

EXPLORING "WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP"

Students Creating
a Road Map for Making
a Difference

INTRODUCTION TO THE SPECIAL ISSUE BY KARON JOLNA

THIS SPECIAL ISSUE FEATURES THE WORK OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN A COURSE RECENTLY DEVELOPED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S STUDIES AT UCLA

MORE THAN EVER, we are facing challenges of leadership. Students need to be prepared to face those challenges with solutions—to lead with honesty, empathy, respect, and courage in government and law, in business and nonprofit organizations, in national and transnational communities.

This need to make a positive difference in a world of challenges was the motivation behind the development of "Women and Leadership," a new course in the Department of Women's Studies. This course explores leadership



EXPLORING "WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP"

Karon Jolna



Director's Commentary UNDER NEW LEADERSHIP

Kathleen McHugh



A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE ON "WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP"

Aylin Oncel



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Under New Leadership...

AS THIS SPECIAL ISSUE of *CSW Update* indicates, women have made great strides in holding leadership positions in business, government, health care, the arts, and sports. The Obama administration has signaled the importance of women's leadership with many of its appointments. The new Cabinet includes Hilda Solis, Secretary of Labor; Janet Napolitano, Secretary of Homeland Security; and Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State. Mary Shapiro heads the Securities and Exchange Commission, Susan Rice is Ambassador to the U.N., and Lisa P. Jackson heads the EPA.

In the legislature, the Honorable Nancy Pelosi is the first woman Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. Meanwhile, in the judicial branch, Sonia Sotomayor is poised to become the first Latina to sit on the Supreme Court. We just need more of a good thing. A recent article in *Time* magazine cited studies which indicate that female leadership styles are "extremely good for business." Based on consensus building rather than hierarchy, caution rather than risk, collaboration and transformation rather than cutthroat competition, these styles produce and will

from left to right, Nancy Pelosi, Hillary Clinton, Janet Napolitano, Hilda Solis, Susan Rice, Lisa P. Jackson, and Mary Shapiro. All photos are U.S. government official portraits.

work well in new workplace environments which are flexible with regards to where and when one works. Women's leadership and flexibility enhances productivity and is good for business!

— Kathleen McHugh

The presence of women in [leadership] positions is...essential to encourage aspirations among the next generation, and to counter reservations about women's capacities for leadership roles. In an increasingly competitive global environment, no society can afford to hobble half of its talent pool.

– *Justice Sandra Day O'Connor (Ret.), Foreword, Women and Leadership: The State of Play and Strategies for Change, edited by Barbara Kellerman and Deborah L. Rhode (Jossey-Bass, 2007)*

Exploring Women and Leadership, *continued from page 1*

through a feminist lens—as well as through the practical experiences of such pathbreaking women as Laura Chick, California Inspector General; Denita Willoughby, Vice President, AT&T; Bridget Baker, President, NBC Universal; and Dr. Marie-Francoise Chesselet, Chair of the Department of Neurobiology in the David Geffen School of Medicine.

When the curriculum for women's studies programs was being developed in the 1970s, the study of leadership was not a priority. Women had little access to powerful positions and confronted barriers to their advancement at every level. "Leadership" itself was often defined by attributes frequently associated with masculinity: heroic, assertive, independent, analytical, and objective. As Alice Eagly writes in the course text, *Women and Leadership: Transforming Visions and Diverse Voices* (2007), "to study leadership, be it in organizations or in politics, would have meant focusing on men."

Forty years later, women are among the world's most powerful leaders. The 2008 candidacies of Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin for the highest offices in the United States and the ascendancy of representative Nancy

Pelosi to Speaker of the House marked a new milestone for women in leadership; a new and more diverse generation of women has risen to visible and powerful positions and women's relationship to leadership has been irrevocably changed. Many of these women leaders have become champions of progressive change in their organizations, communities, and society. They represent fresh perspectives, different backgrounds, new thinking, and possibilities. And they are role models for the next generation of women leaders.

In the course, I asked each student to choose a woman leader that they admire (an eye-opening exercise in itself) and conduct an interview about how she ascended the leadership ladder, overcame any barriers to advancement along the way, and what differences she is making in her organization, family, and community and how she has transformed the theory and practice of leadership for the next generation.

When the course ended, we created a class book of all the interviews so that each student could use it as a guide on their own journey to leadership. In this special issue of *CSW Update*, we share some of the profiles as well as the



During the 2008 presidential campaign, Hillary Clinton experienced many sexist attacks.

themes and insights that most informed and inspired the students.

Karon Jolna is a Lecturer in the Department of Women's Studies. She developed and taught the first undergraduate "Women and Leadership" course. She has been a CSW Research Scholar since 2004.



Have the courage of your
convictions, don't mind
what the world says; don't
try to be popular...
do your duty.

– *Victoria Woodhull, 1871, first
woman to run for President of
the United States, before women
had the right to vote*

A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE ON "WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP"

Around the world, women are changing the theory and practice of leadership. They are holding top positions in companies and institutions that have been traditionally male dominated, while initiating entirely new leadership styles and strategies for gaining success. Such qualities as inclusion, collaboration, and collective empowerment are associated with the leadership style of women who use their influence to affect others and create change rather than the direct “get things done” approach that comes with more conventional—and often coded as masculine—ways of leading. Now, with the growing presence of women in the public sphere, their successes and trajectories around the world are setting the stage for a new generation.

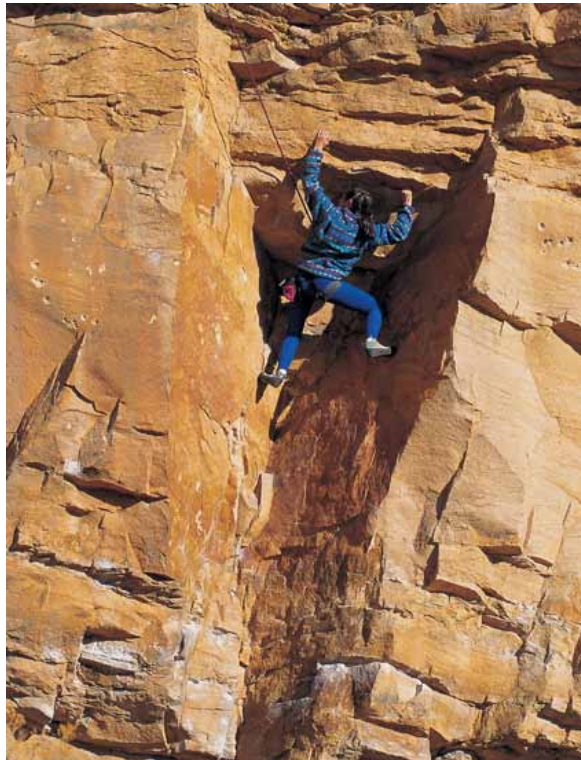
As my graduation from UCLA approached, I jumped at the chance to take a Women and Leadership seminar in my last quarter because

I wanted to take a class that would teach me to more ways to make an impact in my community once I leave academia. I hoped to cultivate my already passionate interest in making positive change happen for women around the globe and to find strategies to achieve those goals. While I acknowledge the youthful idealism in wanting to advance women’s rights internationally, I also find in myself what I have found in many of my female friends and peers: a drive to excel and persevere, no matter how far out of reach the goal may seem.

