

## Are Women Getting Even? Women, Men, and Wages

The Center for Women and Work's 7th Annual Gathering at the Well Forum, held on Thursday, April 14, 2005, posed the question "Are women getting even?" and focused on the issue of wage equity for women. Women have been entering the workforce in greater numbers but still earn, on average, only \$.77 of every dollar that men earn, leading to disparities totaling into the millions over the course of a lifetime.

The featured speaker was Evelyn Murphy, who is the founding president of the WAGE Project Inc, a non-profit grassroots organization dedicated to addressing wage disparities



Evelyn Murphy, featured speaker

for women, and the author of a book to be published this fall entitled

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## Measuring Discrimination

Differential treatment, whether in terms of gender, age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disabilities, is increasingly recognized as a chronic stressor that can affect both psychological and physical health. Research specific to the workplace is beginning to accumulate to support the claim that workers' health and well being are affected by features of the work environment such as unfair or inequitable treatment of employees, sexual harassment, and discrimination. One barrier to furthering such research, however, is the lack of awareness of appropriate measurement instruments.

To facilitate greater scholarly work in this arena, CWW received a con-

tract from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to develop a catalogue of measures that assess aspects of the work environment relevant to ethnicity, race, and gender diversity. The compendium includes measures of such issues as harassment, discrimination, work-family balance, and general organizational climate for diverse groups of workers. The book begins with an introductory chapter coauthored by Meg Bond and Laura Punnett on the rationale for including these domains in occupational health research. This introduction is followed by 59 entries that describe currently available organizational measures, their psychometric

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## CWW Applies for Grants

In order to continue exploring the gendered conditions of work, the Center for Women and Work seeks funding from a variety of sources, including foundations and government agencies. Meg Bond, Laura Punnett, and Jamie Weller submitted a grant proposal to the Patrino Foundation, a family foundation founded in 1990 that promotes educational and social programs for women and girls. The request for funds was made to support a "Gender in the Workplace" Graduate Student Program which, if funded, will provide CWW with the funds to support two female graduate students interested in conducting research on topics related to women and work.

Paula Rayman, Maria Brunette, and Meg Bond recently submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation (NSF) to support a project on women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The heart of the proposed initiative is a working conference that will gather an intergenerational and interdisciplinary community of racially and ethnically diverse scholars to have a dialogue about scholarship on workplace factors that are associated with women's success in STEM fields. The proposed working conference will bring together members of two primary cohorts who have done research on women and science—scholars whose research emerged in the 1960's and younger scholars who began their work in the 1990's. We also hope to involve graduate students who will be nominated by senior scholars based on their potential to make future research contributions to the "Women in STEM" field.



## Welcome Danielle

**D**anielle Barrasso is currently in the BA/MA Community Social Psychology program at UMass Lowell. She is graduating with her Bachelors Degree this Spring and will continue her studies as a graduate student next year. Danielle is currently conducting an evaluation of the Associates Program that is sponsored by the Center. She is interested in women at work, work/family balance, and sexual harassment.



Danielle Barrasso, CWW Research Assistant

## CWW Joins Lowell Women's Week

As part of Lowell Women's Week 2005, three CWW Associates presented their research on issues relating to the gendered conditions of work. Sarah Kuhn, CWW Faculty Associate from the Department of Regional Economic and Social Development, presented results from Project TechForce in which she collected extensive survey and interview data on women and men working in the software and internet industry in Massachusetts. Her event was entitled "Women and Work on the Information Technology Frontier." Cheryl G. Najarian, CWW Faculty Associate from the Department of Sociology, shared her findings from qualitative life history interviews with college educated deaf women in Rochester, N.Y., and Boston. In her talk, entitled "Between Worlds: Deaf Women Workers as a Linguistic Minority," she discussed the ways these women's work experiences connect with the changing trends of work, the role of technology, and the implications for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Laura Punnett, CWW Senior Associate from the Department of Work Environment, presented an analysis of the physical workload involved in hotel housekeeping, as well as of the political situation currently facing hotel workers at an event, "How Heavy Can a Mattress Be? Women's Work in Hotel Housekeeping—the Physics and the Politics." Discussion explored how the traveling public can support these workers.

