

# YOUNGER WOMEN'S TASK FORCE



younger women's task force  
A Project of National Council of  
Women's Organizations

A PROJECT OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS  
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Dear YWTF Members:

Addressing a group of YWTF Chapter Directors around a small table in the US Capitol, Hilda Solis, a Democratic Congresswoman from California, thanked us for "making history by organizing the next generation of women leaders."

On July 15, nine YWTF Chapter Directors did indeed make history as they gathered in Washington for the YWTF Chapter Director Retreat. The retreat began with a welcome reception hosted by YWTF's DC Metro Chapter, followed by two days of strategic planning during which Directors finalized YWTF's mission, vision, goals and structure (see page 2). The third day was packed with trainings in grassroots organizing, fundraising, and lobbying. During the final day, YWTF Directors lobbied their members of Congress on issues of concern to younger women. The retreat ended with a bang when six members of Congress sat around a table with YWTF Directors for over an hour! During this intimate "Congressional Dialogue," members engaged us in discussion about a variety of younger women's issues. To read more about the Congressional Dialogue, see page 2.



YWTF Chapter Directors meet with women members of Congress

YWTF has truly grown into a nationwide, grassroots movement. YWTF has over 1,000 members in eleven chapters across the country, as well as a re-organized National Coordinating Committee, made up of some of the original founding NCC members as well as some Chapter Directors. These past few months, YWTF leaders have spoken at over a dozen conferences at venues including the Constitution Center in Philadelphia and the Women's Rights Park at Seneca Falls.



YWTF members and Martha Burk, NCWO Chair at Women's Rights National Park, Seneca Falls

And the most exciting news is that YWTF has launched its own web site! Please visit us at [www.ywtf.org](http://www.ywtf.org).

Finally, I would like to welcome YWTF's two new Chapter Directors, Andrea Carson Tanner and Jeni Daniels. Andrea, Director of YWTF Philadelphia, majored in women's studies at Emory University. She has worked in the field of university admissions and served as Co-Vice President of Programming American Association of University Women branch. Jeni Daniels is a senior at Tulane who will pursue her Ph.D in English and Drama upon graduation. Jeni was in midst of launching the YWTF New Orleans chapter when the horrible tragedy of Katrina hit her city. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jeni during this terrible time.

Alison Stein  
YWTF Project Director

YWTF and Oxygen Television partnered on a campaign to get the word out about the dangers to younger women of privatizing social security. Please click on the link below and forward the message on to everyone you know!

[http://speakup.oxygen.com/campaigns/social\\_security/](http://speakup.oxygen.com/campaigns/social_security/)



# Events



## YWTF DC Metro Hosts the National Regional Director's Welcoming Reception

By: *Adriane Casalotti, Newsletter Editor, YWTF DC Metro Chapter*

What do you get when you mix YWTF leaders, the DC chapter and salt rimmed glasses? "Feminist Margaritas on the Rocks"!



YWTF chapter directors network with YWTF DC chapter members

On July 15, women leaders from around the country converged to mark the kickoff of the YWTF Regional Director's Summer Retreat—a five day conference held on the campus of the George Washington University. In order to welcome the participants, the DC Metro Chapter took the lead to produce a networking happy hour reception at Teatism, a local restaurant. The event served as a much needed break from traveling and as an introduction to the Nation's capital. Moreover, with over 30 members in attendance, it was a unique opportunity for Task Force Directors from chapters across the country to network with the membership of the DC chapter.

During the event, each chapter director spoke about the current state of their chapter and their visions for the organization. Each director received a special hand-made gift bag full of essential DC goodies (complete with maps and ear-plugs and feminist literature) and was treated to exotic food

and drink.

Members of the DC Chapter were thrilled with the product of their labor. Deva Kyle, the DC Chapter Director, described the event as a success. "The welcoming reception was an excellent opportunity for young women active in the DC community to learn from, and share with young women leaders from around the country," she said.

