

CONCEPTS & CONNECTIONS:

— Women & Leadership —

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Conversation with Dr. Helen S. Astin

Co-Author of *Women of Influence, Women of Vision: A Cross-Generational Study of Leaders and Social Change*

NCLP: How did your interest in and work on leadership begin?

Astin: For the past few years, I have been immersed in the study of leaders and leadership. Our book, written with my colleague Carole Leland, *Women of Influence, Women of Vision*, is the outcome of years of work on two major themes: *women and leadership*. Both themes have provided a common bond and many hours of discussion and sharing of ideas between the two of us.

In our own work on leadership, we looked for some unconventional views about the topic and for some new cues and opportunities. In the early 1980's, we heard people beginning to discuss leadership in terms with which we resonated—vision, personal commitment, empowerment, and risk. This was, in large part, the language of the modern women's movement. We realized that the period of social change we had been witnessing and participating in offered women a new way of conceptualizing the meaning and model of leadership for social change. Thus, we were prompted to undertake an in-depth study of seventy-seven women whose passion for justice and equality and whose leadership propelled remarkable achievements on behalf of women.

We began our study with three goals in mind. First, we wanted to profile and compare women who provided leadership during the first two decades of the modern women's movement. The group of women we identified in this leadership cohort, the **Instigators**, were women who were visible change agents and who are recognized for their significant accomplishments on behalf of women. Some instigators were associated

with specific organizations, institutions, and coalitions. These were the positional leaders. Others were identified as leaders because of their influence and leadership as academic scholars and teachers. They were identified as nonpositional leaders.

We also considered it essential to include two other cohorts of women leaders in order to enhance our understanding of the social and historical context of leadership and to explore some aspects of leadership succession. Thus, to our Instigators, we added a representative group of **Predecessors**, or women who served in leadership roles—primarily as institutional administrators—during the 1940's and 1950's. We also added a cohort of **Inheritors** or women who began to assume leadership

roles during the second decade of the modern women's movement.

Our second goal was to document the experience, perspectives, and accomplishments of the three groups of women leaders during these decades. Although new organizations, new legislation, research and writing about women were

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 🏠 *Connections from the Director of NCLP*
- 🏠 *Conversation with Helen S. Astin, Author of Women of Influence, Women of Vision*
- 🏠 *Scholarship and Research Updates*
- 🏠 *Program Spotlight: Arizona State University*
- 🏠 *Training and Techniques: University of Florida*
- 🏠 *Leadership Bookshelf: Life Notes: Personal Writings of Contemporary Black Women*

Continued on page 3

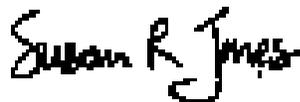
Connections From The Director

At this moment, connections **from** the Director is actually a misnomer. In fact, this is connections **between** directors of NCLP! We are very pleased to welcome Alison Breeze to the University of Maryland and to the position of Director of the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs. Coming to Maryland from Kennesaw State College in Georgia where she served as the Director of Student Life, Alison has a long track record of success in leadership education. Fueling her success in the field is a keen interest in the intricacies of leadership, a genuine commitment to developing leadership programs which are inclusive of multiple perspectives, and a belief in student development.

Alison has participated in the Leadership Symposium for three years and has published both articles and book reviews on various leadership topics. Alison has the skills, vision, and creativity

necessary to provide leadership for the Clearinghouse and to move NCLP forward as the nationally recognized resource in leadership education it has become.

The arrival of a new Director comes on the heels of the departure of Nance Lucas who served as the Director of NCLP for the past three years. Under Nance's leadership, the Clearinghouse opened its doors and flourished! Nationally recognized in the field of leadership education, Nance developed key relationships between NCLP and other professional associations, served as Chair of the InterAssociation Leadership Project, and was instrumental in the implementation of the Leadership Symposium. She is currently on the Eisenhower Leadership Grant team with Helen and Alexander Astin which is creating a prototype leadership development model. Nance's departure from NCLP does not indicate a move away from leadership education, as she is currently serving as the Associate Director of the Center for Political Leadership and Participation at the University of Maryland at College Park. We thank Nance for all the work she has done on behalf of the Clearinghouse and wish her the very best with her new leadership challenges and opportunities!



Susan R. Jones, Coordinator
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NCLP now has course and program descriptions from all previous editions of the Leadership Source Book (1986-1992) compiled by the Center for Creative Leadership. Copies are available to NCLP members upon request. While some of the courses and programs listed may no longer be active, the course syllabi and program descriptions constitute a wonderful resource for those planning and developing leadership courses and programs.

Dr. Helen S. Astin

Continued from page 1

developed in the 1960's and 1970's, the actual events—the struggles and successes—have not been recorded or reported. While many of us have a general notion of what the modern women's movement is about, few of us know the specifics as seen through the eyes of the women who played major leadership roles during that time.

Our third goal was to study the process of leadership for social change and to develop a conceptual model based on the experiences of leaders in this study. We believe that such a model could be useful in future studies of leadership and in the practice of leadership.

NCLP: Can you say more about your conception of leadership?

Astin: We began our study with the premise that leadership is a creative process in that it differs from management as the latter is defined as a process of maintenance. In other words, leadership manifests itself when there is a goal or action intended to bring about change in an organization, an institution, the social system; a change that would improve people's lives.

Management ensures that the system functions to its optimum level, while leadership is a creative process that results in change. We conceptualized leadership as the actions and behaviors of women who worked toward changing social institutions in order to improve women's lives.

I view leadership as a process by which members of a group are empowered to work together synergistically toward a common goal or vision that will create change and transform institutions and thus improve the quality of life. The leader as a catalytic force or facilitator is someone who, by virtue of her position or opportunity, empowers others to collective action towards accomplishing the goal or vision. From our perspective, the process of empowerment and collective action is the cornerstone of leadership.

