



Texas Governor's Commission for Women Newsletter

Spring 2006

Upcoming Events

June 20	Governor's Small Business Summit in Houston
October 11	Texas Women's Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Reception
October 12	7th Annual Texas Conference for Women

Governor Appoints New Commission

Governor Perry appointed 13 individuals to the Governor's Commission for Women for terms to expire 12/31/07:

Chair Keely Appleton, Arlington
Vice-Chair Wendy Bengal, El Paso
Sue Chiang, Sugar Land
Peggy Hairgrove, Haskell
Cynthia Jenkins, Irving
Christie Leedy, Abilene
Lisa Lucero, Austin

Becky McKinley, Amarillo
Carmen Pagan, McAllen
Carol Foxhall Peterson, Alpine
Tresa Rockwell, El Paso
Connie Weeks, Austin
Daisy White, Houston

For Commissioner's biographical information, please visit the Governor's website at: <http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/press/appointments>.

The Governor's Commission for Women, a division of the Texas Governor's Office, promotes opportunities for Texas women through outreach, education, research and referral services. The commission focuses on economic development, women's health issues and the prevention of violence against women. For more information on the Commission, please visit our website at: <http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/women>

2006 Texas Women's Hall of Fame Honorees Named

Since 1984, the Governor's Commission for Women has hosted the Texas Women's Hall of Fame, which recognizes women who have made significant contributions to the State in the areas of leadership, education, health, and the arts.



Biographies and photographs of the honorees are on display at the Hall of Fame's permanent exhibit, located on the campus of Texas Woman's University in Denton. More than 15,000 guests have visited the site since its opening in 2003. The recipients of this year's Texas Women's Hall of Fame are:

Dr. Shirley Neeley, Education

Amanda Dunbar, Art

Dr. Ellen Vitetta, Health

Kathleen Foster, Leadership

Dr. Shirley Neeley began her career in education thirty-four years ago. She has served as teacher, assistant principal, principal, and superintendent. In 2004, Dr. Shirley Neeley was named as Texas Commissioner of Education by Governor Rick Perry. As commissioner, she serves as the head of the Texas Education Agency, which oversees 1,037 school districts and 200 charter schools. In this position, she ensured that almost 50,000 new students would find a school ready to shelter and educate them after the twin disasters of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Amanda Dunbar, age 23, will be the youngest Hall of Fame recipient to date. Amanda Dunbar is one of the most dynamic young artists in the country. Amanda's work led to the creation of "Angel Alliance," a charity which provides resources to allow young people to express themselves through the arts. Her dedication to children is further demonstrated through her work with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Wednesday's Child, and the Texas Medical Association's "Be Wise – Immunize" campaign.

Dr. Ellen Vitetta is Professor of Microbiology and Director of the Cancer Immunology Center at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School. A world-renowned immunologist, she has pioneered the development of immunotoxins for treatment of disease. She has authored more than 450 scientific articles and ranks as one of the top 20 female scientists in any field of research in terms of the frequency with which other scientists cite her publications.

Kathleen Foster is the co-Founder and Director of Casa de Esperanza de los Niños. With a dream and an initial donation of \$500, Ms. Foster rented a home in a poor area of Houston, began taking in young children in crisis and Casa de Esperanza de los Niños was born in 1982. From its humble beginnings, Ms. Foster now directs an organization that has grown to a full-time staff of 45, a budget of over \$2 million and a volunteer force of over 350.

The Texas Women's Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony is October 11, 2006, in the Senate Chamber of the Texas State Capitol at 3:30 pm. The event is open to the public and we invite you to attend.



National Women's Health Week

The goal of National Women's Health Week is to encourage women to take simple steps for a longer, healthier, and happier life. The Week runs from May 14-20, 2006, and kicks off with National Women's Check-Up Day on May 15, to encourage women to schedule an appointment with their doctor or other health care provider for an annual check-up and health screenings.

When women take even the simplest steps to improve their health, the results can be significant. But women need to be able to choose the most effective steps for their individual lifestyles. For example, heart disease is the number one killer among women, but cancer ranks first among Asian/Pacific Islander women. When it comes to lung cancer, however, white women have the highest mortality rate, while African American women have the highest mortality rate from heart disease.

The week focuses on the importance of incorporating simple preventive and positive health behaviors into everyday life. It encourages awareness about key health issues among all women, including women with disabilities, African American, Asian, Latinas, and Native American women, since research has shown there are significant health disparities among these groups.

For information about hosting or participating in this and other National Women's Health Week activities, visit: www.womenshealth.gov/whw.

Governor's Small Business Summit

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, women entrepreneurs are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. business market. Today, there are 10.6 million privately-held women-owned businesses in the United States. They employ 19.1 million people and generate \$2.46 trillion in sales. What's more, women continue to start businesses at twice the rate of all U.S. businesses. Women entrepreneurs are a driving force in the Nation's economy—yet they continue to face barriers in starting up, financing, and growing. That's why the Governor's Commission for Women is a sponsor of the Governor's Small Business Summits and encourages female participation.



"Women entrepreneurs are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. business market"

Governor Rick Perry will host the next summit in Houston at the Westin Galleria on June 20. The summit will be a full day of discussion and education on a variety of topics of common concern to small-businesses. Topics to be discussed include: how to get financing from various sources, developing your workforce, payroll tax and tax credits, healthcare for you and your employees, and how to do business with the state.

If you are interested in attending the Houston summit, please register online at: <http://www.governor.state.tx.us/division/s/ecodev/sba/houstonsummit>

Texas Conference for Women

Don't miss the 2006 Texas Conference for Women! Now in its seventh year, this non-partisan, day-long event offers attendees an opportunity to hear practical advice on everything from personal and professional development to money management and life skills from nationally-recognized experts who are leaders in the fields of healthy, media, business, finance and personal development. The Conference also gives attendees an opportunity to network with peers and learn strategies for success by interacting with speakers and other guests.



The 2005 Conference attracted a sell-out crowd of 7,000 attendees and boasted 75 speakers, including co-founder of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundations, Melinda Gates; senior correspondent for NOW on PBS and managing editor of Latino USA, Maria Hinojosa; Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson; and award-winning author, poet and civil rights activist, Dr. Maya Angelou.

The Seventh Annual Texas Conference for Women is October 12, 2006, and Governor Rick Perry and First Lady Anita Perry are the hosts. The Commission for Women is proud to be a supporting organization again.

For registration or further information, please visit the 2006 Texas Conference for Women website at:

www.txconferenceforwomen.org.

National Teen Dating Violence Prevention Awareness Week

The American Bar Association has developed a National Teen Dating Violence Prevention Initiative in an effort to raise awareness of and prevent teen dating violence. In recognition of a recent U.S. Senate and House Resolution on the topic, Governor Perry proclaimed the week of February 6-10, 2006, as Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week in the State of Texas.

Forty-two designated Texas high schools received tool kits that provided educators and students materials to guide them through the week. The teen-influenced toolkits were developed by the American Bar Association and funded through grants from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and the Office of the Governor. The Toolkit contains the following useful items: "Prevention Recommendations" Book, "Dating and Violence Should Never Be a Couple" DVD, awareness week slogan posters, teacher's guide, emergency wallet cards and a materials reproduction disc.

The Governor's Commission for Women co-hosted a press event to launch the statewide initiative on February 6, 2006. For more information on Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week, please visit www.abanet.org/unmet/home.html.

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women@governor.state.tx.us.

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