## Take Note

### CWW Recycles through FundingFactory™ Program

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## Same Difference

Rosalind Chait Barnett, a Senior Research Scientist and the Executive Director of the Community, Families, and Work Program at Brandeis University's Women's Studies Research Center, was invited to campus on April 19 to talk about her new book *Same Difference: How Gender Myths are Hurting Our Relationships, Our Children, and Our Jobs*. The book, co-authored by Barnett and Carol Rivers, aims to dispel myths and stereotypes about gender that have been perpetuated by the media and popular culture. Drawing on extensive research, they argue that it is power, not gender, that makes a difference, and that there are more differences among women (and among men) than between women and



Rosalind Chait Barnett talks about her new book *Same Difference: How Gender Myths are Hurting Our Relationships, Our Children, and Our Jobs* at a campus event sponsored by the Community Social Psychology Graduate Teaching Assistants and CWW

men. During the event that included faculty and students, Dr. Barnett presented numerous gender myths, the studies that fuel them, and the overwhelming research that refutes them. The event was co-sponsored by the Psychology Graduate Student Organization and the Center for Women and Work, and funded by the UML Bookstore Fund.

## Interested in Joining CWW?

**T**he CWW Associates Program is a critical component of CWW's role as a hub for innovative scholarly projects on the gendered conditions of work. The primary goal of the program is to foster an interdisciplinary, intellectual community at UMass Lowell that supports new projects on women and work, fosters collaborations across disciplines, and builds partnerships between community and university members to address shared concerns. We welcome visiting scholars and community associates as well as resident faculty. If you are interested in exploring an affiliation, please contact Meg Bond (Meg\_Bond@uml.edu).



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*Getting Even: Why Women Don't Get Paid Like Men and What to Do So We Will.* She is also the former Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts and a Resident Scholar at Brandeis University's Women's Studies Research Center. Dr. Murphy shared numerous examples of sex discrimination lawsuits filed and won by women in industries around the country. While women face discrimination in hiring, promotion, and wage determination, she noted that sexual harassment cases are the most common. In each scenario, women's wages suffer. Her prescription for action includes three basic steps: 1) gather information (e.g., find out what others earn), 2) join with others (at work and in the community), and 3) approach the boss with allies.

Following Dr. Murphy's presentation, three commentators spoke briefly about their visions for change. Massachusetts State Senator Susan Tucker commented from a legislative and political perspective on what women can do to get equal pay. Lisa Brothers, the Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Judith Nitsch Engineering Inc, as well as a UMass Lowell Class of 1984 Alumna, spoke

about the challenges she has faced as a woman business owner both in negotiating contracts for her company and in establishing equity for those the company employs. She also shared advice about how women can more effectively negotiate their salaries. Oneida Blagg, the recently appointed UML Director of Equal Opportunity and Outreach, offered valuable insights about ways that women can prepare themselves to negotiate equitable pay. Dr. Murphy joined our three commentators for a larger discussion about strategies for change.

The WAGE project, as developed by Dr. Murphy, supports women seeking equity. To build on her model, we asked partici-

pants to form small groups and engaged in mock WAGE Club discussions. They discussed such questions as, "What barriers have you faced in your workplace related to wage equity?" and "How have you responded to those barriers and what challenges have you faced in responding to them?" The forum planning committee included Jamie Weller, CWW Staff; Imogene Stulken, UML Protestant Campus Ministry; Robin Toof, UML Center for Family, Work, and Community; and Meg Bond, CWW Director. The Forum was funded by the UMass Lowell Council on Diversity and Pluralism, UML Council of Federated Centers and Institutes, and the UML Bookstore.



Front Row: Oneida Blagg, commentator; Jamie Weller, CWW Staff and Forum Planning Committee. Back Row From Left: Laura Punnett, CWW Senior Associate; Evelyn Murphy, Featured Speaker; Robin Toof, CFWC and Forum Planning Committee; Lisa Brothers, commentator; Meg Bond, CWW Director; Imogene Stulken, Protestant Campus Ministry and Forum Planning Committee; Danielle Barrasso, CWW RA.

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## Measuring Discrimination

properties, and an analysis of their usefulness for occupational health research.

