduate of St. Edward's University, Angela holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting.

Outstanding Professional Development Award



Vicky McBride began her career with the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) in 1982 as a clerk/typist and radio operator. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration while working full time, raising a family and attending college at night. In 2002, she earned a masters degree in business administration from Midwestern State University. Vicky was charged with finding ways to leverage available maintenance funds and increase the number of highway maintenance employees on the local roadways. She created and implemented a plan to reduce managerial staff and increase the number of highway maintenance workers; which increased the overall operation efficiencies of the district. Vicky is the Director of Administration for TXDOT's Childress District. She oversees staff responsible for human resources, information technology, safety, warehouse operations, purchasing, accounting and public transportation services for over 250 local TXDOT employees.

Outstanding Community Involvement Award



Dixie McLeod is a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, Division for Rehabilitation Services. Dixie provides employment assistance to individuals with disabilities. She is a certified rehabilitation counselor as well as an internationally certified alcohol and drug counselor. Dixie has been a member of the Beaumont Mayors' Committee for over 25 years. After Hurricane Rita, she co-chaired the Beaumont Mayors' Committee Career Fair, in collaboration with multiple community partners. The career fair provided employment opportunities to people with disabilities and helped employers find qualified workers. Dixie volunteers as a mentor trainer with Christian Women's Job Corp, a faith-based organization that provides women with job readiness and computer and coping skills. She is active in Christian Women's Fellowship, her church's Russian mission program, as well as Angel Food Ministries, which provides nutritious food to individuals at an affordable cost.

State Agency Council

Outstanding Women in Texas Government Award Recipients

Outstanding Leadership Award



Anna Rodriguez graduated from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Engineering in 1991. She began her career at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) in 1992, and currently serves as a program specialist and professional development coordinator for the agency. Anna led a team to create a library of standard responses to public comments on pending air, waste, and water permit applications. Anna served on the Texas A&M University External Advisory Council and coordinated with the University of Texas' Southwest Environmental Education Training Center to bring technical training courses to the TCEQ Austin Campus for the air permits division. In 2006, Anna received the TCEQ's Exceptional Leadership Award for her role in helping the agency fulfill its mission. She was commended by the Office of Permitting,

Registration and Remediation for her leadership in resolving a long-standing challenge involving air permitting. Anna is a member and past chair of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers and is active in numerous other professional organizations.

Outstanding Contributions to Other Women in State Government Award



Liza Chen is a document processing specialist for the Texas Legislative Council. She is a University of Texas at Austin graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics. Liza is a member of Executive Women in Texas Government, an organization that promotes leadership in service to Texas by offering professional development opportunities to its members. She serves on the public relations and professional development conference committees. Liza is a member of the Young Women's Alliance (YWA), an organization that provides professional women with opportunities to lead, educate, network, and serve. Liza co-chaired the "Downtown and Country" Fashion Show for the YWA Foundation which raised money for educational scholarships for women. Liza is a member of the Austin Junior Forum, a nonprofit women's organization supporting women, children and the elderly

in the Austin area through community service, grants, and fundraising events such as Christmas at Caswell House. Currently, she sits on the public relations committee and the Heart Gallery Project, which help locate permanent homes for adoptable children who are considered hard to place.

"I would just like to thank you again for all that you have orchestrated to make the awards luncheon possible. All my guests had nothing but praise for the event! Thanks beyond words can express."

- Liza Chen

Beacon State Fund

The Beacon State Fund was established in 1996 as a non-profit organization designed to educate and improve the civic participation of Texas citizens by promoting community leadership and volunteerism. The fund provides financial assistance to the Commission for its initiatives. The board meets annually.

Jan O'Neill, President



Jan O'Neill is the Vice President of the George W. Bush Childhood Home, Inc. Board. She was a member of the Texas Governor's Commission for Women from 1994–2000, serving as the co-chair. She served both as chair and co-chair of the Texas Women's Hall of Fame. Since 1992, she has served on the board of the Gladney Fund in Fort Worth and the Midland Gladney Development Board. She graduated from Texas Christian University and received a master's degree in education from the College of Notre Dame.

