

# Philadelphia NOW

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## Community College of Philadelphia

Community College of Philadelphia Women's Center  
Community College of Philadelphia Women's Studies Program  
Mid-Atlantic Women Studies Association  
Present:

### Women of Color and Allies Summit "Empowerment: An Inward & Outward Journey for Women" **Keynote speaker: SONIA SANCHEZ**

**Saturday, March 18, 2006  
8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

Community College of Philadelphia  
1700 Spring Garden Street  
The Great Hall – Room S2.19

#### **Workshop Topics include:**

- **No Hay Excusa en Violencia Domestica/There is No Excuse for Domestic Violence**
- **Wholistic Wellness: Taking Back Your Power**
- **Myths & Facts: The Sexuality of Women of Color and Reproductive Empowerment**
- **Women of Color Organizing for Reproductive Justice**
- **The Possibilities for Women as Leaders**
- **Women of Color in Mass Media**

**This is a free event.**

**Continental breakfast and lunch will be served.**

**Registration for this event is required.**

**Please call the Women's Center at 215-751-8808;  
by Tuesday, March 14, 2006 to reserve your seat**

#### **Progress Report by Karen Bojar**

These are difficult times for the feminist movement with the appointment of Justice Roberts and Justice Alito to the Supreme Court. It has become all the more important

that we elect representatives committed to upholding women's rights.

NOW works on every level to elect committed feminists, with the national

NOW Political Action Committee, the Pennsylvania NOW Political Action Committee and in Philadelphia with our local Political Action Committee.

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## **Progress Report (continued) by Karen Bojar**

Philadelphia NOWPAC has jurisdiction in local races and in those state races where the boundaries fall entirely within the city limits. As we are an all volunteer organization with limited resources, we do not endorse in every race but focus on those races where we think we can have the greatest impact. Our goal is not simply to make a statement but to help elect candidates who will advance our agenda.

We may be endorsing fewer candidates than we have in the past as we have added support for same sex marriage not just support for civil unions as one of our criteria for endorsement. (See the statement on p. 5 prepared by our intern Michele Ditto summarizing our reasons for including support for same sex marriage as one of our criteria for en-

dorsement by PhiladelphiaNOWPAC.)

Our local organization now has a three part structure: 1) our core chapter with officers elected every two years; 2) our Political Action Committee (PhilaNOWPAC) which consists of executive board members as well as politically active members appointed by the executive board; 3) the Philadelphia NOW Education Fund (PNEF) which supports our educational work.

The board of the PNEF consists of members with experience in educational programming, grant writing and fundraising. We have a few slots available for additional members who have expertise in grant writing and fund raising. Please contact Rosa Woods, the president of the PNEF, at [rosa3301@comcast.net](mailto:rosa3301@comcast.net)

if you have experience in grant writing and fund raising and are interested in serving on the PNEF board. This year the PNEF has focused on raising funds for the Women of Color Conference which we hope will be supported by Philadelphia NOW members.

We are also engaged in a chapter history project and have begun the process of interviewing our founding members. This year we will honor founding member Florence Cohen as well as women who have advocated for and provided services for women in prison: Naima Black, Community Collaborations Coordinator at the Pennsylvania Prison Society, and a group of women's organizations who have worked to strengthen ties between women prisoners and their children, "Messages from Mom." Please note pg. 9 for details of the fundraiser.

## **THE CATERPILLAR CAMPAIGN "STOP CAT" by Marlene Santoyo**

In March of 2003, a young American, Rachel Corrie, was crushed to death as she attempted to pre-

vent a home demolition in Rafah, Gaza. Ms. Corrie was killed by a Caterpillar D9 Bulldozer used

by the Israeli military. The Caterpillar D9 Bulldozer is also used by the Israeli military for home and olive tree demoli-

## THE CATERPILLAR CAMPAIGN “STOP CAT” (continued)

by Marlene Santoyo

tions, allowing for the construction of settlements and the erection of a separation barrier on Palestinian land.

Since 1967, the Israeli army has used CAT equipment to bulldoze over 12,600 homes in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, leaving over 50,000 women, men and children homeless.