NCLP: Can you describe further some of the elements in your model?

Astin: In our model for the study and practice of leadership, we underscored the nonhierarchical nature of leadership and the view that the leader was a **facilitator** who enables others to act collectively toward the accomplishment of the common vision. Collective action, passionate commitment, and consistent performance were the essence of leadership exhibited by the women in our study.

Virtually all of the women in the study conceived of leadership as a process of "working with people and through people." All along they acknowledged the thoughts and energies of others who had helped them or who laid the groundwork for their labors.

As agents of social change, these leaders took action because of an acute awareness of injustices in our society. They shared strong convictions and commitments to social justice and change. Many of them, veterans of social movements and causes—labor, peace, civil rights, anti-war, wages, housing, jobs, education—took advantage of or created opportunities to solve problems and to make a difference. Their passion came, in part, from direct personal experiences. For example, witnessing or experiencing discrimination. Their values stemmed from their roots: grandparents, parents, or relatives who also cared passionately about social justice.

In initiating change, they first identified problems and accepted complexity as both a challenge and an opportunity. Then, they developed a network of like-minded

people and worked together within the system to transform it. Their specific qualities and strategies were clarity of values, trusting others, doing one's homework, and listening and empowering. They relied greatly on self-awareness and interpersonal and communication skills. They were facilitators.

NCLP: Can you say more about special skills or strategies they used in their leadership?

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Astin: In response to the question about strategies for change, our women leaders identified three key ingredients: **Be clear on your values, be a good listener, and do your homework.** The role of values in their leadership was articulated in terms of the vision that guides their behavior. These leaders saw their primary role as one of providing vision and having a point of view that articulates clearly an institutional mission. Trust and integrity were words often used by them. Building trust, trusting others, maintaining integrity, and committing to human rights and justice were the values they espoused.

However, it is not enough to have a vision. The issue is how you go about sharing that vision, empowering others, and creating a collective that shares in the vision and acts to bring about the desired change. **Listening and learning** from others and giving credit to others are the essential strategies in empowering others.

What is refreshing as one listens to their voices is their openness. They are non-defensive and they value their coworkers. If you value others, you listen to them, you trust them, and you are open to their pointing out problems or

mistakes. Recognizing that leadership requires collective action, you choose your coworkers to complement your talents, you reward them, and you give them feedback.

The process of empowerment as described by the women leaders in our study includes four key behaviors

1. You meet people on their own turf and you listen.
2. You hire strong people, people who complement you. You are not defensive; you let them point out problems and mistakes.
3. You make them feel good, you give feedback, you make them visible, and you give others the credit they deserve.
4. You value collegiality, thus you consult with others, and you work through consensus.

As one leader said: "I brown-bag lunch with each department, I always tell them 'this is your hour. What do you want to brag about or complain about, or be sure that I know about'...I listen and try to build bridges of communication...I do listen hard and I think I learn from what I hear and I do not come in with a lot of preconceived notions about what we ought to do."

Working with strong people or people that complement you is not threatening. These leaders are confident and they know themselves well enough that they appreciate other people's strengths. As one said: "I think that the most important thing is to recognize what you are good at and what you are not, and be sure that you hire people around you who will fill in the gaps." The same message from another woman was, "I like to work with very strong people. I enjoy that, I don't find that of any threat...I believe so strongly in delegation and in letting people move it along as far as they can. I am a delegator and a supporter."

They give praise and credit where credit is due. They provide feedback and they reward their coworkers. But most important is that they believe in the collaborative, collegial style of leadership

and in the importance of reaching consensus. They empower by enabling others to do their best. As one woman said, "One of the things I find very important to do is to get people, whether they are staff or faculty, to do things they have no idea they can do."

In other words, you give autonomy, you delegate, you free people to do their thing, you facilitate learning, you offer feedback, and you find rewards in their achievement.

Another principle they follow is: **Do your homework.** It is important to be prepared, know what you are talking about, do your research, plan, and develop a blueprint. Having a vision and being a good listener have to be coupled with being always prepared by having done your homework. Their motto is..."Build trust and know your stuff." They are learners; they are students, learning about themselves, the institution, and the process of leadership.

NCLP: What about the issue of power and influence?

Astin: If we were to conceptualize leadership in hierarchical terms and use the leadership model to portray the relationships that exist within institutions and organizations, then the term power provides a useful tool in analyzing leader decisions and actions. Thus the positional leader can be viewed as someone who has authority and as someone who controls information and resources in order to accomplish her goals or wishes. In other words, she is someone who can and is exercising power over others as he or she "leads".

Our conception of nonhierarchical leadership, however, and the framework we used in the study, looks at leadership as a process of

empowering others and as a means of creating a collective that acts toward the accomplishment of a shared vision or goal.

Each one of our respondents talked about having influence rather than power. Influence was preferred because it was seen in interpersonal and value-oriented terms. They recognized that by virtue of their position, being the president of an institution, they had authority and that others attributed power to them. In essence, positional authority creates symbolic power. However, they used their position as a power base to influence, to bring about change, and to develop networks that in turn became the powerful agents of change.

In the collegial style of leadership they do not need power in the form of control, but rather power in the form of empowerment. As one of the women said to us, "[leadership] takes place when a certain combination of elements come together, where something needs to be done and enough people want to do it, and there's the right combination of people that have the ideas and the people who understand the process...leadership you earn by being able to put together that right combination of things so that people are doing what they want to do." ■

"... the framework we used in the study looks at leadership as a process of empowering others and as a means of creating a collective that acts toward the accomplishment of a shared vision or goal."

Dr. Helen S. Astin is Professor of Education at the University of California, Los Angeles and incoming Chair of the Board of AAHE. She is also the co-project investigator of an Eisenhower grant aimed at developing a leadership model that can be used with undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds.



