

Number of Resources Requested	
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1983	24
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1979	17
1978	41
1977	46
1976	9
1975	59

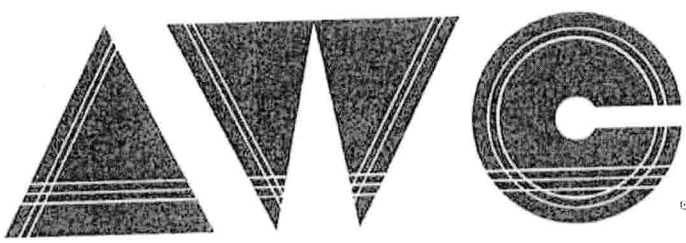
AWC
ALASKA WOMEN'S COMMISSION
 2000 E. 10TH AVENUE, SUITE 102
 ANCHORAGE, AK 99503

Members of Commission:
 Paula Ziegler, chair
 Juneau
 Joy Green-Armstrong, vice chair
 Anchorage
 Lucinda Blalock, Nome
 Mary Ann Johnson, Fairbanks
 Linda L. Pined, Kodiak
 Elizabeth (Pat) Kennedy, Anchorage
 Rebecca Napoleon, Hooper Bay
 Betty Ramage, Anchorage
 Wendy Rodman, Fairbanks
 Susan Shalley, Kenai
 Executive Director
 Ruth Lister

State of Alaska
 Steve Conroy, Governor
 Stephen McCalpine, Lt. Governor

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ALASKA WOMEN'S COMMISSION

Annual Report 1989 - JANUARY 1990

STEVE COWPER
GOVERNOR



STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ALASKA WOMEN'S COMMISSION
3601 C STREET - SUITE 742
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99503

PHONE
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January 25, 1990

The Alaska Women's Commission is pleased to present our 1989 annual report, outlining the tasks we completed and the goals we reached during the last year.

First among them was the re-establishment of the Commission for another four years. With the firm mandate we received from the Governor and the legislature, we were able to spend two meetings in extensive long-range planning to insure that those four years are full of productive activity aimed at the betterment of the economic, political, social and educational condition of Alaska women and their families. Revision of the Women's Legal Rights Handbook was successfully completed, and its distribution accomplished as effectively as possible within a limited budget.

Important outreach to rural women took place in Nome and Bethel; we hope to augment this during the coming year, and an important contribution to that goal will be aided by the federal grant we received to hold a conference on substance abuse in rural Alaska, with a special emphasis on women.

Other outreach of significance we were able to make this year was to welfare recipients and female high school drop-outs. We hope to follow up with research designed to provide assistance to both these groups.

A new decade lies before Alaska and its citizens, containing both roses and thorns. The Alaska Women's Commission is dedicated to seeing that those citizens who are female share equally in the former and not disproportionately in the latter.

Sincerely,

Paula Sampson
Chair

Members of the Commission:

Paula Sampson, chair, Juneau

Joy Green-Armstrong, vice chair,
Anchorage

Michelle Brown, Anchorage

Loretta Bullard, Nome

Florence Esmailka, Ruby

Linda L. Freed, Kodiak

Rebecca Napoleon, Hooper Bay

Wendy Redman, Fairbanks

Lary Schafer, Huslia

Susan Smalley, Kenai

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Alaska Women's Commission has undergone some important changes in 1989. The passage of legislation to continue the Commission was difficult. Concerns raised by women who testified or women who talked to staff have impacted the direction of our work. In particular it is clear that there are many women in Alaska who are striving to get off welfare, helping a family member who has a serious health problem, recovering from sexual abuse or domestic violence, living in poverty, lacking adequate job skills, needing appropriate treatment for addiction to drugs or alcohol, or lacking adequate child care or housing. These and other basic issues must be solved to enable women to be in a position to make choices about their lives.

Women also testified in hearings before the Commission about feeling unsupported in their choice to be a homemaker or start a home business or work part-time while raising a family. The Commission has looked at strategies to support women in these choices and has incorporated these issues into our long term plan as well as our FY90 activities.

