

CHOICES

Feminist Majority Foundation Campus Program E-Zine

February 26, 2007

www.feministcampus.org

"The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any."

Alice Walker

Note from the Campus Team

This semester is flying by as we hit the halfway mark with the very momentous Spring Break! This is the time when all college students from East Coast to West Coast from the Midwest to the Deep South, forget all about books, teachers and tests to let loose for one grand week of, well, you know. Before you pack your bathing suits and towels, remember to Back Up Your Birth Control!

March is Women's Herstory Month as well as International Women's Day. Celebrate by hosting a teach in on Bush's lethal International Family Policies and show the Global Majority Again...DVD. You can also conduct global reproductive rights activities during our Standing with our Sisters Week of Action Commemorating International Women's Day (March 4-10).

Remember to register for the National Young Women's Leadership Conference in Washington, DC March 24 and 25, 2007 on the campus of UDC. Spaces are moving fast! For Equality,
Kassidy Johnson

Black Feminist Activists



Born in Los Angeles in 1933, Diane E. Watson currently serves as the Representative for California's 33rd Congressional District, which includes Culver City and much of the City of Los Angeles. Congresswoman Watson serves on both the Black Congressional Caucus and the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues.

A lifetime champion of women's and civil rights, Watson became the first African American woman to be elected to the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education in 1975. In 1978 the Congresswoman left the LAUSD Board of Education and was elected to the California State Senate. During her time as a California State Senator she became a statewide and national advocate for health care and women and children. In 2001 Watson ran for Congress in a special election defeating both of her male competitors in the Democratic primary and continuing on to win the seat with 75% of the popular vote.

Congresswoman Watson has worked

with the FMF on a number of campaigns including our Feminization of Power (FOP) campaign to encourage record numbers of women to run for office; the campaign helped double the percentage of women in Congress in 1992. Watson also worked with the FMF to try and defeat Prop. 209, a deceptive anti-affirmative action measure on the ballot in California in 1996. The measure narrowly passed resulting in the elimination of race and gender-based affirmative action programs in education, employment and public contracting in the state.

In her time as Congresswoman, Watson has voted against bans on Partial-Birth Abortion, Same-Sex Marriage and Human Cloning. She also voted against funding the Iraq war, drilling in the ANWR and approving Bush's tax cuts. Currently the Congresswoman is cosponsoring legislation that calls for the Government of Japan to formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility for its Imperial Armed Force's coercion of 200,000 women into sexual slavery from the 1930s through World War II.

Sandi Lyman, West Coast Organizer

Sojourner Truth Celebration on the Hill

The National Congress of Black Women, The National Council of Negro Women and the Feminist Majority Foundation, were all on hand to celebrate the passing of the Sojourner Truth Bill. The historic move came after U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Texas, and U.S. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., authored legislation for the creation of the monument to honor the woman who spent much of her life preaching for the abolition of slavery and women's suffrage.

President Bush signed the legislation requiring that a bust of Sojourner Truth be erected in the United States Capitol next to

the statue of other suffrage movement members, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott.

"The recognition by the Congress and the president that Sojourner Truth, one of the nation's greatest women's rights leaders, should be honored in the Capitol is both well deserved and long overdue," said Jackson Lee, who added that the late Dr. C. Delores Tucker, who served as past president of the National Congress of Black Women, was instrumental in initiating the project almost 10 years ago.

The program started off with a reading of

Truth's famous poem "Aint I A Woman" by 7th grade student Josephine Poole and included speakers, Ellie Smeal, president of the Feminist Majority Foundation, the Honorable Hillary Rodman Clinton, the Honorable Shelia Jackson Lee, Dr. Dorothy I.



Continued pg. 2

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Sojourner Truth Celebration on the Hill cont.

Height, Founder and Chair of the National Council of Negro Women, Dr. E. Faye Williams, National Chair of the National Congress of Black Women, Cicely Tyson, actress, Kim Gandy, NOW President, and the Honorable Diane Watson.

The work isn't over though, the statute



has been approved, but the money for Truth's statue still needs to be raised. "This is historic because Sojourner Truth is that symbolic person," said Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee D-Texas. She announced that Wal-Mart Stores Inc., has donated \$100,000 for the project.