The motivation of today’s young women is an untapped resource for enriching our society. I learned this while taking this seminar with nineteen other ambitious women who also wanted to learn more about how they could find their own paths as leaders. Together, we studied and analyzed leadership approaches and solutions



The motivation of today’s young women is an untapped resource for enriching our society.



to overcoming barriers for women in political, corporate, and public settings. We gained new perspectives on collaborative leadership and how to achieve our long-term leadership goals. We set timelines for ourselves to map out how and when we would be able to accomplish personal objectives. To pool resources of knowledge and experience, we bounced ideas off of each other before, during, and after class. The energy in the classroom brought us together and pushed us forward in thinking about how we could be the leaders of tomorrow.

To make women's leadership even more tangible, our professor, Karon Jolna, brought women leaders in Los Angeles to speak about their personal paths. The guest speakers, including Denita Willoughby, Caroline Heldman, Wendy Greuel, and Laura Chick, who all shared their wisdom and advice for achieving success. Out of their stories came recurring themes: finding mentors, staying informed, persevering through obstacles and discrimination, and being confident in one's self and one's values. These women chose to reach out to and encourage younger women to be active and involved in what interests them most. As more female role models and mentors emerge, I believe young women will set higher standards and objectives for themselves, gain more self-confidence and have greater conviction that their career goals are feasible in today's world. To promote success for the next generation, we need more women to set examples for young women and girls who have the potential to thrive but are not inspired or have the necessary guidance to pursue their passions.

I cannot emphasize how much this class has encouraged and motivated me to make change happen. Being part of a group of young women, who all wanted to make something of themselves, whether in film, neurobiology, cosmetics, athletics, engineering, finance, or law, was so empowering that I wanted to collaborate and discuss with

them more and more. By the end of the quarter, I wanted to work *with* these amazing women on their projects, as they wanted to work on mine. Even though I had never met any of them before, we became closer each week. I was inspired and energized by seeing each one find her own sense of self and ways to develop her interests and goals. All have the capacity and ability to succeed; many need simply to be encouraged to step outside conventional boundaries and to challenge societal beliefs that continue to favor the other sex.

Able, intelligent, and creative young women who do not yet see their full potential as a result of obstacles such as familial obligations must be taught how to fulfill the promise we all hold. I hope that my friends, peers, and colleagues will graduate from college with the confidence, motivation, and determination that they can accomplish anything that they set their mind to. Change takes time, but times are changing. The world is in need of fresh faces and perspectives, and the next generation of women will surely bring new ideas, perspectives, and strategies to reshape the mold of leadership in new ways.

Aylin Oncel is graduating with a double major Women's Studies and Political Science. She co-edited this special issue with Karon Jolna.



Never losing faith, we worked
to redeem the promise of
America, that all men and
women are created equal. For
our daughters and
our granddaughters, today we
have broken the marble ceiling.
For our daughters and our
granddaughters now, the sky is
the limit.

*– Nancy Pelosi, 2007, after being
sworn in as Speaker of the US House
of Representatives*



Laura Chick

By Jenna Rodman

FORMER LA CITY CONTROLLER
IS NOW CALIFORNIA'S INSPECTOR
GENERAL

In March during the harried days leading up to the city election, Laura Chick is taking the time to talk with the Women and Leadership seminar. She takes a seat, emanating a no-nonsense, “let’s get things done” attitude. She tells us that the world is crying out for female leadership. It is a testimony to her dedication to this goal that she is here speaking with our class. She doesn’t just talk the talk; she walks the walk.

Since 2003, for example, Chick has been bringing together panels of distinguished female professionals to discuss contemporary issues affecting women, focusing on topics such as women in politics, women in the media, women in sports, women in the kitchen, and women at the top. She invites women young and old to listen and ask questions.

The first L.A. City Controller to have expanded powers to conduct audits of the city, Chick has taken full advantage of the opportunity to ferret out mismanagement and fraud. Her audit of the LAPD’s delinquency in testing DNA rape kits brought to light a shocking number (7000!) of kits left untested, as well as the gross mismanagement of federal funds given

to the city to eliminate the backlog. At the end of her report, she asks, “How is it possible that we are in this situation? The answer is simple and obvious. The city, its elected leadership as well as the police department, has not given this issue the attention, resources, and priority it deserves.” Go Controller Chick!

During her appearance at the seminar, she tells us about her job as L.A. City Controller. She was a champion and “watchdog” (her term), pushing for good government and social change. Trained as a social worker, Chick brings a practical approach to problem solving to her civic career. Finding city government lacking in effective leadership, she worked diligently and effectively to change the rules of the game from within.

Highlighting the determination, focus, and integrity that Chick revealed in her work as Controller, the media have employed a colorful assortment of words and phrases to describe her. She is a “pit bull,” “grizzly,” and “feisty.” She is “scrappy,” and she is “trouble.” Chick herself is unafraid of losing popularity by saying what is on her mind. She has publicly “slamm[ed] [the]



Chick's audit of the LAPD's delinquency in testing DNA rape kits brought to light a shocking number of untested kits, as well as the gross mismanagement of federal funds given to the city to eliminate the backlog.

city's hiring practices" and reports she is "disappointed" with most in city government.

Despite her dedication to increasing the number of women in leadership positions, Chick also believes that good women can and should challenge other good women, and in the recent election she did not endorse Wendy Greuel for Controller simply because she is a woman. Over and above gender, she believes that those who have power and can get things done should also be independent and loyal to the job.

I am grateful for the time Chick was willing to spend with our class and for the urging she gave us to break the mold of the linear male model of leadership. I wish her luck in her newly created post as Inspector General of the federal stimulus money that arrives in California.

Jenna Rodman is an undergraduate majoring in Women's Studies and is a women's mental health activist. She aspires to gain a Master's degree in Social Work.