Thus, while the process of gaining legislation for continuing the Women's Commission was difficult, it also provided us with a lot of information from across the state on what are women's concerns and on what changes women need to address these concerns.

The new Women's Legal Rights Handbook, an updated Directory of Women's Organizations, a women's calendar, meetings for welfare recipients in Bethel, Anchorage and Kenai to address their needs, research on young women who drop out of school, and award of a federal grant for a substance abuse conference for rural women are the major accomplishments of the past year. It has been a productive year and I look forward to continuing the Commission's work to improve the status of Women in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Ruth Lister

Ruth Lister
Executive Director

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COMMISSION STAFF

Ruth Lister,
Executive Director

Evelyn Tucker,
Information Officer

Lauren Bruce
Research Assistant

Billie Harvey
Title V Information Assistant

PURPOSE OF THE COMMISSION

The Alaska Women's Commission is dedicated to the achievement of equal legal, economic, social and political status for women in Alaska.

Nine public members and one representative from the Attorney General's office are appointed by the Governor to staggered three year terms. They represent a wide range of backgrounds, interests and geographic areas. Meetings are held three times per year and are open to the public.

The Commission is a statewide network for study and action on a variety of issues. Current priorities include legislation, employment, civil and legal rights and issues relating to the family.

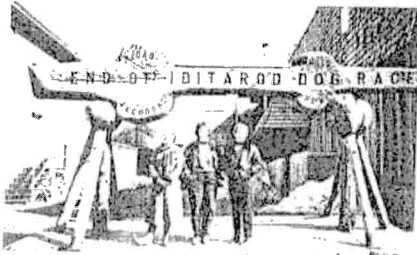
WOMEN'S COMMISSION LIVES

Governor Cowper signed SB 8, the bill extending the life of the Alaska Women's Commission, into law on April 20th. This legislation extends the Commission's life until June 30, 1993.

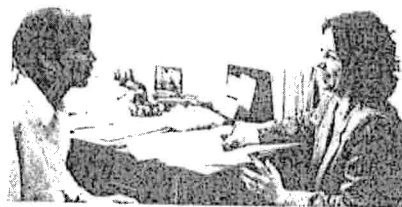
The original version of SB 8, as submitted by Senator Fahrenkamp, would have reinstated the Alaska Women's Commission under basically the same terms it had operated under prior to "sunsetting". The Legislature amended this bill (SB 8) in some significant ways. The amendments shorten the terms Commissioners serve from five years to three and limit the length of appointments to a maximum of six consecutive years.

The original bill required that one of the Commissioners be a homemaker. SB 8 amends it by deleting the term homemaker and inserting in its place a "person who manages a household that includes the person's spouse and at least one child and who is not otherwise employed".

The amended bill is consistent with the original which directs the Governor to make appointments on a nonpartisan and nondiscriminatory basis and to give consideration to the recommendations made by "civic organizations, women's organizations, educational and vocational groups, employer groups, labor unions, church groups, homemakers' clubs and organizations, and other groups having an interest in the welfare and status of women".



Commissioners meet in Nome:
Paula Sampson, Linda Freed, Susan Smalley.



Ruth Lister and Evelyn Tucker work on the Long Term Plan for the Women's Commission.

The original bill also directed the governor to consider statewide geographical representation of the Commission and minority and low-income representation when making appointments. The legislature added the following groups: senior citizens, the disabled, people from a variety of occupational categories, people with different marital statuses, and people with various numbers of children.

Finally, the amendments to SB 8 also provide the following direction: "When conducting research, acting as a referral service, serving as a forum for ideas, and developing recommendations related to the welfare of women, the commission shall solicit and consider information and views from a variety of constituencies in order to represent the broad spectrum of diversity that exists with respect to possible approaches for meeting women's needs in the state".

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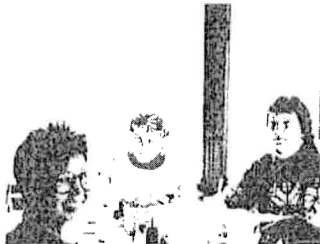
LONG TERM PLAN

In 1988 the Alaska Women's Commission started work on a long term plan. Issues of concern to women were identified as well as present and ideal status. Women's organizations statewide were asked to comment on these issues and suggest strategies for accomplishing change.

