



NOW New York State Reporter

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*"It was we, the people; not we, the white male citizens; nor yet we, the male citizens; but we, the whole people, who formed the Union... Men, their rights and nothing more; women, their rights and nothing less."
~Susan B. Anthony*



President's Message

by Marcia A. Pappas, President, NOW-New York State

I want to thank you all, from the bottom of my heart, for your support during these past six years, and in particular these recent hard economic times. Since 1966, NOW has been at the forefront in the struggle for women's equal rights. And we have made many gains for women, none of this which would have been in any way possible without your time, your energy, and your support.

So I sincerely thank you for past contributions to NOW-New York State, NOW-New York State Foundation, and NOW-NYS Political Action Committee. Because of you, all three of these entities continue to facilitate many important forward steps for women and girls. Without you, our organization could not thrive as it does, with our many ongoing challenges and successes. And I love sharing our victories, but of course I will need to ask for your ongoing support to continue our fight for equality.

This newsletter is chock full of news including:

1. Legislative updates
2. 2010 Convention information
3. NOW-NYS and Chapter Actions
4. Election Bylaws
5. Celebrations
6. No Fault Divorce and the NOW-NYS position thereon
7. Contemporary women's issues articles

On the Legislative Front:

Our efforts included legislation called the Strangulation Prevention Act of 2010. Because strangulation is sometimes ignored, this bill would specify that such abuse is a crime. We also fought hard (and successfully) for passage of the Dignity for All Students Act, and in continuing work, we won passage of a Counsel Fee/Expert Fee legislation that will enable the non-monied spouse to obtain legal representation during a divorce. Along with this we also gained Post Marital Income legislation that will allow the non-monied spouse to receive maintenance (alimony). Lastly, we supported legislation to facilitate civil remedies for victims of bias-related crimes. As this newsletter goes to print, these bills are on their way to the Governor's desk for signature. We are, on a daily basis, urging the Governor to sign them into law.

We persist in the fight for the NYS Equal Rights Amendment and the Reproductive Health Act. If these two pieces of legislation are signed into law, we will have made enormous steps towards equality for all women and girls. I can assure you that, if you re-elect me at our upcoming conference, I will continue the fight for both of these watershed bills.

On the Community Outreach Front:

NOW-NYS Inc. has sponsored of a Divorce/Child Custody Forum for women in the Nassau, Long Island area. This forum offers, to those negotiating divorce and those in the Family or Supreme Courts, meetings with skilled attorneys who provide information and answer questions. Already dozens of women have benefited from this forum, with information about child custody, child support, maintenance, restraining orders, orders of protection, divorce grounds, and equitable distribution. It is our goal to offer these important forums throughout New York State. We thank Tracy Simmons from Mid Suffolk NOW for taking on the task of organizing this monthly forum.

And our many press releases are reaching thousands of New Yorkers. In fact our release distributors inform us that our notices are always among the top ten Internet hit-getters in the State.

On the Take Action Front:

For over a year NOW-NYS led the charge for the expulsion, from the New York Senate, of Hiram Monserrate, following his domestic-violence conviction. Because of our vigorous campaign, a NYS Senator was expelled from office for the first time in almost a hundred years. In fact, our actions sent a clear message to all elected officials and to abusers throughout New York State that domestic violence is simply not acceptable. Collectively, women across this State, and particularly in Monserrate's Queens area, said "no more violence against women!" No doubt about it, because of our efforts, the ravages of domestic violence are back on the radar.

Further, NOW-NYS was in the forefront when the Stupak/Pitts Amendment endangered women's reproductive rights in the federal Health Reform Bill. We went into action and organized a very visible "WE WON'T GO BACK!" rally (which included abortion rights pioneer Bill Baird) in front of Senator Schumer's New York City office. Ralliers moved on to the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral and great visibility was attained.

On the Political Action Front:

Then, as politics followed action, on March 16, the good citizens of Queens, NY elected pro-women's issues Senator Jose Peralta to Monserrate's seat. The NOW-NYS PAC was very proud to be a part of that effort. But of course, that election is not the end of our work. As women's advocates, we must continue the fight until ALL women enjoy equal rights. And that means we must continue to elect feminist women and men to represent us in government. With elected officials passing laws that protect and empower the lives of women and girls, there is great hope of achieving our goals.

On the Educational Front:

For several successive years, NOW-NYS Foundation has offered a New Activist Training seminar for people interested in making social change for women and girls. To be effective, such activists must have tools and knowledge about women's rights. And women who acquire such knowledge become confident leaders.

Indeed, young women and new activists are the life blood of our movement, for they will be the next generation to fight for women's rights. Before her death Alice Paul, author of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), said she believed NOW was the organization that would continue her generation's fight for women's equality. So it is extremely important that our Foundation continues to provide this essential education service for young and new activists.

In closing, I remind you that, from its founding, NOW has been a grassroots organization whose power and energy come directly from our members. We accept no government money. We are accountable only to our members, supporters, and our principles. And you, the members, are shaping a new generation of women and men who will insist on equality. Your continuing support has helped to realize the dreams of those foremothers who held that first-ever women's rights convention so long ago.

I thank you again for making my job easier, interesting, and fulfilling.

Remember TEAM: Together Everyone Achieves More!

In Sisterhood,

Marcia A. Pappas
President

Proposed Agenda for NOW NYS Convention

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16TH, 2010

8:00 am - 5:00 pmRegistration and Credentialing
(Note: closed for luncheon)

9:00 am - 10:00 am..... Film Presentation

10:00 am - 10:30 amOpening Plenary Session I
Call to Order * Adoption of the Convention Rules
Adoption of the Election Rules * Adoption of the Agenda
Welcome to Albany, NY (Mary Richmond, President of
Albany Area NOW)

10:30 - 12:00 pmPlenary by the NOW-NYS Young
Feminist Task Force

12:15-2:15 Luncheon, Awards and Guest Speakers
NOW-NYS Woman to Woman Award: Gaby Moreno and
Karen DeCrow, Esq.

