

Voices

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT CENTER FOR WOMEN AND POLITICS

Catt Center and League of Women Voters of Ames Sponsor "Ready to Run" Workshop

The Catt Center received a grant from the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University to offer its "Ready to Run" campaign training program in spring 2007.

"Ready to Run" is designed for women considering seeking public office, running for higher office or working on a campaign. Although the program will focus on women candidates and campaigns, men can also attend.

The program incorporates the political culture and climate of the locale and uses state and local campaign experts to highlight the specifics of running in a particular state or region. "Ready to Run"

participants will hear directly from local leaders, campaign consultants and party officials to get help and information on running for office in their area.

"Iowa women represent a promising, but largely untapped pool of talent when it comes to candidates for public office," said Catt Center director Dianne Bystrom.

"Although women comprise 51 percent of Iowa's population, only 22 percent of our state legislators and just over a third of our local government officials are women.

"Moreover, Iowans have never elected a woman to the governor's office and Iowa is among only four states that have never sent a woman to the U.S. Congress. We hope that 'Ready to Run' will encourage Iowa women to seek public office and give

them the tools they need to be successful," she said.

The program will discuss such topics as positioning yourself for public office, putting a campaign together, raising money, media strategies, running as an outsider or challenger, and addressing issues of diversity. Additional information and registration forms are available at the website, www.las.iastate.edu/CattCenter or by contacting our office at 515-294-3181.

CAWP established its "Ready to Run" program in 1998 as a bi-partisan effort to recruit and train New Jersey women to run for all levels of office and to help address the under-representation of women in American politics.

Catt Center Offers Several Courses Focusing on Women and Leadership Topics

Through its Joni and John Axel Leadership Development Series of seminars, the Catt Center offers academic course credit on several leadership topics. This semester, students can earn three credit hours by taking "Women in Leadership and Public Service."

The course focuses on women's political leadership and public service in the United States and centers on three major questions: Do women have an identifiably different way of leading? How does this leadership manifest itself in the public arena? Why does women's public leadership matter? Students will discuss historical differences in the kinds of leadership and service in which women have engaged in as well as learn

about the theories of women's political and public leadership. Presentations by national, state and local women leaders will highlight the opportunities and constraints they face on their road to political leadership and public service as well as their projections for the future.

In addition, the Center is also co-sponsoring "Leadership, Personal and Professional Explorations for Women." This course is being co-taught by the staff of the Catt Center, LAS Career Services, Program for Women and Science and Engineering and the Student Activities Center.

This course takes a comprehensive approach to understanding women's

unique issues and experiences as they relate to leadership, the professional workplace, and professional and personal choices. Field trips, guest speakers, leadership assessments and other hands-on opportunities help illustrate the challenges and opportunities that women have following their college education.

The Axel Leadership Development Series also includes two other courses, "Leadership Styles and Strategies in a Diverse Society," which is taught in the fall, and "Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Women and Leadership," which is taught alternately in the spring with "Women in Leadership and Public Service."

Mary Louise Smith Chairs O'Brien and Townsend Stress Importance of Connections

Working hard and forming connections were common themes shared by CNN news anchor Soledad O'Brien and former Maryland Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend in their recent visits to Iowa State University as the 2005-2006 Mary Louise Smith Chairs in Women and Politics.

O'Brien, the co-anchor of CNN's *American Morning*, received the Hispanic Achievement Award in Communications in 1997 and the Hispanic Heritage Award in 2005. Townsend, Maryland's first woman lieutenant governor from 1995-2003, is the eldest child of Robert and Ethel Kennedy. She narrowly lost a bid to become Maryland's first woman governor in 2002. More than 700 people attended their public presentations.

During her visit on Oct. 27, 2005, O'Brien led a roundtable discussion with students on women and minorities in the media; gave remarks at a donor/scholar dinner hosted by the Center; and presented a public lecture titled, "Women and Leadership: Mentoring the Next Generation."

