



LAFAYETTE COMMISSION ON THE NEEDS OF WOMEN



Serving the Lafayette Community Since 1976

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2009 Commission Members

Lupe L. Acosta,
President

Germaine Breaux
President-Elect

Sandra L. Moore,
Secretary/Liaison

Judith Derise Perez
Parliamentarian

Carol Coreil
Historian

Paula Duncan
Member at Large

Tonya Bolden-Ball
Past President

Linda Armstrong
Marguerita Auguillard
Twana Benoit
Rose Hoffman Cormier
Tahanna Francis
Amy Fuselier
Billi LaCombe
Lisa LeBlanc
Susan Lyman
Linda Miller
Tracy Mouton
Ola Prejean
LaKisha Varner
Sharon Wright

Commission's Purpose:

The purpose of the Commission, as established by Section 7-90 of the City Charter, shall be to facilitate an awareness of the status and needs of women in the city, parish and state; to provide input at the local level regarding the concerns of women in the community; to make recommendations for policies that affect the needs of women; to evaluate and improve the role of women in the community and in the state; to promote programs to meet these needs; and to serve as a clearing house for information and services available to women in the community.



President's Message

Lupe L. Acosta

History was made with the election of our country's first African American President, Barack Obama. Regardless of whom you supported in the presidential race, one thing is definitely clear --- being a woman is an issue. We as women have the great opportunity to ensure that issues that are important to women are addressed.

As President of the Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women, it is an honor and privilege to serve the Commission as well as recognize the 33rd year of the Commission's existence. The Commission has a long and productive history of activity. Projects that the Commission has been involved in over the years have benefited the women of the city and parish of Lafayette. The Commission endorsed the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, introduced a listing of qualified women for appointed and elected positions in the city and parish in the Talent Bank, assisted in the establishment of the Sexual Abuse Response Center, and supported the concept of and the need for a shelter for battered women, now known as Faith House. Recent projects the Commission has been involved with include hosting a forum, "Run Girl, Run! - The ABC's of Running for Political Office and the ABC's of Family Law - What Every Woman Needs to Know"; established the 1st Annual Essay Contest in connection with Women's History Month and hosted the 1st Annual Lafayette Women Leader's Social for women's clubs and organizations. We continue to publish the Resource Directory for Women and Children and recognize outstanding women for their service to our community at the Women of Excellence Awards Luncheon. Our platform for this year is Connect, Communicate & Collaborate and with that in mind, we will be partnering and collaborating with other women's organizations and clubs to address pending challenges and issues that impact women.

As a Commission, we will have opportunities to accomplish more and increase the visibility of the Commission in the community. We will continue to find ways to perform our Mission Statement, which has been delegated to us, and to partner with new women's organizations and clubs to serve the community in every possible way. We are a Commission of one liaison and twenty members on its board and I hope to see everyone continue doing their part and voice their support to see that we accomplish all of our tasks.

Outgoing President's Message

Tonya Bolden-Ball

It has been indeed an honor and a privilege to have served as the Lafayette Commission On The Needs of Women's 2008 President. As I approach my sixth year of membership with the Commission, I can't help but reflect on how much LCNW has raised the bar and made great strides during 2008. My 2008 platform focused on education and community collaboration with emphasis being placed on educating, elevating and empowering women and children of the Lafayette community. In celebration of Women's History Month, we hosted our first annual Lafayette Women Leaders' Social where the public was given the opportunity to meet the women of LCNW and recognize the importance of understanding and respecting the diversity of women in the positions in leadership in Lafayette.

In conjunction with the social, LCNW also hosted its first annual essay contest. We provided an opportunity for female high school seniors residing in Lafayette Parish to give their perspectives on one of two essay topics: "Women Bridging the Generation Gap" or "Young Ladies...My Reflection in the Mirror". We also received recognition at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's First Annual Women's Conference for the organization having the largest number of attendees. Another catalyst that was used to educate the women of the community was with the Lafayette Parish Bar Association to host a forum titled "The ABC's of Family Law-What Every Woman Needs to Know". The Commission also supported and promoted in collaboration with the Lafayette Parish School System, the national campaign of "Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day".

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LCNW History

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy established the President's Commission on the Status of Women. States as well as cities followed his lead by establishing state and local commissions.

Because of the efforts of five women, Dr. Sarah Brabant, Dr. Doris Bentley, Isabel Gant, Margaret Gimbrede, and Jessie Livingston Taylor, Lafayette became the second city in Louisiana to establish a commission. They were instrumental in leading the steering committee that drafted a proposal for the commission, with assistance from the State Governor's Commission and the support of Mayor Kenneth F. Bowen, which was presented to the City Council.

As a result of their efforts, in 1976, the City Council concurring with the Mayor's recommendation passed a resolution establishing the Mayor's Commission on the Needs of Women now known as the Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women. Past administrations have supported the Commission throughout the years. The Commission maintains twenty members on its board. The members are appointed by the City-Parish President on recommendations from the Executive Committee of the Commission.