Speakers Panel:

*Tracey Brooks, Executive Director of Family
Planning Advocates

*Bill Baird, Reproductive Rights Pioneer

*Zenaida Mendez, Executive Director of the
National Dominican Women's Caucus

*Terry O'Neill, President of National NOW President

2:30 pm - 3:45 pmworkshops

4:00 pm-4:30 pmCandidate speeches

4:45 pm - 6:00 pmPlenary-Speakers Panel:
Dr. Mo Therese Hannah, Author & Chair of Battered
Mothers/Custody Conference.
Professor Andrea Lyon, Attorney & Author

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17TH, 2010

9:00 am - 10:00 amRegistration and Credentialing

9:30: am - 10:45 am..... Organize, Organize, Organize!

11:00 - 12:00 pmClosing Plenary
Election Results, Vote for 2011 Convention Location,
Resolutions

12:00 pmadjourn

Hotel Information:

Hotel Rates: Hotel rates will be \$75 for a double \$85
for a triple/quad per night and exhibitors and
attendees will be responsible for making their own room
reservations. The convention will be held at the

RAMADA HOTEL (formerly Clarion Hotel),
3 Watervliet Ave Ext., Albany, NY 12206

For room reservations call (518)438-8431
<http://www.clarionhotelalbany.com/>

REGISTRATION FORM for 2010 www.nownys.org Register On-Line NOW-NYS Convention, Oct. 16th and 17th

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Circle Form of Payment:

MasterCard * Visa * Check * Money Order

Credit Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

- \$50.00 NOW Members - Registration Only
- \$75.00 NON-Members - Registration Only
- \$30.00 Luncheon only
- \$40.00 Student rate - Includes Convention Registration & lunch

Do you have special needs? _____

Deadline for special needs request is September 15th, 2010.

Exhibit at the Convention:

- Rates include skirted table & registration •
- Non Profit Rate \$75 • For Profit Rate \$125
- I would like to reserve a table \$ _____ enclosed

Advertise in our 8-1/2 x 11 Convention Journal:

Non Profit Rates * For Profit Rates

- Full Page \$250 • Full Page \$350
- Half Page \$175 • Half Page \$250
- Quarter Page \$150 • Quarter Page \$175
- Eighth Page \$75 • Eighth Page \$100
- Supporters List \$25 • Supporters List \$50
- Buy a congratulatory ad for our honorees!
- Ad Size: _____ \$ _____ enclosed

**10 % off with the purchase of
an exhibitors table and ad**

QUESTIONS? 518-452-3944

**Reserve advertisement spot (9/15/10)
and exhibitor table by 10/1/10.**

**Return this form & payment to:
NOW NYS, 1500 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12205**

As per our NOW-NYS Bylaws, please note sections of the bylaws below.

IV. Structure:

NOW-NYS is governed by its members, who will meet annually at a State Convention to make decisions about leadership, policy, issues, and any other business to appropriately come before the body. NOW-NYS shall be governed between state Conventions in accordance with the duties outlined by these bylaws.

A. The Member:

Any person who is a member in good standing of the National Organization for Women and who has fulfilled the dues requirement of NOW-NYS and lives or works in New York State is a member of NOW-NYS with all rights and privileges of membership.

B. The New York State Convention:

The State Convention, the supreme governing body of NOW-NYS shall be the general membership assembly of NOW-NYS. The Convention shall formulate general policy, elect officers, adopt program priorities, and process any other business which may appropriately come before the assembly. Every NOW-NYS member in good standing shall be entitled to attend the State Convention and to participate in all of its activities, including the right to vote if the requirements of Article IV, B.1, of these Bylaws have been met.

1. Credentialing and Voting at the State Convention shall be on a per capita basis.

a. Each NOW-NYS member in good standing for at least 60 calendar days prior to the commencement of the State Convention shall have one vote.

b. Credentialing shall take place at the State Convention from the time that it is open for registration until a half hour before balloting for Officers is scheduled to take place.

c. Individuals whose membership expires within a 90 calendar day period before the Convention shall be eligible to vote if they have renewed their membership and can provide proof of renewal.

2. Site and Date of Convention.

a. The State Convention shall be held in the last four months of every calendar year, commencing on a Saturday.

b. The State Convention body shall fix the place of the next State Convention by a majority vote of the plenary.

c. Two consecutive State Conventions shall not be held in the same county or city.

d. Two biennial election State Conventions shall not be held in the same county or city.

e. The NOW-NYS Council shall fix the exact date of the State Convention and give each NOW-NYS member at least 45 calendar days advance notice of the dates of the State Convention. The notice will include a proposed agenda. f. The State Executive Committee shall make arrangements for State Convention accommodations and shall determine the Convention agenda for presentation to the first plenary at the State Convention.

3. Activities at the Convention. The State Convention shall be assembled so that members of NOW-NYS may: a. hear interim reports from the State Executive Committee and the State Council; b. attend workshops; and c. gain valuable information from an exchange of chapter experience.

d. Each State Convention shall have at least one workshop for the heads of local chapters and conveners, in which chapters will share ideas, discuss emerging issues, and organizational challenges.

5. Presiding at State Meetings: The President of NOW-NYS shall preside at the State Convention. In the absence of the President or in the President's inability to preside, the Executive Vice President, the Vice President-Legislation, Secretary, shall preside, in that order.

6. Plenary Sessions: Each State Convention will have at least two plenary sessions. The opening plenary session will not be held before 10:00 am on Saturday. a. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of 20 members.

