

*Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton's*  
**WISCONSIN WOMEN = PROSPERITY**  
*A Statewide Economic Development Initiative*

***PROGRESS REPORT***

**May 2008**

***“Across Wisconsin, I see talented and  
tenacious women poised to lead this  
state's economic growth -- if only we  
clear obstacles from their path.”***

**Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton**







STATE OF WISCONSIN  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
BARBARA LAWTON

Dear Friends,

Just five years ago, on my first morning as lieutenant governor, I was presented with the Institute for Women's Policy Research "Status of Women in Wisconsin" report that gave us a low C- grade for the status of women in our state. A design team of a handful of women leaders set to work immediately, and started to breathe life into what became the statewide economic development initiative Wisconsin Women = Prosperity. Countless women and men across Wisconsin joined in over time.

To transform that initial report into a precise diagnostic tool to map our strategy to raise the grade for women here, we identified the following as essential building blocks for a woman's prosperity, inextricably linked:

- \* Leadership and Political Participation
- \* Economic Sufficiency
- \* Educational Opportunity
- \* Health, Safety and Well Being

We worked with research teams from the UW-Madison La Follette School of Public Affairs and other academics, with professionals and experts in all fields -- an irrepressible army of volunteers. We gathered anecdotal data from citizens at forums in thirteen Wisconsin cities. We turned that initial report into a very precise diagnostic tool to inform our strategy to raise the grade for Wisconsin women, and improve the state's economic outlook by doing it.

Regional Solutions Networks took up WW=P recommendations and remapped the state to drive progress. My "kitchen cabinet" founded a non-profit to anchor work outside the capitol; the Wisconsin Women's Council became an active partner. And the work to raise the grade for Wisconsin women went forward.

I present to you today a mid-term report that reflects impressive triumphs, that makes visible the many challenges we muscled through to author a new chapter in the history of women in Wisconsin, and that lays bare those areas of resistance where change continues to move at a glacial pace. I present to you a narrative of determination and dreams, of our obligation to unleash the talent of women across the state and to ensure their daughters and granddaughters dream bold visions for the future for our state.

I present to you a chronicle of success and a catalyst to continue. When women thrive, Wisconsin thrives!

Truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Lawton".

Barbara Lawton  
Your Lieutenant Governor

*Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton's*  
**Wisconsin Women = Prosperity**  
*A Statewide Economic Development Initiative*

**PROGRESS REPORT ♦ QUICK REFERENCE**

Page	Recommendation	Status
<b>ECONOMIC SUFFICIENCY</b>		
2	Ensure Equal Pay for Equal Work Across Sectors	<i>Work in Progress</i>
2	Certify Women-Owned Businesses	✓ <b>PASSED</b>
2	School Conferences and Activities Leave Legislation	<i>Work in Progress</i>
3	Extend eligibility for Wisconsin Shares from 12 to 26 weeks for W-2 participants and extend W-2 benefits to high-risk women in the third trimester of pregnancy.	<i>Work in Progress</i>
4	Establish a pilot program with private funding to allow a specified number of women on W-2 to attend UWM; then evaluate the long-term economic impact.	✓ <b>PASSED</b>
4	Implement a Trial Jobs Plus program: partnering employers agree to teach job skills while providing immediate work experience for eligible participants. Where possible, they would then hire these women as regular employees over a minimum specified term following their successfully completed TJP program.	✓ <b>PASSED</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP &amp; POLITICAL PARTICIPATION</b>		
5	Use the talent, ideas and experience of those enrolled in WW=P to create solutions and lead initiatives supporting women's prosperity in Wisconsin	✓ <b>SIGNIFICANT GAINS</b>
8	Create a culture of opportunity by recognizing and fostering talent in women, and matching it with opportunity to increase the numbers of women in leadership	✓ <b>SIGNIFICANT GAINS</b>
<b>HEALTH, SAFETY &amp; WELL BEING</b>		
10	Increase access to reproductive health care for women statewide.	✓ <b>SIGNIFICANT GAINS</b>
11	Pass and Implement the Wisconsin Mental Health Parity Act	<i>Work in Progress</i>
12	Reduce the incidence of violence against women and its subsequent economic drain in our state by closing gaps in services, improving protections, and by building public support to fund programs that address root causes.	✓ <b>SIGNIFICANT GAINS</b>
<b>EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT</b>		
13	Ensure compliance with Title IX and advocate for educational equity.	✓ <b>GAINS</b>
14	Coordinate programs to support girls and women in STEM-related classes, courses, and training programs and encourage girls and women to participate in STEM classes and careers.	✓ <b>SIGNIFICANT GAINS</b>

## OVERVIEW

### Wisconsin Women = Prosperity (WW=P)

is an economic development initiative launched by Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton. It works as a broadband movement, designed to shore up Wisconsin's economy by harvesting the considerable talent of all available workers, ensuring women are positioned to participate fully. It invites citizens – all citizens – to make their own contributions toward building a sustainable economy in Wisconsin by:

- Empowering women to make their best contributions in corporate, political and civic life
- Building a collaborative statewide network among women and allied men
- Forging ties with the broadest range of public and private partners.

WW=P defined prosperity as the ability to feed, clothe, house, educate and nurture yourself and your family and have that extra personal or social capital that allows you to make a contribution to your community as well.

WW=P focuses on 4 building block issues: Economic Sufficiency; Health, Safety, and Well being; Educational Achievement; and Leadership and Political Participation. All together, these issues take on the shape of each woman's individual life, our capacity to prosper or not. The challenges facing women could not be confined to the silo of a single issue.

This report is also available online at [www.lt.gov.wisconsin.gov](http://www.lt.gov.wisconsin.gov)

*"The project's recommendations are ambitious but worth implementation, given that women play such a key role in the state's economy."*

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 2005

*"Wisconsin should take the lead with Lawton in charge of promoting the state as friendly to women starting a business here. The effect will be more than to continue the trend of women's businesses growing at a fast pace. Promotion of the state as hospitable to women starting businesses can increase the pace of recovery in the Wisconsin economy."*

Oshkosh Northwestern, 2004

*"Barbara Lawton ... has consistently been a strong voice for women and their full participation in society. Through her work on a wide variety of issues, she has demonstrated a long-standing effort to advance equality of rights and opportunities for women and their families."*

Wisconsin Women's Network

*"What's unique about Wisconsin's program is that it specifically highlights women's contributions to everyone's well-being, so it's not just a matter of increasing economic security for women but of improving every aspect of public and private life for everyone by strengthening women's involvement and outcomes."*  
Institute for Women's Policy Research  
Washington, DC

## ECONOMIC SUFFICIENCY

### 1. Recommendation: Ensure Equal Pay for Equal Work Across Sectors Status: *WORK IN PROGRESS*

**Equal Pay Enforcement Act.** Assembly Bill 310 strengthens Wisconsin's law prohibiting discrimination in the workplace by granting workers a way to recover damages. Under the leadership of Senator Dave Hansen and Rep. Christine Sinicki, the Equal Pay Enforcement bill passed the Wisconsin State Senate in 2008. Unfortunately, the Assembly refused to take up the legislation and refused to even give the Equal Pay Enforcement Act a public hearing. The bill will be re-introduced in the January 2009 session.

