



ARIZONA WOMEN'S EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT, INC.

WOMEN & WORK: THE FUTURE

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Insights and Recommendations on the Future of Women and Work in Arizona

Made possible through the Arizona Women's Education & Employment's 2006 "Women & Work: The Future" Symposium
March 30 and 31, 2006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More than 30 years ago, women started entering the workforce in large numbers. This environment has changed significantly since then, but as the landscape continues to evolve, issues exist that hamper the ability for women to reenter the workforce, or to compete professionally as effectively as male peers.

Indeed, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the average male worker with a full-time, year-round job earns \$54,803 per year, which is about 32 percent more than his average female counterpart, who earns \$37,123.

Consider also that women, on average, spend 11 years out of the workforce during their lifetime. Called the "sandwich generation," or people caught between the often conflicting demands of raising children and caring for aging parents or other relatives, these individuals face challenges in returning to or competing in the workforce. In fact, many face refusal of job offers or reductions in income in order to accommodate these demands.

In March, Arizona Women's Education & Employment, Inc. (AWEE) presented "Women & Work: The Future" symposium as part of its celebration of changing lives through the dignity of work for 25 years. The two-day symposium, held March 30 and 31 at the Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa, was attended by nearly 200 participants. The conference goal was to identify key issues facing women in the workforce and develop recommendations to address and enhance these issues.

An overview of the key recommendations that emerged from the symposium follows:

Recommendation: Educators need to emphasize students' need for lifelong learning; employers need to broaden the categories of employment contracts/relationships; policy makers need to enact legislation that adequately protects employees from losses of retirement savings.

Recommendation: Policy makers need to invest in alternative forms of education; employers need to partner with workforce development organizations and support think tanks whose research can anticipate emerging trends in the global economy and in our society.



Recommendation: Employers and policy makers should collaborate to redefine “retirement” and workplace policies need to be adjusted to encourage and facilitate the participation.

Recommendation: Employers need to emphasize outcomes and results and recognize that most employees, especially women, balance work and other responsibilities of adult life.

Recommendation: Re-entering employees should be hired and compensated according to their ability to perform in specific assignments, regardless of how long or why they have been out of the workforce.

Our hope is that policy leaders, employers, and workforce development organizations will use these recommendations as a starting point for implementing changes in the workplace. We hope as well that AWEE’s leadership will use these recommendations to review the organization’s priorities and strengthen its programs and services.

OVERVIEW

Organized by AWEE board member and Northern Arizona University President Emerita, Clara Lovett, the two-day symposium was attended by nearly 200 key representatives of Arizona state and local government, large corporate employers and small businesses, educators, human resource professionals, non-profit community organizations, and philanthropic foundations.

The overall purpose was to chart a course for the enhancement of the workforce environment for women. The symposium brought together provocative national and local experts to discuss challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for Arizona women and for the employers and policy makers whose decisions impact the workplace. Sessions addressed topics on women and retirement, balancing work and other adult responsibilities, and preparation for the jobs of the future.

The event was sponsored by B&L Charitable Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, Maricopa Community Colleges, Wells Fargo, Salt River Project, TriWest Healthcare Alliance, Arizona Foundation for Women, Northern Arizona University, and The Business Journal.

Event speakers included:

- Ms. Betsey Bayless, CEO, Maricopa Integrated Health System
- Mr. Robert B. Bulla, CEO (retired), Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona
- Dr. Elizabeth Cabrera, Associate Professor Visiting, ASU at the West campus
- Ms. Shinae Chun, Director, Women’s Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor



- Ms. Nancy Dean, Executive Director, Arizona Foundation for Women
- Ms. Beth Ellenby, President, The Rest of Your Life Productions
- Dr. Rufus Glasper, Chancellor, Maricopa Community Colleges
- Ms. Marsha Goodman, Esq., AWEE Board Chair and CEO, U. S. Business Interiors
- Ms. Mary Ann Guerra, Chief Operating Officer, TGen Corporation
- Dr. Marjorie Lightman, Partner in the consulting firm QED Associates and senior fellow at WREI (Women's Research and Education Institute) in Washington, D.C.
- Dr. Clara Lovett, Symposium Coordinator and President Emerita, Northern Arizona University
- Ms. Valerie Manning, CEO (retired), Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce
- Ms. Darcy Renfro, Policy Advisor to the Governor of Arizona for Higher Education, Tourism and the Economy
- Ms. Donna Schober, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor, Maricopa Community Colleges
- Ms. Marie Sullivan, President and CEO, AWEE
- Dr. Linda Thor, President, Rio Salado College
- Dr. Mary Vanis, Director of the Center for Workforce Development, Maricopa Community Colleges
- Ms. Carol Warner, President and Chief Operating Officer, Johnson Carlier Construction
- Dr. Nancy Welch, Associate Director, Morrison Institute for Public Policy
- Ms. Gay Ann Williams, Vice President, Health Net of Arizona and AWEE board member
- Mr. Thomas Ziemba, Executive Director, Project for Arizona's Future