7. Elections: a. The election of the Executive Committee, with the exception of the Chairperson, shall be conducted by on-site balloting at the State Convention held in even numbered years.

b. On-site voting shall be in accordance with voting privileges at NOW-NYS Conventions as defined in these Bylaws. c. The elected Executive Committee shall take office at the adjournment of the State Convention. d. Election Committee:

(1) Composition:

(a) The State Council will in the second quarter of the year in which elections will take place appoint from among its own members by a majority vote an Election Committee, designating one member to serve as Chair of the committee. (b) No member of the Election Committee shall be eligible to be a candidate. Vacancies on the Election Committee shall be filled by a vote of the State Council.

(2) Duties of Election Committee:

(a) At the next State Council meeting following appointment, the Election Committee Chair shall report the names of the Election Committee members responsible for: (i) receiving and distributing candidate platforms; (ii) credentialing voters; (iii) tallying ballots; and (iv) soliciting candidates, if necessary.

(b) The Election Committee shall be responsible for including candidate platforms in the 45 calendar day advance notice of the State Convention.

(c) The Election Committee shall also make these platform statements available at the State Convention.

(c) At the State Convention, members of the Election Committee shall verify the eligibility of each voter.

(i) Proof of membership shall consist of the voter's name and date of membership from official NOW membership records, or cancelled dues check or other proof of payment. Independent proof of identity shall also be required.

(ii) Once a member has been determined to be eligible, a ballot initiated by a member of the Election Committee shall be issued to the voter. The voter shall be required to sign her/his name in one or more places to acknowledge receipt thereof. Each voter shall receive only one ballot listing candidates and the offices for which they are running. There shall be no replacements for lost ballots.

(d) All ballots, signature lists, and NOW credentialing documents shall be retained by the Election Chair or her/his designee for a period of 90 calendar days after the State Convention. Any candidate may request to examine the materials at the convenience of the Chair of the Election Committee. All such requests and responses shall be through the mail return receipt requested.

e. Election, State Convention and Executive Committee Notification:

(1). No later than the second calendar quarter of the year in which an election shall take place, there shall be a mailing to every chapter of the Bylaws sections pertaining to the State Executive Committee and Elections and notification on the date of the State Convention.

(2). This information shall again be distributed with the 45 calendar day advance notice of the State Convention to every member of NOW-NYS.

f. Candidacy Requirements and Declaration of Candidacy:

(1). Declaration:

(a) At least, seventy-five calendar days before the commencement of the State Convention, all candidates must declare their candidacy and provide a one page typewritten platform to the Election Committee through email or the mail return receipt requested.

(b) The platform statement for candidates for President shall be limited to 300 words. The candidates for President must specify before election in their platform statements whether they wish to be full time and compensated or whom they wish to designate as Executive Director.

(c) All other candidate platforms shall be limited to 200 words.

(d) If there are slates of candidates, each slate should be diverse geographically and racially. There should be at least one person of color on each slate.

(2). Qualifications:

(a) NOW-NYS members who have been members of the National Organization for Women for a period of at least one year and members of NOW-NYS for a period of at least six months at the time of the election shall be eligible to run for Executive Committee positions.

(b) Incumbent Executive Committee members, who have served in the same Executive Committee position for four consecutive terms may not run for reelection to that same Executive Committee position. A partial term of less than one year does not constitute a term of office.

g. Endorsements: Any chapter may provide candidates of their choice with their membership lists, including at-large members within their geographical area. No candidate may have access to the statewide at-large membership list for the purpose of campaign mailings or phone banks. The State Council may not make a formal endorsement of any candidate.

h. Candidate Speeches: A portion of the State Convention schedule shall be allotted to candidate speeches.

(i) Each Presidential candidate shall be limited to 10 minutes for presentation and 3 minutes for questions and answers. (ii) Candidates for other offices shall be limited to 5 minutes for presentations and 3 minutes for questions and answers. (iii) Written questions for candidates shall be collected in a box before their presentations have ended and will be picked randomly by the Election Chair.

i. Balloting:

(1). Balloting: Polls for voting shall be open from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on the Saturday of the State Convention. With the exception of Election Committee members, no member may re-enter the polling room after leaving once the balloting has begun. The Election Committee shall ensure a secret ballot. (2). Ballot Order: Before the State Convention, the Election Committee shall determine the order of the candidate's names under each office on the ballot by the flip of a coin. No facsimile of a ballot will be allowed as campaign material. (3). Polling Place: Balloting shall take place in a separate room at the State Convention site. No campaign materials shall be displayed in the room nor shall any campaigning be allowed within twenty feet from the entrance to the room. (4). Proof of ID: The Election Committee shall require each voter to show a valid ID and to sign her/his name in one or more places before the voter casts her/his ballot. (5). Poll Watchers: Each candidate may appoint one poll watcher to observe the balloting and tallying. Poll watchers may not leave the balloting room until after the tallying is completed. Poll watchers may observe credentialing if they choose. (6). Method of Balloting: Balloting will be by preferential order, and the single transferable vote system of proportional representation will be employed in the tallies. (7). If the election is uncontested, the convention delegates may vote by acclamation.

j. Tallying: Election shall be by the majority of the members present and voting.

(1). Counting: The Election Committee shall count the ballots in clear view of poll watchers. After the tallying is completed, all candidates shall be asked to come to the balloting room to hear the results of the election.

(2). Announcement of Results: The Election Chair shall announce the results of the election at the next plenary session and shall print the results of the election in the next all member mailing, and shall announce the results at the next scheduled State Council meeting. The President shall declare the candidates elected.

C. The State Executive Committee:

Shall consist of officers elected at the State Convention. No member of the Executive Committee may hold more than one position on the Executive Committee.

1. Members: President, Executive Vice President, Vice President for Legislation, Secretary.

a. The President shall:

(1) be the principal spokesperson and lobbyist for NOW-NYS; (2) be compensated (either full or part-time as declared in the election platform).