We need more women
in public service.
And we need more
social workers.

Laura Chick

Finding my Mentor

by Gabrielle Thomas



Gabrielle Thomas (right) with Denita Willoughby

When I enrolled in the Women and Leadership class taught by Karon Jolna, I knew it would be powerful, but I wasn't expecting what happened. Throughout the quarter, my colleagues and I had the opportunity to meet with many successful leaders that were invited to speak to our class. Each woman had their own unique story; yet, there was a common theme emerging: having a mentor can be the key for women to unlock the doors to success. When the assignment was

given for us to interview a woman in leadership, I didn't take the assignment lightly. There were many successful women to choose from. I continued to research until I found Denita Willoughby.

Vice President of External Relations at AT&T, Willoughby manages all of the company's philanthropic and community initiatives. She holds a degree in engineering from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and an

MBA from Harvard University. As a wife and mother of two sons, she successfully balances her career with her family life. She is also African American, which—I discovered in my search for women leaders—makes her a rarity. For all of these reasons, she was my top choice.

When the appointment arrived, I entered her spacious corner office, and Willoughby immediately made me feel comfortable. Although I was

there to interview her, she wanted to know all about me! She was genuinely interested in my future and offered guidance on how to become a successful woman. I asked her a series of questions about her background and all the joys and challenges that come with her leadership position. She obliged and when I had exhausted the allocated hour, I still had more questions. She told me that we could speak the next day, and she would give me advice on networking. She followed through and spoke to me via cell as she was leaving her son's basketball game. I laughed out loud at her realness: I was witnessing one of her balancing act moments.

Two weeks later, Denita called and invited me to attend a Lakers game and meet some of her colleagues in the AT&T Suite at the Staple's Center. Although I was born and raised in Los Angeles, this was my very first time at a Lakers game! It was so much more fun than watching it on television! Denita was proud to present me as her mentee, and it was at this time that I realized the power of the Women and Leadership class.

The class assignment of conducting an interview with a women leader initiated a conversation and a relationship that I am certain will last a lifetime. Denita Willoughby is an amazing and inspiring woman. She is down to earth and sincere in her desire to help others succeed. She has gone out of her way to offer me guidance and



Denita Willoughby was appointed Vice President of External Relations at AT&T in 2006. She participated in The Women's Conference, an annual event organized by California First Lady Maria Shriver, in 2009.

has even written letters of recommendation on my behalf. I am truly blessed to have her as my mentor, and I can say without a doubt that taking the Women and Leadership class has been a life-changing experience for me.

An undergraduate majoring in Women's Studies, Gabrielle Thomas is the founder of My Beauty, an organization that works to empower girls to become successful women. Gabrielle is also the recipient of a CSW Renaissance Award.

Plan your work, and work your plan.

Denita Willoughby

Donna Bojarsky

dynamic, goal-oriented, and compassionately driven

LA-BASED POLITICAL CONSULTANT AND FOUNDER OF THE NEW LEADERS PROJECT, L.A. WORKS, AND FOREIGN POLICY ROUNDTABLE

by Aylin Oncel

RECOGNIZING THE INFLUENCE that celebrities have on public consciousness, Donna Bojarsky created ways to make an impact on national and global politics by drawing attention to issues or elections through the high visibility of celebrities. Since 1989, she has served as a public policy advisor to actor Richard Dreyfuss and others, advising celebrities on philanthropies while fundraising for causes and coordinating events. In “Poliwood,” Bojarsky is paving the way for high-profile individuals to create political and social change locally, nationally, and around the world. In addition to being a link between the world of politics and Hollywood, Bojarsky has founded several organizations and programs that benefit Los Angeles locally or address current issues of foreign policy and international rela-

tions: the New Leaders Project, L.A. Works, and Foreign Policy Roundtable. She has also served on the boards of such volunteer and community service groups as the National Board of City Cares of America and the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission.

Making a difference and seeing evidence of change in the community and lives of the people she cares about is her definition of success. Her efficacy as a leader is rooted in her ability to see where change is needed and to find ways to implement progress. If people are moved or influenced for the better, Bojarsky considers herself successful. An agent for change from within, she is rising up in the political, entertainment, and nonprofit worlds as an effective and successful leader. Her entrepreneurial drive allows her to

deftly juggle political, organizational, and familial commitments, as well as constantly developing new projects and ideas.

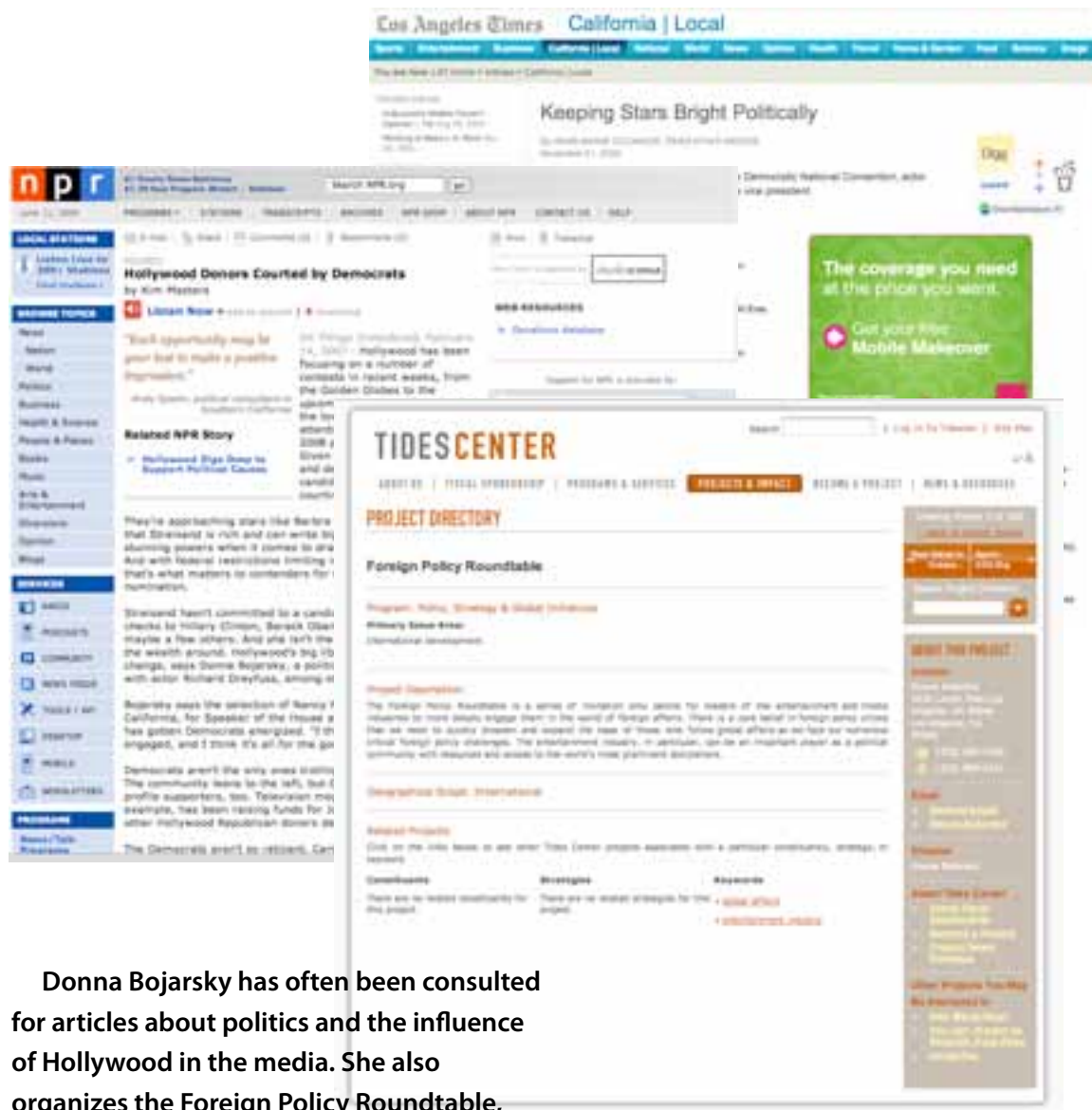
As a Jewish woman, Bojarsky brings attention to groups that have been underrepresented in the past and disproves social or gendered biases about what constitutes a leader. The leadership skills that have contributed to her success include staying informed about local and global current events, networking, fundraising, and focusing on issues in which she has an avid interest. Her projects begin at a micro, not macro, level, lending credence to her leadership style, which embodies a process approach that is perceptive and catalyzes change.

