

# PCSW News—November 2007

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What you'll find...

- Where Connecticut Stands: Getting to a Better Tomorrow
- Share your story
- WAGE Connecticut: An Effort to Eliminate the Wage Gap
- National News: Fair Pay Restoration Act
- Trafficking in Persons Council
- New Release: Sexual Harassment Prevention Trainer's List
- ATTENTION CT State Agency Equal Employment Opportunity Specialists and Attorney General Designees!
- View upcoming events

## Where Connecticut Stands: Getting to a Better Tomorrow

- One in five families in Connecticut can't pay their bills with their current jobs;
- 78% of these families have at least one worker;
- Households maintained by women are more than twice as likely to have problems paying their bills;
- People of color (particularly Latinas), women (especially single parents) and urban residents are disproportionately impacted.

These are the findings from our latest report *Overlooked and Undercounted: Where Connecticut Stands*. This data was the driving force for formulating the PCSW's first Women's Economic Security Package. The three-part Package places women at the center of the conversation about economic security and growth in Connecticut and getting to a better tomorrow for everyone.

[Read \*Overlooked and Undercounted: Where Connecticut Stands—Executive Summary and Economic Security Package\*](#)

Here's what we've done:

### Where Connecticut Stands Press Conference

The PCSW was joined by Kate Farrar of Wider Opportunities for Women and Merle Harris, President of Charter Oak Community College at a press conference on October 10, 2007. At the conference we released our report *Overlooked and Undercounted: Where Connecticut Stands* and announced our three-part economic security package.

The report is a region-by-region analysis that identifies characteristics of families with inadequate income in Connecticut. It presents two key findings and offers clear solutions and priorities:

- Employment is key to income adequacy, but not all jobs are equal.
- Education reduces the rate of income inadequacy, especially for people of color and for women.

[Read the press release](#)

[Read the press release in Spanish](#)



Left: The audience listens during the press conference; Below: President of Charter Oak Community College Dr. Merle Harris

Above: Kate Farrar of Wider Opportunities for Women

### Public Hearing: Getting to a Better Tomorrow

The PCSW hosted its first of three public hearings in October in Enfield at Asnuntuck Community College. Representative Karen Jarmoc, Senator and PCSW Legislative Commissioner John Kissel, Enfield Town Council Member Scott Kaupin, PCSW Commission Chair Jean Rexford, and PCSW Executive Director Teresa C. Younger were all present to hear testimony from local residents on the challenges they face making ends meet. Their testimony will be compiled in a report to be presented to the CT General Assembly.

[View a gallery from the event.](#)

### Brunch with Women Legislators

On November 8, 2007, PCSW held a successful Legislative Brunch on the topic of *Women: Economic and Financial Security* at the State capitol. The goal of the event was to have female legislators begin a dialogue with the PCSW about economic and financial security initiatives that support women in becoming financially successful. We shared our Economic and Financial Security Package to facilitate discussion. Our package is supported by a report commissioned by the PCSW entitled *Overlooked and Undercounted: Where Connecticut Stands*, which has region and gender-specific data on the financial status of Connecticut residents using the Self-Sufficiency Standard. As a follow up to the brunch we will be sending out a poll to all legislators to continue the dialogue about how we can work together to help women become economically and financially secure.

[View a gallery from the event.](#)

## Share Your Story

PCSW's next **Public Hearing will be January 23, 2008 at Norwalk Community College from 6:00- 8:00 PM.** Join us and tell us YOUR story. If you can't attend the hearing we'd still like to hear from you. Please [send us an email](#) or write to us at:

Permanent Commission on the Status of Women  
 18-20 Trinity Street  
 Hartford, CT 06106

[View the event flyer.](#)

## WAGE Connecticut: An Effort to Eliminate the Wage Gap

WAGE Connecticut (Women Are Getting Even, CT Chapter) was formally launched by the Connecticut AAUW at the Pay Equity and Gender Pay Gap Conference, which they co-sponsored with the YWCA of New Britain. This is the newest WAGE Hub in the country organized to develop a network of individuals and organizations committed to eliminating the wage gap. Obviously, the PCSW strongly supports this effort. Among the women in attendance at the meeting were: National Director for the WAGE Project Community and Campus Initiatives Annie Houle, AAUW CT President Carol Virostek, New Britain Executive Director Robin Sharp, President Charter Oak State College Dr. Merle Harris, NE AAUW Regional Director Patricia Ho, and PCSW Executive Director Teresa C. Younger.

To join the efforts of WAGE Connecticut, contact AAUW/CT Women's Issues Chair and former PCSW staff member [Susan Hoover](#).

Multiple events will be organized this year around Pay Equity Day on April 22, 2008. Watch upcoming newsletters to learn more about the WAGE Hub and Equal Pay Day.