In May of 1989 the Commission reviewed these comments as well as other issues proposed by both women's organizations and individuals who have contacted our office.

At that time, the Commission divided the issues from the draft plan into two major categories: survival and equity. Many women are concerned about survival needs such as food and housing for themselves and their children. Other women are able to focus on equity issues such as equal representation in local and state government, equal access to opportunity in the work place, sex equity in education, etc. Women affected by survival issues must have these addressed before they can even be concerned about equity issues. Some issues such as health care and substance abuse services affect both groups of women. The Commission will balance its

focus between survival and equity issues over the next several years. The survival issues



Rebecca Napoleon, Susan Smalley, Linda Freed.

Identified were: health care, basic education, housing, legal services, child care, child custody, child support, and domestic violence/sexual assault services. The equity issues identified were: employment, family leave, entrepreneurship, affirmative action, part-time and flexible work, demographic balance on boards and commissions, sex discrimination in the law, sex equity in education, and support of lifestyle decisions.

Different categories of women who are affected by these issues were listed by the Commission. For example, the groups affected under support of lifestyle decisions were listed as homemakers, divorcing women, single parents, rural women, employed women and pregnant women. Groups affected under part-time and flexible work were homemakers, teens, employed women, single parents and seniors. At their recent meeting in October the Commission completed the long term plan by finalizing strategies for action for each issue. While we anticipate that new strategies will be added when projects are implemented, this is an excellent starting point for our work.

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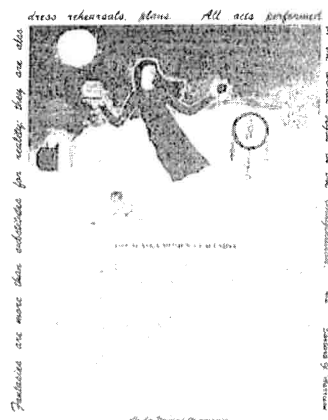
WELFARE REFORM: ANNUAL REPORT

The Women's Commission sponsored forums for welfare recipients to learn about the federal Family Support Act and to provide a means for welfare recipients to impact the proposed state plan to implement the Act. A total of four meetings were held, two in Anchorage, one in Bethel and one in Kenai. Recipients responded positively to having a safe and confidential opportunity to be heard. For most, the isolation and fear created by being on public assistance and living in poverty have been overwhelming.

At the first Anchorage meeting the Commission brought Carol Sasaki, director of a national organization called HOME (Helping Ourselves Means Employment with Education) through a Carl Perkins grant from the Department of Education. Recipients addressed questions on childcare, education and training needs, child support, barriers to self sufficiency, and entrepreneurship. Recipients expressed a strong desire to get off welfare. They were clear about the kind of help they needed to get jobs that are not low paying or lacking medical insurance. The Commission reported their findings to the Family Support Task Force and published a preliminary report which included recommendations.

At the second Anchorage meeting, women reviewed key issues in the draft state plan, talked about their responses, and learned how to give written and oral public testimony. About a dozen recipients came to the public hearings on Welfare Reform.

The Commission will continue to meet with recipients and to work with them and state agencies to create programs that meet their needs for obtaining self sufficiency.



THE CALENDAR AND DIRECTORY

In February of 1989 the Commission published a revised Directory of Women's Organizations in Alaska. This useful booklet lists Women's Organizations statewide and by community. The Directory was last revised in 1984.

Early in 1989 the Commission also produced a women's full color poster calendar. The calendar lists annual meetings of women's organizations, conferences and workshops of interest to women in communities around the state. The calendar was mailed to women's organizations and groups, health aides, Native organizations and schools. It was very well received.

LEGAL RIGHTS HANDBOOK REVISED AND UPDATED

In September the Commission released a newly revised and updated **Women's Legal Rights Handbook**. Commission staff worked with attorneys and other reviewers to revise, update and in some cases rewrite sections of the text. They also added a new chapter entitled "Legal Representation" which advises women about selecting and working with an attorney or representing themselves if they can not afford a lawyer.