Through the New Leaders Project, L.A. Works, and Foreign Policy Roundtable, Bojarsky

has made astounding contributions to the Jewish community, to Los Angeles and its surrounding areas, and to promoting peace. Bojarsky exemplifies a positive and self-assured woman who stands up for herself and her values in situations where her capabilities or ideas may be doubted. She has the strength and confidence to create organizations to enact her vision for change. As a woman, Bojarsky brings a different perspective to the nonprofit advocacy world, serving as a role model for others. Embracing her diverse voice and entrepreneurial spirit has led Bojarsky to success in her endeavors.

By following her passions for volunteerism, politics, and international relations, Bojarsky has defied conventional theories and shown that women leaders can make effective change happen. Stagnant concepts of leadership are being swept away by women like Bojarsky. Her career has made it clear that one woman can make all the difference.

Aylin Oncel is graduating in 2009 with a double major in Women's Studies and Political Science. She will be attending law school in the fall.



Donna Bojarsky has often been consulted for articles about politics and the influence of Hollywood in the media. She also organizes the Foreign Policy Roundtable, an invitation-only salon for leaders in the entertainment and media industries.

Wendy Greuel

NEWLY ELECTED LA CITY CONTROLLER FAVORS COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP

Taking time out of her busy campaign schedule a week before the March 3rd city-wide election, Wendy Greuel came to visit the Women and Leadership class. Running for the top position of LA City Controller left vacant by Laura Chick, she had been dogged by negative publicity in the press. For example, the *Los Angeles Times* had asked “Is Greuel too nice to fill the shoes occupied by City Controller Laura Chick?” She was trapped in the familiar double bind for women in leadership: nice OR competent. Greuel was being pegged as too nice (or too nice to win). Women are always expected to be nice but leaders must be competent. It is very difficult to be viewed as both. Explaining to our class that she takes a collaborative approach to leadership, Greuel noted that that style may have inspired her critics to label her as “too nice,” but

she stands behind the way she leads and makes no apologies.

Greuel overcame the negative coverage, the gendered (read: male) expectations about leadership, and a difficult campaign to win the election. Holding one of the three highest posts in the city government, she is now a top contender for the mayorship if Antonio Villaraigosa leaves to run for governor. Los Angeles has never had a female mayor.

A UCLA alumna, Greuel is dedicated to making political leadership possible for more women. For starters, she offered her personal email address and the possibility of internships to the students in the class who are interested in politics. Also, she plans to continue the “Women’s Dialogue” series that her predecessor, Laura Chick, started. This series brings together panels

of distinguished female professionals to discuss contemporary issues affecting women.

Finally, this high-powered politician parsed no words with the class: yes, boys and girls, she IS a feminist. And in these times, where self-identifying as a feminist could be dangerous to your political viability, it is refreshing and heartening to hear.

Jenna Rodman is an undergraduate majoring in Women’s Studies and is a women’s mental health activist. She aspires to gain Master’s degree in Social Work.

MARIE-FRANCOISE CHESSELET

by Farnoosh Nik-Ahd

THROUGH HER LEADERSHIP STYLE AND FEMINIST VALUES, CHESSELET IS ACTIVELY CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT OF EQUALITY AND OPPORTUNITY AT THE DEPARTMENT OF NEUROBIOLOGY AT UCLA

From her uniquely feminist upbringing to her experience in medical research, Dr. Marie-Francoise Chesselet is a truly inspiring leader. Today she is the chair of the Department of Neurobiology in the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. She is also the Director of the APDA Advanced Center for Parkinson's Disease Research, the Morris K. Udall Center of Excellence for Parkinson's Disease Research, and the Center for Gene Environment Studies in Parkinson's Disease at UCLA, all in addition to her position as Principal Investigator of Chesselet Labs. Having worked at Chesselet Labs for more than a year now, I have come to admire Dr. Chesselet not only for her work in the field of medicine but also for her ability to lead with an emphasis on collaboration and teamwork.

Raised in France, Dr. Chesselet's father was a scientist and her mother an artist, two life paths that can be seen in the two dimensions of her life. In her family, creativity was valued above all else, and innovation and new



Dr. Chesselet is chair of the Department of Neurobiology in the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA.

ideas were encouraged. In addition, Dr. Chesselet's grandmother instilled strong feminist values in her from an early age. The girls of the family were told that everything was possible for them; they were expected to seek an education and a career rather than marriage. This expectation prompted Chesselet to enter medicine, as she felt that this path would provide her with the most options. A college biochemistry course that she took at the age of seventeen made her certain that she was going to do research. Through medical research, she was able to integrate creativity with science.