(i) The President may hire other staff, including an Executive Director, who 5

will be compensated. (ii) The President should appoint an Administrative Assistant who will be compensated. Executive Directors and Administrative Assistants may be either full or part-time. (a) Paid staff will work out of the Albany office. At least one part-time staff person will work out of the Albany office.

(b) The Executive Director may be terminated from employment at the will of the President.

(3) The President may not be a paid employee of any unit of government, except as a civil servant not covered by the Federal Hatch Act.

(4) The President shall ensure that the agenda, the minutes of the previous meeting, and other relevant information are sent to all Council delegates at least 30 calendar days before a regularly scheduled State Council meeting. The President shall provide updated leadership lists of New York State Council delegates during or directly after each meeting.

(5) The President shall, with the assistance of the Finance Committee, be responsible for recommending fundraising activities to the State Council. The President shall issue press releases and arrange media coverage.

(6) Other duties as prescribed by the parliamentary authority, the State Convention, the Executive Committee, or the State Council.

b. The Executive Vice President shall:

(1) assist the President; (2) preside in her/his absence or incapacity; (3) be responsible for coordinating State Council Task Forces; and (4) coordinate the development of a state wide proactive action agenda/campaigns that shall be approved by the State Council; and (5) other duties as prescribed by the parliamentary authority, the State Convention, the Executive Committee, the President, or the State Council.

c. Vice President for Legislation shall:

(1) work with the Executive Vice President in helping the State Council Task Forces to develop a legislative agenda; (2) coordinate the legislative activities of the member chapters and legislative activities of the State Council Task Forces; (3) coordinate the development of a pro-active legislative agenda, recommend legislative priorities and programs to the Council and aid the President in developing relationships with State government; and (4) other duties as prescribed by the parliamentary authority, the State Convention, the Executive Committee, the President, or the State Council.

d. The Secretary shall:

(1) record and maintain the minutes of all meetings of the Executive Committee, the State Council, and the plenary sessions of the State Convention; (2) maintain the Operating Rules, State Council Policies, and Bylaws of NOW-NYS. (3) other duties as prescribed by the parliamentary authority, the State Convention, the Executive Committee, the President, or the State Council.

2. Functions and Duties:

a. Authority Between State Council Meetings: The Executive Committee shall:

(1) manage the affairs and control the funds and property of NOW-NYS;

(2) adopt necessary rules and regulations, provided none of the Executive Committee's actions conflict with the actions or directives of the State Council or of the State Convention, or are inconsistent with the purpose of the organization;

(3) have the authority between meetings of the State Council to take action in the name of NOW-NYS, provided such action shall be entirely consistent with the goals, purposes, directives, and policies of the State Council and the State Convention. Such actions taken by the Executive Committee shall normally be limited to those directly mandated by the State Council. 6

(i) If actions or decisions must be taken where there is no prior directive by the State Council or the actions are not obviously consistent with the purpose of NOW or the directives of State Council, the Executive Committee may, on an emergency basis, act after receiving approval of a majority of the member chapter Presidents via email discussion or teleconference discussion with NOW-NYS member chapter presidents. All chapter presidents must be notified of the discussion at least 24 hours in advance of the call. All Chapter Presidents must be polled. The vote of each member chapter president shall be reported at the next State Council meeting. The Executive Committee must get the approval of a majority of all chapters prior to taking any action.

b. Reporting Responsibilities: The Executive Committee shall report any actions taken between State Council meetings to the State Council at the next meeting of the Council.

c. Fiscal Responsibilities: The Executive Committee shall submit

a proposed annual budget at the first State Council meeting after January 1 of each year for Council approval.

d. Meetings: The Executive Committee shall meet at least three times each calendar year, at the call of the President, or upon request of at least two (2) Executive Committee members. The President of NOW-NYS shall preside at all State Executive Committee meetings.

e. Paid or Compensated staff: Additional members of the Executive Committee besides the President may be compensated with the prior approval of the Council.

D. Member Chapter: Any convened or chartered chapter of the National Organization for Women, which is located in New York State, is a member chapter. The policies and programs of each chapter shall be defined by its members, unless the policy or program is in contradiction to the one adopted by the State Council, or the State Convention, or NOW.

E. The State Council:

1. Composition: The State Council shall be composed of:

(a) the Chair, who shall have speaking privileges but not voting privileges; (b) the members of the Executive Committee; (c) the heads of the State Council Task Forces; and (d) three(3) delegates (4 if there is a woman of color) and (1) alternate from each Member Chapter in New York State. (e) No member of the State Council may cast more than one vote or vote by proxy. (f) All members of the Council must be members of NOW-NYS. (g) A quorum is at least two (2) Executive Committee members and one delegate from each of at least five (5) different Chapters. (h) All members of the Executive Committee, Chairs of Task Forces, and State Council delegates and alternates must be members in good standing of NOW-NYS. A grace period of 3 months exists for members following the expiration date shown on the National NOW records.

2. Functions and Duties:

(a) Between State Conventions, the State Council shall be a general policy-making body.

(b) The State Council shall set policy and determine the action agenda for NOW-NYS.

(c) At the first meeting of the calendar year, the State Council shall establish a meeting schedule for the remainder of the year.

(d) The State Council shall meet at least three times each year.

(e) The President or at least twenty (20%) percent of Council members may call a special meeting. Notice of a special meeting shall be at least 21 calendar days to all Council members, and the notice shall state the date, time, place, and purpose for the meeting.

(f) A quorum for a special meeting shall be the same as for a regular meeting.

(g) There shall be a regularly scheduled State Council meeting within 60 days after the State 7

Convention. However, the State Council shall convene immediately following the adjournment of the State Convention for the sole purpose of electing the State Council Chair.