### 2. Recommendation: Certify Women-Owned Businesses Status: *PASSED*

**Women Business Enterprises.** A formal process to certify women-owned businesses with the State of Wisconsin as a Woman Business Enterprise (WBE) now allows greater opportunities for women to grow their business and to compete for state and federal contracts. Senate Bill 515, sponsored by State Senator Carol Roessler and Representative Pat Strachota, was signed into law by Governor Jim Doyle and enacted April 19, 2006. WBE certifications are administered through the Department of Commerce. Qualifying businesses are at least 51 percent owned, controlled, and actively managed by a woman or women applicant. As of May 27, 2008, there are 257 businesses are certified as Women Business Enterprises. According to the Center for Women's Business Research in Washington D.C., firms that are 51 percent or more women-owned grew at twice the rate of all firms from 1997-2006. Interested WBE applicants can apply at: <http://www.commerce.state.wi.us/MT/BD-WBECertification.html>

**Cutting Red Tape for Women-Owned Businesses.** Lt. Governor Lawton worked with state agencies and stakeholders to permit Wisconsin businesses already certified by federal disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) standards to be certified as WBEs in the state. Lt. Governor Lawton announced that 179 new businesses had been certified as women business enterprises (WBE) without having to do additional paperwork or pay additional fees. This is another step toward the goal of connecting WBE's to greater opportunities.

### 3. Recommendation: Pass School Conferences and Activities Leave Legislation Status: *WORK IN PROGRESS*

The **Wisconsin School Conference and Activities Leave bill** would expand the Family and Medical Leave Act to include school conferences and school-related activities in the list of events eligible for unpaid leave for parents who work at businesses with 50 or more employees. This bill has been introduced in the legislature the past two sessions (AB 796 in 2005 and SB 195 in 2007), championed by Representative Spencer Black and Senator Tim Carpenter, and will be introduced again in the upcoming 2009 session.

**Why?** The gender wage gap remains persistent and substantial. With a median hourly wage of \$13.67 in 2006, Wisconsin women's wages were roughly 22 percent lower than men's. At this rate, a full-time, woman worker in the state would earn around \$28,000 per year, on average, compared with over \$36,500 for men.<sup>1</sup>

**Why?** Increasing opportunities for women to start and grow businesses will fuel economic growth in Wisconsin in multiple ways.

*"Wisconsin should take the lead with Lawton in charge of promoting the state as friendly to women starting businesses here."*

Oshkosh Northwestern Editorial  
June 16, 2004

**Why?** Being a good parent should never cost you a job. Parents have had to make difficult choices between income and jobs and their child's education needs. Workers want to support their children and be involved in their education.

- A survey of low-income Wisconsin workers revealed that 26% had no paid vacation, 57% had no paid sick leave, and 74% lacked any paid personal leave.<sup>2</sup>
- 75% of those parents with a child scoring in the bottom quartile in math and reading could not rely on flexibility at work to participate in their children's school conferences.<sup>3</sup>
- More than 33% of workers whose children score in the bottom quartile hold jobs without paid sick or vacation leave.<sup>4,5</sup>

## ECONOMIC SUFFICIENCY

**Why?** Many pregnant women living in poverty are forced to work against doctor's recommendations because they have no other financial support.

A woman in this situation is more likely to have a baby with serious and costly medical complications, and to suffer damage herself that could jeopardize her long-term ability to support and care for her family.

Scientists point to consistent, stress-free care as critical in a baby's first years to brain development and future productivity. The cost to the state of extending newborn leave for W-2 mothers from three to six months would be offset in part immediately by \$4 million saved in childcare subsidies,<sup>6</sup> and fully over time in reduced demand for social programs and remedial education.

New mothers living in poverty face greater difficulties than most, having to adjust to the needs of an infant and arrange for childcare when they return to the W-2 work program.

With federal funding flat, the State of Wisconsin struggles to provide appropriate funding for childcare for low-income families.

### 4. Recommendation: Improve W2 to Move Women out of Poverty

#### **4A. Extend eligibility for Wisconsin Shares from 12 to 26 weeks for W-2 participants and extend W-2 benefits to high-risk women in the third trimester of pregnancy.**

**Status: Work in Progress**

Governor Doyle introduced both these extensions in his past two state budgets.

**Governor's Budget Proposal, May 2005:** Governor Jim Doyle proposed increasing funding by \$685,800 in 2005-06 and \$1,371,600 in 2006-07 to extend W-2 grants, beginning January 1, 2006, in the amount of \$673 per month, to women who do not have children and who are in their third trimester of an at-risk pregnancy. Of these amounts, \$341,400 in 2005-06 and \$682,800 in 2006-07 would fund W-2 benefits, and \$344,400 in 2005-06 and \$688,800 in 2006-07 would fund W-2 services.

Eligibility would be limited to an unmarried woman who: (a) would be eligible for W-2 except that she is not a custodial parent of a dependent child; and (b) is in the third trimester of a pregnancy that is medically verified and shown by medical documentation to be at risk, i.e. the woman is unable to participate in the workforce. A W-2 agency could not require such women to participate in any W-2 employment positions. Receipt of a grant under this provision would not constitute participation in a W-2 employment position.

As under current law, all other pregnant women, whose pregnancy is medically verified and who would be eligible for W-2 except that they are not custodial parents of a dependent child, would be eligible for employment training and job search assistance services provided by a W-2 agency.

**Governor's Budget Proposal, May 2007:** Increase funding by \$469,200 in 2007-08 and \$938,500 in 2008-09 to extend W-2 grants beginning January 1, 2008, in the amount of \$673 per month, to women who do not have children and who are in their third trimester of an at-risk pregnancy. Eligibility and other provisions as above.

**Breaking news: Restored Funding for Wisconsin Shares.** Governor Jim Doyle signed into a law the 2007-09 Budget Repair Bill in 2008 that provided \$18.6 million in General Purpose Revenue to address a dramatic shortfall in the Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program.

*Scientists point to consistent, stress-free care as critical in a baby's first years to brain development and future productivity. The cost to the state of extending newborn leave for W-2 mothers from three to six months would be offset in part immediately by \$4 million saved in childcare subsidies,<sup>6</sup> and fully over time in reduced demand for social programs and remedial education.*

## ECONOMIC SUFFICIENCY

**4B. Establish a pilot program with private funding to allow a specified number of women on W-2 to attend UWM; then evaluate the long-term economic impact. Support the program expanding timeline for child care vouchers for individuals accessing educational options.**

**Status: PASSED**

**Life Impact Program.** The Jane Bradley Pettit Foundation gave the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee a \$2 million gift to help low-income students with children break the cycle of poverty through education. The six-year pilot "Life Impact Program" began in 2005 with 11 women and one man who receive annual grants of up to \$5,000 toward their college and day care expenses. The Foundation plans to expand to more than 60 students by the program's sixth year. Beyond tuition, "Life Impact" provides access to a Life Coach and support staff to serve as advocates and provide resources and individualized assessment of students' academic, economic and career-related needs.