HIGHLIGHTS OF PRESENTATIONS

“High-tech jobs are driving the U.S. economy,” said Shinae Chun, director of the Women’s Bureau at the U.S. Department of Labor. “Nearly every existing or newly

created job has some type of high-tech component associated with it.” Chun served as one the symposium’s key presenters sharing the national perspective on women in the workforce.

“When you climb one mountain, you find another mountain to climb.”

“Women see connections where there seems to be no connection.”

“It is important to note that women’s employment patterns are different,” Chun said. “They are more likely to work in part-time jobs or work fewer years because of interruptions in their careers to take care of family members.” Chun pointed out that this pattern decreases a woman’s ability to attain the same retirement savings as her male counterparts in the workforce, and at the same time, reduces a woman’s capacity to stay on top of new technology.

Chun addressed the critical importance of education for women. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, from 2004 – 2014, 36 percent of the 19 million new jobs are projected to be filled by those with a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Dr. Rufus Glasper, Chancellor of the Maricopa Community College District, echoed Ms. Chun’s remarks on the importance of educating women. He spoke about efforts to bring together Arizona policy makers, employers, and educators to address the future needs of the state through initiatives such as the Governor’s P-20 Council and the Arizona Bioscience Foundation.

“Retirement as we have known is an obsolete concept.”

Marjorie Lightman, partner in the consulting firm QED Associates and senior fellow at WREI in Washington, D.C., spoke about trends affecting the large cohort of baby boomer women who are now approaching the traditional retirement age. “On average, a female retiring at 55 can expect to live another 27 years, four years longer than a male retiring at the same age,” Dr. Lightman said. She noted the need to rethink career patterns and traditional notions of what retirement means – a big issue for women who live longer than men, earn less on average, and accumulate fewer assets during their working years.

“None of the top ten jobs in 2016 exists today.”

“All ‘new’ jobs will require training in technology at some level.”

With national data and trends as background, speakers and attendees then proceeded to focus on the current situation in the Arizona workforce and on forecasts for the next 10 to 25 years. An important

“We need to align education and employment for Relevance Results Resolve Resources”



overview was presented by Rufus Glasper, chancellor of the Maricopa Community College District, a major force in workforce development for the state and a long-term partner of AWEE. Dr. Glasper emphasized that education and employment need to be aligned for relevance, results, resolve and resources.

KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The key issues and recommendations that emerged from the presentation and discussions are:

Women can expect very different career patterns and relationships with employers than the generations that preceded them. Most employed adults will change jobs or careers between five and nine times during their prime working years. They will alternate between full- and part-time employment, telecommute, and take time off (with or without pay) for re-training and re-careering. They also will bear primary responsibility for their own health insurance coverage and retirement savings.

Recommendation: Educators at all levels need to emphasize students' need for lifelong learning rather than specialized knowledge and narrow job skills. Employers need to broaden the commonly accepted categories of employment contracts/relationships. Policy makers need to enact legislation that adequately protects employees from Enron-type losses of retirement savings and that provides assistance (e.g., through tax credits) for employees in need of re-training or re-careering.

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|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>"Soft Skills"</i> | |
| ✓ <i>Job satisfaction</i> | ✓ <i>Pleasing customers</i> |
| ✓ <i>General work ethic</i> | ✓ <i>Presentation skills</i> |

The 10 most important jobs in 2016 probably do not even exist today. The global economy that already shapes many work environments is so fluid and dynamic that traditional educational institutions are hard pressed to keep up with the changing needs of young students and returning adults. Moreover, traditional post-secondary education is increasingly less affordable for lower and middle-income students.

Recommendation: Policy makers need to invest in alternative forms of education, including on-line and accelerated programs at the high school and college levels. Employers need to partner with workforce development organizations such as AWEE to create flexible, cost-effective, on-demand programs for employed adults who need to keep up with changing work environments yet do not need or wish to pursue degree programs. Employers should also partner with and support think

tanks such as the Center for the Future of Arizona, whose research can anticipate emerging trends in the global economy and in our society.