CAT bulldozers are funded by US military aid to Israel – which is paid for by US taxpayers. CAT has been rebuked by the UN High Commission on Human Rights, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch. By highlighting Caterpillar as a US-based corporation

profiting from the Israeli occupation, the door is opened for talking about other US corporations and the US government itself – the policies and economic support perpetuating the occupation.

The big win is to end Caterpillar bulldozer sales to the Israeli Army.

However, the strength of the Caterpillar Campaign is that there are many ways to have small success – a university divesting its holdings in Caterpillar stock, a community center declaring itself a CAT FREE zone, a contractor refusing to use Caterpillar equipment, the outcome of the US STOP

CAT's Campaign strategy of education for mobilization. In Philadelphia, SUSTAIN and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) are part of the worldwide Caterpillar Campaign effort.

Please, Google “Caterpillar: Stop Bulldozing” to sign the petition. For more info, contact Marlene Santoyo at [marlsan@cavtel.net](mailto:marlsan@cavtel.net) or go to [www.endtheoccupation.org](http://www.endtheoccupation.org).

## Gloria Steinem Is Feminism Still Relevant?

by Louise Francis

One of the foremothers of the women's movement, Gloria Steinem, in an event entitled “Is Feminism Still Relevant?”, spoke at the University of Pennsylvania on February 23. It was apparent that many people, including many undergraduate and graduate students at Penn, thought feminism was indeed relevant.

In her first few sentences, Gloria herself indicated that the answer was obvious. While women have made a lot of progress in the past 30 years, much work is left unfinished. For instance, she noted that parking lot attendants earn more than child-care workers, not because we value parking cars more than taking care of children, but be-

cause the former occupation is predominantly male and the latter female. Approximately 40% of work in the US and 60% worldwide is not considered or counted as work (i.e., child care, cooking, etc.) and does not earn credits towards retirement benefits. The so-called “non-work” work is largely performed by women.

Gloria noted that it will probably be another 75 years, or more, before women attain full equality. Some of her prescriptions for changing the future are:

Parents need to attend to how they raise their sons, not just how they raise their daughters. In other words, while we need to raise girls to be more like boys, and to have the same

hopes and aspirations for their futures as do boys, we also need to raise boys to be more like girls (i.e., to be more caring).

Women need to demand pay equity for women. This is not just the same pay for the same job grade and title occupied by a man, but equal pay for jobs of comparable worth (ex.: nurse and pharmacist).

Feminists must work collaboratively with other civil rights movements. Women will not attain equality as long as other racial, ethnic and sexual minorities do not enjoy equality.

Louise Francis is the Treasurer of Philadelphia NOW. Her e-mail address is [louise-francis@msn.com](mailto:louise-francis@msn.com)

## **RALLY AGAINST THE WAR IN IRAQ IN NYC APRIL 29, 2006** by Kathy Black

NOW has joined in an historic alliance with other major national organizations against the war to build a mass mobilization in New York City on Saturday, April 29. Details are still being worked out for the day's activities, but the call has gone out from U.S. Labor Against the War, United for Peace and Justice, Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, Friends of the Earth, People's Hurricane Relief Fund and the Climate Crisis Coalition to bring together an even larger gathering than the hundreds of thousands who rallied in Washington last September to demand an end to the war and a new direction for our country.

NOW has long held that peace is a femi-

nist issue. We passed a resolution against the war in Iraq at our 2004 convention, we have signed on to a letter with other women's organizations calling for an Iraq withdrawal plan, and we have demonstrated nationally and locally with other groups since before the 2003 invasion. Our peace platform opposes the Bush administration's exploitation of September 11 to advance a right wing domestic agenda of diminished civil liberties and social services, massive defense spending, enormous corporate contracts in Iraq, and a foreign policy that exacerbates the plight of women and children in the Middle East, promotes military aggression and feeds anti-American

sentiment around the world.

Mark your calendars now and plan to join other NOW members and our allies in New York on Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, to raise the call for an end to the disastrous occupation and tragic loss of life in Iraq. Watch the NOW website (and those of the other organizations) for more details about speakers and activities for the day. Information about the march and a pdf file can be found now at [www.now.org/issues/peace/nyc2006/index.html](http://www.now.org/issues/peace/nyc2006/index.html).