(h) The State Council shall report all Council actions to the entire membership.

(i) Minutes of the Council meetings shall be sent to each Council Member with the meeting notice and agenda of the subsequent meeting. This will be sent at least 30 calendar days prior to the scheduled date for that meeting.

(j) Meetings of the State Council shall be open to the membership of NOW.

3. Selection: The method of selecting chapter delegates to the State Council shall be left to the discretion of the chapters. Each chapter, however, will select its three delegates and one alternate from among chapter members who live or work within the chapter's geographical area. A chapter will be entitled to four delegates if one or more of their delegates present is a person of color. It shall be the responsibility of each chapter president to report all changes of delegates and alternates to the Secretary of NOW New York State.

4. Chairperson: The State Council shall, at its first meeting following its State Convention, elect a Council delegate or the incumbent Chairperson to be Chairperson of the State Council. Election procedures shall be determined by the State Council; however, a majority vote is required for election to the position of Chairperson. The Chairperson of the State Council shall serve for a period of one year, beginning immediately after the election, and ending upon the Council's first meeting following the State Convention. The chapter from which the Chairperson has been selected must send a new delegate to the Council. There is no term limit for Chair. The Chairperson of the State Council, who shall preside at all State Council meetings, shall be responsible for establishing the agenda for the State Council meetings, and for chairing meetings of the State Council in a fair and unbiased manner. The chair shall ensure that individuals on all sides of an issue are given an opportunity to speak and ensure that members concerns are given placement on the agenda.

5. Salary and Compensation: With the exception of members of the Executive Committee, no paid employee of NOW-NYS shall vote at any State Council meeting or serve on the Elections Committee.

6. Presiding: In the absence of Chairperson of the Council, the President, the Executive Vice President, the Vice President of Legislation, Secretary, shall preside, in that order.

Full NOW-NYS bylaws are available at <http://www.nownys.org/docs/bylaws.pdf>

2010 Recipients of the *NOW-NYS Woman to Woman Award* to be presented at our annual convention, October 16th, in Albany, NY



Gabriela Moreno

Twenty two years ago, I received a phone call from the New York City chapter asking me to work on a newsletter mailing. "I can do that," I said to myself. Little did I know that I soon would have the opportunity to work on an issue that I always cared deeply about — access to legal abortion. As co-chair of the Reproductive Rights Committee, I helped coordinate logistics to defend abortion clinics from Operation Rescue attacks. I organized letter writing campaigns, and most recently I participated in an emergency lobby day in Washington D.C. to urge our representative to reject the anti-abortion Stupak-Pitts amendment to the proposed National Health Plan. It is unbelievable that twenty-two years later we are still fighting the same fight.

My activism at NOW extends to more than just working on abortion rights. I have been on the National NOW Board representing the Northeast Region. For the past six years, I have served as an officer of NOW-NYS. In the New York City Chapter, I have served as Secretary of the Board, Action Vice President, and Legislative Vice President and have been a long-time member of the chapter's Political Action Committee. One of my favorite activities for ten years was chairing the annual Susan B. Anthony Awards ceremony at City Hall because it honored women who were grassroots leaders in their communities. This event was also a yearly reminder that women who are not members of NOW value our history as an organization dedicated to advancing women's rights in all areas. As chapter leaders, we need to meet to these expectations. It was my great pleasure to receive the Susan B. Anthony Award in 2001.



Karen DeCrow, Esq.

Karen DeCrow is a nationally recognized attorney, author, and advocate specializing in Constitutional law, gender and age discrimination, and civil liberties. For 42 years, she has devoted countless hours to writing articles, columns, and books on feminist issues and lecturing on reproductive rights. Her law practice primarily uses litigation as a tool for social change. Her lifelong activism and dedication to promoting gender equality has had a profound impact on the lives of women and men, both here and abroad.

DeCrow joined the fledgling National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1967 at a time when the organization was pushing for equal pay for equal work, a concept that appealed to her — an overworked, underpaid employee in the publishing industry. In 1969, she decided to pursue a law degree, and during her first year as an SU law student, she became the first woman to run for mayor of Syracuse, the first woman to run for mayor in New York State, and one of only a handful of women running for office anywhere in the country.

From 1974 to 1977, DeCrow guided NOW as its national president. Under her leadership, efforts to advance gender equality included persuading NASA to recruit women; persuading the EEOC to investigate sex discrimination complaints; pressuring the then three national networks to include women and minorities in front of and behind the camera; and influencing the male Ivy League schools to admit women. In 1988, she co-founded World Woman Watch with Robert Seidenberg, M.D., to urge world leaders not to use religion or culture to mask sex discrimination. And she campaigned tirelessly for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, traveling the country to debate anti-feminist writer Phyllis Schlafly more than 50 times.

DeCrow's many articles and columns have appeared in such prestigious publications as *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune*, and *USA Today*. Among her notable books are *The Young Woman's Guide to Liberation* (1971), *Sexist Justice* (1974), and *Women Who Marry Houses: Panic and Protest and Agoraphobia* (co-authored with Robert Seidenberg, M.D., 1983). According to former *New York Times* columnist, William Safire, DeCrow was the first person on record to use the phrase "politically correct."

In recognition of her pioneering advocacy for gender equality, DeCrow was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame on October 10-11, 2009.



Young Feminist Task Force's Jerin Alam Receives Award

On Wednesday night I attended the Bella Abzug Leadership Institute (BALI)'s Bella and Bella Fella Awards ceremony. Jerin Alam (pictured) received The First Young Women's Andrea Leadership Award.

Jerin is the amazing leader of NOW New York State's Young Feminist Task Force (YFTF). In her acceptance speech Jerin spoke of the feminists that came before her. She implored veteran feminists to help the movement by mentoring one young feminist each, saying, "We can achieve a feminist world in our lifetimes if the different groups of feminists work together."