Outgoing President's Message – con't

2008 was indeed a busy and productive year for LCNW. None of this would have been possible without the members of LCNW. I have been blessed to work with a dynamic group of ladies that understand and recognize the importance of elevating women and children of the Lafayette community. As the country witnessed the making of history with the election of the 44th president, Barack Obama, I cannot help but echo his theme of change. With the state of the economy and budget cuts being prevalent; we must continue to remember that if we are to improve then change must occur. As Joseph Addison stated, "Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind. To the fearful it is threatening because it means that things may get worse. To the hopeful it is encouraging because things may get better. To the confident it is inspiring because the challenge does exist to make things better." If we are going to continue to educate, elevate, and empower women and children of Lafayette, then I welcome the opportunity for change to occur!

Commission News:

- **2008 MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENT – LUPE L. ACOSTA**

The 2007-2008 Louisiana State Paralegal Association was presented with a request that they consider presenting the Meritorious Service Award, also known as the "Jimmie" to one of their board members. This award is the highest award given by LSPA as it is a unique and important award. The "Jimmie" award came about when the first recipient of this award had received all of the accolades LSPA had to offer, continued to be a valuable, dedicated, working member of LSPA and whose continuing contribution was invaluable. In response to the unequalled service, the LSPA Board did the obvious – created a special award to recognize this kind of enduring contribution and dedication.



It truly is rare for an individual to serve in every capacity within the organization and receive every honor of that organization, but still continue to contribute a vast amount of time, energy and effort to further its work, demonstrating an unrivaled commitment that is not self-seeking, because it is based on a belief in the organization's goals. Due to its nature and the rarity of the devoted individuals it is designed to honor, The "Jimmie" is not an annual award – it is intended to be given infrequently, only if, and when, the LSPA Board of Directors determines that there is overwhelming evidence that an LSPA member has demonstrated such selfless, long-term dedication and commitment.

The nomination to the board came as no surprise. The board's decision to present Lupe Acosta with the "Jimmie" was an easy one. Lupe was honored at the 2008 Annual Meeting Awards Banquet for her selfless work, unyielding dedication and superior leadership on behalf of LSPA and the paralegal profession within the State of Louisiana.

Lupe has been a member of LSPA since 1992. She is also a member of the Lafayette Paralegal Association, Southwest Louisiana Bankruptcy Bar Association and the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) where she was appointed to serve on the Continuing Education Council. During her membership with LSPA, she has served as President, President-Elect, Vice President, District II Director, Parliamentarian, NALA Liaison, and various committee chair positions.

Lupe has also been a board member of the Lafayette Volunteer Lawyers and served as a newsletter committee member for the Lafayette Parish Bar Association. She was recently installed as the President of the Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women. She was also elected to serve on the National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) being the first woman from Louisiana to serve on the national board.

Commission Involvement:

- The LCNW participated in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure on Saturday, March 21, 2009.
- On Thursday, November 5, 2009 the Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women and the Lafayette Parish Bar Association will present the **3rd Annual Run Girl Run** community presentation. This year the event will be held at the Association's new facility at 2607 Johnston St. We will begin with an opening social at 5:30 p.m. and then the program starts at 6:00 p.m.

The topics on the agenda will include: divorce, community property, debt, protective orders and the new pro se divorce clinic. Attendees will have an opportunity to present questions to an experienced and knowledgeable panel of local attorneys. Seating is limited and the public is welcome to attend.

Lupe was a recipient of LSPA's Outstanding Paralegal of the Year Award in 1995; Nominee in 2000 for NALA's National Achievement Award and in 2005 received NALA's Affiliates Award. She has presented several seminars regarding the Paralegal's Role in Bankruptcy Proceedings & Filings, Nuts & Bolts of Consumer Bankruptcy, Paralegal Profession, Notary Course, Mentoring, Professionalism, Ethics, Management Tips, Community Involvement and Projects and has been a speaker at several local high schools and paralegal schools during Career Day.

Lupe has been involved in the legal field for over 30 years and has been a practicing paralegal since 1984. She is currently employed with the law offices of Daniel M. Landry III as a Paralegal/Office Administrator. She graduated from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in 2006 where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration/Business Management. Lupe is known for her exemplary skills and professionalism throughout the paralegal profession and the community as well.