Program Spotlight

Women of Color Leadership Conference

By Sheila Kloefkorn

On many campuses, women of color are recognizing a shared need to come together to gain a common understanding and collective power to affect change personally and professionally. The first Women of Color Leadership Conference at Arizona State University arose from this common need. A handful of women from four ethnic women's professional organizations on campus began working together in October, 1992 to create a conference to "enhance the well-being of all women."

An excerpt from the conference program captured the message of the event. "Although we represent different cultural and ethnic groups, we share one common bond: that is living and working in a male, caucasian environment. But even though we have this bond, we too may have biases and prejudices towards each other because of a lack of sensitivity, information, and interaction".

Eleanor Yopez of the Hispanic Women's Coalition related that coalition members began to explore the idea of a joint conference for ethnic women as they began planning for their annual Hispanic Women's conference. Through this dialogue, members of the American Indian Women's Group, the Asian Women's Association, and Sister Friends: African American Women of ASU agreed to co-host a shared conference.

"The conference was built upon two purposes: to enhance the personal self-identity of women of color and to better understand and appreciate other cultures."

The conference was built upon two purposes: to enhance the personal self-identity of women of color and to better understand and appreciate other cultures. The day long conference attracted more than 300 students and women professionals from the ASU main and west campuses, as well as the Valley community and local high schools. Targeted groups included minority faculty and staff at ASU and female minority students from area high schools. Every woman staff and faculty member was sent a conference brochure as an invitation. Women college students were recruited personally through their interaction with faculty and staff. High school students were contacted through individual schools.

Students were paired with women professionals through a collaborative mentoring program designed to provide role models and to encourage career development. As a result, the conference addressed the generative nature of leadership development for young women. Women students were able to learn from the experiences of women who came before them and share insights with their mentors. Rather than women professionals facilitating the conference for students, the participants interacted as colleagues and were able to learn from one another.

The conference enabled students to focus on issues of personal and leadership development issues from a specific perspective. Every discussion and every interaction was placed in the context of

women's ethnic experience. Workshops centered around integrating this experience into a women's larger educational and professional experience. The planning committee brainstormed workshop topics in two areas: career enhancement and personal empowerment. Presentations were solicited individually from ASU faculty members.

Concurrent Workshops included:

- Developing Cultural Sensitivity Between Ethnic Groups
- How to Plan for Your Financial Security
- Managing Your Boss
- Taking Care of Yourself in a Holistic Way
- The Web of Silence: When Women of Color Communicate
- Using Education for Career Development and/or Personal Growth

Mixed ethnic panels included:

- Coping with Discrimination and Harassment
- How to Survive as a Woman of Color Student
- The Aging/Menopause Process of Women of Color
- What and How to Teach Our Children

ASU President, Dr. Lattie Coor, welcomed participants and emphasized the significance of coming together as ethnic women. Dr. Christina Gonzales, Assistant Professor of Communications, served as the keynote speaker. Gonzales highlighted the importance of respecting one's own female, ethnic self.

Art, poetry, and music complemented the program with entertainment during registration, lunch and break times. The Native American Round Dance and Phoenix Oyote Singer, Alvis Robertson, closed the program.

The response to the conference continues to be overwhelmingly positive. Deborah Brouhard,

conference presenter and Counselor/Instructor for the Minority Assistance Program, related that the conference "highlighted a group of people who are invisible on campus." To this end, the program was an historic day. It not only bridged the gap for ethnic women, but for women in general at ASU. The strength of the conference came from the collective power of women coming together, as the conference program stated, to "listen, ask, and acknowledge in a spirit of sharing and humor." It promoted open communication and skill development. Women of all ages, backgrounds, and perspectives came together and enabled critical dialogue regarding personal and professional issues that face women every day.

Conference organizers and community members are excited about continuing the program. Future conferences will continue to feature personal and professional development experiences. For more information about the conference, contact Eleanor Yepez, Director of Field Education, School of Social Work, Box 871802, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, 85287-1802. ■

Sheila Kloefkorn is the Program Coordinator, Memorial Union, Arizona State University.

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Scholarship & Research Updates

Women and Leadership: Gender Differences and Similarities

By Susan R. Komives

The emergent paradigm in leadership has been encouraging and affirming for women. The relational characteristics of this paradigm value collaborative practices and empowering strategies. One could argue that women have created the paradigm shift. Because many women practice these approaches, this paradigm has been called "Feminine Leadership" (Marilyn Loden, 1985) and acknowledges women's ways of leading (Sally Helgesen, **The Female Advantage: Women's Ways of Leadership, 1984**; or Judith Rosener, "Ways Women Lead", **Harvard Business Review, 1990**). Men also practice these empowering, collaborative approaches and I find it an appropriate and encouraging development to refer to these styles as empowering or relational (which either gender could attribute to themselves or others) rather than gender-specific terms which either gender may find inappropriate and uncomfortable. **Megatrends 2000** calls the 1990's the "Decade of Women in Leadership" partly for the affirmation of the emergence of valuing these characteristics, yet the challenge for the paradigm shift underway is for all people to practice these principles (see Vol. 1, #1 of **Concepts & Connections**).

There is substantial value in studying women and seeking to understand differences among and between women as leaders. A PSY-FIRST search revealed 60 entries since 1991 regarding women and leadership and a search in UNCOVER found 90 articles since 1988. There is a wealth of research and literature in the field. Yvonne Billing and Mats Alvesson (**Scandinavian Journal of Management, 1989**) propose "Four Ways of Looking at Women and Leadership".

Literature focuses on (1) the equal opportunity perspective; (2) the meritocratic perspective; (3) a perspective that women offer something quite special, or (4) the view that women embrace values that can significantly transform the way organizations function. The literature regarding women and leadership ranges from access, glass ceiling and affirmative action dimensions, to styles and strategies women prefer to use, to comparative studies of men and women.