**4C. Implement a Trial Jobs Plus program: partnering employers agree to teach job skills while providing immediate work experience for eligible participants. Where possible, they would then hire these women as regular employees over a minimum specified term following their successfully completed TJP program.**

**Status: PASSED**

**Real Work Real Pay – Trial Jobs Program.** Governor Jim Doyle signed the Real Work Real Pay (RWRP) pilot program as part of the 07-09 Executive Budget. Under this pilot project, one hundred persons in Milwaukee, Kenosha and Marathon County will gain real work experience in jobs that pay wages, instead of W-2 stipends or grants.

Under the pilot, from June 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009, agencies in these counties will partner with employers by providing a wage subsidy, mentoring and work supports to help each worker succeed. RWRP employees will be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit, a benefit that will help them support their children and families. When the wage subsidy ends, the employer is expected to retain the RWRP participant as an unsubsidized employee.

This pilot will assist the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development in identifying successful strategies that help W-2 participants succeed in finding increased economic independence. The lessons learned will inform future decisions on how to expand RWRP. To learn more about Real Work, Real Pay, see: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/w2/rwrp.htm>.

**Why?** A high percentage of women leaving W-2 continue to live in poverty because they don't learn skills to increase their earning power.

*The Life Impact Program, a six-year pilot program, began in 2005 with 11 women and one man receiving annual grants of up to \$5,000 toward their college and day care expenses.*

**Why?** W-2 participants who reach the end of their allowable benefits without new skills or training still need assistance improving their outlook for getting a stable, family-supporting job.

*Participants will receive their wages and also be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit, a benefit that will help them support their families.*

**Why?** To make Wisconsin the best state in the nation for women to live and work, we must advance models that spark innovation and embolden women to dream and design the changes needed.

*Utilization and retention of young people, particularly young females and young minority populations is no longer a social issue. It is an economic survival necessity.*

**Terry Ludeman**  
former Chief Labor Economist  
Wisconsin Department of  
Workforce Development

**Working Together to Support Women-Owned Businesses - Viroqua.**

Ingrid Mahan, Program Director of Viroqua's Chamber of Commerce and Main Street Program, oversaw their successful downtown revitalization, filling storefronts, creating jobs and attracting investment. The great majority of those new businesses are owned and/or managed by women. When plans for a highway bypass threatened their success, they turned to Lt. Governor Lawton for help. Lt. Governor Lawton brought state officials to Viroqua to integrate community wisdom into construction plans and develop a prototype for planning state transportation improvements that will support the community's economic development goals – and to support the growth of women-owned businesses.

## LEADERSHIP & POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**In The Beginning ...** The WW=P initiative began with a Status of Women in Wisconsin report and half a dozen women around a kitchen table. Evolving Steering Committees, Kitchen Cabinets and academic teams worked with Lt. Governor Lawton, plotted public forums across the state (A), convened a symposium to collect feedback on preliminary findings (B), then drove recommendations forward at their statewide convention (C). Read about each of these important steps below:

**A. Statewide Open Forums.** In January 2004, Lt. Governor Lawton facilitated Open Forums on the status of women in Wisconsin in 13 communities across the state, including Appleton, Eau Claire, Janesville, Racine/Kenosha, La Crosse, Madison, Milwaukee, Platteville, Rhinelander, Richland Center, Superior, and Wausau. More than 1,000 people turned out to provide testimony at these forums. In February, electronic forums resulted in additional data being streamed to WW=P Task Force Leaders.

**B. WW=P Women's Symposium.** The Steering Committee divided research into the four issue building blocks and, working with academic teams and volunteers, collected data around critical questions in each. Lt. Governor Lawton convened 150 collaborating partners in June of 2004, including government, civic and business leaders, to join WW=P core leaders to assess the emerging enriched profile of the status quo for women in Wisconsin. Symposium participants heard preliminary findings and results of the open forums, and started to develop recommendations to raise the grade for women here.

**C. Wisconsin Women Forward Statewide Convention.** In March, 2005, Lt. Governor Lawton welcomed nearly 800 participants to Madison for an historic statewide convention to address the status of women in Wisconsin—the first in nearly 40 years. In a hands-on, work-filled day, the WW=P think tank morphed into Regional Solutions Networks, effectively laying a power grid of action teams over the map of the state, ready to build local agendas for progress and engage their communities in this critical economic development strategy. Hear from participants at:

[www.wiwep.org/Events/2005ConvHighlights](http://www.wiwep.org/Events/2005ConvHighlights)

**1. Recommendation: Use the talent, ideas and experience of those enrolled in WW=P to create solutions and lead initiatives supporting women's prosperity in Wisconsin. Status: SIGNIFICANT GAINS**

**Regional Solutions Networks (RSN).** Following the convention, the Regional Solutions Networks serve as a way for convention participants to convene community members to build an agenda specific to their area needs to raise the grade for Wisconsin women – the vehicle to drive work forward. These RSN's serve as local networks that focus on this critical economic development strategy.

## LEADERSHIP & POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**Wisconsin's Women's Funds Grow.** Women's Funds in Wisconsin focus on improving the lives of women and girls by making grants to nonprofit organizations, and by educating the communities they serve regarding issues that affect women and girls uniquely. Women's Funds continue to grow – there are now 16 funds throughout Wisconsin.

**The Wisconsin Plan for Women–National Address.** The Institute for Women's Policy Research (Washington, DC) featured Lt. Governor Lawton as a keynote speaker at its June 2005 national conference to tell the story of "The Wisconsin Plan for Women," showcasing WW=P as an economic development initiative and a model for advocacy and action to improve the status of women.

**Green Bay Women in Leadership Project.** The Green Bay Regional Solutions Network was organized in September 2005, and its first agenda item was to recruit more women candidates to run for Green Bay City Council and the Brown County Board of Supervisors. At that time, only two women served on the County Board and no women on the City Council. January's ballot listed five women running for city council and eight for county board. The first African American woman in Green Bay history was elected to the City Council and four women were elected to the Brown County Board. The group continues to be active in many ways, including continued recruiting and support for women in local elected office.

**Women in Politics.** Wisconsin Democracy Campaign organized annual forums in 2006 and 2007 titled, "Women, \$ and Politics: Who's Winning?" Lt. Governor Lawton keynoted the UW Oshkosh forum in 2007. The events highlighted women's proud, long history of driving progress, the challenges women face running and winning elections, and the importance of gender equity in representation.

**Madison SOS (Speak Out, Sister!).** High school student Natalia Thompson launched SOS in spring of 2007 and, with the help of Lt. Governor Lawton, attained a national grant from the Case Foundation to expand her program. Realizing from her own experience that local community programs did not sufficiently meet the needs of young girls, Natalia contacted several local organizations and created a series of workshops designed to educate and empower young women. Starting August 26, 2007 and continuing throughout the fall, a group of diverse young women attended six lectures that discussed issues of local importance and taught leadership skills. More recently, Madison SOS has been in the process of introducing initiatives that aim to address issues faced by young women. These initiatives include an online forum for high school girls, community roundtables, and surveys on local social justice issues. Madison SOS will then work with their Teen Leadership Council to develop a report for community leaders on how to help improve the lives of young women. The report will be released on August 26, 2008- Women's Equality Day.