Director Meg Bond led the effort with significant contributions made by Alketa Kalaja (graduate student in Community Social Psychology), Pia Markkanen (CWW Associate and Researcher at the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production), Dianne Cazeca (graduate student in the Department of Work Environment), and Laura Punnett (CWW Senior Associate and Professor of Work Environment) along with Sivan Daniel and Lana Tsurikova (both while graduate students in Community Social Psychology). We anticipate that the book will be published by NIOSH in the Fall of 2005.

Clark, R., Anderson, N. B., Clark, V., & Williams, D. R. (1999). Racism as a stressor for African Americans. *American Psychologist*, 54(10), 805-816.

Krieger, N. (2003). Does racism harm health? Did child abuse exist before 1962? On explicit questions, critical science, and current controversies: An ecosocial perspective. *American Journal of Public Health*, 93(2), 194-199.

Meyer, I. H. (2003). Prejudice as stress: Conceptual and measurement problems. *American Journal of Public Health*, 93(2), 262-265.

Schulz, A., Israel, B., Williams, D., Parker, E., Becker, E., Becker, A., & James, S. (2000). Social inequalities, stressors, and self reported health status among African American and white women in the Detroit metropolitan area. *Social Science and Medicine*, 51, 1639-1653.



# Center for Women & Work



University of Massachusetts Lowell

## Of Note

**S**usan Moir, Director of the Labor Resource Center at UMass Boston and an Associate at the UML Center for Women and Work, hosted a very successful Statewide Conference on the Future of Work in Massachusetts. Over 150 labor and community leaders came together with UMass faculty and staff to explore issues of the changing economy, workplace change and their impact on workers. The conference featured reports from twelve research projects that were commissioned by the UMass Labor Centers, as well as a number of panels and interactive workshops. CWW Associates Paula Rayman and Sarah Kuhn presented a paper on their research from Project TechForce entitled, "Software and Internet Industry Workers in Massachusetts."

## CWW Associates' Research Presentations

Bond, M.A. (2005, June). *Organization Studies and Community Psychology: Integrating Frameworks to Study Dynamics of Race and Gender*. Paper to be presented at the 10<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the Society for Community Research and Action, Champaign, IL.

Bond M. A., & Punnett L. (2004, November). *Improving Measurement of Discrimination, Bias, and Harassment in Occupational Health Research*. 132<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting, American Public Health Association, Washington DC.

Dinh, K. & Bond, M. (2005, June). *Changes among Host Individuals and Communities in their Adaptation to Immigrants*. Session at the 10<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the Society for Community Research and Action, Campaign, IL.

Moir, S., Azaroff, L., & Punnett, L. (2004, November). *Organizational determinants of*

*intervention effectiveness: A data collection tool*. 132<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting, American Public Health Association, Washington DC.

Najarian, C. (2005, March). *Lifetime Educators and Self-Advocates: Deaf Women's Family and Educational Experiences*. Eastern Sociological Society Conference, Washington, DC

Najarian, C. (2005, March). *Culture and Identity Construction*. Session Moderator, Eastern Sociological Society Conference, Washington, DC.

Punnett, L. (2004, December). *Gender, Work Organization, and Health*. NORA Organization of Work Women's Health Expert Panel Meeting, NIOSH, Cincinnati, OH.

Punnett L., & Herbert, R. (2004, July). *To What Extent Can the Association Between Female Gender and Musculoskeletal Disorders be Explained by*

*Occupational Exposures?* (Invited contribution, Mini-symposium on "Gender differences in the risk of work-related musculoskeletal disorders") Fifth International Scientific Conference on Prevention of Work-related Musculoskeletal Disorders (PREMUS), Zurich, Switzerland.

Punnett, L., MacDonald, L., Härenstam, A., & Warren, N. (2004, June). *Work Organization: Contextual Exposure Assessment for Occupational Health Epidemiology* (Invited Keynote). Exposure Assessment in Epidemiology and Practice, Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Slatin, C., Tessler, J., O'Sullivan, M., Punnett, L., Lally, J. & PHASE-in Healthcare Project (2004, November). *Occupational Injury and Illness Disparities Research in the Healthcare Work Environment: Opportunities and Obstacles*. 132<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting, American Public Health Association, Washington DC.

## The Center for Women and Work 2004/5

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