Sex is now a frequent independent variable in most studies even if gender is not the focus of the study. (Please note: in this column I have used gender to describe a construct and sex to describe a variable.)

Studies of women and leadership use both positivistic (empirical) and interpretive (qualitative) paradigms. Many of the illuminating contextual studies are in-depth interviews with women leaders seeking themes from their experiences. Helen Astin and Carole Leland's **Women of Influence, Women of Vision** is such a study. (See this issue for more on their study.)

To truly understand women and leadership, as well as gender differences and similarities, I highly recommend beginning readers start with foundational works such as **Gender Roles: A Sociological Perspective** by Linda Lindsey (1990, Prentice-Hall), **Women's Reality** (Anne Wilson Schaefer, 1981, Harper & Row), or Jean Lipman-Blumen's 1984 **Gender Roles and Power** (Prentice-Hall). Lipman-Blumen's Achieving Style Inventory (ASI) is an excellent tool for understanding how people accomplish their goals and it is specifically useful in leadership research. Her article "Connective Leadership: Female Leadership Styles in the 21st Centu-



ry Workplace" is featured in a special issue of **Sociological Perspectives** (Spring 1992).

There are literally thousands of articles that look at various leadership phenomena and gender. Researchers should use great caution in citing any individual empirical study when so many exist. Psychologist Alice Eagly and her doctoral students at Purdue have some significant meta-analysis work looking at gender and leadership. Their article, "Gender and the Evaluation of Leaders: A Meta-analysis", is in the January 1992 issue of **Psychological Bulletin**; "Gender and Leadership Style: A Meta-Analysis" is in the September 1990 issue; and "Gender and the Emergence of Leaders: A Meta-Analysis" is in vol. 60 (1991) of the **Journal of Personality and Social Psychology**. These three articles are a substantial analysis of hundreds of empirical leadership studies. They posed four questions in their series of studies: (1) Do women and men carry out leadership roles in a different style; in other words, do women and men who are in the same leadership role behave differently? (162 studies reviewed); (2) Are women and men evaluated differently when they carry out leadership roles in exactly the same style (61 studies)?; (3) Do women or men emerge as leaders from initially leaderless groups (58 studies)?; and (4) Which sex is more effective in leadership roles (87 studies)? In many ways, men and women are more alike than they are different as leaders, yet there are important differences. Their analysis showed 92% of the studies found women to be more democratic or participative and men more autocratic or directive. Women were significantly more concerned with morale and social relationships and were more task-oriented (once outliers were removed). They found that role in the organization overrides gender

"There is substantial value in studying women and seeking to understand differences among and between women as leaders."

role, particularly when women are in more masculine roles. Their research showed no evidence of gender bias in evaluating leaders; yet women were devalued in some circumstances, such as when using masculine, autocratic styles. They did find a tendency for men to emerge as leaders in groups, but women tend to emerge in long term groups. Women also emerge if socially facilitative behaviors are desired. They found no overall sex differences in effectiveness and when outliers were removed, found women slightly more effective. Satisfaction ratings produced the largest difference favoring women, while ability ratings favored men. Many of the studies Eagly and her colleagues conducted were done with college students in laboratory settings and as they note, may have limited generalizability in practice. Their findings are fascinating and I recommend you get all three articles. It might be interesting to study those "outliers" and to learn about their experiences; but that is another study!

There are a number of works comparing men and women leaders such as Rosabeth Moss Kanter's 1977 award winning **Men and Women of the Corporation** (Basic Books), Trudy Heller's 1982 **Women and Men as Leaders** and Catharine Herr Van Nostrand's 1993 **Gender-Responsible Leadership**.

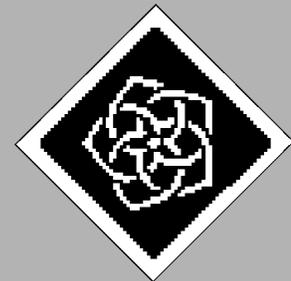
There are still few empirical studies on women of color. Helen Zia writes on "Women of Color in Leadership" in the Summer 1993 issue of **Social Policy**. Gloria Bonill-Santiago (**Latino Studies Journal**, January 1991) writes about "Hispanic Women Breaking New Ground Through Leadership" and the National Hispana Leadership Institute is featured in the **Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education** (January 1994). Contact the Hispana

Institute at 500 E. 8th Ave., Denver, CO 80203 or call (303) 861-2888.

The student affairs literature has several fine sources that address gender and women. One such source is **Empowering Women: Leadership Development Strategies on Campus** (Maryann Sagaria, Editor, 1988, Jossey-Bass). Jane Fried has edited a new 1994 NASPA monograph **Different Voices: Gender and Perspective in Student Affairs Administration**.

Flo Guido-DiBrito (University of Northern Iowa, <dibrito@uni.edu>) and Laura Nathan (Mills College) have started a fascinating major research project "Women's Ways of Leading: An Intergenerational Study of Student Leaders and Higher Education Administrators." Using a constructivist model, they are doing exten-

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sive interviews on individual campuses to determine the impact of gender-related moral and intellectual development on leadership. Their interview protocols reveal ways of developing, ways of knowing, and ways of leading. Be in touch with Flo if you have an interest in the project or if your campus is interested in being a research site.

My own leadership research program includes women in leadership. My students chuckle when I say empirical studies can be exciting, but they can verify my true delight and amazement at reviewing data printouts. In my 7 campus, 700 subject leadership study, I was profoundly perplexed to find no significant correlations between achieving styles (e.g. collaboration) and transformational leadership when I studied the printout of the entire sample. But, bells and whistles sounded when I looked at the printouts by sex because what appeared as a weak nonsignificant correlation for the whole sample was the result of a strong positive significant correlation for women combined with a strong negative correlation for men. The men's and women's findings had washed each other out! (See **Journal of College Student Development** Vol. 32, #6, 1991 for more detail.)