The Chapters on "Employment" and "Divorce and Dissolution" were rewritten and substantially enlarged. "Employment" now contains sections on: State and Federal Laws Regarding Discrimination; Wage Discrimination; Sexual Harassment; Pregnancy, Childbearing, and Family Leave; People with Disabilities; and Local, State, and Federal Anti-discrimination Agencies.

The Divorce and Dissolution chapter now covers: Residency; Property Division; Tax Consequences; Alimony; Attorney Fees; Child Support; Child Support Enforcement Program; Child Custody; Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act; Modifications; and Visitation.

The Commission would like to acknowledge the contributions of many different women from throughout the state who helped revise sections and review drafts. This revision of the Handbook would not have been possible without their assistance.

Because of budget limitations, the Commission printed fewer copies than it has in the past. The Commission distributed copies to Women's Organizations, Domestic Violence Programs, Public Defenders, Alaska Legal Services, District Attorneys, Health Aides, Native Organizations, Senior Centers, and individuals. Initial copies free; each additional copy is \$1.50 plus postage.

Women's Legal Rights Handbook



The Alaska Women's Commission

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COMMISSION RECEIVES GRANT

PLANS SUBSTANCE ABUSE CONFERENCE FOR RURAL WOMEN

In September the Commission received a federal grant from the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention to produce a statewide conference on substance abuse issues for rural women. The conference will focus on women taking a leadership role in the prevention of substance abuse in their communities as a result of their commitment to families and children.

"Leadership in Sobriety" will be held as a retreat at the Meier Lake Conference Center, a rustic facility located on a lake approximately 40 miles north of Anchorage. The conference will run March 20-23 and will accommodate 60 to 80 women from throughout the state. Participants will include women who are providers of human services, policy makers in their communities, and those who have a personal interest in substance abuse issues. The budget includes

scholarships and travel stipends for 24 women from around the state. Regional health corporations will be asked to select two women from their region to attend.

The Commission will identify women from rural communities whose work and interest in the field of substance abuse qualifies them as experts. They will provide workshops and group session for the conference. One "outside expert", Phyllis Chelsea from Alkali Lake, has been invited to be the main presenter. Otherwise the Commission's intention is to identify and nurture its own substance abuse experts in rural Alaska.

"Leadership in Sobriety" will give rural women the opportunity to examine how substance abuse affects them and their families. The Conference will provide a forum to explore the relationships between substance abuse, domestic violence, sexual abuse, depression, and suicide. Lastly the conference will give women the opportunity to share the positive strategies they have developed in their personal and private battles with substance abuse.



Billie Harvey and Mary Stachelrodt go over the conference mailing list.



Evelyn Tucker and Mary Stachelrodt discuss the substance abuse conference.

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YOUNG WOMEN OF ALASKA SPEAK OUT

The Commission Completes Research on Why Teens Drop Out

In December, 1989, research was completed on a study about why young women drop out of school. The Women's Commission interviewed 115 teens and tape recorded their comments and ideas.

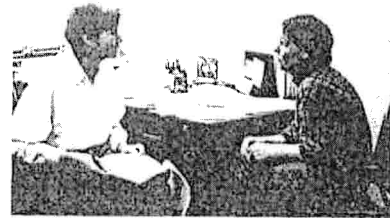
The estimated drop-out rate for Alaska is approximately 33%, matching the national average. Young women comprise almost half of the total number of drop-outs.

The unique aspect of this study is that it affords the reader an opportunity to hear the thoughts and feelings of young women who have gone through the experience of failing in school or having school/parents/teachers fail them and have dropped out as a result.



Elizabeth Peratrovich

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Ruth Lister and Lauren Bruce review the Drop Out report.