Beyond the official goals for the event, Kyle noted an additional benefit to the reception. "The event was a tremendous success. It not only served as a networking function with prominent young members of the established women's movement, it also acted as an outreach opportunity for those not already involved."



Susanna Murley (YWTF Graphic Designer), and Deva Kyle (YWTF DC Chapter Director)

## Congressional Dialogue

By: *Andrea Carson Tanner, YWTF Philadelphia Chapter Director*

Topics like reproductive rights, violence against women, and workplace issues are on the minds of both young women and our national leaders. During our chapter director retreat in July, YWTF leaders met with congresswomen from the Democratic Women's Working Group. It was a busy day on Capitol Hill since Congress was in session, but six legislators took time to learn about YWTF and discuss some of the topics that are of concern to younger women. Hilda Solis (CA-32), Lois Capps (CA-23), Jan Schakowsky (IL-9), Stephanie Herseth (SD), Marcy Kaptur (OH-9), and Debbie Wasserman Schultz (FL-20) were present for the discussion. Following a welcome by Representative Solis, the Roundtable kicked off with a dialogue about reproductive freedom and pending legislation that will ensure women enjoy the rights they are guaranteed. The upcoming debate on the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act was the next topic, and Representative Schakowsky and YWTF Miami chapter director Sophie Brion shared their experiences in working on the important issue of domestic violence. The hour wrapped up with Representative Kaptur outlining her goals for pay equity and economic equality for women, one aspect of which is fair access to credit. The time we spent together was not only a chance for us to introduce a new grassroots organization to the nation's women leaders, but also to truly engage in a dialogue about the work we do in our lives – as professionals and as volunteers – and the issues we are all passionate about. Overall, the congresswomen were delighted to make contact with the young leaders of YWTF, and the chapter directors were honored to have an audience with some of the most influential women in the country. In the end, everyone expressed a sincere interest in working together on a variety of issues in the coming months and years.



Andrea Carson Tanner speaks with Congresswoman Lois Capps

# Community

## Notes from NCWO: Hatching Policy Advocates



By: Ellen Boneparth, NCWO Director of Special Programs

A new flock of policy advocates was hatched this summer in NCWO's summer training program, New Faces, More Voices. Thirty younger women working in 23 different Washington women's organizations broke out of their academic shells to learn the skills necessary to advocate for women's issues.

The training covered the history of the women's movement, legislative politics, coalition building and grass roots organizing, and communications and message development. The New Faces, More Voices participants chose their own issues for lobbying -- research and funding for microbicides to provide women protection from sexually transmitted diseases and for obstetric fistula repair for women in developing countries.

The participants made lobby visits to the Hill at the end of the program and were thrilled to discover that they could play a vital role in the process of informing and persuading legislators on women's issues. As one participant put it, "My opinion of lobbying before my day on the Hill was pretty poor. I felt that the contingent of lobbyists from 'Gucci Gulch' was privileged and used means other than pure interest to secure access. After this, I realized that any person, rich or poor, can have access and potentially influence a congressperson on a subject that they feel strongly about."

The training concluded with a session on career development, "Where Do We Go From Here?" Six members of the Younger Women's Task Force conducted conversations with the New Faces, More Voices participants over how they made career choices and launched their own careers, and provided tips for taking Washington by storm. Thanks go to Lucy Melvin, Girls Inc, Taylor Hatcher, National Partnership for Women and Families, Deva Kyle, pension lawyer at the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation, Laura Fenimore, Senate Democratic Policy Committee, Andrea Minkow, Senate Democratic Steering and Outreach Committee, and Shireen Mitchell, Digital Sister.

To all our wonderful 2005 participants, spread your wings and fly!

New Faces, More Voices is free and open to interns working in NCWO member organizations. To read the 2005 Report on the program, go to our website, [www.womensorganizations.org](http://www.womensorganizations.org). For information about our 2006 program, check the website around January 1, 2006 or email [ellenb@ncwo-online.org](mailto:ellenb@ncwo-online.org).