Brooke Rollins, Vice President



Brooke Rollins is the president of the Texas Public Policy Foundation. Previously, she served as deputy general counsel and ethics advisor in the Office of the Governor, and later as policy director. Brooke spent several years as a litigator with Hughes & Luce, L.L.P. and completed a federal judicial clerkship with the Honorable Barbara M.G. Lynn. She graduated from Texas A&M University with a bachelor's degree in agriculture development and the University of Texas School of Law.

Lynn Box, Secretary



Lynn Box is the program administrator for Continuing Education's Third Age University at The University of Texas at Austin. Previously, Lynn worked in the Office of Special Services for The University of Texas System. Lynn was appointed to the Women's Commission from 1970 to 1972. Lynn received a degree in secondary education from The University of Texas at Austin.

Connie Weeks, Treasurer



Connie Weeks is a freelance educational consultant and artist. Previously, Connie worked as an art teacher in Round Rock and Austin. Her volunteer work includes fundraising for hospice efforts and Alzheimer's disease and volunteering at Tarrytown United Methodist Church. Connie also served as a member of the 2003 Governor's Inaugural Committee. She received a bachelor's degree from Baylor University and a master's degree from Hardin Simmons University.

Texas Women's Hall of Fame

Texas Women's Hall of Fame

In 1984, the Governor's Commission for Women established the Texas Women's Hall of Fame to honor the State's most accomplished women. Inductees include first ladies, teachers, astronauts, and athletes. More than 250 people attended the induction ceremony on October 18, 2004.

Since its establishment in 2003, the Texas Women's Hall of Fame permanent exhibit has hosted nearly 27,672 visitors and 155 events. Located on the campus of Texas Woman's University in Denton, the permanent exhibit features biographies and photographs of the inductees. The exhibit also hosts an interactive computer kiosk with award ceremony videos and interviews with the honorees.

The Texas Women's Hall of Fame biennial awards ceremony recognizes the achievements of women. Texas residents submit nominations and a bi-partisan, independent panel of judges select the recipients whose names will join the Hall of Fame. This biennial awards event honors Texas women who have made significant contributions in areas such as the arts, athletics, business, education, health and leadership.

"Texas women owe a great deal to the Women's Commission appointees in Governor Perry's Administration. They have worked hard and successfully to preserve the history of women's contributions to our State."

C. Nasworthy - Governor's Commission for Women Member 1983-1985



Picture of the grand opening of the Texas Women's Hall of Fame Permanent Exhibit.

Texas Women's Hall of Fame

Texas Women's Hall of Fame 2006 Inductees

Dr. Shirley Neeley Education



Despite 35 years in education - and counting - Dr. Shirley Neeley will never forget the beginning of the 2005 - 06 school year. As Commissioner of Education at the time, she overcame, within a month's time, her biggest professional challenge, and benefited 46,500 students and the state of Texas overall.

When Hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit the Gulf Coast in August and September 2005, the first hurricane caused one of the largest migrations of Americans within the past century, while the latter devastated a smaller section of the upper Texas coast, where small towns and close-knit communities depend upon their schools to unify the area. As Texas Commissioner of Education, Shirley was charged to ensure that almost

50,000 new students find Texas schools ready to receive them.

During the twin disasters that befell Texas and its neighboring states, Shirley traveled not only around the state, but also to Louisiana to meet with educators there about what Texas might do to help their children. For weeks, she kept long hours and held daily progress meetings, making herself constantly and consistently accessible.

Shirley began her education career in 1971 as an elementary-school teacher in Pasadena Independent School District. She taught there for three years, then left for a year to have her daughter, Brandy, and complete a Master of Science degree. Within eight years, she rose through the ranks to assistant principal, then principal, and eventually, to Superintendent of Galena ISD - the same district she had grown up in.

During her ten-year term as superintendent, Shirley built a cohesive administrative team and improved student performance, and their district became Texas' largest exemplary school district from 2002 to 2004. Additionally, in 2003, Shirley was named the State of Texas' Superintendent of the Year, Region IV Superintendent of the Year, and Educator of the Month by Texas School Business magazine.