ELIZABETH PERATROVICH CHOSEN FOR WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME

The Alaska Women's Commission selected Elizabeth Peratrovich (1911-1958) as the 1989 inductee to the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame. She was selected for her work to insure passage of anti-discrimination legislation in the Alaska Territorial Legislature. In the 1940s Elizabeth Peratrovich and her husband Roy led a determined fight for passage of a bill that extended civil rights to all Alaskan citizens. They were successful in 1945 when the Alaska Territorial Legislature passed a law that provided for "full and equal accommodations, facilities, and privileges to all citizens in places of public accommodation within the jurisdiction of the Territory of Alaska."

Elizabeth Peratrovich will be formally inducted into the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame at a reception in March as part of this year's Women's History Month events. The Women's Hall of Fame was established by Governor Cowper in 1986 to honor women who have made contributions to Alaska and who have provided visible role models for tomorrow's leaders. It is dedicated to the late Lisa Rudd.

COMMISSION PRESENTATIONS

Prior to the passage of SB8, much of the Commission's time was spent speaking to groups and individuals in favor of the Commission. In addition the Commission made presentations to a variety of audiences on key issues the Commission is supporting. A total of 944 people attended these presentations, forums, and meetings. The following is a summary of presentations the Commission made at forums, meetings, and conferences in 1989:

Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
 Alaska Women's Lobby
 Alaska Women's Political Caucus
 Alaska Women's Resource Center
 Annual School on Addiction Studies
 Association of Public Administrators
 Association of University Women
 Bartlett Club
 Business and Professional Women's Club
 Chugliak High School
 Department of Education Sex Equity Training for Trainers
 Displaced Homemaker Meetings for Region X
 Emmonak High School
 Kodiak Women's Resource Center
 National Women Legislators Conference
 Public Service Alaska Conference
 re:commitment, a conference on equity in Alaskan Schools
 Small Business Association
 Valley Women's Resource Center
 University of Alaska, Women and Social Policy Class
 Forums and Meetings the Commission Sponsored
 Legislative Alliance for Women (12x)
 Meetings on Divorce/Dissolution and Child Custody (5x)
 Pro-life and Pro-choice Meetings (2x)
 Substance Abuse Conference Planning Meetings (2x)
 Welfare Reform Public Forums (4)



Photo by Jerry Peverall
 Rebecca Napoleon, from Hooper Bay speaks to the students of Emmonak High School about what it takes to be a successful student, both in high school and in college.

Media Contacts

TV News Interviews etc.
 Anchorage
 Fairbanks
 Juneau
 Kotzebue
 Nome
 Seward
 Sitka
 Unalakleet
 Upernivik
 Wainwright

Press Releases on Women's Month of Fame
 Women's History Profiles on TV (PBS)
 Press Releases and Reviews of the Women's Legal
 Status Handbook

Publications Requested

Annual Report: A review of the major accomplishments of the Women's Commission from January 1, 1986 to December 31, 1986.

Commitment or Complacency: An assessment of sex equity in Alaska's educational institutions with recommendations for future action. Out of print.

Directory of Women's Organizations: Statewide directory of women's organizations.

Family Equity at Issues: A study of the economic consequences of divorce on women and children.

Results of research on economics of divorce in Alaska. Making a Difference: A Primer for Women in Public Life. A handbook for political involvement. Includes information on campaign planning, voter contact, and working with volunteers.

Profiles in Change: Names, Notes, and Quotes for Alaskan Women. Stories about Alaskan Women who have contributed to the state's economic, social and political development. Out of print.	1983	requested
Report on the Economic Status of Alaskan Native Women. Results of the study on the economic status of Alaskan Native women.	1983	5
Status Report. Alaska Women's Commission's Newsletter.	1989	5,220
Women's Legal Rights Handbook. Outlines legal rights affecting women in Alaska.	1989	2,476
Poetries		
1989 Poem Calendar		2,000
Women in Alaska: A Timeline of Famous Alaskan Women		78
References		
The Alaska Women's Commission received over 800 calls from women seeking information or a referral. In 1989 approximately one third of the calls were answered by direct. Approximately one third were from women who wanted to start their own business. Roughly 10% involved asserting legal rights. The remaining calls were from women seeking information in such areas as health care, counseling, assistance with welfare, information on the commission, employment, education, women in history, and legislation.		



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