**"It is critical that women be elected to local offices because it's simply a healthier discussion when many viewpoints are presented. Women have similar experiences to their male counterparts, but also unique experiences – unique experiences that enrich the background for any discussion. In addition, women make up half of our population, and deserve representation."**

-Dotty Juengst  
WW=P Green Bay  
Regional Facilitator

### **Leading Women in Milwaukee Collaborate to Form Milwaukee Women inc**

Milwaukee Women inc (MWinc) – the "inc" stands for "inclusive" – was formed in 2002 to promote greater female representation in corporate leadership in Wisconsin. MWinc is a collaborative effort whose steering committee is composed of representatives from Milwaukee's leading professional organizations, corporations, non-profits and academic institutions. MWinc's mission is to help decision-makers understand the value of bringing different perspectives to the table to foster better decision-making. MWinc published reports in 2002, 2005 and 2007 on women's participation in the leadership of Wisconsin's largest companies, finding that companies that embrace diversity have a competitive edge.<sup>3</sup> Learn more at:

[www.milwaukeewomeninc.org](http://www.milwaukeewomeninc.org)

**LT. GOVERNOR LAWTON'S  
CORPORATE ADVISORY BOARD  
PROMOTES EFFECTIVE  
PRACTICES**

Lt. Governor Lawton's *WW=P* Corporate Advisory Board developed a home-grown "catalog" of effective business practices to help businesses of all sizes in every part of the state better develop and harvest the talent of women employees.

Lawton convened top executives from the many Wisconsin corporations that already show a bottom-line understanding of the value of women's contributions with their practices instituted to develop and support women's success in the workplace, through all the seasons of their lives.

Current models include creating women's networks that meet and advise top leaders, male and female, on women's business perspectives; accountability measures that hold supervisors responsible for increasing gender diversity at all levels through productivity metrics; family-friendly policies that are measured by the number of women and men who use them. The best practices foster a culture of inclusion and empowerment, with training and promotion that target women and people of color at every level.

Read the report at:

<http://ltgov.gov/docview.asp?docid=13764&locid=126>

**Incorporating  
Successful Practices**

The top executive at Oakwood Village, a long-term care facility in Madison, and the Service Employees International Union, which represents the majority of their employees, called while in the middle of contract negotiations. They asked for a presentation to a joint meeting of employees and management of effective practices that contribute to work-family integration and women's success in the workplace. Later they came to the Lt. Governor Lawton's office to sign their contract and celebrate successful incorporation of many of those practices.

**LEADERSHIP & POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

**Project Girl.** This girl-led, arts-based initiative was founded by artists Kelly Parks Snider and Jane Bartell. The project is designed to give girls a creative opportunity to develop and strengthen skills they need to become more informed consumers of media. Girls are encouraged to critically deconstruct media messages and work for productive change. The project has ongoing workshops highlighting artistic learning and expression. The exhibition has been shown in a variety of locations in Wisconsin and nationally, Madison (Edgewood College), Maine (Colby College), and Minnesota (Walker Arts Center). The exhibition will be shown this Fall at Alverno College along with workshops throughout the Milwaukee Art Museum. See, [www.projectgirl.org](http://www.projectgirl.org).

**American Association of University Women (AAUW) – Wausau.** The state AAUW made *WW=P*'s agenda its own for a year, and the AAUW-Wausau continues to program around *WW=P*'s four focus areas: health, education, economics, and leadership. In 2007 and 2008, AAUW - Wausau hosted a series of events to address financial and legal issues that surface during divorce; media literacy and the overt and covert effects that media coverage (or lack of) of women has on all of us; eating disorders and body images that adversely affect girls' and women's health; and bringing forth women's roles through Women's Studies content.

**Brides Walk Against Domestic Abuse.** In 2006, the UMOs Latina Resource Center staged Wisconsin's first "Brides Walk." Lt. Governor Lawton, Congresswoman Gwen Moore and California Congresswoman Hilda Solis were at the lead of the walk. Hundreds of women in bridal gowns circled a float in Milwaukee's Mexican Independence Day parade to honor a Latina woman killed by an abusive former lover on her wedding day, and to say to the community that violence against women will not be tolerated and there is a safe place to go for help. September 14, 2008, will mark the third annual march for awareness to the issue of domestic abuse.

**NEW Leadership Wisconsin.** Mount Mary College's Women's Leadership Center partnered with National Education for Women (NEW) leadership program to offer a non-partisan program for college women designed to address the under-representation of women in politics at all levels of government. Now in its third year, the goal of this six-day residential program, offered on the Mount Mary campus in Milwaukee, is to educate, empower and encourage more women to take on public leadership roles at all levels, up to and including elective office. Lt. Governor Lawton has been a featured guest each year. Mount Mary College also hosted several public forums on topics such as public health, women in leadership in education, women and sports, and women and elected office in Wisconsin.

**Candidate Forums.** Alverno College, the League of Women Voters and women involved in *WW=P* teamed up to provide candidate forums to establish candidates' positions regarding policy that defines the lives of women in Wisconsin.

**Run-Vote-Lead Program.** The Women's Fund of Greater Milwaukee partnered with the White House Project to bring the national Run-Vote-Lead program to Milwaukee for candidate training. The White House Project partners nationally with leading women's funds to provide outreach and education at the grassroots level focused on grantee organizations and the women they serve.

## LEADERSHIP & POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**2. Recommendation: Create a culture of opportunity by recognizing and fostering talent in women, and matching it with opportunity to increase the numbers of women in leadership.**

**Status: SIGNIFICANT GAINS**

**Women in Elected Office in Wisconsin.** In 2005, at the request of Lt. Governor Lawton, the Wisconsin Women's Council compiled a report on women serving in Wisconsin's more than 16,000 state and local elected offices. Updated in 2007, this ongoing benchmarking initiative will allow the state to determine any progress made on this important indicator of women's social and political participation. For more on women in elected office, see: <http://womenscouncil.wi.gov/docview.asp?docid=13276&locid=2>.

**WW=P Corporate Advisory Board.** Lt. Governor Lawton convened an advisory board of top executives at those leading Wisconsin businesses known for their exemplary and profitable practices in creating forward-thinking workplace climates. Members included such award-winning corporations as Harley-Davidson, Manpower, S.C. Johnson, Smith Barney, Alliant Energy, and Quad Graphics. The Board created an unprecedented public resource by cataloguing their effective practices to share with other companies in the state, so that businesses statewide, of varying size, may benefit from ideas already tried and true that support a healthy workforce. Their message: improving the work environment and increasing opportunities for women will boost profitability. Read the report: <http://ltgov.gov/docview.asp?docid=13764&locid=126>

**Raise the Grade Tour.** Lt. Governor Lawton led her Corporate Advisory Board on an eight city "Raise the Grade Tour," hosted by Rotary clubs across Wisconsin. With stops in Green Bay, Madison, Wausau, Racine, La Crosse, Eau Claire, Janesville and Milwaukee, the Tour shared information about the importance and profitability of establishing effective practices to support the success of women in the workplace.

