

Follow-up to 2006 National Employer Summit

In the first months following the 2006 National Employer Summit, BPW Foundation began to implement the strategies identified by Summit participants as top priorities. Through educational activities, policy outreach to U.S. Congressional Staffers, and research efforts, BPW Foundation is following-through on its commitment to Summit attendees to offer them a year's worth of robust resources. Work by the BPW Foundation and other Summit attendees is driving activities that are impacting the development of public policy, government programming, research, and voluntary practices that will help re-design workplaces for workingwomen and men. These workplaces of the present and future will be more likely to model work-life effectiveness and workplace flexibility, equity, and diversity.

Current and Ongoing Activities Undertaken by BPW Foundation

Policy Outreach

- BPW Foundation Special Policy Event

BPW Foundation believes that through collaboration it can support the development of public policy that positively impacts the workplace as well as the lives of workingwomen and their families. Special policy events and audio conferences provide participants with the tools they need to discuss and develop public policies that help build successful workplaces and create systemic change. In February 2007, BPW Foundation sponsored a Special Policy Event titled *Building Policy Together: Workingwomen, Employers and Policymakers*.

- Carried over themes and ideas identified as priorities during the 2006 NES into the workshops and seminars including a panel discussion on the pending creation of workplace flexibility “soft touch” legislation that invited participants to act as a focus group for researchers and Hill staff.
 - Introduced key concepts of BPW Foundation’s philosophy on policy development to key stakeholders emphasizing consensus-based policy development, making the business case for workplace equity, and enabling government, researchers, policymakers, employers, and workingwomen to work together to create win-win policy solutions.
 - Sponsored luncheon during which Commissioner Christine M. Griffin of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission clarified the roles that employers, government, and advocates play in creating equitable workplaces.
 - Worked in partnership with the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest and AFSME to co-develop a curriculum on consensus-based policy development.
 - Offered opportunities for knowledge sharing through a poster session and networking event that featured presentations from the Department of Labor-Women’s Bureau among others.
- Policy Resource Activities

In its capacity as a neutral convener and independent clearinghouse and research institution, BPW Foundation has a long and continuing tradition of informing policymakers at all levels on issues impacting workingwomen. After the 2006 NES, BPW Foundation:

- Began working with its sister organization, BPW/USA, as a resource to Capitol Hill staffers working on legislation related to workplace flexibility, paid sick leave, paid family and medical leave, etc.
- Utilized a workshop at the Special Policy Event as a focus group for a Hill Staffer, allowing workingwomen and small business owners a chance to provide input on key aspects of the draft legislation.
- Engaged 2006 NES participants as well as other employer, workingwomen, and research connections in policy development discussions with Hill staffers to ensure that key stakeholders’ voices were heard.

- Invited to and participated in an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission-sponsored focus group on issues impacting workingwomen.

Media Outreach & Publicity

BPW Foundation has strategically expanded outreach for its messaging and research by participating in strategically chosen conferences, seminars, and focus groups that support the development of research, practice and public policy around workplace equity, diversity, and work-life effectiveness. But BPW Foundation is not limiting its outreach to research and policy circles. BPW Foundation is committed to contributing to the public dialogue as well and is developing an outreach strategy that includes contributing to and developing articles and opinion pieces for mainstream media outlets.

Expansion of the Cross-Sector Network

- Partner Engagement
 - Two speakers from the 2006 NES were elected to BPW Foundation's Board of Trustees in early 2007. Lisa Hershman, Global Vice President of Operational Excellence and Quality and first Chairwoman of Avnet, Inc.'s Global Women's Forum and Muriel Watkins, Vice President of Human Resources of The New York Times represent major employers with strong work-life and diversity initiatives.
 - A Department of Labor-Women's Bureau representative reported to BPW in early 2007 that a new collaboration was recently created between the DOL-WB and the DOL-Office of Disability Employment Policy as a result of conversations begun during the 2006 NES. The two agencies will collaborate on workplace flexibility outreach and education.

Upcoming Activities from BPW Foundation

Educational Outreach

- Webinars/Audio Events Series

BPW Foundation, in conjunction with various program collaborators, offers a series of audio and web conferences on critical workplace issues. Upcoming topics include *Flexibility: Management's Perspective*, *Work Design: Flexibility Versus Face Time*, *Supporting Women Veterans*, *Building Public Policy Together: Consensus-Based Policy Creation*, *Workplace Flexibility: Developing a Strategic Plan for Public Policy Development*. In addition to publicly available webinars, members of BPW Foundation's employer advisory network, which includes past Summit participants, will have access to special webinars focused on peer-to-peer knowledge sharing around topics raised during the Summit. Recordings and resources from prior calls are available at www.bpwfoundation.org.