For years, however, Dr. Chesselet was told by peers and others in her field that she should be at home taking care of family. Even today, she is often the only woman at meetings and conferences, which makes many of her male colleagues uncomfortable. Knowing she would have to deal with prejudice and injustice for being a woman in a male-dominated field, Dr. Chesselet entered her profession ready to work around such oppressions rather than against them. This mentality has liberated her and enabled her to speak her mind boldly and make herself recognized. She has come to recognize the power of her voice and uses it to make herself visible in

a male-dominated field, to advocate for change, and to accomplish her goals. Dr. Chesselet advises women to work with the prejudice they encounter, as a way of combating oppression indirectly without shifting focus or time away from one's personal goal. She says that women should go into their profession aware that they will encounter injustice but should not allow this to hinder their ability or determination whatsoever.

Dr. Chesselet's leadership style at Chesselet Labs makes her a "tiger mother"—she embraces those around her in a very caring, protective way. She pushes each person to go beyond their limits and to embrace optimism and excitement, instilling a sense of value and purpose in the lab's mission. Dr. Chesselet is also collaborative in her approach. She believes that the sum is more important than its parts, and thus she initiates mass collaboration across specialties in order to bridge the networks of individuals working under a common goal and to strengthen the work environment.

Through her leadership style and feminist values, Dr. Chesselet actively creates an environment of equality and opportunity. She is transforming the world of neurobiological research

and making an impact on future generations of researchers. Interacting with women who have successfully balanced careers with fulfilling personal lives enabled the class to see the impact of gender equality within the workforce, helping us envision a brighter, more balanced future for our world and for women in medicine.

Farnoosh Nik-Ahd *is an undergraduate with a double major in Women's Studies and Neuroscience.*



Don't be afraid to ask questions,
don't be afraid to take a risk. Be
open-minded as to which direction
your career will go, and remember
that a network of supporters and
mentors is very important.

– *Cathy Sandeen,
Dean of Continuing Education
and UCLA Extension, UCLA*

Bridget Baker

by
Brandi
Andres

*Independence
is a necessity*

PRESIDENT OF TELEVISION NETWORKS DISTRIBUTION AT NBC UNIVERSAL SAYS,
“I’M ABOUT THE MISSION, NOT THE MAN...”

BRIDGET BAKER has always viewed her career very simply: independence is a necessity. Listed #25 in *Hollywood Reporter’s* “Power 100 Women in Entertainment” in 2007, Baker has been President of Television Networks Distribution at NBC Universal since December 2006. Surprisingly, finding a rewarding and influential position in the entertainment industry was not her original goal. “I never had this idea that I would someday be called a president,” she said. Baker remembers being prompted once in college to write down her dream career. “Well, maybe I’ll be a vice president of sales [for] maybe a telecommunications company,” she recalls writing, but the word “entertainment” never came to mind.

Given all her accomplishments, Baker still acknowledges that reaching a high position in any business is no smooth sail. She often refers to a phrase that sums up her ideas about work: “I’m about the mission, not the man.” For Baker, that means she’s not focusing on the advancement of her career but on the mission that her company is “trying to execute.” This approach makes clear how she has managed to gain such a high position in entertainment media. She simply concentrates on the job at hand and does it better.

Baker shared a few tips that may help other young women in trying to follow on her road to achievement:

Develop positive working relationships with coworkers. Rather than focusing on gender, women need to establish relationships with coworkers as they would with siblings. “If there’s a way for you to [move] up [in a company],” Baker declares, “one of the most successful . . . is to have your peer group pushing you up.”

Think of your organization as a pyramid. “Everybody’s for the boss, on a mission for the boss,” she explains. Baker first learned this lesson while working on Capital Hill as a legislative aide to Senator Ted Stevens for four years. Every student, no matter what industry they are planning to go into, should, she advises, spend some time working in government.

Do not bring an attitude of entitlement to a job. Think of it as a signed contract and consider your job in xyz terms: You accepted *x* amount of money for *y* amount of time to do *z* amount of work. Then do the work to the best of your ability.

Look for a job that fits your character and person-

ality. Take informational interviews and pay attention to the environment of each company. Baker recalls one of her first interviews, “I went in ... and did not see a female, except a couple of admins in the very front of the office. It was as quiet as a library. And, it was [filled with] white males, over 55, in navy blue suits. I took one look at that and thought, ‘not for me.’”

Be prepared to answer any question pertaining to the company or the business you are in at any given moment.

Women must fearlessly advance to the front of the pack through their determination to succeed. “I was not interested in being a trinket on someone else’s backpack,” Baker concludes. “People have to be willing to follow you. They say, ‘leaders emerge.’” And in Bridget Baker’s world that means trusting your instincts, having a positive attitude, and pushing yourself to achieve the highest quality in your work. Now, that’s a leader I’m willing to follow.

Brandi Andres is an undergraduate majoring in Women’s Studies major and a media producer.

Susan Dempsay

by Jenna Rodman

Feminist transformational leaders act as catalysts of change. They have a clear vision and a holistic picture of how organizations should incorporate feminist values of collaboration, inclusion, and social justice while meeting stated goals. In the case of Susan Dempsay, that meant providing meaningful support for families and caretakers in crisis. She is a visionary who, motivated by the desire to help her schizophrenic son, set out to make the lives of those in similar situations better, happier, and healthier. She was determined, despite the barriers, to build a safe space for people like her son. Susan Dempsay's leadership does not specifically address gender nor does she see herself as a feminist leader. Nonetheless her leadership style, her progressive approach to running organizations, and the services she champions all resonate strongly with

core feminist values and are a stellar example of what I consider feminist leadership.

In 1979, Dempsay joined and became a leader of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI), a support group for people with mental illness and their families. Some group members had become painfully aware that there was no place or activities in the community for their sons or daughters who could not have jobs or go to school and that the total responsibility for the welfare of the mentally ill person was left to the often overburdened and heartbroken families. They came up with the idea of building a mental health drop-in clubhouse near their homes in West Los Angeles.

Dempsay is also the founder and past Executive Director of Step Up on Second, a well-established agency providing psychosocial support for the mentally ill. She puts wishes into action by leading a team of non-professionals in building a grassroots non-profit community mental health program, which employs paraprofessionals and peers in leading groups that teach art, literature, and life skills. She started a practice of including a small for-profit business that employed members of the non-profit support agency to give them motivation and a sense of purpose. Dempsay's organization has taken a portion of this care into the public sector, making it visible and alleviating the burden of

responsibility from the mother. In turn she made the personal political.