**The Non-Profit is Formed: Wisconsin Women Equals Prosperity, Inc.** Lt. Governor Lawton's "hinged door" Kitchen Cabinet decided to anchor their work permanently with foundation of a non-profit organization in 2005. WW=P Inc. continues to promote women's leadership and support Regional Solutions Networks across Wisconsin. The organization operates with an independent Board of Directors. See: [www.wiwep.org](http://www.wiwep.org).

**Leadership Opportunity Database.** In 2006, the Greater Milwaukee Committee (GMC) began a database of "board ready" women and minorities at the request of Lt. Governor Lawton. They established this list to boost female and minority representation in the ranks of corporate executives and board members, in response to MW Inc.'s reports that Wisconsin ranks low nationally for female representation on corporate boards. According to the GMC, in the first year alone, three dozen companies sought the list's 72 names and several women were placed on corporate boards in some of Wisconsin's largest public companies. According to Tim Fisher, a member of Regal-Beloit's board and nominating committee, "[t]he list will only grow in significance and usefulness in the years ahead."

**Why?** Women bring a distinct and necessary perspective to good governance in the public, non-profit and private sectors.

*"After the spring election, the Eau Claire County Board of Supervisors has a record number of female representatives. Nine out of 29 supervisory seats are held by women, which I believe is a record for our County."*

*Robin Leary  
Supervisor District 23  
Eau Claire County Board*

*"If Wisconsin is to compete well in a 21st Century economy, we must empower more than half of our state's workforce"*

*Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton  
2006 "Raise the Grade" Tour*

## LEADERSHIP & POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

### GET INVOLVED!

**Wisconsin Women's Council**  
<http://womencouncil.wi.gov>

The Women's Council is Wisconsin's statutory commission on the status of women and girls. Join a working group on issues such as women in elected office, the status of girls, or outreach. The Women's Council can also help you find organizations in your community focused on advocacy, networking and leadership and professional development.

**WW=P, Inc.**  
<http://www.wiwep.org>

Use the WW=P, Inc., web site to connect with Regional Solutions Networks, programs and events in your community.

### Wisconsin's Women's Funds

Women's Funds empower all women to become philanthropists and participate in shaping the future of their communities.

To find a Women's Fund in your community, visit the Women's Council website:

<http://womenscouncil.wi.gov>

**Oshkosh: Strengthening our Connections.** The Oshkosh chapter of AAUW held a public meeting in February of 2006 to address regional connections that can work to advance the goals of WW=P. The group hosted a panel discussion to discuss how to contribute to building a sustainable economy in Wisconsin by addressing the four WW=P issue areas. Some of the area organizations that participated were WINR, Goodwill, Planned Parenthood, the Women's Fund, Living Healthy and ADVOCAP.

**Manitowoc Area "Women-omics" Expo.** Presented by the WW=P Manitowoc Regional Solutions Network in April of 2006, a multi-generational gathering of women representing a variety of careers and perspectives assembled. Their goal: empower working women to identify the challenges they face and build strategic solutions that will be of benefit to the women, their families and employers.

**Kenosha Area "Women-omics" Expo.** The day-long Expo was presented by the WW=P Kenosha Regional Solutions Network, in partnership with Gateway Technical College, Kenosha Women's Fund and the Kenosha Women's Network in October 2006. The Expo featured a wide range of business and educational programs available to women in the Kenosha area, highlighted women-owned businesses and services, and offered more than a dozen free educational seminars by women leaders in health, finance, insurance, politics and community services.

**Northwoods Regional Solutions Convention, Rhinelander.** In October, 2006, Lt. Governor Lawton welcomed over 100 conference participants to network and explore successful strategies to improve the quality of their lives and the Northwoods economy. The group plotted expanded action and activities for the future. The Northwoods Regional Solutions Network continues to host events and develop educational and media outreach programs, including programs and speakers related to Project Bridges, Tri-County Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Grief Counseling, Wisconsin Council for Children and Families' Vision 20/20 Project, Nicolet Technical College Scholarship Program for Women, Financial Debt Counseling, Family Guided Sex Education, Dating Violence and STEM Careers.

*I hope that WW=P will uncover success models in every region of Wisconsin that can be shared and replicated region-by-region. I hope to be surprised by what we learn from one another.*

**Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton**  
*pictured right on her Raise the Grade Tour*



## HEALTH, SAFETY & WELL BEING

### 1. Recommendation: Increase access to reproductive health care for women statewide.

Status: **SIGNIFICANT GAINS**

**The Family Planning Advisory Council** was convened in 2003 by Lt. Governor Lawton, and later invited to become a permanent advisory board to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Family Services. The Council coordinates organizational and agency approaches to insure access to cost-effective family planning services and reproductive health care. The Council seeks to help prevent unintended pregnancies and provide access to affordable reproductive health care, especially to low-income women.

**Wisconsin's Medicaid Family Planning Waiver** was enacted in January, 2003. With leadership from the Doyle-Lawton Administration, it now provides family planning and essential reproductive health services and supplies to women age 15 through 44 who are at or below 200% of the federal poverty level through the BadgerCare Plus expansion. The main goals of this family planning project are to help women avoid unintended pregnancy and to maintain good health.

**Compassionate Care for Rape Victims** was signed into law by Governor Jim Doyle in 2008. The law requires Wisconsin hospital emergency rooms to give rape victims full and accurate information about treatment options, including information about emergency contraception. If requested, they must dispense the medication on site to prevent pregnancy following assault. The bill was led through the Legislature by Senators Robson, Taylor and Miller and Representatives Pocan, Benedict and Berceau.

**Family Planning Hotline.** Wisconsin Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association (WFPRHA), in conjunction with Family Planning Health Services, Inc. (FPHS), created a toll-free hotline (1-877-975-9858) to ensure that women in every part of the state would have immediate information about access to Emergency Contraception (EC). They have also instituted EZ-EC agreements with community-based organizations that help victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**Ending Cervical Cancer in Our Lifetime.** As part of a national campaign of the National Lt. Governor's Association (NLGA), Lt. Governor Lawton led a statewide effort to increase cervical cancer prevention and treatment awareness in Wisconsin. She traveled the state with former First Lady Sue Anne Thompson, distributing informational brochures to spread the word that cervical cancer is common, preventable and treatable. Ariel Co. Inc. in Marinette, Wisconsin, a wholesale distributor of professional salon products, distributed thousands of brochures to beauty salons statewide. Lt. Governor Lawton filmed a public service announcement that runs on the Time Warner Cable and Charter Communications networks. More information can be found at: [http://ltgov.wisconsin.gov/issues\\_view.asp?issueid=8&locid=126](http://ltgov.wisconsin.gov/issues_view.asp?issueid=8&locid=126).