## National News—Fair Pay Restoration Act

The Senate is considering legislation, the Fair Pay Restoration Act, that would ensure that women and other workers who experience compensation discrimination are able to obtain justice. The Act would reverse the decision in the recent Supreme Court case [Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber](#), which said that employees cannot challenge ongoing compensation discrimination if the employer's original discriminatory decision occurred more than 180 days before.

In this case, Ledbetter discovered she was unfairly paid for the past 20 years and wanted compensation for those lost wages. The Supreme Court limited the compensation to just 180 days.

Because pay information is often confidential, it may take a long time for an employee to realize that she is experiencing compensation discrimination. The Fair Pay Restoration Act would restore long-standing law and promote voluntary compliance with anti-discrimination laws by employers.

To learn more about what you can do, educate yourself at the National Women's Law Center, [www.nwlc.org](#).

## Trafficking in Persons Council

The Interagency Task Force on Trafficking in Persons, established by the Connecticut General Assembly in 2004, is now the Trafficking in Persons Council. The original mission of the task force was to research the extent of trafficking in Connecticut, as well as determine what services are available to victims and how well equipped Connecticut law enforcement agencies are to deal with the problem.

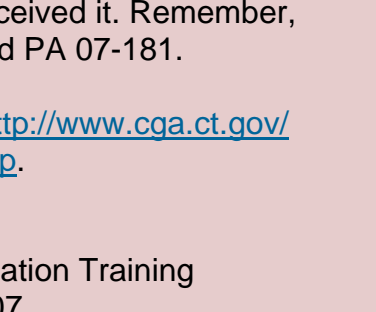
In the 2007 legislative session, the General Assembly passed [PA 07-107, AA Establishing a Trafficking in Persons Council](#), tasking the new group with determining what services are available to victims and how to best coordinate a response. Additionally, funding was provided to the Office of Victim Services to develop a coordinated response system to trafficking of persons, including providing trainings on how to address the issue of human trafficking. The council includes law enforcement officials, leaders of state agencies, and community-based advocates and providers of services to victims.

The council will continue to report to the legislature annually.

Upcoming meetings are scheduled for December 5, 2007 and June 4, 2008. For additional information, please [visit our website](#).

## New Release! Sexual Harassment Prevention Trainer's List

The PCSW has just updated its sexual harassment prevention trainers list. We provide this list in order to assist employers in complying with C.G.S.A. §§ 46a-54-200 - 46a-54-207. This state law requires all employers with 50 or more employees to provide at least two hours of sexual harassment prevention and training to all current supervisors and new supervisors within six months of hire or promotion to a supervisory position. It also encourages an update training every 3 years. The state regulations, as well as a sample poster for the workplace and Historical Statistics for Sexual Harassment Caseload, are attached as appendices.



If you are a state agency that requires sexual harassment prevention training PCSW may be able to help you, you can [request a training on our website](#).

## Attention CT State Agency Equal Employment Opportunity Specialists and Attorney General Designees!

We are still accepting registrations for Affirmative Action Investigation Foundation Training, (formerly of all new Equal Employment Opportunity Specialists (formerly Affirmative Action Officers) and Attorney General Designees. Please [contact our office](#) if you believe you need this training. Please also forward this notice to any new EEOs or AGDs who may have not received it. Remember, this 10-hour training is required by PA 03-151 and PA 07-181.

Registration is also available on our website at [http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/Outreach/Pages/AAOAGD\\_Registration.asp](http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/Outreach/Pages/AAOAGD_Registration.asp).

Affirmative Action Investigation Foundation Training  
 December 11 and 12, 2007  
 8:00 AM-4:00 PM  
 Legislative Office Building 1D, Hartford

## Upcoming Events

- November 30, 2007 [Women in the Trades Exchange](#)
- December 11 & 12, 2007 [Affirmative Action Investigation Foundation Training](#)
- January 23, 2008 [Public Hearing: Getting to a Better Tomorrow](#)
- February 6, 2008 CT General Assembly convenes
- February 21, 2008** **Making Women Visible Day**  
 Mark your calendars today, more information to follow!

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The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) was established by the State Legislature in 1973. Seventeen appointed volunteer Commissioners join a team of volunteers to work to eliminate sex discrimination in Connecticut. They are to inform leaders about the nature and scope of discrimination, to serve as a liaison between government and private interest groups concerned with services for women, to promote consideration of women for governmental positions, and to work with state agencies to access programs and practices as they affect women.

PCSW NEWS is published 6 times a year under the direction of Communications Director Barbara Potopowicz  
 Christa Allard, Editor - [christa.allard@cga.ct.gov](mailto:christa.allard@cga.ct.gov)  
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