Those afflicted with chronic mental illness face stigma, hatred, violence, and erasure. Through the Step Up on Second clubhouse support system, Dempsay is making a difference in the lives of members, families, and the community at large. She founded an organization that created an invaluable resource for the mentally ill and improved the quality of life for its staff, the members, and their families. Step Up on Second is strongly rooted around core feminist values, life experience, and the transformational leadership of Susan Dempsay.

Jenna Rodman is an undergraduate majoring in Women's Studies and is a women's mental health activist. She aspires to gain Master's degree in Social Work.



Although we weren't able to
shatter the highest, hardest
glass ceiling this time, thanks
to you, it's got about 18 million
cracks in it, and the light is
shining through.

*– Hillary Clinton, farewell to
supporters, National Building
Museum, June 7, 2008*

Stacy Melle

by Natalia Abrams

*When someone tells you,
“you can’t do x,” it just makes you
want to do that thing more.*

Vice president of NBC/Universal’s on demand division, Stacy Melle is a transformational leader. As Jean Lau Chin describes it, transformational leadership style is “motivating others to perform beyond their expectations by setting a personal example of high standards, providing support, and encouraging creativity.” Melle embodies all these feminist traits. As a woman and a person living with a life-shortening chronic disease, she has also achieved greatness beyond most.

Since the age of seven, Stacy wanted to work at a television studio: “Most little girls want to be a princess, I wanted to work in television.” Melle knew what she wanted and went for it. For example, in the seventh grade, she consciously changed her group of friends in order to be surrounded with more motivated classmates because she recognized that networking with the right people could move one ahead. “I joined a

lot of clubs,” she remembers, “and I was never satisfied with being a member.” Melle worked herself up to a leadership position in almost every club she joined. In high school, she was a dancer and head cheerleader. Her duties as head cheerleader were important to her in the developmental stages of her leadership style because they included choosing music and uniforms for the group and setting all the rules.

Learning early on in her high school years that she had cystic fibrosis, a life-shortening chronic lung disease, Melle made the amazing decision not to accept that she was going to die: “...I would be different.” This year, she will celebrate her fortieth birthday. Her illness helps define both her leadership style and her outlook on life. Deciding that she needed to make every moment count, she applied this attitude to every activity, club, or group she joined. Yet, success came at a cost. When she was running for head

cheerleader, fellow classmates spread rumors that she could not handle the position because she was going to die. These accusations hurt her deeply but she firmly believes that she gained strength from being told she could not do something. “When someone tells you, ‘you can’t do x,’ it just makes you want to do that thing more.”

Always knowing that there were bigger and better opportunities for her, she always dressed for the job she wanted, not the job she had. Melle also dealt with her illness in a professional and private way. Her advice to women with chronic illnesses is “don’t say anything, it is none of their business unless it interferes with your job.” If they know, a boss might object to a trip or a task. In fact, she believes that she was let go from her first job because of her illness, considering she lost her job only a few months after confiding to her boss that she had cystic fibrosis. In order to keep her illness and its effects



Return to Digital Hollywood Agenda

Click to Next Session

Digital Hollywood Fall 2006
Thursday, October 26
2:15 PM - 3:30 PM
Track IV:

Building Brands, Hollywood Style - Word of Mouth and Community Marketing
Sara Francis, Senior Account Executive, Deep Focus
Mathieu Nouzareth, President, BOONTY Inc.
Clarke De Pastino, Vice President, Entertainment & Lifestyle, Streetwise Concepts and Culture
Yael Elish, President and CEO, eSnips
Pete Snyder, CEO, New Media Strategies
Marissa Gluck, founder and Managing Partner, Radar Research, LLC, Moderator

Stacy A. Melle, Vice President Marketing, On-Demand, NBC Universal Cable: Stacy A. Melle, Vice President Marketing, On-Demand at NBC Universal Cable, is responsible for the creation and execution of pay-per-view (PPV) and video-on-demand (VOD) marketing campaigns to promote Universal Studios, Focus Features and Rogue Films current and library movies, TV content from NBC's broadcast and cable networks as well as special events. Most recently she has directed campaigns for "The 40-Year-Old Virgin," "King Kong" and "Brokeback Mountain." Before joining NBC, Melle worked as an Affiliate Relations Manager for Viewer's Choice (now called IN DEMAND) where she assisted western U.S. cable operators in the management and marketing of their PPV service. Melle has also worked as a PPV Manager at South Bay CableVision (InterMedia Partners) where she launched PPV and managed the daily PPV operations and marketing. Melle and has been recognized with numerous industry awards from (Cable Telecommunications Association of Marketing (CTAM) to Women in Cable and Telecommunications (WICT). Melle and her team was honored with CTAM Silver MARK Award for "The Mummy" campaign and most recently they received First Place for CTAM's Digital PPV & VOD Case Study for their local ad sales promotion tying in CNBC and In Good Company. Previous CTAM Case Study Competition awards include the "American Pie" and "FlickFest" campaigns. In November 2003, Melle was included in The Hollywood Reporter's "10th Annual New Generation" issue recognizing the top thirty-five most promising executives poised to lead the industry. In addition, Melle has been twice rewarded with a Marketing Manager Award from Show Event Television, as well as the Bay Area Cable Excellence Award for Best Producer of a Documentary. In 1999, the Chicago Chapter of WICT presented Melle with the Dana Thompson Star Award. She currently serves as Chapter Mentor of the Southern California Chapter of WICT.



prove that she is just as capable as anyone—able or disabled, man or woman—to run a company.

Melle believes, however, there is still a glass ceiling and she has hit it. The “glass ceiling” refers to an apparent but not visible barrier that denies women top positions in organizations. In *Through the Labyrinth* (McGraw Hill, 2007), Alice Eagly and Linda Carli assert that the glass ceiling no longer exists; the path to leadership and achievement is through a labyrinth or a “complex journey toward a goal worth striving for (and is attainable).”

Melle also has to deal with the double-bind dilemma, which refers to the expectations of women within a leadership position. If women seem too feminine, they can be criticized for lack of strength. When they act too strong, they are castigated as too masculine.

I chose to interview Melle because I wanted to learn from a leader who had accomplished

many goals while dealing with outside obstacles. I also have personal experience with a chronic illness. She and I are similar in our interests and our dedication to leading. For example, we both aspire to be leaders of every group we join. Stacy's stable upbringing gave her a strong foundation for her leadership positions. Although I lacked such stability when I was growing up, I have been able to provide it for myself as an adult. I have also learned that networking with humility is key, meaning sometimes you have to face those who have fired you, not hired you, or do not even care to know your name.