- The Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women and the Lafayette Parish Bar Foundation sponsored the second in a series of interactive forums, **Run, Girls, Run**, with the theme: **ABCs of Family Law: What Every Woman Needs to Know**. The forum's purpose was to provide information to educate, empower, and enhance the quality of life of women in our community. A panel discussion presented by local attorneys featured: Susan Theall on Family Law Issues, Franchesca Hamilton on Protective Orders, and Nora Stelly on Family Medical Leave Act. The forum was funded with a grant from the Louisiana Bar Foundation.
- The **2008 Holiday Spotlight** was held at Lafayette's Restaurant on December 4, 2008. The Commission's 2009 officers installed were: Lupe Acosta, President; Germaine Breaux, President-Elect; Sandra Moore, Secretary; Susan Lyman, Treasurer; Judith Derise Perez, Parliamentarian; Carol Coreil, Historian; Paula Duncan, Member at Large; Tonya Bolden-Ball, Past President.
- **Sharon L. Wright**, an Indiana native, has recently been selected as a member of the Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women. She and her husband, Hugh Lyons, moved to Carencro, Louisiana in March of 2008. Sharon retired from the University of Louisville in Louisville, Kentucky after a 35 year career as Director of Purchasing. During that time she attained C.P.M. (Certified Purchasing Manager) designation from the Institute for Supply Management, Inc. Sharon served as Regional President, Kentucky Chapter, of the National Association of Education Buyers. She is a volunteer for Hospice of Acadiana and formerly served as volunteer for Hospice of Southern Indiana. Sharon enjoys spending time with her family, reading, community service and thoroughbred horse racing. Welcome to Acadiana, Sharon, and to the Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women.

- On Friday, October 9, 2009, The Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women in conjunction with *The Times of Acadiana* and The Woman's Foundation will host the 15th annual **Women of Excellence Awards Luncheon**. The ceremony honors women who have attained outstanding levels of achievement and whose contributions have made a significant impact on the lives of our citizens. The luncheon will be held in the Vermilion Ballroom at River Oaks Conference and Reception Center located at 520 East Kaliste Saloom Rd., Lafayette La. The event will begin at 11:00 am.



Women of Excellence Awards Luncheon 2008

The Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women, Woman's Foundation, Inc. and *The Times of Acadiana* were proud to sponsor this year's 14th Annual Women of Excellence Awards. The awards luncheon was held on Fri., Oct. 10, 11:00am - 1:00pm, at the Frem F. Boustany Convention Center. For fourteen years, the Commission has honored women who have attained outstanding levels of achievement and whose contributions have made a significant impact upon the lives of our citizens.

LaVonya Malveaux, MSW, GSW was this year's keynote speaker. Her presentation was "The Influence of Women" - highlighting the power of the influential woman, "the woman's touch" and women in leadership.

Those honored were Patricia Kennedy Rickels, PhD; Maureen Brennan, PhD; Rebekah R. Huggins; Jan Swift; Nina M. G. DuPont; Lisa Lazard; Sallie Varrelman; Anita Cook Hazelwood; Teresa L. Elberson; and Susan S. Horton

Woman's Foundation, Inc. also presented the Care and Concern for Women and Families Award. This honor is given annually to a non-profit organization that has dedicated itself to improving the lives of women and families in our community. This year's recipient was Big Brothers Big Sisters of Acadiana.

Coming Soon

- **Take Your Daughter/Son to Work Day:** The Commission supports the event and will send letters to the editor, school board and LCG. This event is scheduled Thursday, April 23, 2009.
- **Be a Heart Starter!** Free Bystander CPR Training will be held Saturday, May 9, at the Cajundome. Register online at www.heartstarter.org

Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women

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We're on the Web!

Coming Soon!!!

Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women is a member of the National Association of Commissions for Women.



The National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) is committed to equality and justice for women by increasing the effectiveness of member commissions and serving as their national voice.



2009 Lafayette Commission on the Needs of Women Members

Bottom (left to right): Germaine Breaux, Lupe L. Acosta, Tonya Bolden-Ball
Middle: Linda Armstrong, Ola Prejean, LaKisha Varner, Judith Perez, Paula Duncan, Carol Coreil, Sandra L. Moore
Top: Rose Hoffman Cormier, Billi LaCombe, Tahanna Francis, Sharon Wright
Back: Twana G. Benoit, Amy Fuselier

Resolution Success

Tahanna Francis

According to a recent article written by the American Psychiatric Association making changes can be difficult but not impossible (2008). Every year in January people all over the world make a declaration to make some type of change in their lives. You have all heard about them, New Year's Resolutions, and many of you are implementing them into your lives at this time. So what is going to help you to achieve your resolution this year? If you desire a different resolution outcome this year, it is important for you to understand that it takes more than stating your intentions to be successful.

Abraham Lincoln once said, "A goal properly set is halfway reached." Several of you have set the goal, but have you set it in a way that will continue until it has been reached. Apply your New Year's Resolution to the following and make changes as needed:

1. **Brainstorm:** free-write ideas as they come to you without evaluating or editing them or make an idea web
2. **Pick one:** select one goal and dedicate all of your energy into it, when it is accomplished, celebrate and move on
3. **Be Specific:** use your long-term goal and ask "How will I ...?" and break it down
4. **Measure it:** by time or amount
5. **Stay positive:** optimism equates success
6. **Write it:** write all goals positively ("I will eat a fruit per day", instead of "I will stop eating junk food.")

Good Luck in reaching your goals and remember adjustments can be made at anytime during this process.