**Expanding Access through Worksite Reproductive Care:** The state's family planning providers are able to offer comprehensive reproductive health services, including health promotion programs and employee education, more cost-effectively than traditional health plans. Through the Worksite Reproductive Care Program (WoRC), employers contract with the Wisconsin Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association for high-quality, low-cost services for insured employees; uninsured employees may benefit from subsidized programs the providers offer, including the Waiver.

**Why?** Only when acknowledged as full and autonomous citizens with equal protection under the law, including the right to privacy in medical decisions and with access to full reproductive health care, will women enjoy full participation in the economic, civic and social realms of our society.

*"Lack of contraceptive coverage by private health insurance contributes to high rates of unintended pregnancy in Wisconsin: 39% of all pregnancies in WI are unintended; 73% of all births paid for by Medicaid are unintended."*

Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services,  
Healthiest Wisconsin 2010  
Implementation Plan

### Regional Solutions Networks Host Congressional Forums on Women's Health Policy

In 2006, Regional Solutions Networks in Wausau and La Crosse partnered with WW=P, Inc., the Wisconsin Women's Network, Wisconsin Public Health Association, Wisconsin Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association, Family Planning Health Services and the American Association of University Women-Wisconsin to hold the forums.

U.S. Senator Herb Kohl, U.S. Representative Ron Kind and other panelists discussed the national health care system, and specifically those issues which directly impact women, with local citizens.

## HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL BEING

**Why?** Mental health and substance abuse problems affect hundreds of thousands of Wisconsinites each year, presenting a tremendous drag on our economy, yet many of these conditions are treatable.

If you account only for depression, which affects at least 16% of all Americans,<sup>7</sup> you will discover that medical costs of untreated depressed people average twice those of the non-depressed<sup>8</sup>, and that those suffering untreated depression are seven times more likely to be unemployed or under-employed<sup>9</sup>.

The combined indirect and related costs of untreated mental illness, including the costs of lost productivity, lost earning due to illness, and social costs exceed \$113 billion annually.<sup>10</sup>

Studies suggest that insurance coverage of mental illness and substance abuse can decrease overall medical costs because of increased use of preventative versus acute care.<sup>11</sup>

An analysis of state mental health parity laws concluded: "To date there are no examples where mental health parity has been enacted in a state and costs have dramatically increased," and, "to date there are no examples where mental health parity has been enacted in a state and a measurable increase in uninsured has been detected."<sup>12</sup>

One study showed that depressed workers have between 1.5 and 3.2 more short-term disability days in a given 30-day period than other workers. The average salary equivalent disability costs of these days range between \$182 and \$395 per depressed worker.<sup>13</sup>

### 2. Recommendation: Pass & Implement the Wisconsin Mental Health Parity Act Status: *WORK IN PROGRESS*

**Lieutenant Governor's Task Force on Women and Depression in Wisconsin Report.** In response to the Institute for Women's Policy Research's ranking of Wisconsin as 48th out of 50 states in the number of poor mental health days experienced by women, Lt. Governor Lawton convened a high level Task Force on Women and Depression in 2005. Lt. Governor Lawton then convened more than 100 business and non-profit leaders, educators, health care professionals, workers advocates and mental health professionals from around the state to work toward implementing the recommendations of the Task Force. Today, many of the recommendations from the Task Force have been implemented and the coalition remains active. A copy of the Task Force report and recommendations can be downloaded at the following link: <http://ltgov.wisconsin.gov/docview.asp?docid=11100&locid=126>.

**Mental Health Parity legislation** has been introduced in each legislative cycle since 2003, gaining new support each time. The 2007/2008 bill was led by Senator Dave Hansen and Representative Sheryl Albers and will be re-introduced in the January 2009 session.

**National Depression Screening Day.** As part of Mental Health Awareness Week, Lt. Governor Lawton led Wisconsin's largest-ever observance of National Depression Screening Day on October 11, 2007. Businesses and organizations across the state partnered with the Lt. Governor to extend more than 750,000 invitations to employees or members to take a free and confidential online depression screening. When the screening was completed, results were given immediately and, where indicated, a menu of helpful services and next steps was provided. The free and confidential depression screening is still available on Lt. Governor Lawton's website: [www.ltgov.wisconsin.gov](http://www.ltgov.wisconsin.gov) (click mental health button).

**Mental Health Parity Action Day.** February 20, 2008, brought an unprecedented demonstration of support with more than 600 citizens, representing every legislative district in Wisconsin, joining Lt Governor Barbara Lawton for Mental Health Parity Day in the Capitol. Participants met with their elected representatives to educate them about the economic importance of enacting mental health parity now. See photos from the day at: [http://ltgov.wisconsin.gov/scrapbook\\_view.asp?ssid=167&locid=126](http://ltgov.wisconsin.gov/scrapbook_view.asp?ssid=167&locid=126).

*"For every \$1.00 invested in more thorough mental health treatment, employers gained a minimum return on investment of \$1.20 in the form of increased productivity and attendance.*

Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services  
Office of Policy Initiatives and Budget  
*Does Mental Health Parity Make Economic Sense for Wisconsin?*<sup>14</sup>

## HEALTH, SAFETY & WELL BEING

**3. Recommendation: Reduce the incidence of violence against women and its subsequent economic drain in our state by closing gaps in services, improving protections, and by building public support to fund programs that address root causes.**  
**Status: *SIGNIFICANT GAINS***

**State Funding to Support Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services:** In the 2007-08 budget, Governor Jim Doyle introduced and the legislature approved a \$1.9 million increase for domestic abuse services, including services for under-represented and underserved populations.

**Safe Housing for Victims of Domestic Violence.** In April 2008, Governor Jim Doyle signed the Safe Housing Act, allowing victims of domestic violence to terminate rental agreements without penalty. The Act allows a victim to break a lease if they are in imminent danger. The law was passed unanimously by the Wisconsin State Senate and Assembly – led by Senators Coggs and Sullivan and Representatives Suder and Grigsby.

**Access to Legal Counsel.** In the 2007-08 budget, the Governor passed \$1 million per year in funding to address the civil legal assistance needs of low income people. While not specifically designated for victims of domestic violence or sexual assault, victims will benefit from this funding as they are one of the priority populations served by low-income legal providers.

**Status of Family Violence Option for WI.** W-2 now allows individuals to meet participation requirements by attending domestic violence services, includes a good cause reason and time limit extensions related to domestic violence issues.

**Lethal Hidden Weapons Bill Vetoed.** Governor Doyle stood with the overwhelming majority of law enforcement throughout Wisconsin in opposing the Lethal Hidden Weapons Bill. The bill (SB 403) would have allowed loaded, hidden guns at shopping malls, concerts, banks, playgrounds, and even school zones, putting our kids and communities at risk. Wisconsin was ranked in the top ten safest states to live in 2005. It is a testament to the people of Wisconsin that our state is not only one of the safest places to live in the country, but also has a proud tradition of responsible gun ownership and use.

**Iron County Coordinated Community Response Team.** Coordinated by Iron County Human Services, Iron County has made great strides in assessing the gaps in services to meet the needs of victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault by beginning a Coordinated Community Response Team. They started the process of improving our teamwork, providing information and tools to service providers and first responders such as law enforcement, social workers, the District Attorney, as well as the Judge, the school district, UW-Extension staff, Americorps-Vista, Great Lakes Recovery, and others directly or indirectly affected by the crimes of domestic violence and sexual assault.