"O'Brien is a strong advocate of mentoring as a way to keep young people motivated and hopeful. A product



O'Brien talks to a group of students at an open forum during her visit on Oct. 27, 2005. She illustrated the challenges facing women and minorities in relation to the media.

of mentoring herself, she discussed how mentoring allowed her to find her way in the world and learn the values of determination and hard work as means to a greater end," said Dianne Bystrom, director of the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics.

During her lecture, O'Brien said that mentoring is critical to success in the workforce. She gave examples of people who could be mentors as well as advice on how to be a good mentee.

"Do it all—any time you are challenged, take on more," O'Brien said to the young women at her lecture.

During her lecture on "Gender and Executive Leadership: Are We Ready for the Next Woman President?" on March 29, 2006, Townsend challenged the young women in the audience to get involved and make a difference.

Townsend also led a roundtable discussion on volunteerism and community service with Catt Center students, members of the League of Women Voters of Ames and other ISU students. She was the guest of honor at a dinner hosted by President Gregory Geoffroy and his wife, Kathy, at The Knoll. Catt Center students and university and local leaders also attended the dinner.

Townsend said many women were taught to keep their mouths shut and be nice, lovely and sweet, but said things today need to change.

"Women can be ambitious and reach their goals. We need to change the culture to allow for that to be okay," she said.

Townsend cited a recent study on seven things women look for in a job: good colleagues, being themselves, meaningful work, making a difference, juggling work and family, recognition and money.



Townsend talks to Emily Jensen about her goals following college at a reception for student leaders and Catt Center supporters.

She pointed out that while the list includes important aspects in life, none of them say "I want to change the world." Townsend added the women need to take the initiative.

"Women need to be tough, uncomfortable, and tell you the truth," she said.

The Mary Louise Smith Chair in Women and Politics was established in 1995 to honor the Iowa native and longtime political and civic leader. Its purpose is to bring nationally renowned political leaders, scholars and activists to Iowa State to enrich the experiences of students and educate citizens about the role of women in the political process.

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Sherr Serves as Fall 2006 Mary Louise Smith Chair

ABC News correspondent Lynn Sherr shared her insight as a woman journalist during her public presentation on “Outside the Box: Women, Politics and Media” on Nov. 28 as the fall 2006 Mary Louise Smith Chair in Women and Politics.

Sherr joined ABC News in 1986 and covers such stories as social change and women’s issues as well as investigative reports. She has received an Emmy, two American Women in Radio and Television Commendation Awards and a George Foster Peabody Award.

During her visit to Iowa State, Sherr gave remarks at a dinner with donors, students and friends of the Carrie Chapman Catt Center. More than 300 people attended her public lecture at the Memorial Union where she spoke about her participation in the women’s rights movement.

“I didn’t only cover the feminist movement, I was part of it,” Sherr said.

Sherr also spoke about the importance of good journalism and urged the audience members to get their news from more than one source in order to get the full story.

“I became a reporter for a very corny reason – to tell the truth and help make sense and bring order to what I see as a very disordered world,” she said.



Sherr talks to students while she autographs books following her public presentation. Her recent books include "Out the Box" and "Failure is Impossible: Susan B. Anthony in Her Own Words."

Catt Associates Continue to Educate and Engage ISU

The Catt Associates student organization has started off their spring semester with numerous events and activities.

Last semester, the students created a calendar titled *Women Impacting ISU* that pays tribute to the women students, faculty and staff who have distinguished themselves through outstanding accomplishments which have influenced Iowa State University. From the

nominations received, 12 women were selected to be honored, including six students and six faculty and staff. The women were recognized in a reception in the Memorial Union on Sunday, Jan. 21, where the calendar was unveiled. Approximately 75 people braved the snowy weather to attend the reception honoring the women featured on the *Women Impacting ISU* calendar. If you are interested in obtaining a calendar, please contact the Catt Center as 2,500 of the 18x24 inch posters are being given away free of charge.

“We hope that this calendar will provide the representation of the achievements women have made through the many facets of the university,” said Jenna Jones, Catt Associates secretary and organizer of the calendar. “The calendar is designed to showcase these women’s accomplishments and inspire women of all generations to take on challenges and have a continuing impact on the university.”

