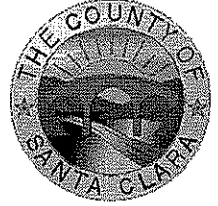


County of Santa Clara
Board of Supervisors
Supervisorial District Two
Supervisor George Shirakawa

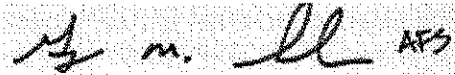
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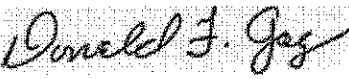


BOS2-060209-1

DATE: June 2, 2009

TO: Supervisor Ken Yeager, Chairperson
Supervisor Dave Cortese, Vice Chair
Finance & Government Operations Committee

FROM: 
George Shirakawa
Supervisor, District 2


Donald F. Gage
Supervisor, District 1

SUBJECT: ADD-BACK REQUEST: OFFICE OF WOMEN'S POLICY

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Consider allowing the Office of Women's Policy to remain as a stand-alone entity within the Office of the County Executive, add back \$42,010 in Object Two, and forward favorable recommendation to the Fiscal Year 2009 - 2010 Budget Inventory List.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Fiscal Year 2010 Recommended Budget calls for the consolidation of the Office of Women's Policy (OWP) with the Office of Affordable Housing and Office of Human Relations. I propose to keep the Office of Women's Policy as a stand alone office that is directly linked to the County Executive's Office for the purpose of continuing the meaningful, high-level coordination necessary to meets its mission of identifying and addressing current and emerging issues for women and girls. Over the years, the OWP has effectively met this mission and developed a stellar reputation as a

convener and collaborator throughout the County and community. OWP works closely with the courts, departments with Board appointees and elected officials, community partners, and other cities in the County. In large part, the office's impressive accomplishments can be attributed to its elevated status.

Women and girls continue to face daunting challenges especially given the current economic crisis. Today, the reality is that . . .

- More families than ever are headed by single women
- 41% of working women are their family's sole source of income
- Unemployment is rising more rapidly for women and women's earning are falling faster
- Women have disproportionately receive sub-prime mortgages
- Women still earn only 77 cents for every dollar a man makes
- Santa Clara County ranks lowest in California for women executives and board members at major public companies

Continued financial support of the service and supplies budget for the Office of Women's Policy allows it to be involved in Women's History Month, Equal Pay Day, Women's Equality Day Breakfast, and annual Domestic Violence Council conference. In addition, the funding provides small stipends to student interns if they are not receiving college credit for their time. Focus groups and roundtables that solicit valuable community input on issues like HIV/AIDS, Title IX, women and poverty, and others are all possible due to this allocation. Since 2005, OWP has administered over \$3 million in federal grants from the ARREST and Justice Assistance Grants.

BACKGROUND

In 1998, the County created an office specifically for women and girls. Former Supervisor Blanca Alvarado founded it as the County's commitment to women. Over the years, OWP has been at the forefront of many issues facing the Country:

- In 2003, it produced a Family Court report raising issues about cultural sensitivity and how the court process affects children.
- A program that started under OWP called Girls for a Change, is a now a national non-profit with mentors and over 100 teams of girls taking action in their communities in three states.
- Early reports on economic conditions for women in Silicon Valley from OWP discussed predatory lending practices and housing issues for women well before this current housing and economic crisis.
- In 2005, when the Grand Jury and Jail Population Task Force had concerns about women in our jail, OWP worked with the Commission on the Status of Women and the Department of Correction to look at programs and services for women which culminating into the ground-breaking 'Breaking Cycles, Rebuilding Lives' report in 2008. Not only has the County received two awards for the efforts, more housing and domestic violence community groups are working directly with the jail.