Read any leadership research with very critical eyes if the authors do not report sex as a variable. There may be no sex differences, but sex MUST be an independent variable in any empirical leadership study to truly understand the phenomena being studied. ■

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Preparing Women to Lead Through PLEN

by Marianne Alexander

*The elements of role models and first-hand observation are cited as essential components of leadership education for women by Helen Astin and Carole Leland in their study of women leaders (**Women of Influence, Women of Vision: A Cross-Generational Study of Leaders and Social Change** (1991), Jossey-Bass). These critical ingredients are the basis of leadership programs offered by the Public Leadership Education Network (PLEN) and its member institutions.(1) PLEN, a national consortium of eighteen women's colleges, is the only higher education organization whose sole mission is the preparation of women for public leadership.(2) PLEN, as a consortium, offers public policy programs in Washington, D.C. for women students from colleges and universities across the country; and member colleges offer women students a wide range of campus-based leadership programs.*

PLEN's Washington programs provide students with women leaders as role models and teachers, as well as opportunities to observe and experience the policy process. For example, the 60-70 women students who come to Washington, D.C. each January to participate in PLEN's Women and Public Policy Seminar meet with more than 40 women who are making a difference in the public policy arena as staff and leaders of advocacy groups, and in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. During the two-week seminar, students observe oral arguments before the Supreme Court, hear briefings by women foreign policy experts at the State Department, and visit congressional offices to discuss legislative issues with female staff members.

Building on this January program model, PLEN has created additional programs that provide experiential elements and role

*models for students. A Public Policy Internship Semester Program in Washington, D.C. places students in internships with public sector organizations and agencies led by women. To help a student identify the internship placement that most closely matches her interest, PLEN publishes a directory entitled **Preparing to Lead: The College Women's Guide to Internships and Other Public Policy Learning Opportunities in Washington, D.C.** To complement the internship experience, students meet together in a weekly seminar to discuss policy and workplace issues with women who direct organizations and agencies in the public arena. At PLEN's Women and Congress Seminar, held each March, students discuss legislative issues with women members of Congress and their staffs. After observing Congressional committee sessions, students participate in a simulation of a committee hearing, playing the roles of members, staff and witnesses presenting testimony.*

Responding to the growing interest of students as well as women's policy groups in global issues, PLEN recently added programs that provide students with international opportunities to find role models and gain first-hand experience. Students attending the European Seminar in May, 1993 observed a session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg and learned about women's employment policy from women officials in the European Commission in Brussels. In May, 1994, students in the Women and International Policy Seminar met in Washington, D.C. with women officials in the U.S. State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development (AID), and the World Bank. Through a special program created by PLEN for late summer 1995, women students will be able to participate in the women leaders

of non-governmental organizations Forum at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September, 1995.

Campus-based programs at the PLEN member colleges also provide women leaders as role models and offer opportunities for first-hand observation and experience. Douglass College's PLEN program brings prominent women public leaders to campus for informal discussions and sends students to work in summer internships with women leaders in state government. During their spring break, students from the nationally recognized women's leadership program at Mount St. Mary's College in Los Angeles shadow women policy makers as part of their course work for a minor in leadership studies.

Several PLEN colleges have launched women's leadership institutes that serve women leaders in their community and state, as well as providing women role models for students on campus. Columbia College in South Carolina and Wells College in upstate New York offer a wide variety of programs that draw women leaders to campus. Douglass College and Trinity College in Washington, D.C. have recently created women's leadership institutes with close involvement with women leaders in the public sector.

Two PLEN colleges have expanded opportunities in existing programs for students to learn from women leaders. Trinity College of Vermont has added a public policy leadership component to its well-established community service learning program. During their spring break, students gain first-hand experience as volunteers assisting people who are without food and shelter. This service experience is combined with

the opportunity for students to speak with women leaders of advocacy groups and agencies who are actively seeking policy solutions to hunger and homelessness. Stephens College has incorporated PLEN's Washington, D.C. offerings in its Washington internship program.

Since its founding fifteen years ago, PLEN's membership has grown from five to eighteen women's colleges. Initially created by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 1978, PLEN has expanded its range of program offerings and the number of students it serves. The capacity to deliver more programs to more students is due in large measure to member institutions' willingness to expand the usually accepted definition of campus and classroom. To find the most appropriate leadership mentors and role models for women students and to help them gain, Direct experience, PLEN colleges have enlarged the traditional boundaries of the campus to include the public policy arena.

Collaboration has also been key to the growth of PLEN colleges' programs both in Washington, D.C. and on campus. This collaboration has involved faculty and staff of member colleges meeting annually to exchange information and experience in, Developing leadership programs; the cooperation of women's organizations in the policy arena; and women leaders acting as teachers, mentors and sponsors in PLEN seminars, conferences and internship program. Critical to this collaboration has been the firm commitment of eighteen women's colleges to prepare women for public leadership by sharing resources with each other and programs with women students across the country.

"Campus-based programs at the PLEN member colleges also provide women leaders as role models and offer opportunities for first-hand observation and experience."

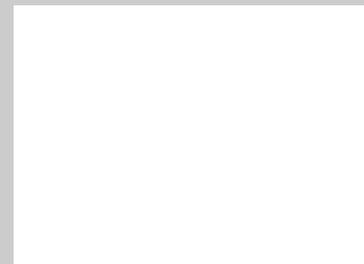
(1) PLEN's current membership includes

Agnes Scott College
Carlow College
Chatham College
College of Notre Dame of Maryland
College of St. Benedict
College of St. Catherine
College of St. Elizabeth
Columbia College
Douglass College of Rutgers University
Mount St. Mary's College
Mount Vernon College
Newcomb College of Tulane University
Stephens College
Sweet Briar College
Trinity College of Vermont
Trinity College in Washington, D.C.
Wells College
and William Woods University

(2) As defined by PLEN at its 1988 Wingspread Conference on Educating Women for Leadership, public leadership is making a difference in the public policy arena. Individuals may exercise public leadership as elected or appointed officials in local, state, and federal levels of government; as leaders of advocacy, community and interest groups; as heads of public-interest research groups; and as staff members working with public officials and agencies in formulating policy.