Retirement as American workers experienced it in the period ca. 1945-1995 is an obsolete concept. As adult Americans, especially women, live longer and routinely experience jobs and career changes, they establish different relationships with employers and co-workers. As they reach the traditional retirement age, they will continue to seek employment, but not in the fields in which they spent their prime working years.

Recommendation: Employers and policy makers should collaborate to redefine “retirement.” Rather than an exit of still active older adults from the workforce, “retirement” should be viewed as a transition from specific jobs or careers to various forms of paid service to society. Workplace policies need to be adjusted to encourage and facilitate the participation of mature women and men who may work part-time and who may not need employer-provided health insurance.

“Employers’ attitudes: perceive re-entry women as less committed.”
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Flexible work environments are a must if the United States and Arizona are to keep up with the fluid and dynamic global economy and at the same time cope with the graying of their workforce and the increasing cost of health care.

Recommendation: All types of employers need to rethink their expectations, emphasizing outcomes and results rather than time-on-task and recognizing that most employees, especially women, balance work and other responsibilities of adult life. Policy makers need to examine the unintended consequences of archaic laws and regulations, e.g., the ubiquitous ones that deny access to training opportunities and health insurance to part-time employees.

The more fluid and unstable the economic environment, the more likely it is that employees, especially women, at all levels of education will “opt out” and then re-enter the workforce repeatedly during their prime working years.

Recommendation: In the global economy of the 21st century, multiple opt-outs and re-entries should be accepted as the norm in the workplace, not the exception. Re-entering employees should be hired and compensated according to their ability to perform in specific assignments, regardless of how long or why they have been out of the workforce.



SUMMARY

Women play a vital role in the stability and success of the Arizona workforce. Key issues, however, such as access to affordable education and training programs, flexible work schedules to accommodate personal demands, and access to affordable childcare continue to hamper women's ability to compete in or re-enter the workforce.

Enhancing and evolving the workforce environment for women in Arizona requires meaningful and innovative new discussions and key actions from civic and state government, educators, employers and policy leaders.

Exploring opportunities, new strategies, and education practices to embrace multiple strata of women who may be new workers, re-entry workers, those looking for career advancement, regardless of their workforce eligible age, education, and economic background/status, is critical.

Development of employer, educator, and policy leader coalitions in which these discussions can begin is an important first step. Without changes to the workforce environment, women will continue to struggle with these issues, and the result could impact the stability and success of the Arizona workforce.

ABOUT ARIZONA WOMEN'S EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT, INC. (AWEE)

“Women & Work: The Future” symposium highlighted AWEE’s contributions to workforce development in Arizona and helped participants understand what lies ahead – very much in the spirit of the visionary women leaders who founded the organization in the early 1980s. A few highlights of AWEE’s achievements include:

- AWEE has served and supported nearly 40,000 individuals since its inception, placing more than 17,000 people in quality jobs over the last 25 years. That translates into strengthened families and individuals who are better able to function and contribute back to their communities.
- AWEE links its participants to quality jobs. The 2004 average wage at placement was \$9.23 per hour. AWEE also provides critical follow up services that empower individuals to earn better wages over time. The average wages earned at one year after the initial placement is \$10.05 per hour and at two years the wages increase to \$11.71 per hour.

AWEE has an important role to play in evolving the workforce environment in Arizona, both as an advocate of changing workplace policies and practices and as a resource to women in their quest for successful careers and families.

In the years ahead, AWEE will strengthen already established relationships with state and local government to impact the legal and regulatory climate in Arizona. Building stronger relationships with employers, both large and small, to help them make changes that will help them attract highly skilled and motivated women employees and reduce the high costs of attrition and training also will be a priority.

While continuing to focus its efforts on providing education, training, and support to Arizona’s working poor, AWEE recognizes that its “faces of success” may have to go through its programs more than once, as they negotiate a very fluid environment.

AWEE also recognizes that as well as assisting women, including college-educated women, to plan for their long-term financial future, it is becoming as important to assist them to acquire job skills that are useful for the short-term.

Last but not least, and more than ever in the past, AWEE will forge partnerships and strategic alliances with other organizations to meet the huge and growing demand for its services. Along with building a more robust infrastructure to support program participants, AWEE needs to align itself with compatible advocacy organizations in Arizona and with the most innovative institutions and leaders in the realm of education, whether those are public or private, on-site or on-line, old or new.

To learn more about AWEE or to become involved in workforce enhancement initiatives, contact 602-223-4333 or visit AWEE.org.