Named Texas Commissioner of Education in 2004 by Governor Rick Perry, Shirley served as head of the Texas Education Agency and was responsible for overseeing more than 1,035 school districts and 200 charter schools, educating 4.4-million Texas schoolchildren. The self-described "head cheerleader for Texas schools," Shirley's approach has been characterized by her high energy, high expectations, and complete commitment to doing what's best for our kids. Shirley is dedicated to all Texas children receiving a first-class education, so they can become both productive citizens and lifelong learners.

"Thank you all very much for your hard work and for the true honor of being inducted into the Texas Women's Hall of Fame! The induction ceremony and reception were first class and thoroughly enjoyed by all!"

-Shirley Neely, 2006 Texas Women's Hall of Fame inductee

Texas Women's Hall of Fame

Texas Women's Hall of Fame 2006 Inductees

Kathleen Foster Leadership



It was 1982, and Kathleen Foster had \$500 and a dream. She had spent eight years working with the mentally ill and homeless and discovered a serious need: parents trying to deal with their own homelessness, mental illness, chemical abuse or unemployment could not adequately provide for their children, so those children needed help, too. Kathleen, with her friend Bill Jones, rented a house in a poor section of Houston and began taking in these young children in crisis, providing them with a safe home. They called it Casa de Esperanza de los Niños - the House of Hope for Children.

Casa de Esperanza's Residential Program provides the highest quality foster care through nine agency foster homes and over 40 community-based foster homes. Casa Caseworkers help parents get the right treatment and services to provide a stable home. The in-house medical clinic provides medical evaluation and treatment for the children, while the Children's Development Center provides psychological, psychiatric and developmental evaluation and therapy. Casa de Esperanza's after-care and outreach program supports families during children's transition back to their homes, while adoption and post-adoption programs serve children who can't return to their biological families.

Casa Academy offers school-age children a flexible, less stressful educational environment. Through the generosity of major donors, a scholarship program has recently been established to help former Casa de Esperanza children attend a college, university or technical/vocational school. All services are provided free of charge, and private funds, not government sources, support the organization's budget.

To date, under Kathleen's leadership, Casa de Esperanza has served over 2,000 indigent children and their families, and has facilitated more than 185 special-needs adoptions. Through her dedication to breaking the cycle of abuse and neglect, Kathleen has not only improved the lives of thousands of Texas children, but also diminished future societal costs. Every year, Kathleen and Casa de Esperanza save Texas taxpayers thousands of dollars by providing whole-child care for a minimal amount, for children who otherwise might be confined to a hospital, nursing home or psychiatric facility.

Kathleen's commitment extends beyond her professional life and into her own home, where she is the mother of six adopted children. So whenever she talks with single or adoptive parents, Kathleen can relate to their parenting struggles and challenges at a very personal level. Kathleen's personal passion and insightful guidance have led to changed lives and new hope for many Texas children who have suffered from abuse, neglect or HIV.

Texas Women's Hall of Fame

Texas Women's Hall of Fame 2006 Inductees

Dr. Ellen Vitetta Health/Health Resources



Dr. Ellen Vitetta is an internationally acclaimed scientist, educator and academic leader. Her achievements in science and medicine exceed just impressing her colleagues, students and the public, and are nothing less than awe-inspiring.

Based at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas, Ellen is a professor of microbiology, director of the Cancer Immunology Center, and holder of the Scheryle Simmons Patigian Distinguished Chair in Cancer Immunology. She was the first female biomedical scientist from Texas ever elected to the most prestigious American honorific society for research excellence, the National Academy of Sciences.

A world-renowned immunologist, Ellen pioneered the development of immunotoxins for the treatment of disease - especially lymphoma, breast cancer and AIDS. Immunotoxins act like a "smart bomb" among diseased cells, finding and destroying them without damaging the surrounding cells or tissue. Ellen is also developing vaccines to protect against agents of biological warfare.

The author of more than 475 scientific articles, Ellen is also one of the top ten female scientists who other scientists reference. She has been honored by a long list of awards, including repeatedly receiving the Outstanding Faculty Teaching Award at Southwestern Medical School.

Ellen is an extraordinary teacher and an advocate for advancing the careers of women in science and medicine. She has served as a thesis mentor for 25 Ph.D. or M.D./Ph.D. students and 58 postdoctoral fellows, about half of whom have been young women. One of her former graduate students, Dr. Linda Buck, won the 2004 Nobel Prize in Medicine or Physiology. Another student, Dr. Francis Ligler, was elected to the National Academy of Engineering as one of its very few female members.

