

Rutgers University

Institute for Women's Leadership

ADVANCING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP FOR A JUST WORLD:

STEPPING IT UP

A Summary of IWL's Strategic Planning Report

November 26, 2012

I. Introduction

The Institute for Women's Leadership (IWL) at Rutgers University is a unique and influential consortium of academic and policy centers dedicated to pioneering research, training, and advocacy that advance women's leadership in such vital sectors as education and scholarship, politics, the arts, the sciences, and the workplace. Founded in 1991 as the nation's first university consortium dedicated to women's lives and leadership, the Institute and its nine members have for two decades produced seminal research, hosted world-class scholars, shed light on key topics in the public debate, and raised the visibility and importance of women's issues on campus and in the public arena.

The Institute's founders, including its visionary first director, Mary S. Hartman, sought to address the critical underrepresentation of women in leadership at the local, national, and international levels. Today, that mission is more pressing than ever. As societies around the globe grapple with new and entrenched challenges to women's rights and, more broadly, to social and economic justice for millions of men, women, and children, women's leadership capabilities remain one of the world's great untapped resources. It is with a heightened sense of its global relevance that the Institute consortium is now doubling down on its commitment to educate and inspire women to lead, to work with men and women around the world to re-envision what it means to lead in the 21st century, and to infuse the public discourse with feminist perspectives.

With the recent appointment of a new director, Alison R. Bernstein, the Institute and its members convened a "Blue Skies" Committee composed of unit directors, faculty, staff, and administrators to update the consortium's strategic plan. The 26-page planning document they produced over six months is summarized in this report. The plan affirms the mission of the founders, assesses the Institute's strengths and challenges, and sets forth an ambitious but achievable agenda for the next six years.

The Institute for Women's Leadership Consortium Members:

Douglass Residential College (1918) is the only public undergraduate residential college for women in the country, with a leadership focus that links academic, student, and residential life.

The Department of Women's and Gender Studies (1969) is an interdisciplinary department with both undergraduate and graduate programs that is one of the most highly ranked in its category in the U.S.

The Center for American Women and Politics (1971) is a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics and the nation's leading authority on the status of women in government.

The Institute for Research on Women (1977) is a national leader in advancing feminist scholarship through annual research seminars, distinguished lecture series, and scholarly publications.

The Center for Women's Global Leadership (1989) is a central player in the worldwide movement to define and achieve women's human rights. The Center's research and programs focus on advancing economic and social rights from a feminist perspective and promoting an end to gender-based violence.

The Center for Women and Work (1993) is a unit of the School of Management and Labor Relations that links researchers, policymakers, and working women in addressing issues of women and work in New Jersey, the U.S., and globally.

The Institute for Women and Art (2006) supports research, programming, and exhibitions related to women and art, while also promoting policies and strategies to redress gender inequities in the arts.

The Office for the Promotion of Women in Science, Engineering and Mathematics (2007), the home of Rutgers' NSF-ADVANCE grant, develops initiatives to increase the number of undergraduate, graduate, and faculty women entering and succeeding in science, technology, and engineering fields.

The Center on Violence Against Women and Children (2007) is a unit of the School of Social Work whose work includes research, continuing education, MSW education, and community facilitation.

II. Women's Leadership in 2012: Unfinished Business

While the number of women enrolled in higher education has exceeded that of men for over a decade, the proportion of women in leadership roles in every sector of society lags seriously behind; today, at best, women hold twenty percent of top positions. Rutgers is no exception: just over 25 percent of our women faculty hold the rank of full professor and only two of our thirteen academic deans at Rutgers-New Brunswick are women. At home and abroad, these disparities have real consequences. Indeed, consortium members contend that progress, prosperity, and peace around the globe, from the developing to the advanced world, hinge on raising the status of women.

Among the world's great public universities, Rutgers is uniquely positioned to make game-changing contributions to women's advancement. Our renowned faculty, the excellence of our programs in women's and gender studies, the nation's only public residential college for women, and the specialized expertise represented by the consortium's nine members set the standard for scholarship, teaching and service for the 21st century. The intellectual engagement of our students in these issues, combined with their eagerness to step up and make a difference in the world, also sets us apart.

III. The IWL's Central Role

In developing the new strategic plan, the "Blue Skies" Committee reaffirmed the Institute's central role in supporting consortium members in their important, ongoing work, while also creating and fostering new collaborative initiatives that build on the strengths of the members, add value to their work, and deepen their impact at Rutgers, locally, and nationally. The Committee also affirmed the importance of global perspectives and connections as IWL moves forward.

As a key part of its mission, the Institute serves as a catalyst and incubator for innovative programs, courses, and events. Over the next six years, the IWL will focus on creating model programs that link theory and practice in fields such as health, media and technology, and philanthropy in the non-profit sector, while continuing to build interdisciplinary leadership education programs that deepen understanding of critical issues affecting women. By establishing productive new collaborations with colleagues across Rutgers' three campuses and with external partners, including universities and think tanks in the U.S. and abroad, the IWL will extend its reach and impact. Building on the noted success of programs such as the Leadership Scholars Certificate Program and WINGS Mentoring Program as well as publications such as *Talking Leadership*, we will expand our creative output with new documentary films on and by women leaders, new women's leadership case studies for undergraduate and graduate courses, and with wider dissemination of IWL consortium faculty research.