- Women's Network Knowledge Sharing Series and Online Tutorial

During the 2006 National Employer Summit, the creation of mechanisms to decrease the isolation felt by women and minorities and to improve their access to critical work assignments and professional development opportunities was identified as a critical step in increasing both workplace equity and diversity in America's workplaces. The development of affinity groups which incorporated mentoring and targeted career mobility opportunities was identified as a promising voluntary employer practice that appeared to effectively address these issues. As part of its commitment to promote the dissemination and adoption of promising voluntary workplace practices identified during the Summit, Business and Professional Women's Foundation is developing a Women's Networks Series.

The Women's Network Series will integrate online learning, peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, articles and web-based events to increase the level of knowledge about how to create women's networks within the workplace. The series will also explain with women's networks can and can't do to increase women's career mobility and to foster equity and diversity. The project will be launched with a panel discussion on women's networks to be held in Reno, Nevada in July 19, 2007 as part of BPW Foundation's Women's Advancement Luncheon and Seminar. The luncheon and seminar take place during the 2007 BPW/USA National Conference. For more information visit, www.bpwusa.org/nationalconference.

- Expansion of Rawalt Online Resource Center

Over the next three years, BPW Foundation will continue to convert its extensive physical archive, the *Marguerite Rawalt Resource Center* (Rawalt), into an easy-to-access online resource center. In response to requests by Summit participants for a comprehensive database that captures the latest in effective practices and information on policy development in one place, BPW Foundation will emphasize the collection of materials and links on work-life, diversity, and equity over the next year of the online resource center's expansion. Materials from participating 2006 NES organizations and employers will be highlighted along with those from additional university centers, national and international government websites, and innovative employers. But, Rawalt will not simply be a passive repository; through the Rawalt project, the knowledge contained within in it will be disseminated via e-newsletters, articles, op-eds, webinars, and online tutorials to mainstream publications, employers, researchers, workingwomen advocates and policymakers. To visit the resource center, visit www.bpwfoundation.org.

- Quarterly Newsletter on Policy & Practice

In Summer 2007, BPW Foundation is launching a quarterly e-newsletter for employers, workingwomen, researchers, and policymakers that will feature articles and bibliographies on voluntary practice and public policy areas identified at the 2006 National Employer Summit.

- 2008 National Employer Summit

To answer the demand for safe places for employers, policymakers, researchers, and advocates to meet and share promising practices and public policy insights, BPW Foundation will host a 2008 National Employer Summit. BPW Foundation's 2008 National Employer Summit, to be held Summer 2008, will showcase research, voluntary practices, and information on public policy or government programs that helps employers build workplaces that model workplace flexibility, workplace equity, and diversity. Champions among employers, researchers, government officials, and policymakers will be highlighted as they present the latest research or promising practices that impact workplaces. Summit seminars will also examine the laws and regulations that impact employers in these areas and illuminate the rights and responsibilities employers and employees have under them. Opportunities for professional development, networking, and small-group discussions will be featured throughout the event. For more information on how to participate in the 2008 NES, e-mail foundation@bpwfoundation.org.

Expansion of the Cross-Sector Network

- Employer Advisory Network

In 2005, BPW Foundation established the nucleus of a new cross-sector network of employers, workingwomen, researchers, and government agencies. The network's purpose is to identify and implement the systemic changes needed to fully empower workingwomen and to advise, promote and participate in BPW Foundation programming and research activities. To date, over 60 organizations have shared their knowledge and resources to support BPW Foundation's research, education and professional development events. In 2007, BPW Foundation will formalize relationships with a number of its employer advisory network members to engage in collaborative research and educational projects on topic areas arising from the 2006 NES.

BPW Foundation values the knowledge and expertise of its network members. The contribution of their know-how, content expertise, and funding helps BPW Foundation achieve its mission to empower workingwomen to

achieve their full potential and to partner with employers to build successful workplaces. In return, those who work with BPW Foundation are engaged in cutting-edge innovative programming, informed by quality research, which provides a future-oriented perspective aimed at creating change. Through their interactions with BPW and participation in our programming and research, our partners are empowered to build better futures for themselves, their workplaces and their communities.

As a member of the employer advisory network, participants have opportunities to:

- Be part of a speaker's bureau on work-life effectiveness, workplace equity, diversity or similar workplace issues. Speaker bureau members participate in:
 - BPW Foundation's educational and policy workshops, seminars, webinars
 - Are referred as speakers for key conferences, panels, or hearings to our other partners around the country and on Capitol Hill
 - Are referred to members of the press as content experts
 - Are invited to participate in media events including press conferences and briefings
- Participate in focus groups conducted with local, state or national staffers for elected officials to inform the development of public policy on issues that impact your business/mission.
- Inform the development of and participate in our research projects including case studies, focus groups, surveys, etc.
- Inform the development of and participate in our many educational and professional development opportunities including a quarterly electronic newsletter, audio and web events, workshops and seminars and the National Employer Summit.
- Have access to and be encouraged to link examples of your promising practices, research or conference materials to the Rawalt Online Resource Center, BPW Foundation's growing archive of resources exploring research, policy, knowledge and education related to work-life effectiveness, career transitions, workplace equity and diversity.