Also, Catt Associates with Citigroup support sponsored their second annual “From Debt to Dollars: Financial Empowerment for Young Women” workshop on Saturday, Feb. 17, in the Memorial Union. More than 60 participants attended sessions on learning how to invest, understanding credit, and financial decisions made during college and after college. Shonna



Jones-Jacobs, training manager from the Office of Financial Education at Citigroup, served as this year’s keynote speaker.

“This year’s workshop built on the success from last year,” said Marisa Stadlman, Catt Associates president. “We hope that the students walked away from the clinic feeling better prepared to make those important financial decisions.”

On Feb. 22, the Catt Associates lobbied during the Regents’ Day at the state Capitol. The Advancing Citizenship Together (ACT) freshman learning community joined them, and the two groups met with state legislators to discuss current legislation and funding for education.

This March, Catt Associates will be sending three students – Jenna Jones, Marisa Stadlman and Sarah Sunderman – to the Women in Congress conference sponsored by the Public Leadership Education Network (PLEN) in Washington, DC, over spring break. The three will attend the conference with other women from universities across the United States and hear from top women political leaders from the nation’s Capitol.

Catt Associates will continue to meet a few times a month and be active on campus and in the community.

Center Students Visit Ames High School to Discuss Importance of Political Participation

The Catt Associates student organization and ACT (Advancing Citizenship Together) freshman learning community worked together to educate Ames High School students about the importance of political participation and voting in the upcoming midterm and general elections.

On Oct. 30 and Nov. 2, the two organizations attended five American government classes at the high school. The college students played a quiz show game with the seniors to test their knowledge about the upcoming midterm

election and politics. Questions included asking who their national senators were, who their state representatives were, and who was running for Ames City Council.

“We wanted to familiarize the high school students with local politics and get them interested in voting,” said Marisa Stadlman, Catt Associates president and ACT peer mentor. “Young people often say that the politicians don’t care about them, but young people don’t vote in the same proportion as older citizens. Why should the politicians care if they don’t vote?”

The students were also quizzed on their knowledge about women in politics.

“This was a great way to show the young women that they can succeed in politics,” said Jenna Jones, Catt Associates member. “Historically, women have been involved but need to participate to a greater extent.”

Each class period ended with question-and-answer sessions so the AHS seniors could ask the college students about their own interests in politics as well as life in college.

Friends Honor Jane Greimann with Contributions to the Legacy of Heroines Scholarship Fund

It was a year ago, February 4, 2006, that the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics lost a good friend, former state representative Jane Greimann.



Greimann was an active member of the community. She taught art, health, and family and consumer science at Nevada Junior High School for 16 years; served in the House of Representatives of the Iowa Legislature for five years; was on the Mid-Iowa Community Action Board and Hawk-I-State Board, and was a community service volunteer. Greimann was also involved in the Center as an invited speaker and guest at many of its events and activities.

The Center received more than \$1,500 to fund a Jane Greimann Legacy of Heroines Scholarship. The scholarship program provides students with unique opportunities such as meeting outstanding local and national leaders, participating in Center events, receiving recommendations for scholarships and awards, and serving as peer mentors for freshman students.

The 2006-2007 recipient of the Jane Greimann scholarship is Jenna Jones. A senior majoring in management and journalism, Jones has served as president and secretary of the Catt Associates student organization, on the GSB executive cabinet, and as director of public relations for Political Action Week. She co-chairs the Committee on Lectures, was a 2004 election official, and was selected for the 2006 VEISHEA outstanding student leader award.

“It was an honor for me to receive a scholarship in honor of a woman who made such a positive impact in politics and in her community,” Jones said.

The Center would like to thank those who gave to the scholarship fund. Because many of the gifts were cash from miscellaneous donors, we were unable to list their names.

The Catt Center continues to accept gifts to support this scholarship. If you are interested, please contact the Center.

Thank you to those who donated to the Jane Greimann Legacy of Heroines Scholarship fund.:

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