## YWTF DC Metro Supports Jr. NYLC

By: Adriane Casalotti, Newsletter Editor, YWTF DC Metro Chapter

On August 5, members Emily Skelton and Jenn Taylor represented YWTF DC Metro by presenting a workshop for the Jr. National Young Leaders Conference. Every year, junior high school students who embody leadership skills and/or leadership potential are nominated to participate in this 10-day conference that is open to students throughout the country.



Deva Kyle, Chair YWTF DC  
and Aisha Taylor, YWTF DC  
Outreach Director

Both Emily and Jenn presented two workshop sessions on the topic of Body Image and Eating Disorders; one of several social action workshops the students had an opportunity to choose. Each session included approximately 25 students (both boys and girls) who were very participative and eager to share their personal experiences regarding body image.

A primary focus of the workshop was to give these young leaders the opportunity to discuss ways to deal with the problem of negative body images and strategies to bring about positive change in their communities. Both Emily and Jenn were encouraged by the students' insight and enthusiasm.



YWTF DC Metro Members, Emily  
Skelton (left) and Jenn Taylor

## Regional News

### New York YWTF Pushes High Heel Vote

By, Erin Lee Mock, YWTF NY Chapter Director

About a year ago, everyone was hearing the figure: 22 million single women under 40 didn't vote in 2000. Pundits, politicians, and PACs were trying to mobilize what they called "The High Heel Vote" for the 2004 Presidential election. Whether or not they were successful, we won't know for some time . . . but every year is an election year and the NY YWTF is sending informed younger women to the polls in numbers to vote for their city officials.

Our members have been trained to register younger women voters and will be hitting the streets (and other places younger women go- bars, clubs, shopping districts) two weekends in September to register and educate women about the local election and the important role they can play.

But it doesn't stop when we sign them up. Our Policy group asked the mayoral candidates 10 questions important to our constituency, considering issues from the availability of emergency contraception to the safety of our subways and buses. For the first time, we heard younger women's questions about our own concerns answered and were addressed as the powerful voting bloc we know we can be! When younger women in New York open newspapers as the election nears, we will be able to read about what matters to us, thanks to our efforts in writing articles, letters to the editor, and op-eds making the candidates' answers to our 10 question survey available to the public. These answers will also be accessible through our voter education booklets, as will other information about the ins and outs of municipal voting.

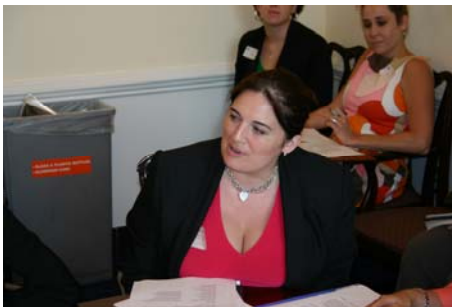


Kristin Bradfield, YWTF Phoenix Chapter Director, Alison Stein, YWTF Project Director, and Erin Lee Mock, YWTF NY Chapter Director at the Congressional Briefing

### Phoenix YWTF to Host Arizona Young Women Meet-Up

By, Kristin Bradfield, YWTF Phoenix Chapter Director

The Wild West is about to get a little wilder with the Greater Phoenix Chapter hosting an Arizona Meet-Up January 26-28th in Scottsdale, AZ. The Meet-Up, which is being modeled after the 2005 National Meet-Up in Washington, DC will provide a venue for drafting the Arizona Younger Women's Issues agenda. The Meet-up will bring together women in their 20s and 30s from all over Arizona including Phoenix, northern and southern Arizona. The steering committee is putting its recruitment focus on bringing together a diverse group of women that represent the unique women of Arizona. Distribution of applications began on September 1, 2005 at various locations around the state. The Meet-Up will include intergenerational dinners with women who forged the women's movement in Arizona, women in their 20s and 30s, and teenage girls from local middle schools and high schools. Phoenix Chapter Director Kristin Bradfield says, "We are trying to eliminate the concept of waves and make this more about a continuous dialogue that fosters learning from one another. I know there