Ellen earned a Bachelor of Arts degree at Connecticut College, and her advanced degrees from New York University Medical and Graduate Schools. She is an active member of many organizations, including American Women in Science, the American Association of Cancer Research and the American Association of Immunologists, where she served as elected president of its 6,000 members in 1994. Her distinguished career in science and medicine not only helps strengthen the health and well-being of us all, but also helps inspire and motivate young women to follow in her remarkable steps.

Texas Women's Hall of Fame

Texas Women's Hall of Fame 2006 Inductees

Amanda Dunbar

Arts



When Amanda Dunbar enrolled in an after-school art class at 13, she never expected it would lead to two appearances on The Oprah Winfrey Show, million-dollar commissions, or help for thousands of children nationwide. But from the moment Amanda picked up a paintbrush for the first time and created the portrait "Mother's Touch," everything about Amanda's amazing talent, incredible career and inspirational generosity has exceeded expectations.

Born in Canada, Amanda moved with her family to Allen, Texas, at the age of 12.

A year later, she discovered her natural-born gift, and began painting in earnest. By 16, Amanda had several sell-out art exhibitions and an understanding that her art could help people. Following the Columbine tragedy, Amanda created the painted image "Angel Alliance" to symbolize her belief that all humans are spiritually connected. She then decided to also create a charity called Amanda's Angel Alliance, intended to empower young people to express themselves through the arts, rather than through violence. Amanda's Angel Alliance uses its contributions - more than half a million dollars to date - to support schools' and youth programs' curriculum and purchase art materials, so it can offer children the opportunity to express themselves through art.

Additionally, Amanda works extensively on behalf of other charitable organizations. As an ambassador for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Amanda has advocated for young victims of abduction and sexual exploitation, and has helped raise awareness and support of the organization. She also contributed her painting, "The Sprinkler," which the center chose to represent the group's annual Hope Awards and Congressional Breakfast honoring exceptional law-enforcement teams and their efforts on behalf of children. Amanda has worked for five years with Wednesday's Child, helping raise almost \$200,000 to improve the lives of thousands of Texas foster children. She also helped the Texas Medical Association Foundation reach a new fundraising record at its Be Wise - Immunize campaign gala; with her donation of a commissioned painting, Amanda helped provide important immunizations for 27,000 Texas children.

Amanda holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Art History from Southern Methodist University, graduating cum laude with honors and distinction. She has studied in Italy, France, Brazil and Fiji. Amanda has sold millions of dollars' worth of her art, and has donated more than a half-million dollars through her paintings.

Ultimately, Amanda paints what matters to people, and is helping children in Texas and across the country understand their importance and potential through the inspiration and example she provides.

Health and Wellness

The Governor's Commission for Women strives to improve the health of Texas women and their families through education and the promotion of physical activity and healthy living. From breast and cervical cancer to heart disease to sedentary lifestyles, the Commission is working to provide Texas women with preventative information and tools they need to combat such health predators.

Breast Cancer Awareness

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month and the Governor's Commission co-hosted an annual breast cancer awareness press event and reception at the Texas State Capitol. The 2006 speakers included Texas First Lady Anita Perry and Dr. Eduardo Sanchez, former Commissioner of the Department of State Health Services. A reception followed in the Lieutenant Governor's Reception Room. This event has raised awareness and educated women about breast cancer for more than ten years. The event highlights the importance of early detection through screening and self breast examinations. More than 20 stories aired following the press event. Media in attendance included: Univision, Rumbo de Austin, KVUE-TV (ABC), KTBC-TV (Fox), KEYE-TV, Texas State Radio Network, and the University of Texas' Office of Public Affairs.

**"In 2005, an estimated 2,210 Texas women died of breast cancer and 12,980 new cases of breast cancer were diagnosed."
-Center for Disease Control and Prevention**

Cervical Cancer

The Governor's Commission for Women takes an active role in raising awareness of cervical cancer because Texas has the second highest rate of cervical cancer in the country. The Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) is the main cause of this disease. These HPV infections are most often acquired during a woman's late teens and 20's. Women whose HPV-related cervical cancer abnormalities are discovered and treated early have an almost 100 percent survival rate. To aid in the fight against cervical cancer, the Commission distributed more than 7,500 brochures to all registrants at the 2006 Texas Conference for Women with useful information and preventative tips. Please go to www.maketheconnection.org for more information on cervical cancer.