***Preparing to Lead: The College Women's Guide to Internships and Other Public Policy Learning Opportunities in Washington, D.C.** is available from PLEN for \$10.00: PLEN 1001 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. Suite 900, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Dr. Marianne Alexander is the Executive Director of PLEN.



Leadership Training Concepts & Techniques

The Leadership Development of a Conference Steering Committee

By Helen L. Mamarchev

For the past seven years the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Office for Student Services at the University of Florida have provided the opportunity for a select group of women students to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders.* These students form the steering committee that develops the annual UF Women's Leadership Conference (WLC), which is held in January and to some degree is modeled after the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders.

The chief purpose for the day-long Florida Women's Leadership Conference is to expose women on the UF campus to issues that will affect them during their lives. If measured by size, the conference is very successful; registration has "maxed out" for the last four of the conference's seven years.

The second purpose of the WLC is to provide leadership training for the eleven students on the WLC steering committee. Few professionals would doubt the value of offering leadership conferences on campus, but it is sometimes easy to overlook the value of putting students in the "driver's seat" to program those conferences. This article focuses on the steering committee and the model used for developing it.

The steering committee is composed of a student director who is selected from the previous year's steering committee and ten other students who are selected through a competitive application and interview process. Factors such as age, classification, academic major, student organization

involvement, and grade point average are considered to insure diversity among the members of the committee.

Each applicant is interviewed by the selection committee, which consists of the student director and two volunteer advisors for the Women's Leadership Conference. Interview questions include knowledge about issues affecting women, ideas for the upcoming WLC, and the ability to commit to weekly fall steering committee meetings.

The student director holds a "Welcome Aboard" meeting to acquaint the committee members with one another and to talk about basic responsibilities of committee membership. Before the conclusion of the spring semester, a second meeting is held to finalize plans for attending the national conference in June.

The main purpose for taking the steering committee members to the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders is to expose them to the content and format of a large conference similar to the one they will later produce at Florida. Committee members are assigned to breakout sessions so that there is a UF committee member present at each one. Each committee member is required to take comprehensive notes and collect handouts at the sessions she attends.

Immediately after the national conference, while the steering committee is still together in Washington, the student director leads the steering committee in a debriefing session in which they critique the overall conference, the

keynote speakers, and the breakout sessions. The student director collects the notes and handouts and makes an executive summary of the conference for use by the committee members in the fall.

As fall semester starts, the real work of the steering committee begins. An overnight planning retreat is held at one of the advisors' homes. Its purpose is to reacquaint steering committee members, to provide an opportunity for socializing, to facilitate

brainstorming the theme and topics for the Women's Leadership Conference, and to assign individual responsibilities.

Weekly committee meetings are characterized by an ice breaker and updates from each committee member. They are run by the student director, who also meets with steering committee members individually to make sure they are meeting their deadlines. The burden of making sure that things happen according to plan is on the shoulders of the student director and the steering committee. Advisors offer feedback and guidance, but if

something falls through, it is completely up to the students to fix it.

After seven years of putting on the program, the detail and logistics work do not need to be reinvented. The learning experience for the students comes in working on the project with the other steering committee members. They develop the plan and the realization of a successful conference is dependent upon them. Their signatures are on the conference from start to finish. Student planners learn how to collaborate, which is

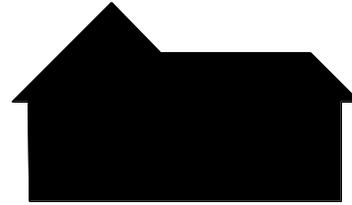
"The burden of making sure that things happen according to plan is on the shoulders of the student director and the steering committee."

* Sponsored by the National Association for Women in Education, the Conference is in its tenth year of providing superior leadership education and issue examination for college women. About 450 conferees attend the June three-day conference, held at The George Washington University.

an important skill for successful leaders. The student director's learning experience is magnified beyond that of the individual steering committee member. She experiences the enormity of the task of putting on a conference for 400+ people. She also bears the burden of putting on a conference that is at least as good as the conference the year before. These are not small tasks, considering how well established and popular this conference has become. Very few students have the opportunity to create a day-long program that carries out a unified theme. The student director builds for herself a "portfolio" that is unsurpassed as a leadership development experience. The majority of the student directors have been selected as Outstanding Female Graduates at the University of Florida, and have gone on to be successful in their chosen careers.

Many students who have been on the steering committee return to campus from time to time and report that their experiences with the WLC are some of the most meaningful of their collegiate careers. Reinforcing most of the research on the value of co-curricular experiences, the steering committee members report that they developed skills from their WLC experiences that they could not have gained in the classroom. One of the main skills is learning how to be a team player. Others are: meeting deadlines, collaborating, accepting responsibility for clearly defined jobs, and taking direction from a peer. The lessons they remember and the satisfaction of a job well done are lifelong memories and reflect important skills that are continually applicable to their professional lives. ■

Dr. Helen Mamarchev is the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.



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We invite you to submit leadership program materials (brochures, pamphlets, course syllabi, etc.) to the NCLP. Your materials will be categorized in the Clearinghouse according to program type (retreats, emerging leaders, academic courses, community service, etc.) and shared with NCLP members who request information about specific programs.