IV. Charting Future Directions

Creating New Knowledge, Expanding New Territories

The IWL Strategic plan sets out three pioneering initiatives that break ground for the consortium while creating important new relationships for members. They are "Women and Health," "Women and the Media," and "Women and Philanthropy."

The Women and Health initiative examines the complex web of factors shaping women's lives and their impact on women's health and well-being. As Rutgers integrates UMDNJ into the university's world-class teaching and research mission, the Institute for Women's Leadership consortium is coordinating an ambitious new agenda to examine women and health that engages all three university campuses. The initiative recognizes that women's health around the world is shaped as much by social, economic, political and environmental forces as by biology. Its approach draws upon the research and scholarship of Rutgers' faculty working in such varied disciplines as the health sciences, sociology, law, political science, history, women's and gender studies, anthropology, art, social work, biology, psychology, education, and environmental sciences. The Women and Health initiative will be launched in the spring of 2013 with a series of activities designed to stimulate a campus-wide conversation that will lead to the formation of a new center on women and health to serve as the nexus of ongoing scholarship in this field at Rutgers. The initiative will, for example, respond to the backlash that threatens to undermine women's long-established reproductive freedoms, including court challenges at the state and federal level and local policies that violate these legal rights.

Two faculty-led symposia will engage the university community and the public in current issues around women's health. The first symposium, "Maternal and Fetal Bodies," is slated for November 2013 and coincides with the 40th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade. The discussion will center on the debate around reproductive rights and its impact on women's experience of their bodies and the delivery of medical care since the landmark Supreme Court decision. The second symposium, "Body Mass Index (BMI) in Women: Health or Hype" is planned for Spring 2014 to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo and will include a themed art exhibition. The symposium will focus on the impact of BMI categorization from all aspects of a woman's physical, emotional, sexual, financial, and psychological health and lay the groundwork for examining its pros and cons across the life cycle.

Among IWL consortium's partners for the Women and Health initiative are the Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, the School of Social Work, the Bloustein School, the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy & Aging Research, the School of Arts and Sciences, the History Department, and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ).

The Women and Media initiative will explore the media's powerful role in shaping culture, public perception, and policy, and address the persistent underrepresentation of women leaders as well as the stereotypical depiction of women and girls in sectors ranging from advertising, to news, to entertainment. Despite gains in recent years, men continue to occupy a disproportionate number of the leading roles in media such as film, as well as top positions in the news media, TV production studios, and other media fields.

Multidisciplinary research will shed light on these issues with critical analyses of the images of women and girls in such mainstream media as commercial films, television, documentaries, and news media, and an up-to-date appraisal of women's representation in leadership positions, including those of producers, directors, writers, and actors in key media organizations. Collaborators in this initiative will use the research and findings generated by it as the basis for proposing policies and programs to bring about greater gender, racial, and ethnic equality in these sectors. Researchers will also examine women's use of new social media and its role in changing perceptions of women.

The Women and Media initiative involves partnerships among the Rutgers School of Communications and Information (SCI), the Department of Women's and Gender Studies in the School of Arts and Sciences, the IWL, and the Geena Davis Institute on Women and Media in Los Angeles. The initiative will explore the creation of a program in women and media that will include a joint SCI/IWL master's degree in Women's Leadership and Media Studies to be housed at SCI, which could be offered on campus and in an online format.

The Women and Philanthropy initiative will explore the changing demographics of the philanthropic sector, in which women play an increasingly prominent role. Currently 42 percent of all individuals with a net worth of \$1.5 million or more are women. Women will capture 70 percent of the \$41 trillion in

intergenerational wealth transfer over the next 40 years.¹ Currently women give an average of 3.5 percent of their wealth to charity, while men give an average of 1.8 percent.² Their philanthropic choices become increasingly influential as they assume greater power and leadership in this growing sector. As a group committed to women's leadership, the IWL will partner with other universities and organizations to examine and promote women's advancement to leadership positions in the non-profit and philanthropic sectors. Through this initiative, slated to begin in fall 2014, the IWL will incubate educational programs to develop a new generation of philanthropic leaders. A former philanthropist, IWL Director Alison R. Bernstein brings wide expertise to this arena.

Expanding Programs to Reach New Populations: Graduate, Continuing Studies, and Professional Development

Building on our expertise and experience in leadership education and training, the IWL consortium will expand its programming and services into the graduate and continuing studies arena, combining gender based analysis with practical and professional skills. The Center for Women's Leadership (CWGL), which for nearly two decades has provided enrichment and training to women now at the helm of the human and women's rights movements, is one of our notable successes. This international cohort of women leaders will be the audience for expanded programming, as will graduates of the Rutgers Executive Leadership Program, which is co-sponsored by IWL and the Center for Women and Work and conducted by The Next Level, Inc. The Department of Women's and Gender Studies and the IWL are now piloting an online course with National Nurses United, the largest nurses' union in the US. It is anticipated that the nursing partnership will lead to a certificate program and degree-granting opportunities.