Childhood Obesity

In Texas, more than 25 percent of children between the ages of 6-18 are overweight or obese. As a result, about 1 in 20 Texas kids develops signs of diabetes. Obesity is the second most preventable cause of death after smoking. This biennium, the Governor's Commission for Women continued its battle against childhood obesity by printing and distributing magnets which serve as a reminder of the dangerous condition. At the 2006 Texas Conference for Women, Commissioners passed out information on healthy eating habits for children and talked to attendees about how they could make healthier lifestyle choices. For more information on this epidemic, please visit the Oliver Foundation Web site at www.oliverfoundation.com.

Health and Wellness

Texas Round-Up

The Texas Round-Up is a statewide fitness initiative that encourages all Texans to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles through regular exercise and general physical fitness. Governor Rick Perry created the Texas Round-Up in 2004 to counter the trend of increasing obesity and sedentary lifestyles among Texans and to serve as a model for other states as they consider similar initiatives.

The Texas Round-Up includes two main components: a free, online system for individuals to keep an ongoing record of their activities throughout the year and the Texas Round-Up Fitness Festival, which is held in Austin, Texas on the last Saturday of April. Additionally, cities across Texas are getting involved and promoting the Texas Round-Up in their local communities through outreach and even events of their own.

Results of the 2007 Texas Round-Up

- 24,879 participants completed the 6-week training program
- 920 cities participated from across the state of Texas
- 5,679 registrants signed up for the 10K events and Kid's Mile

The Governor's Commission for Women sponsored a Fit for Eating project which encouraged Texans to submit heart-healthy recipes for the first annual Fit for Eating recipe contest. The Commission reviewed and judged all submissions and helped produce recipe cards. Commissioner Becky McKinley prepared samples of the winning recipes at the Texas Round-Up Expo. For more information on the Texas Round-Up, please go to www.texasroundup.org.

Texas Conference for Women

Hosted by Governor Rick Perry and First Lady Anita Perry and now in its eighth year, the Texas Conference for Women is a non-profit, non-partisan, one-day event for Texas women to connect, learn practical and professional strategies from nationally recognized experts, and network with peers.

The Texas Conference for Women is held at the Austin Convention Center and draws more than 8,000 women from across the State of Texas. The conference provides a forum with some of our country's rising female stars in the fields of international and national politics, health, media, business, finance and personal development to share their wisdom with thousands of Texas women.

As a sponsoring organization of the Texas Conference for Women, the Commission hosts a booth in the exhibit hall and provides moderators for panel discussions during the break-out sessions.

More than 500 people came to the Commission's booth in 2006. Educational brochures on cervical cancer were inserted into each of the conference attendee's registration bags to raise awareness of the connection between HPV and cervical cancer. In 2007, the Commission and the Texas Nurses Association hosted complimentary health screenings, including glucose, blood pressure and osteoporosis, for more than 250 conference participants. For more information on the Texas Conference for Women, please go to www.texasconferenceforwomen.org.



Domestic Violence Prevention

Teen Dating Violence Prevention Initiative

According to the Texas Council on Family Violence, one in three female high school students report being physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner. Patterns of dating violence behavior often start early and carry through into adult relationships. In an effort to address and prevent dating violence, the Governor's Commission for Women became a founding member of the Texas Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Team in 2004. Team members include state agencies and statewide non-profit organizations who are working to address domestic violence and sexual assault.

Thus far, hundreds of toolkits have been sent to high schools across the state, impacting more than 11,000 students. Toolkits contain resource materials to help high schools observe National Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week and address the issue of dating violence throughout the school year.

The toolkits include booklets with prevention recommendations aimed at teens, parents, school personnel, the medical profession, members of the law enforcement community and other community crime prevention organizations; wallet cards with national and local emergency information; posters for high school hallways, offices and classrooms; a "Teacher's Guide" containing suggestions for classroom discussions and projects that not only address teen dating violence, but coincide with every classroom's curriculum; and a disk that contains the recommendation materials in a format that can be reproduced.

