

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL
for RESEARCH *on* WOMEN

Press Release

NCRW Conference 2008: A Women's Agenda for Change

New York (June 2, 2008) - The National Council for Research on Women will hold its annual conference June 5-7 at the Kimmel Center at New York University. It will gather leading researchers, advocates, and policy makers to explore the realities and challenges of women's lives today. The conference will not only identify key issues and concerns for women and girls but will formulate a research and policy agenda and set up new collaborations and partnerships aimed at promoting positive change.

“By asking questions and examining issues in depth, we will also develop strategies that produce concrete results. We will explore how research and advocacy can build an agenda and politics of inclusion in a political climate that has too often veered towards division and exclusion” said Linda Basch, President of the National Council for Research on Women.

This year's conference will focus strongly on the 2008 elections. Some key questions will be: How will women vote in November? What are the issues that matter? Is there a gender versus race divide or is it all about class? What are the special challenges of immigrant women? How are women affected by the current financial crisis and economic slowdown?

The Council has already launched a campaign highlighting issues that are critical to women in the 2008 election called *The Big Five*. These issues include: economic security, immigration, health care, violence against women, and education. The conference will not only offer fresh approaches and new thinking about *The Big Five* but

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will take a gendered look at human security and global issues, such as poverty, trafficking and violence as well as the strategies needed to increase security for women and girls.

The conference aims to develop a comprehensive, gender-sensitive agenda to present to a new administration.

Many of the events in the conference program center on or are related to the election theme. The opening plenary, “*What’s at Stake for Women in the 2008 Elections?*,” will feature such experts as Ruth Mandel from the Eagleton Institute of Politics, Kim Gandy from the National Organization for Women, and Marie Wilson of The White House Project.

On Day Two of the conference, a wide variety of topics will be examined including immigration reform, health care, violence against women, economic realities and challenges, and women’s leadership. Many organizations and corporations such as Planned Parenthood, Merrill Lynch, the National Women’s Health Network, the Ms. Foundation for Women, the American Psychological Association, and MergerWatch will be moderating or participating in the program.

During a luncheon program on Friday, former news anchor Carol Jenkins will conduct an interview with Patricia Williams, Columbia’s “Mad Law Professor” and columnist for the Nation. It will be a frank and in-depth look at the underlying currents of racism and sexism and the political manipulations that pose a real danger in the lead up to the 2008 elections.

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There will also be a series of sessions on diversity and inclusion in the workplace, academia and among NCRW member centers, as part of a project funded by the Ford Foundation.

“The workforce has become increasingly diverse and global with women taking on prominent leadership roles in corporations, businesses, and academia. Women leaders, researchers, and advocates have a critical role to play in creating a society premised on equality to which everyone can contribute,” said Council President Linda Basch.

On Friday evening, there will be a reception with Virginia Reticker, who directed the award-winning *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, a documentary about the women in Liberia who helped bring their country’s civil war to an end. The closing plenary on Saturday will provide an overview of the political landscape by Kimberle Crenshaw, Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Bonnie Thornton Dill, who will explore scholarship, leadership, and activism across the national and global spectrums.

The conference aims to shed light on the latest policies and trends that affect women and girls around the world. It will bring researchers, policy experts, and advocates together to strategize about maximizing their impact and developing new forms of social and economic problem-solving.

For more information, please contact Vivienne Heston-Demirel, Director of Communications, tel: (212) 785-7335, ext. 201; vheston-demirel@ncrw.org, or visit our website: <http://www.ncrw.org/events/conference2008/>.

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