Kristin Bradfield at the Congressional Briefing

are things that I can learn from both the women before me AND the women behind me and we really wanted the dinners to create a space for discussion for women across the continuum." This will be the first event in Phoenix of its kind and the chapter hopes to see approximately 100 women in attendance. The communication of younger women's issues will also spread to state and local legislators at a Legislators Luncheon, which wraps up the Meet-Up. "We are really excited about this opportunity because it will give us an immediate audience for the issues we have spent time discussing over the weekend. We are also hoping it will establish the relationships needed for future dialogue and that state and local leaders will see us as a resource for guidance on younger women's issues," says Nicole Critz, a Phoenix Chapter member who is on the steering committee. Applications are available on the YWTF website; the application deadline is October 31, 2005. For more information please contact Kristin Bradfield at azgift@excite.com. Scholarships are going to be offered for women who cannot afford the cost. The chapter has sent out almost 50 sponsorship packets to local corporations and businesses, hoping they will sponsor various aspects of the event.

## Regional News

### Seattle Chapter: What's Happening?

By, Lauren Luttrell, YWTF Seattle Chapter Director

I have a confession to make; my roommate is an extreme conservative....

When I get in his car, conservative talk radio is blaring, right wing books line his shelves and Fox news is merely a flick of the remote away. We just might have had an argument or two (or a hundred) about politics and policy. But while he has easy access to a litany of like minded conservative radio, television and books, for me the progressive voice is harder to access. When we light into an argument I have a tendency to debate the merits of a specific policy, which my roommate will discard because my arguments don't fit into his value system. I need tools to assert how my policy ideas for access to birth control fit into my overall belief in a just society.



Lauren Luttrell at the Congressional Briefing

Luckily, George Lakoff addresses this progressive tendency of stating policy points rather than the underlying values in his book *Don't Think of an Elephant*. In it, he asserts progressives should "reframe the debate" and invest in progressive media, think tanks and research. "Strategic Framing is an effort to revitalize progressive discourse by reframing progressive policies in ways that speak to shared American values" (Rockridge Institute). "Framing is about moral values and systems of ideas primarily and secondarily about the language used to express those values and ideas," says Lakoff.

In June YWTF Seattle joined with over thirty community groups to bring Lakoff and his message about reframing progressive values to Seattle. We came together to host two 800-person Town Hall events and a series of small group events. Leaders of the Seattle progressive community, including the Younger Women's Task Force, participated in two intensive workshops to learn in-depth skills to "frame the debate." Young women joined together for a happy hour to discuss how we could use framing to advance our issues.

### New York YWTF Makes Headlines With Letter to the Editor

#### *The Following Op-Ed Appeared in the Metro NY*

By, Julia Kohn, YWTF Communications Director

This week, Gov. Pataki vetoed a bill that would have made emergency contraception (EC) available over the counter in New York state. EC, which can prevent pregnancy when taken up to 120 hours after intercourse, is one of the best methods we have to reduce unintended pregnancies and, ultimately, abortions. Because EC is more effective the sooner it is taken, women should be able to purchase this safe and effective method over the counter.

I am a proud New Yorker and a member of the New York Younger Women's Task Force, a coalition of progressive younger women working to increase the impact of younger women activists through collaboration on a common agenda. Seven states have already made EC available without a prescription; New York should be a leader in advancing women's rights – not falling behind.



Interested in becoming a member? Please visit our website at [www.ywtf.org](http://www.ywtf.org)

The YWTF Newsletter will be a quarterly publication containing updates on Task Force activities and efforts across the country and highlighting issues of interest to Task Force members. Thank you for reading, and please visit our website for more information at [YWTF@NCWO-online.org](mailto:YWTF@NCWO-online.org).