A "healthyteendating.org" web site was also launched to help disseminate information and allow school officials to register for free trainings on how to best utilize the toolkits. Trainings were provided to more than 500 people in Texas. For those unable to travel to the live training in Dallas, an additional training was broadcast from Austin to all 20 Educational Services Centers.

The Governor's Commission for Women and other team members coordinate an annual statewide press conference to launch National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week in February. Local community events are also planned throughout the month statewide.

The Governor's Commission for Women submitted the *Teen Dating Violence Prevention Initiative* to the National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) for the 2007 Outstanding Achievement Award program which publicly recognizes exemplary and innovative women's commission programs and projects. Lesley Guthrie, executive director of the Governor's Commission for Women, attended the NACW annual business meeting and convention in Louisville, Kentucky July 11-14, 2007.

"As a young teenager, I really appreciate the attention to the teen dating violence awareness week. I'm glad that you and school administrators are creating a school-wide teen dating violence prevention program so...students can see that dating violence is not normal."

E. Ham - Brownsville, Texas

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"The Governor's Commission for Women has been an integral part of the Texas Dating Violence Prevention Team from the very beginning; providing funding, guidance and staff support. We are very grateful for Commission's involvement over the last three years."

*Bronwyn Blake* - Texas Advocacy Project

# Domestic Violence Prevention

## Batterer Intervention Efforts

In 2003, the Governor's Commission for Women surveyed 1,139 law enforcement agencies to assess the prevalence of domestic violence and identify the resources needed to respond to a domestic disturbance call. Those surveyed include city police, county sheriffs and large campus police departments. The agencies cited their need for referral information to supply to alleged perpetrators when responding to domestic disturbance calls. The Commission collaborated with the Texas Council on Family Violence, the Collin County Council on Family Violence and the Texas Municipal Police Association to create a brochure entitled "You Have a Choice." The brochure provides examples of abusive behavior and provides contact information for Batterer Intervention Prevention Programs (BIPP) within Texas.

The Commission received numerous requests for additional copies of the brochures and it re-printed an additional 20,000 brochures in 2006. More than 60,000 brochures have been distributed to law enforcement agencies across the State.

"After I read the brochure, I gave it to a friend because I recognized that he needed some help just like I did."

*Anonymous BIPP Participant*

**You Have a Choice.**  
Do you find yourself hurting the ones you love?  
Take The Next Step - Make A Change.

**Are You Ever Afraid...**  
...that your actions will cost you your partner, your kids, or even your job?  
There is another way.

**This is What Abuse Is:**  
• Calling bad names, screaming  
• Throwing things around the house  
• Hitting, slapping, pushing  
• Isolating your partner from family and friends  
• Putting someone down  
• Making threats (even if you don't mean it)  
• Jealousy and suspicion  
• Forcing someone to have sex  
• Keeping money from your partner  
• Following your partner/stalking

**Remember:**  
It is never OK to hurt the ones we love, even when life gets us down.  
**The truth about power and control.**  
Did you know that abuse is not just physical acts? Name-calling, threats, and intimidation are also abuse.

**What you may not know...**  
Abuse often starts with verbal acts and grows into physical acts. It's time to change, before it grows into something more.  
If you do any of these things, you need to take the next step and make a change.

**Resources are Available**  
in your community to help you take the next step.

**Make a Change.**  
• Lower your voice  
• Take a walk  
• Count to 10 or 20 until you calm down  
• Put your hands in your pocket and walk away  
• Use kind words  
• Take a deep breath, step back, cool down  
• Call your local program for help (See attached card)  
• Show respect for your partner  
• Stop playing mind games  
• Call a leader in your faith community

**All these actions have real consequences.**  
Abusive behavior hurts the ones you love.  
It can harm your children as well. Children worry that their abused parent will get seriously hurt or their abusive parent will go to jail.

**Through a Child's Eyes**  
These thoughts weigh most heavily on a child's mind during school hours when the child is not home.  
Constant worry does not allow them to pay attention to their school work.  
Children who live with abuse may have a hard time relating to friends their own age.  
It is not uncommon for children to feel guilty for having fun. Many children don't want to leave their battered parent alone.