It speaks highly of NOW that they selected such a competent person to head the YFTF, and it speaks highly of BALI that they recognized the passion, focus and grace with which Jerin galvanizes the young feminist community. Those of us on the YFTF are simply crazy about her.

"I have yet to hear a man ask for advice on how to combine marriage and a career."

Gloria Steinem



NOW NYS President Marcia Pappas and Candidate for Attorney General Kathleen Rice

NOW-New York State has Endorsed Kathleen Rice for NYS Attorney General

Pappas stated "On September 14th (Tuesday), we urge all New Yorkers to vote for Kathleen Rice for our next NYS Attorney General. We are honored to be a part of this very important campaign."

Kathleen Rice stated "I'm honored and humbled by the support NOW and its members have shown my campaign," said Nassau County District Attorney Kathleen Rice, a Democratic candidate for attorney general. "I look forward to NOW playing an important role in our grassroots get-out-the-vote strategy over the next month. I am Long Island's first woman DA and with NOW's help, I'm confident we will make similar history with this office at the state level. As attorney general, I look forward to working with NOW to clean up Albany, protect children and families and fight for our reproductive rights and for gender and pay equity in our communities."

Testimony Regarding the Issue of No-Fault Divorce

by Marcia A. Pappas, President, NOW-New York State

Good afternoon. My name is Noreen Connell, former President of NOW-NYS, and I am reading testimony by Marcia Pappas, the current President of NOW-NYS, who could not be here today. In every survey conducted by our organization about the type of calls our office and our chapters receive, divorce-related problems are the number one reason that we are contacted by members of the general public, mostly women but also some men.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak on this very important issue that will affect the lives of millions of women in New York State. NOW-NYS strongly opposes no-fault divorce legislation currently being proposed in the NYS Legislature (A-9753/S-3890) sponsored by Senator Hassell-Thompson and Assemblymember Bing. This bill has a large loop hole in the wording. It states that "Except under exigent circumstances placed on the record by the court, no judgment of divorce shall be granted under this subdivision unless and until" certain conditions are met. NOW-NYS questions this wording: We wonder who defines "exigent circumstances" and exactly what these circumstances might be. Further, this loosely worded legislation leaves a large window for abuse by the monied spouse (usually the husband).

New York is currently a fault state. That means that if you want a divorce, and your spouse does not agree, you must have grounds. The two most common grounds are cruel and inhuman treatment and abandonment. New York State also has one no-fault ground. It is a bi-lateral, no-fault ground. If both parties want to divorce they negotiate a separation agreement, which is a contract spelling out all the terms which a court would decide, such as custody, child support, maintenance (formerly called alimony) and property division. Then after living apart for one year, the agreement becomes the ground for the divorce.

Currently, most separations and divorces are negotiated by couples through these types of agreements. Approximately 95% of divorce cases in New York are resolved by the parties themselves, not by the judge, and without a trial. This is the best possible process.

Unfortunately, the NYS Legislature continues to consider proposals for unilateral no-fault divorce beyond these negotiated agreements. The objective appears to be to secure "divorce

on demand" where either party can go into court, say the marriage has broken down, and get a divorce. No grounds are necessary. Additionally, under all the bills that have been proposed to date in New York State, fault would not be considered in determining maintenance or property division (except "egregious" fault, such as attempted murder of a spouse, which is currently considered in division of property). Under all the proposed bills, the judge wouldn't hear the facts, behavior, and circumstances that led to the break-up of the marriage. Will the judge hear these facts in custody disputes? We are not sure.

NOW-NYS objects to "divorce on demand" because it takes away any bargaining leverage the non-monied spouse has. Currently she can say "If you want a divorce I'll agree, but you have to work out a fair agreement." That is not "blackmail" as has been claimed by some no-fault proponents. Negotiating the terms of the break-up of a partnership is the way partnerships are dissolved in the business world. Women should have the same protection. Another benefit of separation agreements is that couples can agree to terms that the court cannot order. One notable example is child support until graduation from college. The court may order child support only up to the child's 21st birthday. Without a separation agreement with this provision included, children are left to finish college under severe financial hardship or to drop out.

Another objection we have is that, in fairness, any partner to a marriage should be provided with notice that the other partner wants a divorce and be given an opportunity to negotiate the terms for the divorce. With "divorce on demand," not only can the more-monied spouse begin hiding assets (which happens even under our current laws), but this spouse can proceed quickly with legal actions before the other spouse, with limited means, even has the time to find and hire an attorney.

Who is pushing for "divorce on demand"? The push was begun by the New York State Bar Association, whose wealthy clients just want out of the marriage without negotiating an agreement. They would rather have the case go to trial to decide the issues of custody, child support, maintenance and property division. Should domestic relations law be changed to satisfy only the needs of wealthy clients or to help the legal profession gain more fees?

Current law encourages private settlements. In contrast, the Bar Association proposal would flood the court with cases. There is another downside to having more divorces settled through court proceedings: The Office of Court Administration does periodic studies of gender bias, and they acknowledge that gender bias against women still permeates the court system.

The Women's Bar Association has reversed its long standing opposition to no-fault divorce and is now going along with the NY State Bar. Attorneys in the Women's Bar Association have some clients who want out of the marriage and have no grounds. But the Women's Bar Association also says that women are doing so well financially they no longer need the protection of fault grounds. However, on December 24, 2006, the New York Times published an article entitled Scant Progress Closing Gap in Women's Pay. The sub-title was For College Graduates, the Disparity Worsens. Based on factual economic data, it doesn't seem that most women are doing so well in the workplace.

We must look at the socio-economic standing of women in our society. Women clearly continue to be the non or lesser monied spouse, as women continue to give up careers and financial independence for the role of housewife and mother, either on a short-term or long-term basis. For this reason alone we must look closely at how divorce affects the lives of women and children and the role that the state should play to ensure that homemakers and children not be left destitute after divorce.