E-mails will go out in March and April about local transportation arrangements, or you can call Kathy Black at 215-893-3770 for additional information.

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## Philadelphia NOW's Statement on Same-Sex Marriage

***"Gay and lesbian people have families, and their families should have legal protection. . . A constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage is a form of gay bashing and it would do nothing at all to protect traditional marriages. "***

**- Coretta Scott King**

### **What is marriage?**

Marriage is a unique legal status granted by and recognized by governments all over the world. It brings with it a host of mutual obligations, rights and protections.

Legally, states grant civil marriage licenses, providing couples with over 1,000 legal protections and rights in state and federal law, including

- Social Security benefits upon death, disability or retirement of spouse, as well as benefits for minor children
- Family and Medical Leave protections to care for a new child or a sick or injured family members
- Workers' Compensation protections for the family of a worker injured on the job
- Access to COBRA insurance benefits so the family doesn't lose health insurance when one spouse is laid off
- Exemptions from penalties on IRA and pension rollovers
- Exemptions from estate taxes when a spouse dies
- Exemptions from federal income taxes on spouse's health Insurance
- The right to visit a sick or injured loved one, have a say in life and death matters during hospitalization

### **What are civil unions?**

A civil union is a legal status granted by a state. It provides legal protection to couples at the state law level but omits federal protection, as well as the dignity, clarity, security and power of the word "marriage".

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## **Philadelphia NOW's Statement on Same-Sex Marriage (continued)**

### **Why marriage over civil unions?**

Civil unions are not recognized by other states or the federal government, and they do not afford couples the federal benefits accorded by marriage. State benefits programs funded as a joint effort between federal and state entities would be excluded from civil union benefits.

Civil unions are different from civil marriage, and that difference has wide-ranging implications that make the two institutions unequal, such as:

- **Portability** – Marriages are respected from state to state, but questions remain as to how civil unions will be treated in other states.
- **Federal Benefits** – Civil marriage brings with it the abovementioned legal protections and rights and more. Civil unions bring none of these protections and rights.
- **Taxes and Public Benefits for the Family** – Because the federal government does not respect civil unions, a couple with a civil union will be in a kind of limbo with regard to governmental functions performed by both state and federal governments, such as taxation, pension protections, provision of insurance for families and means-tested programs like Medicaid.
- **Filling Out Forms** – People joined in civil unions do not fit into the categories (married, single, divorced or widowed) that are often asked for on forms.
- **Separate and Unequal Status** – The fact that a civil union remains a separate status for homosexuals represents real and powerful inequality.
- **Ending a Civil Union** – If you're married, you can get divorced in any state in which you are a resident. If states continue to disregard civil unions, there is no way to legally end the relationship other than establishing residency in Vermont and filing for dissolution there.

## **Philadelphia NOW Continues to Champion Reproductive Rights for Women by Cindy Bass**

Following, is Cindy Bass' response to an op-ed piece appearing in the February 17 edition of the Philadelphia Inquirer:

"It's ironic that

Arlene Campbell's Feb. 17 commentary, "Focusing on abortion, race," discourages women who may consider exercising the same choice offered to her.

Campbell's unfortunate, painful and regrettable experience seems to have been based on a decision made to satisfy her boyfriend's wishes, not hers.

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**Philadelphia NOW Continues to Champion Reproductive Rights for Women (continued) by Cindy Bass**

Boyfriends come and go; children are yours for your lifetime. For those who decide to have children despite rocky beginnings, I applaud you. However, those choosing otherwise are still to be respected.

Campbell wondered, during Black History Month, how many African American leaders we have lost to abortion. I wonder how

many we have lost to crime and violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and the various other ills of society. These complicated issues won't be wished away; work is required, including making sure that all children born are welcomed into this world with quality health care, education, and housing. Thus, I assume Campbell is working to make this happen.