**How do I know if I'm being Abusive?**  
There are no excuses.  
Taking things out on the ones we love is abuse. Batterers fall into no specific categories or age groups.  
They may be unemployed or highly paid professionals. The batterer may be a good provider and a sober and outstanding member of the community.

Special thanks to the Collin County Council on Family Violence (CCCFV), an initiative of the Justice League of Plano and the Texas Governor's Commission for Women for the use of the information in this brochure.

# Economic Development

In Texas, women own more than 790,000 privately held businesses, which employ more than 1.5 million people and generate almost \$200 billion in annual sales. The Commission works with numerous non-profit organizations to strengthen women's position in the workforce.

## Make Mine a Million \$ Business Program

The Governor's Commission for Women partnered with Count Me In for Women's Economic Independence, a non-profit micro lender, for the "Make Mine a Million \$ Business" competition at the 2007 Texas Conference for Women. Ten Texas women presented three-minute pitches about their companies to judges. Judges determined which individuals had the vision, ability and mindset for growth, realistic financing, and strong operational and marketing plans. Five winners were selected at the end of the conference to receive marketing, financial, and other assistance to help their businesses grow:

Gayla Bentley of Houston  
Lelani Craig of Sugar Land  
Carolyn Morse of Houston  
Jan Moye of Flower Mound  
Cynthia Rubio of Austin

"As a business entrepreneur, the Governor's Commission for Women enables me to grow my business and to create new jobs within my state."

*Cynthia Rubio* - President, Radiant RFID

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"Thank you for your efforts to help Texas women business owners."

Jeanne Fuller - President, Access Referral Network, Inc.

- Women-owned businesses employ approximately 27 million people.
- Women own 48% of all businesses in the United States — that is 9.1 million businesses.
- Women business owners contribute more than \$3.6 trillion to the marketplace each year, and women account for more than 70% of consumer spending.

Economic Development

Texas Business Woman of the Year Award

The Governor's Commission for Women partnered with the Women's Chamber of Commerce of Texas to host the Texas Business Woman of the Year Awards on November 1, 2007. More than 180 people attended the luncheon. The award honors one woman in Texas who exemplifies awe-inspiring strength, brilliance and success. Past honorees of the Texas Business Woman of the Year Award include: Diane Heavin, Founder of Curves International; Lynn Elsenhans, President and CEO of Shell Oil; Colleen Barrett, President and COO of Southwest Airlines; and Rosie Herman, Founder and CEO of One Minute Manicure. This year's honoree is Karen Simon, Executive Vice President and Managing Director of Bradford Companies.

"We were very honored to partner with the Governor's Commission for Women on our annual Texas Business Woman of the Year Awards Luncheon. The contributions and commitment of the Commissioners and Executive Director contributed so much to the fantastic success of this celebration of brilliant Texas women, whose amazing stories, strength, vision, and creativity inspire and propel us toward our own dreams."

Rose Batson - President, Women's Chamber of Commerce of Texas

Survivors at Work

Survivors at Work is a partnership of the Upper Rio Grande at Work Development Board and the Center against Family Violence. This initiative connects domestic abuse survivors with workforce programs and services at the Center's Family Resource Center. The main objective of Survivors at Work is to provide domestic violence survivors and their families the opportunity to acquire workforce skills that address the needs of employers by connecting them to information regarding workforce services and programs, and training, resume and interview skills-building workshops.

AARP Foundation WorkSearch

The AARP Foundation is working with the Commission to offer job assistance for women through a new program called WorkSearch. WorkSearch provides job and career information and services to individuals who are seeking to remain in, or re-enter the workforce. The program provides a variety of services, including interest and ability inventories, skills assessments, information about the community job market and connections to local training and employment opportunities at no cost to the individual. The Commission helps promote the initiative and provides funding for equipment.

One of the key services the program will offer is a comprehensive Web-based assessment tool in hundreds of communities to assist older workers find appropriate employment and polish their skills in preparation for a job search in all fields not requiring graduate level experience.

"The Governor's Commission for Women is an excellent resource. I am preparing to re-enter the workforce and needed some guidance. The staff helped me update my resume and provided tips on interviewing."

J. Clayton - Spring, Texas

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