**Why?** Around the world at least one woman in every three has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime.<sup>15</sup> Gender-based violence is a major public health concern and a violation of human rights.

*Every Wisconsin citizen pays dearly, either directly or indirectly, for persistent violence against women. It is estimated to add up to \$100 million per year in our state: \$70 million in direct costs and \$30 million in lost productivity.*

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2003**

### Stalker Prevention

The La Crosse Police Department and New Horizons Shelter and Women's Center partnered to create a model program to address the issue of stalking and domestic violence. Lt. Governor Lawton presented a \$34,444 Violence Against Women Act Grant to help them enhance their capacity to investigate stalkers, provide additional services to stalking victims, and train law enforcement and Night-time On-call Volunteer Advocate (NOVA) program personnel.

### Health Care for Every Child

Too many mothers who are victims of domestic violence hesitate to leave their abuser if they have no means to provide health care for their children. Governor Jim Doyle proposed and passed in his 2007-2009 budget BadgerCare Plus – a plan to ensure every child in Wisconsin access to health care coverage at no or low cost. The program expands now to include pregnant women, certain parents and caretakers, and adults 18-21 after leaving the foster care program.

Starting in January 2009, BadgerCare Plus will be expanded to include childless adults from ages 18-64. Families can sign up for BadgerCare Plus at <http://www.badgercareplus.org>.

## EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

### 1. Recommendation: Ensure compliance with Title IX and advocate for educational equity. Status: *GAINS*

**Why?** Because the promise of equal opportunity to succeed in all fields and study free of sexual harassment remains unfulfilled for too many girls in Wisconsin.

*Title IX applies to every aspect of federally funded education programs including: Access to Higher Education, Career Education, Education for Pregnant and Parenting Students, Employment, Learning Environment, Math and Science, Sexual Harassment, Standardized Testing, and Technology.*

*Title IX, I Exercise My Rights, 2008*

**Pupil Nondiscrimination Guidelines for Athletics.** In 2006, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) released *Pupil Nondiscrimination Guidelines for Athletics*. DPI collaborated with the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletics Association to release the definitive guide to nondiscrimination in athletic programming. See, <http://dpi.state.wi.us/sped/pdf/athletics.pdf>.

**Tools of the Trade: Wisconsin Toolkit Report.** The toolkit provides data and resources on Title IX as it relates to career and technical education at the high school level in Wisconsin. This publication is part of a national series of reports by National Women's Law Center in Washington, DC. See, <http://www.nwlc.org>.

**Compliance Monitoring.** The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) remains committed to compliance monitoring:

- The purpose of DPI's longstanding **Civil Rights Compliance** program is to provide a quality education for every child by ensuring that all students experience equal access, opportunities, guidance, support, and success in every aspect of their PK-12 public education; fulfilling obligations of state education agencies and assisting schools, districts, and educators to embrace the requirements and spirit of federal civil rights laws; and providing information, samples, or assistance regarding "best practices" in civil rights, nondiscrimination, and educational equity and diversity. Every year, this program monitors 10 districts. See: <http://dpi.state.wi.us/cte/crc>.
- In 2005 and 2007, DPI administered the **Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)** to about 2,100 students in 56 public schools across the state as part of a national effort by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Since 1993, the biennial survey has been used to monitor health-risk behaviors of the nation's high school students and provides valuable data, disaggregated by gender, for state and local decision-making. See: [dpi.state.wi.us/sspw/yrbsindx.html](http://dpi.state.wi.us/sspw/yrbsindx.html).
- During 2007, all districts completed a five-year self-evaluation regarding **pupil nondiscrimination and educational equity**, as required by PI 9, Wis. Admin. Code. Since the 1986 implementation of PI 9, districts are obligated to periodically review and assess school learning activities for gender equity. See: [dpi.state.wi.us/sped/pndselfeval.html](http://dpi.state.wi.us/sped/pndselfeval.html).



## EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

**2. Recommendation: Coordinate programs to support girls and women in STEM-related classes, courses, and training programs and encourage girls and women to participate in STEM classes and careers.**

**Status: *SIGNIFICANT GAINS***

**WW=P's 2005 Youth Leadership Summit.** Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton welcomed more than 350 high school girls to the state's first ever Youth Leadership Summit in March of 2005 in Madison. They spent the day networking and learning with peers and prominent Wisconsin women public servants and elected officials. The Summit was the brainchild of Melinda McNett, a high school senior from Wisconsin Rapids who felt opportunities for young women to envision themselves in influential positions in public service were all too scarce. The day-long program featured addresses by Governor Jim Doyle, Lt. Governor Lawton, State Superintendent of Education Elizabeth Burmaster and Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson, as well as opportunities for small group discussions with other women elected leaders and government officials, a career fair and workshops on topics related to public service, leadership development and Title IX. They connected with other leaders from across the state and opened the door to a bright future.

**Learn, Earn And Prosper: Wisconsin Teen Girls Forward (2006)** followed on the success of the Girls Leadership Conference. LEAP 2006 was sponsored by the Wisconsin Women's Council, WW=P, Inc., the Departments of Workforce Development and Public Instruction, and Acuity, in partnership with Wisconsin colleges and universities, unions, corporations and non-profit organizations. LEAP welcomed 400 girls from high schools across Wisconsin for a day focused on college and career exploration related to high demand, higher-wage career fields, including many STEM fields. Featured speakers included Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton and Workforce Development Secretary Roberta Gassman. Girls also attended a mentor luncheon with women from fields such as aviation, engineering, finance, law, science and the skilled trades; a career and education fair; and interactive workshops. A second conference is planned for Spring 2009.

**The Status of Girls in Wisconsin (2007).** Inspired by the transformative power of the Status of Women in Wisconsin Report as a tool for education and advocacy, Alverno College, Girl Scouts of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Women's Council and the Women's Fund of Greater Milwaukee partnered to publish a landmark study on the Status of Girls in Wisconsin. The report draws upon a wide range of statistical materials to present an overview of how girls ages 10-19 across the state are faring. The study assembles indicators exploring girls' challenges and successes in the areas of education; physical activity; social involvement; technology use; reproductive health; substance use; mental health; violence; crime and incarceration. Read the report at:

[www.statusofgirlsiniwi.org](http://www.statusofgirlsiniwi.org).

**Why?** The growth of the American economy and prosperity of Wisconsin citizens depends upon growth in the knowledge-based sector, especially those grounded in science and technology.<sup>16</sup>

*Women make up 46 percent of the total U.S. workforce<sup>A</sup>, but women comprise only 26.1 percent of the science, engineering, and technology labor force<sup>B</sup>.*

<sup>A.</sup> *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*

<sup>B.</sup> *Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology, 2003.*

Lieutenant Governor Lawton's leadership in advancing the Status of Women Report, founding the WW=P initiative and working across Wisconsin to raise the grade for Wisconsin women, sparked efforts to create complementary awareness for and among Wisconsin girls.