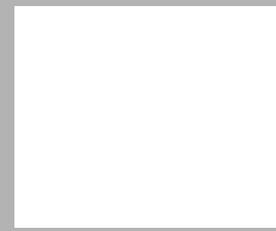
As we continue to develop the Women's Student Leadership Project in collaboration with NAWE, we are particularly interested in your materials on leadership programs for women students. It is NCLP's goal to create a niche in leadership programs for women, from which our members will benefit.

Our goal is to include as much information as possible in the Clearinghouse so we can effectively provide quality services and a wealth of information to our colleagues. Ideally, we would like to have information on every higher education leadership program! The materials you send will serve as the foundation for a network among leadership educators nationally and internationally.

Please send your leadership materials to:

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The Leadership Bookshelf

Reviewed by Zina L. Evans

Life Notes: Personal Writings By Contemporary Black Women

Bell-Scott, P. (Ed.). (1994). New York: Norton.

As our definition of leadership continues to expand to embrace various feminist and multicultural models and theories, it is important that we explore literature written on leadership as well as literature which highlights the social influence of feminist and multicultural perspectives. In addition, it is important to break out of the mold of defining leadership solely in terms of the "position" one holds and begin to explore significant life experiences and influences that leaders and potential leaders share. Patricia Bell-Scott offers this opportunity for exploration in **Life Notes: Personal Writings By Contemporary Black Women**. Bell-Scott, as editor, has brought together segments of journals, diaries, and personal notebooks of 50 Black women ranging in age from 8 to 65. The collection highlights the depth of diversity in the experiences of Black women and emphasizes the vast range and styles of leadership among the group.

Helen Astin and Carole Leland in their book entitled **Women of Influence, Women of Vision**, define a leader as "someone who, by virtue of her position or opportunity,

empowers others toward the collective action in accomplishing the goal or vision" (p. 8). Given this definition, Bell-Scott has captured the essence of Black women leaders in her collection. **Life Notes** gives us an opportunity to read about the life experiences, opportunities, and personal thoughts of some of the more recognized Black leaders such as Audre Lorde, Sonia Sanchez, and Alice Walker; as well as exposing us to countless other women with visions, goals, opportunities, and leadership.

Bell-Scott has divided the book into eight parts representing significant life experiences through the eyes of the writer. Each part has a collection of writings that reflect the authors struggles, insights, self-explorations and achievements. The eight parts include Reflecting Girlhood,

Searching For Self, Meaning and Work, Living Love, Naming Violations and Betrayal, Fighting Back, Claiming A New Self, and Writing From A Different Place. Each of these sections gives us a glimpse of the cultural, social, political, economic, and environmental factors which have shaped the experiences of the writers and potentially shaped their focus and vision as women leaders.

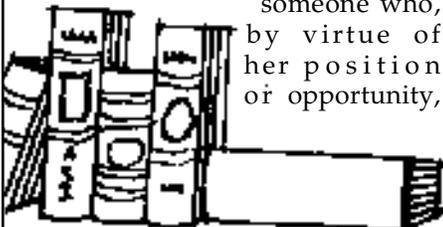
Each writer has her own unique way of sharing her personal experience. The styles vary from day to day accounts of

events, to summations of events, to short stories recapturing various encounters. The varying structures and writing styles engage the reader. It is not necessary to read the book in sequential order because the messages of each individual writer are capable of standing alone. The concept of collective learning and leading is interwoven throughout the book, as each writer gives her account of self and others in the resolution of various life experiences.

As the editor, Bell-Scott has very effectively pulled together a diverse collection of personal writings, while allowing the reader to construct her or his own meaning out of each writer's story. This approach allows the reader to take from the book those pieces that best fit with personal style or philosophy, while challenging the reader to look more broadly at her or his own personal growth and development. In addition, the book is a useful resource in challenging individuals to look at their past experiences and assess what factors have influenced their focus, style, and philosophy of leadership. Lastly, the book offers an alternative view to traditionally defined leadership. Instead of relying solely on the theoretical and technical writings of "experts", **Life Notes** offers a poignant, useful and important exploration of personal and self reflecting views of individuals. ■

Zina L. Evans is a full-time doctoral student at the University of Maryland at College Park.

"The collection highlights the depth of diversity in the experiences of Black women and emphasizes the vast range and styles of leadership among the group."



Women Leading: Today and Tomorrow

Tenth National Conference for College Women Student Leaders

By Susan Denker

In the beginning of June approximately 500 undergraduate women in leadership positions gathered at The George Washington University in Washington D.C., for the tenth annual National Conference for College Women Student Leaders sponsored by the National Association for Women in Education (NAWE). For three stimulating and empowering days, students discussed women's issues, met women of distinction, and made new friends. Heather Towne, a junior at Cazenovia College exclaimed, "I felt this energy (in the room). We are not little girls anymore! We can make a difference! I'm a woman now!" Powerful speakers such as Antonia Novello, former U.S. Surgeon General, and Pat Reuss of the NOW Legal Defense Fund motivated students to go back to their campuses and communities and get other women involved. Despite variations in ethnicity, age and perspective within the group, a sense of community existed where all voices could be heard.

A number of women were interviewed throughout the weekend recounting their conference experiences and realities of being women student leaders on campus. Several themes, outlined below, emerged from the interviews and have implications for leadership educators trying to promote and foster women's leadership development on their campuses.

One prominent theme was the need for more **female role models** across the campus. Many felt that the scarcity of role models has impacted the number of undergraduate women who choose to get involved in leadership activities. Women derive motivation and hope from seeing other women successfully manage lead-

ership positions. May Ly of Washington State University was encouraged by the Women of Distinction Awards Ceremony, "Here is a minority woman [speaking of one of the honorees] who has made it in a field that I want to get into — doing the things that I want to do." Attendees relished being in an environment where female leaders were readily accessible for dialogue and modeling. Marlene Warner of Gettysburg College has found that role models help her develop a broader perspective, "When it seems like I can't get through a day, I will think about all that other women have achieved."