It should be remembered that none of us will be in the home of the women who, at 2 a.m., are worried, frantic, broke, without a support system, and unable to figure out how to manage an already complicated life, now with a baby. And that includes you, Arlene Campbell.”

*Cindy Bass is VP of Membership of the Philadelphia Chapter of NOW. She can be reached at [cmcbass@hotmail.com](mailto:cmcbass@hotmail.com)*

***SAVE THE DATE! Philadelphia NOW Chapter meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 1606 Walnut Street, 3rd Floor, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. Following, is a list of dates:***

**March 13**

**April 10**

**May 8**

**June 12**

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## Lessons Learned - Things Every Woman Should Know Before Running for Office by Tammy L. Gavitt

This time last year, I had already declared my candidacy for State Representative in the 177th District, and had had my first fundraiser. Things looked promising for me and my race—I was a life-long resident of the district; as a female, I had an advantage over the male incumbent at the polls (where women candidates fare better); and I planned on running as a democrat in a district with a 64% democratic registration. I had several volunteers lined up to assist with the campaign, and an energy level that seemed, at the time, abundant. Several months ago, I made the difficult decision *not* to run. Looking back now, it was the best decision for me and my volunteers. What seemed liked a sure thing a year ago, became an up-hill battle that I was quickly losing. With limited financial and human resources, trying to hold down a full-time job, and an energy level that was quickly running out, it was time for me to bow out gracefully. However, to those of you thinking or planning on running, I offer the following advice to you:

**Have a committed group of volunteers at the beginning of your campaign.** Recruiting volunteers throughout the campaign is important, but it is *essential* that you have a core group of volunteers from the beginning. Many people will say that they will help with your campaign, but only invest time in those who do.

**Be prepared to raise funds to sustain your campaign.** I was informed by various sources that I would need \$250K for my campaign, and I did not necessarily agree with having to raise such an outrageous sum. However, you will need to raise funds, and be prepared to spend a good amount of time doing so.

**Do the grassroots work.** Most politicians do not do essential door-to-door work. You will definitely have an edge over your opponent if you do the door-to-door work. And your constituents will appreciate it as well.

**Politics is “dirty”, so be prepared.** My mother use to tell me that “politics is dirty”. She was wrong. It’s not

dirty. It’s absolutely filthy. I found that many of the people in politics weren’t in politics to help the communities and the constituents, but to benefit themselves. There is a lot of “selling of the souls” going on. You don’t have to sell your soul, but expect your campaign to be much more difficult.

**Make certain there is a “good fit” with you and your constituents.** Even though I was a life-long resident of the district, my politics were much more progressive than most of the constituents who lived in the district. Unless you intend to mold yourself to the belief systems to those of your constituents, or there is a natural fit, again, expect your campaign to be much more difficult.

My experience has only solidified in my mind that every person should run for office (at least once in their lives). If we did, our system would not be as corrupt and stagnate and, I believe, we would have better representation for the people.

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Philadelphia NOW Celebrates  
Local Women Leaders

**Where: Philadelphia Ethical Society, 1906 Rittenhouse Square**  
**When: Monday, May 1 , 2006, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.**

Please join us to honor one of our founding members:

**Florence Cohen**

and

Women who have been advocating for and providing services to women in prison:

**Naima Black**

“Messages from Mom”

**Sponsors:**

**Cindy Bass**  
**Nancy Bauer**  
**Kathy Black**  
**Karen Bojar**  
**Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds-Brown**  
**Coalition of Labor Union Women**  
**Sherrie Cohen**  
**District Council 47, AFSCME**  
**Congressman Chaka Fattah**

**Tammy Gavitt**  
**Jean Haskell**  
**Gary Kapanowski, President -**  
**AFSCME, Local 1723**  
**John O’Connell**  
**Cathy Scott, President -**  
**AFSCME, Local 2187**  
**Stan Shapiro**  
**Letty Thall**  
**WOMENS WAY**

**Light Refreshments Served.**

**Suggested minimum contribution: \$25.00**

**RSVP: 215-735-2850.**

**Contributions may be sent to: Philadelphia NOW, 1211 Chestnut Street, Suite 700, Phila. PA 19107**