Supporters must raise \$2 million to commission and produce the bust by the Dec. 20, 2008 deadline.

In previous years, she has been inducted into both the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame (1983) and the National Women's Hall of Fame (1981) in Seneca Falls, N.Y. A United States Postage Stamp was dedicated in her honor at the Sojourner Truth Library in New Paltz, N.Y., on February 5, 1986.

She died in November 1883 at her home in Battle Creek, Mich.

Ashley Bennett and Cassidy Johnson

The
**FEMINIST MAJORITY
FOUNDATION**
proudly presents...

The National Young
Women's Leadership
Conference:
From Campus to Congress

**Saturday March 24 &
Sunday March 25, 2007**

On the campus of
University of the
District of Columbia

Global and Domestic
Reproductive Rights
Acclaimed Feminist speakers
And other feminists
JUST LIKE YOU!

Equal Pay for Equal Play

Thirty-nine years after Wimbledon became a professional event, women singles players will finally receive prize money equal to that of their male counterparts.

When Billie Jean King was the "ladies" singles champion at the famed British venue in 1968, she received 750 British pounds, while men's champion Rod Laver won 2,000. As the purses grew and the gender discrepancy continued over the years, King, other players and women's sports activists lobbied for equity to no avail. Last year, Wimbledon women's singles champion Amelie Mauresmo earned \$53,000 less than men's champion Roger Federer. Tim Phillips, chairman of the All England Club, which sponsors the 130-year-old tournament, insisted that the prize payments were driven by market forces and not by gender.

But powerful young women champions such as Venus Williams and Maria Sharapova began speaking out strongly for equal pay, and their viewpoint was endorsed by no less than British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Finally, the All England Club had to agree.

"This news has been a long time coming," said Billie Jean King. "Wimbledon is one of the most respected events in all of sports and now with women and men paid on an equal scale, it demonstrates to the rest of the world that this is the right thing to do for the sport, the tournament and the world."

FMF Organizers Visit Colorado Campuses

As part of their travel and outreach in Colorado, West Coast campus organizers Sandi Lyman and Olivia Ortiz met with teams of pro-choice young women on college campuses from Denver to Fort Collins this past week to rally support for young women's reproductive freedom across state and city lines. Organizers also met with scores of students to plan and prepare for the FMF's Colorado Regional Conference on Women's Rights and Leadership slated for April 14th at UC Boulder.

On V-Day, Wednesday, February 14th, young women on the CU-Boulder campus gathered around a table in the University Memorial Center to speak out against the latest attack on a young woman's right to choose in Colorado. Like the recently defeated South Dakota Abortion Ban, the Colorado bill, titled the "End Freedom of Choice Act" (SB 143), aimed to ban all abortions for women in the state and included no provision for rape, incest or the health of the mother.

Speaking with young women leaders and feminist faculty at Metropolitan State College of Denver, the University of Denver, and at Colorado State University - Fort Collins, FMF organizers discussed strategies for building coalitions between existing campus groups working for women's rights, social justice and peace while gath-

ering ideas and input for the regional conference. Many students and professors were eager to network with other feminist students and faculty in the state while working together to create a feminist, "woman-friendly" or "pro-woman" climate on their own campus using the Choices Campus Leadership Program framework.

Many faculty and students, women and men, came forward on campuses in Denver, Boulder and Fort Collins to sign Feminist Majority Foundation's "Save Women's Lives" petitions and demand an end to the deaths of women worldwide due to botched and unsafe abortions. These petitions will be delivered to Congress in March during the FMF's National Young Women's Leadership Conference.

FMF organizers ended the week at the 2007 Women's Herstory Conference at CSU Fort Collins. There they were able to meet with keynote speaker Lisa Calderón whose keynote address dealt with feminism and the hip-hop generation.

To register for Colorado's Western Regional Conference on Women's Rights and Leadership visit <http://feministcampus.org/leadership/regional.asp> or e-mail WestCoast-Team@feminist.org.

Olivia Ortiz, West Coast Organizer

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