Melle has a very detailed and focused leadership style. Inclusiveness is her number one priority. Good leaders, she believes, will surround themselves with great people and empower them by providing guidance and fostering collaboration, which are hallmarks of a feminist style of leadership. In addition, she believes in always being constructive not destructive in critiquing employees—following the golden rule. As a successful leader, she has learned that delegation needs to be combined with inclusiveness. In all aspects of her life and career, Melle has proved that women can lead effectively with a feminist, transformational style.

Natalia Abrams just graduated with a B.A. from the Department of Women's Studies at UCLA.

hidden, she would plan scheduled hospital stays during Christmas or Fourth of July weekends. When asked, she would say that she had gone to Club Med (for medicine). Through efficient management of her illness, Melle was able to

Inclusivity is #1.

Stacy Melle

ANGELA OH

by Anne Sim

AS A FEMALE AND AS A KOREAN AMERICAN, Angela Oh has had to overcome many challenges to her legitimacy as she pursued her career. After she graduated with a master's degree in public policy from UCLA, Oh knew she wanted to practice law. After earning her J.D. at UC Davis, she immediately began work in a law firm, where she developed a state and federal criminal defense practice, which included representing juvenile offenders. From the beginning of her law career, however, Oh experienced discrimination in the workplace, especially in the state and federal courts systems.

In *The Double-Bind Dilemma for Women and Leadership*, a study conducted by Catalyst, a nonprofit research organization focusing on women and business, researchers found that “the perception that women do not fit the image of the ideal leader is still pervasive in business, because men are seen as prototypical leaders, women’s leadership behaviors are evaluated against a masculine leadership norm. In such a scenario, women can rarely measure up. Even when ‘feminine’ leadership behaviors are perceived positively—such as when women are complimented for being team-oriented and sensitive

to others’ concerns—women’s styles are still labeled as ‘unique’ and ‘different’ from the (presumed) leadership norm” (Catalyst 9).

The need for a federal Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, therefore, remains as compelling now as it was in



1972. While working women in the U.S. may have more rights today than women in earlier decades, sex discrimination persists in the workplace and women often have difficulty gaining leadership positions because of gendered classifications. Femininity is still viewed suspiciously in many corporations and courts.

In *Race, Gender, and Leadership* (2005), Patricia Parker argues that the conceptualization of leadership often focuses on the notion of the “great man” (most often, white and middle class) (Parker 4). For Oh, this “great man” notion of leadership has plagued her throughout her career as a lawyer, as she sought to gain the respect of fellow lawyers and judges. For example, in the early 1990s, she was defending a criminal case before a white judge. This judge simply refused to acknowledge that she was the lead counsel on the case; he ignored her throughout the

trial, communicating only with her fellow lawyers, who happened to be white, middle-class males.

In forging a highly successful career, Oh has however defied the stereotype and become a transformational leader. She helped clear the path for other Asian American females to become partners and to sit as counsel at major law firms. Barbara Kellerman and Deborah L. Rhode’s edited volume *Women and Leadership* (2007) mentions that “in law, women constitute about half of new entrants to the profession but less than a fifth of law firm partners, federal judges, law school deans, and Fortune 500 general counsels” (Kellerman and Rhode, 2). By altering the traditional hiring practices, Oh implemented changes in the law firm where she currently works, Bird Marella, which now has one of the highest rates for hiring of Asian lawyers in California. Parker notes that the

“transformational leader provides a basis for linking the ideas of leadership as the management of meaning and leadership as a process of social change and emancipation” (Parker, 25). Oh focuses on changing social systems and reforming institutions by appealing to higher ideals and thus attracting followers and influencing top leaders, lawyers, and partners to recruit Asian female lawyers in corporate law firms.

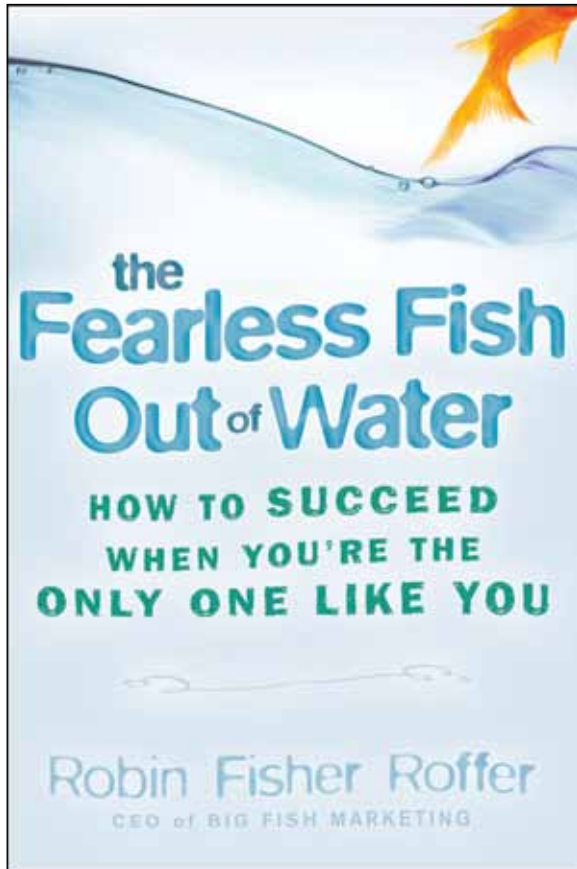
Oh has learned that females do have the power to gain top leadership positions in the workforce or public spheres. To break through the glass ceiling in the workplace, however, Oh found that she often had to express herself in “masculine” ways in the workplace. Recent research has confirmed that individuals with masculine styles are more likely to emerge as leaders than those with feminine styles (Kellerman and Rhode, 7). Even though

power struggles between male and females continue in the workplace, Oh believes that social interaction and cooperation can play a part in helping women to transform the workplace and gain leadership roles without having to adopt a “masculine” style. She works to educate men *and* women about the importance of finding commonalities and recognizing and supporting differences in perspective in the work environment.

Anne Sim is an undergraduate majoring in Women's Studies. She hopes to go to law school when she graduates.

For individuals, the mission statement pulls us toward our possibilities, our dreams...I tell people to try to articulate their mission in seven words or less. It will be easier to remember that way, and you want to be able to think of it easily, like you would a motto, when you need to be reminded of who you are and what you stand for.