Another theme which emerged was the frustration in few **women leaders of color** on their campuses. Finding women in leadership roles is challenging, but finding women leaders of color is an even tougher battle. "We have a number of minority staff and faculty but we have a long way to go," commented April Pollard an African-American returning student from the Community College of Philadelphia. Elizabeth Ramirez, a graduate advisor for the Latino Organization at Washington State, shared, "There is a real shortage of Latino faculty which results in a lack of adequate advising and leadership for Latino women". Elizabeth has taken steps to inspire her advisees by developing peer support groups, encouraging students to take political stances, and building up their self-esteem. She maintains a research note-

book containing articles and findings from studies done on Latino women so that her advisees know that people are interested in their experiences. Role models are key in this process as they teach, guide and inspire women students to take on the everyday challenges of being a leader.

Additionally, there is variety and diversity in how women of color define themselves. Some women view themselves as women first, by their race second (i.e. African-Americans), and leaders third. Others change the order and are known by their race first. Regardless of the order, as Elizabeth Ramirez put it, women leaders of color bring in the dynamic of "how cultural variables influence leadership styles — how we see leadership and what it means in terms of our communities." Eva Garrick, a junior from Rochester Institute of Technology, noted an interesting observation about men of color who are in leadership positions. Often times, they bring cultural

norms into their views of women, such as assuming women to be submissive and non-verbal.

Another theme appeared to be the **lack of community** felt amongst women student leaders. Many of the people interviewed attend colleges and universities made up of over 50% women; yet, when facing challenging situations where support is essential, the women experience isolation. "Sometimes you really feel alone," stated April Pollard. In response

"Powerful speakers . . . motivated students to go back to their campuses and communities and get other women involved."

to comments like this, women attending the conference valued the ability to easily interact with other female leaders, students, and professionals at the conference. "I've never seen such a support system for women and leadership,"

exclaimed Georgina Kyricos, a junior at Wheaton College in Massachusetts. An exiting outcome from the conference was the formulation of a new network of Latina women attending the conference. The new organization is named ELLA - Educated Latinas Leading America. A new ELLA member, Donna Belmares King, noted, "We have to depend on each other." The group hopes to maintain and develop new contacts with Latina women leaders.

Women who described a sense of community at their own institutions, noted the presence of an active women's issues group or a Women's Center from which they could derive encouragement and resources for dealing with everyday trials. For example, Dana Graupmann, a non-traditional student at Everett Community College, shared, "I get my strength from the Women's Center. The women empower me. It's where I regroup." A place on campus to connect with other women was a common "wish list" item among those interviewed.

Despite the increasing number of women involved in leadership, there seems to be a **chilly climate** evident on many campuses. This chilly climate either involves men continually getting more prominent leadership positions or women leaders being presented with numerous obstacles and being stamped with the title "radical feminist." Kelly Ann Kaczka, a sophomore at Catholic University,

expressed her frustration that "not many women are in power positions. For example, there is only one woman in student government." Another student from Gettysburg College, Marlene Warner, said, "Many women run for office but when men run, they are almost automatically voted in." Why is this situation still evident at our institutions?

Vanessa Lin Gonzalez, President of the Society of Mexican/American Engineers and Scientists at Texas A & M struggles with the never-ending red tape that she confronts, "I just wish we didn't have to scream so loud and work so hard for what we as students of a university should receive." In agreement is Student Government President, April Pollard. She says that it would be nice "To not just have the title of president, but also the

power to bring about the changes. There are just so many people to go through. By the time you've gotten things to where you think they should be, it's time to graduate." Paving the way for others is part of the leadership role. Through her experience, April is learning that change can be slow. She realizes that she must focus on whatever part she can play, big or small.

Finally, women who experience what they perceive to be the derogatory label of "radical feminist", deal with a myriad of negative stereotypes. Dana Graupmann, co-chair of a campus women's rights organization, feels that people have the "idea that when you lead you are not nurturing and nice. You are different than what is expected for women." Those interviewed recounted this stereotype at times and have tried to fight its negative connotations,

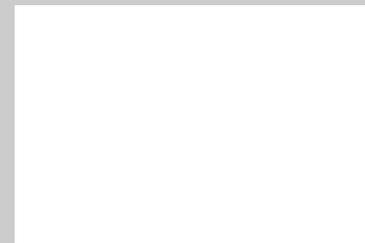
"Some women were interested in learning more about both male and female leadership styles, believing that when the two work effectively together, an incredible amount can be accomplished."

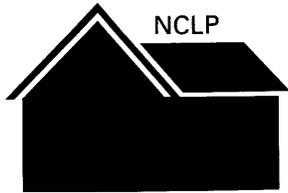
fearing that this label hinders other women from pursuing leadership positions. One of the main sessions at the conference discussed looking at a new term to describe women leaders of today. "Feminist" no longer seems acceptable.

Additional items included on students' wish lists were more courses on leadership development to enable women to strive for leadership positions earlier in their education, as well as workshops on breaking down the barriers which prevent women from leading. Barriers may cause women to question whether they are, in fact, leaders. Some women were interested in learning more about both male and female leadership styles, believing that when the two work effectively together, an incredible amount can be accomplished.

All in all, women attending the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders were anxious to go back to their institutions to promote leadership, get more students involved in activities, and share what they learned. They departed full of excitement and hope, ready, as one student said, "to shoot for the stars". Marsha Guenzler, Conference Chair, recalled an empowering vision at the Women of Distinction Awards Ceremony where "We were there honoring women who have made our present possible, yet at the same time it was equally compelling to look into the audience and see 500 young women with skill, initiative and drive — young women who will chart the paths for our future." Perhaps they will reach the stars.

Susan Denker is a graduate student in the Counseling and Student Personnel Services program at the University of Maryland at College Park.





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