A small number of attorneys who represent victims of domestic violence say that they want no-fault because sometimes their clients are being denied divorces by some judges who tell them that the domestic violence they suffered is not severe enough to be considered cruelty that would warrant a divorce. NOW-NYS has worked on the national and state levels to raise the issue of domestic violence, to reduce its incident rates, and to develop legal strategies under criminal and civil laws to help victims. New York's domestic relations laws should not be changed to disadvantage a majority of women, especially homemakers with children, because a few judges are not following the law. It is these judges who have to be changed or removed. We need thorough judicial education to enlighten judges as to

the meaning of domestic violence. Contrary to popular belief, it doesn't necessarily mean a woman will appear in court with black eyes and broken bones.

The National Organization for Women (NOW-NYS) has a long standing position of opposition to unilateral no-fault divorce. Our opposition is based upon the study of the harmful effects of no-fault laws on women and children in other states.

In 1987, 17 years after California enacted the first no-fault law in the country, California's Senate issued a report entitled Report on Family Equity which found, among other things, that no-fault had created "unintended hardships" for women and children.

Ten years later, in 1997, the prestigious Family Law Quarterly issued by the American Bar Association published an article by Peter Nash Swisher, Professor of Law, at the University of Richmond Law School in Virginia. Professor Swisher studied the effects of no-fault all over the country. In the article he states that "when no-fault divorce was first introduced in most states, a disturbing number of courts failed to provide adequate financial protection to women and children of divorce." Swisher goes on to say, "Consequently, many children of divorce have suffered long-lasting psychological, as well as economic, damage resulting from divorce. Indeed, a number of commentators have concluded that the no-fault divorce revolution in America has failed." Swisher recommends that, at the very least, even in states with no-fault grounds, fault should be considered in maintenance and property division, as it is in approximately 38 states.

Divorce reform is needed. However, NOW-NYS sees the most urgent need as a strong bill regarding expert and legal fees. The party in control of the finances should be ordered to pay meaningful expert and legal fees to the other party during the divorce proceedings in order to ensure both parties have a level playing field. Further, we must ensure that the lesser monied spouse is covered with health insurance and that any move by a party to hide assets results in meaningful penalties to that party. Let's have both parties equally represented, see how that works and then, and only then, consider unilateral no-fault divorce.

Women's Equality will only be achieved if you join us in the fight! Join us in our fight for the New York State Reproductive Health Act.

Imagine a New York that ensures every woman has the right to make the decision that is best for herself, her family, and her future. Imagine a New York that strengthens the rights of our mothers, our sisters and our daughters. Imagine a New York that is committed to the next generation of women. That New York is possible if we pass the **Reproductive Health Act**

WHAT THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ACT DOES

The Reproductive Health Act:

- guarantees a woman's right to control her reproductive health;
- ensures that a woman will be able to have an abortion if her health is endangered;
- treats the regulation of abortion as an issue of public health and medical practice, rather than as a potential crime; and
- guarantees everyone the right to use or refuse contraception

WHY WE NEED THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ACT

1. New Yorkers overwhelmingly support a woman's right to decide when and whether to have a child. In fact, three quarters of New York voters support the Reproductive Health Act—even after hearing arguments against the bill.

2. New York's law is outdated and inadequate. After almost 40 years, times have changed but our state law still regulates abortion in the criminal code and lacks protections if a woman's health is endangered.
3. New York is not secure in relying on the federal protections provided by Roe. State legislatures across the country have enacted over 450 bills that would ban or restrict abortion, some of which are a direct challenge to Roe v. Wade. All it takes is one of these challenges to reach the Supreme Court, and Roe could be overturned.
4. Seven states have already passed laws like the Reproductive Health Act. New York needs to reclaim our rightful place as a pro-choice leader by passing this bill.
5. The majority of voters would vote for a candidate who supports this bill. It's time for the New York State Legislature to listen to constituent voices and support the Reproductive Health Act.

Call your NYS Senator, NYS Assembly member and the Governor and tell them that you want NYS to pass the Reproductive Health Act NOW!

LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES!

Every year *The National Organization for Women-NYS* lobbies for legislation to improve the lives of women and girls.

A8117b-S5007 (Midwifery Modernization Act) was signed into law by Governor Paterson.

The National organization for Women - NYS strongly supported this legislation.. This Midwifery Modernization Act amends the Midwifery Practice Act (Article 140 of the Education Law) to remove an existing requirement that midwives have written practice agreements with physicians. The National Organization for Women (NOW) has long supported reproductive freedom as a priority issue, and believes that women should have complete authority over their reproductive lives.

A529/S5923 - Legislation to establish Civil Remedy for Victims of Bias-Related Violence, was signed into law by Governor Paterson.

This law establishes a civil remedy for victims of bias-related violence or intimidation for deprivation of a civil liberty, property damage, injury or death motivated by race, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age or sexual orientation to recover actual damages, injunctive relief or other appropriate remedy; includes attorneys fees.