These include initiatives to better document and advocate for the status of girls in Wisconsin and to directly engage girls in important areas such as leadership development, college and career exploration and a focus on the high demand careers of the future in fields such as science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

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## EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

**Women SOAR.** The annual two-day summer program for high school girls is sponsored by the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA - Oshkosh, WI). Women Soar focuses on opportunities in aerospace and aviation, to create awareness of and excitement about high-skill career areas traditionally underrepresented by women. Team building, physical challenges and mentor dialogue help inspire and challenge young women to reach their fullest potential. Lt Governor Lawton supported the launch of the program in 2006 and served as its opening keynote speaker. The Wisconsin Women's Council continues to participate in this program.

**State Superintendent of Public Instruction's Technology and Engineering Education Advisory Council.** Started in April 2008, the Council, made up of industry representatives and educators, will ensure that technology and engineering remain a vital part of PK-12 education in Wisconsin. The Council provides recommendations for strengthening and growing the state's technology and engineering education programs to ensure equity in those programs, strengthen alignment with postsecondary education, and building industry partnerships to support technology and engineering education. See: [www.dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2008\\_70.pdf](http://www.dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2008_70.pdf).

**National STEM Equity Pipeline Project.** In October 2007, Wisconsin was accepted as one of five states to participate in the prestigious National STEM Equity Pipeline Project that is designed to attract more women into the fields of math and science. The five-year project focuses on capacity building in the education community to implement research-based approaches proven to increase the participation and completion of females, including those with disabilities, in STEM education and on institutionalizing the strategies by connecting the outcomes to existing accountability systems. See: [www.stemequitypipeline.org/Default.aspx](http://www.stemequitypipeline.org/Default.aspx).

**STEM Grants.** In March 2008, State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster awarded 13 STEM grants to school districts throughout Wisconsin. The competitive grants, ranging in amounts from \$4,220 to \$4,900, were implemented to help school districts develop innovative instructional programs in the STEM categories and focus on pupils that are typically under-represented in the STEM areas (*i.e.*, female students, students of color, and students with disabilities). See: [www.dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2008\\_53.pdf](http://www.dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2008_53.pdf).

**STEM Scholarships for First Generation College Students.** Moraine Park Technical College has just received a National Science Foundation Grant to help support scholarships for first generation college students to begin STEM-related programs of study at the technical college.

## EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

**National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP).** During 2005-2006, DPI was a sponsoring organization for the NGCP, funded in part by the National Science Foundation. NGCP seeks to maximize access to shared resources; strengthen capacity by sharing models and promising practices; and leverage networks of girl-serving STEM programs. The Wisconsin Girls Collaborative (WGCP) awarded mini-grants to 18 local collaboratives working to increase gender equity in STEM fields, provided professional development to STEM instructors and partnered with the UW System's Women and Science program to strengthen the statewide network for gender equity in STEM.

**UW System Women and Science Program.** This program is designed to attract and retain more women and minority students in the STEM disciplines. The program promotes science education that analyzes the social context in which science is practiced, providing women STEM professionals and educators as role models and creating collaborative communities for STEM professors and students within the UW System. Every fall, the Women and Science Program brings together new educators in the STEM fields for a two-day workshop featuring sessions on student-centered pedagogies and classroom and campus climate issues for underrepresented students. The UW system also maintains a partnership with MentorNet, allowing students in the STEM fields to work with a mentor.

**Project to Identify Root Causes Related to Low STEM Interest and Participation.** The State of Wisconsin was selected as one of five initial participants in a National Science Foundation funded project under the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity. The project focuses on conducting state-based research to identify root causes of low-interest and participation, especially among girls, in STEM-related educational programs. Leadership is shared between the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) and DPI. The project focuses on an often ignored piece of the STEM Pipeline which includes two-year and technical colleges. The project is helping to expand our understanding of STEM related careers to include technology and science skills at the application as well as research levels.

**Wisconsin Higher Education Partnership for Women in STEM.** Shortly after the Wisconsin Women Forward Conference in 2005, a Wisconsin Higher Education Partnership for Women in STEM educational fields was formed between representatives of Milwaukee School of Engineering, UW Colleges and WTCS. The partners began exploring models for increasing the continuation of WTCS students into baccalaureate studies in STEM. An email-based mentoring program, MentorNet, which had been successfully used by University of Madison and Milwaukee School of Engineering female students, was made available to a larger group of female and underrepresented students. Twelve Technical Colleges and 10 UW Colleges participated.

**Women in Engineering Program.** The UW-Platteville chapter of the Society of Women Engineers Organization holds both monthly meetings and outreach events such as presentations to fifth graders and guest speakers. A career day will be held on October 27, 2008, for young women in grades 8-12. Participants will learn more about engineering and UW Platteville, and have the opportunity to meet other students interested in engineering. The Women in Engineering Program is sponsored by companies such as Alliant-Energy, Madison Gas and Electric, TREK, and Harley Davidson.



Lt. Governor Lawton met with ninth graders from Platteville High School to encourage them to become Wisconsin Covenant scholars.

### The Wisconsin Covenant

Governor Jim Doyle invited leaders of the University of Wisconsin (UW) System, the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), DPI, and the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities to sign an agreement to implement the Wisconsin Covenant.

Students who participate sign a pledge in 8th grade affirming that they will earn a high school diploma and maintain a B average, participate in their community, take a high school curriculum that prepares them for higher education, and apply in a timely manner for financial aid.

Each Covenant Scholar will be guaranteed a place in either the UW system, WTCS, or at one of the state's 20 private, non-profit, and independent colleges and are promised a financial aid package adequate to meet the cost of tuition. While the Covenant does not apply specifically to women it takes a significant step forward to ensure all Wisconsin students access to higher education.

Learn more at:  
[www.wisconsin covenant.wi.gov](http://www.wisconsin covenant.wi.gov)

## **And Our Work Continues...**

Early on in the work of *WW=P*, four statewide, issue-based task forces narrowed their focus to address a single pressing question in each area to advance our work. Although five years have passed, those questions have not lost their power to inform better public policy and practices in all sectors. I pose them again below and invite your response as we renew our agenda to raise the grade for women here.

### **Economic Sufficiency**

What contributes to/hinders your ability to both work successfully and balance your life personally and/or with your family?

### **Educational Achievement**

What practices bring more women and girls to pursue careers in math/science/technology/engineering, or to become proficient in these areas as tools toward other goals?

### **Leadership and Political Participation**

What are inevitable/essential steps on the path women and girls must follow to assume leadership in your community, in business and in government?

### **Health, Safety and Well Being**

What contributes to/hinders women and girls making/supporting their own good health decisions and maintaining security for themselves and their families?

Please submit your answers to me at [ltgov@wisconsin.gov](mailto:ltgov@wisconsin.gov). Our goal is nothing less than to make this the best state in the nation for women to live, work, study and raise a family. Your ongoing contribution toward that end will be welcomed.

With gratitude,



Barbara Lawton  
Lieutenant Governor

# **WHEN WOMEN THRIVE, WISCONSIN THRIVES!**



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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
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