– *Robin Fisher Roffer, Making a Name For Yourself and The Fearless Fish Out of Water*



The Fearless Fish out of Water:
How to Succeed When You're the Only One Like You
Robin Fisher Roffer
Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2009

BOOK REVIEW BY KELLY SHU

In *The Fearless Fish out of Water*, author Robin Fisher Roffer offers tools for self-empowerment and business success for those who don't fit the proverbial mold. She calls it "the permission slip to celebrate your unique style." Founder and CEO of Big Fish Marketing, author of two books, motivational speaker, and mother and wife, Roffer is a self-proclaimed fearless fish out of water who has made it in the corporate world. Roffer insists that with the right attitude and method, anyone—no matter how set apart they are from the rest of the world—can have a more fulfilling life. Rich in narrative and smart business tips, *The Fearless Fish* is a compelling guide for defining and embracing our differences to achieve success.

The tagline in the title is quite accurate in its description of the book: how to succeed when you're the only one like you. Because of gender, race, age, style, attitude, or other factor, many of us have been the only one like us at some point in our life. According to Roffer, being different helps you stand out, and you can fit in without losing yourself. She takes us through seven career-tested steps to achieve success by celebrating, not hiding from, our differences. Each chapter contains inspiring interviews with corporate and entertainment leaders, easy-to-follow guidelines and mantras for success, and exercises to help readers dig deeper into their

authentic selves and how we can use our unique ability to thrive.

The personal narrative included in *The Fearless Fish* accomplishes what no ordinary lecture or manual could have accomplished. It offers fresh and authentic perspectives on how to succeed in the corporate world from prosperous business leaders on the frontlines of media and entertainment industries, including Roffer herself. From television network executives to hip hop managers to writers, Robin integrates their compelling and enriching narratives to reinforce her seven steps. A woman attorney at the largest media-tion firm in the country, for example, used being a woman to her advantage in a primarily male-dominated field: "I play up my great sense of humor and my warmth [to] get the deals done."

In *The Fearless Fish out of Water*, Roffer has fashioned a motivational and insightful handbook that addresses how to maintain one's identity in the workplace and still accomplish one's goals. By incorporating personal narratives from top executives in various industries, she shows how being fearless can enrich one's life and the lives of others if one celebrates that uniqueness and uses it as a tactic for success. Full of exceptional guidelines and a diversity of experiences, *The Fearless Fish* is truly a must-read for anyone looking to blaze their own trail to achieve success.

Kelly Shu is an undergraduate majoring in Women's Studies and Economics.

"What are your biggest dreams? Now make them bigger. Now, what do you need to do to make those dreams come true? Ask for those things."

– *Wende Jager-Hyman, Executive Director of the Woodhull Institute for Ethical Leadership*

Organizations

THE WOODHULL INSTITUTE FOR ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

Founded in 1998 by author Naomi Wolf and journalist Margot Magowan, The Woodhull Institute provides ethical leadership training and professional development for women. At the Young Women's Ethical Leadership Retreat, a team of committed professionals presents basic empowerment skills that prepare young women for leadership roles in their community and workplace. At the Writers' Retreat, professional authors, journalists, and freelancers provide writing instruction and one-on-one critiques for participants so that they might gain a more thorough knowledge of how to present op-ed pieces, features, book proposals, and pitching ideas. Karon Jolna had the opportunity to participate in the May 2009 Writers Retreat and highly recommends this event for faculty, staff, and students. Upcoming events include the Young

Women's Ethical Leadership Retreat, September 11–13, 2009, Petaluma, CA. For more information, see www.woodhull.org or contact Stephanie Kirby: skirby@woodhull.org or info@woodhull.org

CALIFORNIA WOMEN LEAD

California Women Lead's mission is to increase the number of women in elected and appointed office in California. One way we deliver this message is through our trainings. The recently opened Los Angeles chapter's first official event was an appointments training on Wednesday, May 20th at City Hall. Check the web for upcoming events and registration materials at www.cawomenlead.org. The board of directors includes California Inspector General, Laura Chick, who worked to make this chapter both a success out of the gate and, more importantly, a reality. Therese Hughs, President of the Los Angeles Chapter, encourages young women to join and offers student discounts on membership. Contact admin@cawomenlead.org

STEP UP WOMEN'S NETWORK, LOS ANGELES

Step Up Women's Network is a national non-profit membership organization dedicated to strengthening community resources for women and girls. Through teen empowerment programs for underserved girls, women's health education and advocacy, professional mentorship and social networking opportunities, they educate and activate their members to make sure that women and girls have the tools they need to create a better future. "Invest, Involve and Inspire" is their motto. They offer opportunities for volunteer internships. See www.suwn.org or contact the Los Angeles office at losangeles@suwn.org.

RUTGERS CENTER FOR AMERICAN WOMEN AND POLITICS

The Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) at Rutgers is nationally recognized as the leading source of scholarly research and current data about American women's political participation. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about women's participation in politics and government and to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life. For more information, see www.CAWP.rutgers.edu.

CAWP NEW LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

NEW Leadership is CAWP's national initiative to educate and empower the next generation of women leaders. The award-winning program emphasizes the importance of having women in positions of political leadership. New Leadership teaches collegewomen the value of civic engagement and encourages them to see themselves as empowered leaders who can effectively participate in politics and public policy. For more information see www.newleadership.rutgers.edu or contact: Sasha Patterson, Ph.D. at sashap@rci.rutgers.edu

CATALYST: EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND BUSINESS

Founded in 1962, Catalyst is the leading nonprofit membership organization working globally with businesses and the professions to build inclusive workplaces and expand opportunities for women and business. Catalyst's work is rooted in research. They study women and men across levels, functions, and geographies to learn about women's external barriers to their career advancement, and individual and organizational strategies leading to success. Catalyst publishes *The Double-Bind Dilemma for Women in Leadership: Damned if You Do, Doomed if You Don't* (2007). For more information and downloadable research reports, see www.catalyst.org.

Internship Opportunities

CODE PINK : WOMEN FOR PEACE

<http://www.codepink4peace.org/>

CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

<http://www.cwlc.org/>

FEMINIST MAJORITY FOUNDATION

<http://www.feminist.org/>

GLOBAL FUND FOR WOMEN

[http://www.globalfundforwomen.org/
cms/](http://www.globalfundforwomen.org/cms/)

MS. MAGAZINE

<http://www.msmagazine.com/>

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

<http://www.nwlc.org/>

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN

<http://www.now.org/>

VITAL VOICES GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

[http://www.vitalvoices.org/desktopde-
fault.aspx?page_id=734](http://www.vitalvoices.org/desktopdefault.aspx?page_id=734)

WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL

<http://www.womenforwomen.org/>

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