V. Taking our Legacy Forward

The Institute serves as both a prominent forum for intellectual exchange and a vital source of information about women's leadership for the Rutgers community and for researchers, policymakers, and advocacy groups around the world. Going forward, we will expand access to the consortium's research and pedagogical resources for feminist leadership, such as oral histories and audio and film interviews. We will extend our reach by using new technologies that enable us to disseminate information and share resources more effectively; we will widen the audience for IWL events and programming through mechanisms such as conference streaming. By improving our outreach and making it easier to search our website for consortium offerings, scholarly research, and policy analysis, the Institute will grow participation in credit-bearing and non-credit programs and events consortium-wide.

As the IWL consortium approaches its first quarter century, we confidently build on the strength and depth of our scholarly research and the multidisciplinary perspectives that are the hallmarks of its

¹ Boston College's Center on Wealth and Philanthropy

² Tomorrow's Philanthropist, July 2009

collaborative work. Award-winning programs such as the IWL Leadership Scholars Certificate Program continue to increase students' understanding of leadership, women's education and history, and contemporary issues such as immigration and women's health. The Institute programs offer students a distinctive combination of classroom and community-based learning, mentoring, skills workshops, and independent social action projects. Over the next six years, the IWL consortium will intensify its engagement in existing programs, while also expanding access and increasing visibility and support for them. At the same time the consortium will take its expertise in new and increasingly global directions, forcefully communicating that gender equality and advancing women's leadership are unfinished business whose resolution is integral to solving societal problems such as poverty, violence, economic inequality and inadequate healthcare.

Helping Rutgers Become a Model for Diversity in Leadership

Working to become THE place for advancing women's leadership at Rutgers, the IWL will pilot targeted programs to develop and support women's leadership at the university and in the academy more broadly. The consortium will redouble its commitment to analyzing and disseminating data on faculty diversity and leadership, advocating for diversity at the highest levels, and boosting the retention and promotion rates of minority faculty. Moreover, consortium members will develop new strategies to further diversify their own units. And in its role as the "keeper of the history" of women's leadership, the IWL will put out periodic reports on the university's progress toward greater racial and gender diversity.

Global Engagement in Leadership Studies for Social Justice

The IWL and its members will develop relationships with external partners around the world to strengthen our scholarship, research, and curricula on leadership, and to infuse our new programs and initiatives with global perspectives. The Institute has longstanding ties with many prominent higher education institutions in the U.S., including Barnard College, Spelman College and Columbia University. An emerging relationship with the African Gender Institute of the University of Cape Town in South Africa presents an exciting opportunity for the Institute to provide international experiences in leadership learning for Rutgers students. In the longer term, this partnership will also inform the development of new graduate curricula and program offerings.

A Campaign to Prepare the Next Generation of Women for 21st Century Leadership

As we look to several important anniversaries this coming decade, we see rich opportunities to increase the visibility of the Institute and its members and to boost our fundraising. These important milestones include The Center for Women's Global Leadership's 25th anniversary in 2014, the IWL's 25th and the Center for American Women and Politics' 45th anniversaries in 2016, Douglass College's 100th anniversary in 2018 and Rutgers University's 250th anniversary in 2016. Campaign fundraising priorities around these events will include creating a Chair in Women's Leadership Studies, doubling the endowment for student programs, developing an innovation fund to support new collaborative initiatives involving the member units, and increasing the facilities available to the Institute and consortium members through renovation and even new construction.

By the end of 2016, with the success of this 25th Anniversary Campaign for IWL, the Institute will evolve to a new level of activity as a fully engaged consortium with:

- international partnerships with universities and NGOs to involve women around the globe in advancing women's leadership for a just world;
- graduate level curricula and programs to meet the continuing education and professional needs of women leaders across sectors;
- expanded facilities at Rutgers to support collaborative programs and research;
- the first endowed chair in women's leadership studies to draw distinguished, nationally recognized faculty to Rutgers; and
- two new university centers to further the research and education on the Women and Health and Women and Media initiatives.

Conclusion

In 2012, women's advancement remains a critical priority in the United States and across the globe. The recent elections, which energized women as a key voting bloc and swept five new women into the U.S. Senate, revealed the growing hunger - and need - for women's leadership as the nation faces complex challenges here and abroad. At the same time, these electoral gains pointed up how far we have to go in expanding women's participation in important institutions across every sector of our society, while underscoring disparities in their political and social engagement around the world. As the international community seeks solutions to pressing global problems, it is imperative that women leaders are not only at the table, but framing those solutions.

At the Institute for Women's Leadership consortium, we, too, are energized by the challenges that lie ahead. The work that the Institute and its consortium members do to promote knowledge, infuse the public discourse with feminist perspectives, and prepare transformational leaders is more relevant than ever. We reaffirm our commitment to conducting pioneering research on women's and men's lives, to advancing strategies that will promote women's leadership, and to engaging with students, scholars, policymakers, and activists here and abroad to promote knowledge, training and advocacy.