As we go to print these bills that have been signed by both NYS Assembly and NYS Senate and are on their way to the Governor's Desk:

- Strangulation Prevention Act of 2010
- Counsel and Expert Fee Bill in Matrimonial Actions
- Post Marital Income Legislation (Also known as alimony)
- Dignity for All Students Act

Speaker for the NOW-NYS Convention



Mo Therese Hannah, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology at Siena College

Mo Therese Hannah, Ph.D. is Professor of Psychology at Siena College in Loudonville, New York, a licensed psychologist and clinician specializing in couples therapy and trauma work. She co-founded and chairs the annual Battered Mothers Custody Conference, held each January in Albany, New York. She has published six books and produced numerous articles and presentations on topics related to intimate relationships and partner abuse. Most recently, she is Co-Editor (with attorney Barry Goldstein) of the 2010 Civic Research Institute

publication, Domestic Violence, Abuse, and Child Custody: Legal Strategies and Policy Issues. mhannah413@aol.com

NOW Activists Rally to Say NO to Stupak Amendment to the Health Care Reform

Left to right:
 Joni Baird,
 Sandy Rapp,
 Julie Kirshner,
 Marilyn Fitterman,
 Mary Richmond,
 Marcia Pappas,
 Rachelle Suissa



Maretta Short,
 President of New Jersey NOW



Zenaida Mendez,
 President,
 National Dominican
 Women's Caucus
 and representative
 of the Northern
 NOW Manhattan
 Chapter

Sandy Rapp
 (center) lead
 the group in
 front of St.
 Patrick Church
 in NYC.
 singing
 Remember
 Rose



Rochester NOW Held a Vigil to in
 Rochester, NY to protest Stupak Pitts



Mary Richmond,
 President of Albany Area NOW



Jerin Alam, Chair of NOW-NYS Young
 Feminist Task Force



Speaker for the NOW-NYS Convention

Bill Baird

Bill Baird, labeled by UPI and other media as the "Father of the Abortion Movement" is the holder of three U.S. Supreme Court victories for women's rights. Most notably, Baird v. Eisenstadt legalized birth control for all individuals through the high court on March 22, 1972. Justice William Brennan wrote, "If the right of privacy means anything,

it is the right of the individual to be free...to bear or beget a child." He later fought for minor's rights to abortion in Baird v. Bellotti I (1976) and Baird v. Bellotti II (1979).

Baird was arrested eight times in five states throughout the 1960s for merely lecturing on a woman's right to abortion and birth control. He opened the first birth control and abortion clinic in 1964 and pioneered the "Plan Van" - a mobile classroom where he taught the poor about reproductive healthcare.

Baird v. Eisenstadt is one of the top U.S. Supreme Court cases that became the foundation for countless privacy rulings including Roe v. Wade and the gay rights victory Lawrence v. Texas.

His biography is nearly complete which will tell the story of his 47 year struggle. His initial involvement in this struggle came when an African American unmarried mother of eight children died in his arms at Harlem Hospital in 1963 - a coat hanger imbedded in her uterus.



Speaker for the NOW-NYS Convention

Zenaida Méndez

Zenaida Méndez currently holds the position of Director of External Affairs for the Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN), Public Access Television.

As a Chief Negotiator for MNN's re-franchising process with New York City cable companies, Méndez has successfully secured a new 12-year, multi-million dollar agreement with Verizon.

For many years, Méndez has been involved in a variety of issues affecting women and children -- from housing to daycare, to equal pay for equal work; from education to a woman's right to choose as well as issues surrounding health, economic and environmental justice.

From 2004-2006, Méndez served as Director of Racial Diversity Programs at the National Organization for Women (NOW), where she successfully helped to organize a number of nationwide efforts.

Prior to working at NOW, Méndez was the National Project Director for the Second National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, successfully raising over a million dollars on behalf of the Environmental Justice fund for the project.

Presently, Méndez is President and Founder of the National Dominican Women's Caucus. She is a former member of the board of directors of the National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence as well as a former member of the Board of Directors of the West Harlem Environmental Action Committee, among other organizations.

Born in the Dominican Republic, Mendez moved with her parents and two siblings when she was a teenager. Méndez holds a Bachelor's degree in Government & Public Administration from John Jay College of Criminal Justice and a Master's degree in Public Administration from the City University of New York, Graduate School of Public Affairs.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION IS WRONG IN ANY FORM!

On a May 8th, 2010 the New York Times published an article entitled Group Backs Ritual "Nick" as Female Circumcision Option. The article states that the American Academy of Pediatrics is suggesting that in order to appease families who believe in the practice of female genital mutilation, they should be accommodated in order to stop them from taking their daughters to other countries to undergo mutilation. NOW NYS vehemently disagrees with their position. To see the full article, see: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/07/health/policy/07cuts.html>

The National Organization for Women has taken a strong position against female genital mutilation. NOW continues its strong stance and we urge everyone to contact the American Academy of Pediatrics to voice your opposition to this practice. <http://www.aap.org/guestbook/contactus-form.cfm>

National Headquarters:
The American Academy of Pediatrics
141 Northwest Point Boulevard
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098
USA
847/434-4000
847/434-8000 (Fax)

Washington, DC Office:
The American Academy of Pediatrics
Department of Federal Affairs
601 13th Street, NW
Suite 400 North
Washington, DC 20005 USA
202/347-8600
202/393-6137 (Fax)

Information Regarding Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a surgical procedure that alters the structure of the clitoris and/or labia, and most commonly occurs in one of four types as defined by the World Health Organization.

The practice is generally performed upon girls between the ages of four and 12, but can occur as early as a few days after birth or as late as immediately prior to marriage.

Female genital mutilation is practiced in at least 30 countries in Africa and the Middle East and also occurs in some countries by immigrant population from these regions, such as European countries, the United States, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia.

Depending on the country and specific group involved, a variety of instruments, usually crude ones such as special knives and even sharp stones are used to perform this procedure, and often the same instrument is used over on another girl without sterilization.

Short term consequences of FGM include bleeding, post-operative shock, damage to other organs resulting from lack of surgical expertise of the person performing the procedure and the violence of the resistance of the patient when anesthesia is not used, infections, including tetanus and septicemia, because of the use of unsterilized or poorly disinfected equipment, urine retention caused by swelling and inflammation, and severe bleeding sometimes leading to death.

Long term consequences of FGM include chronic infections of the bladder and vagina, dysmenorrhoea (extremely painful menstruation), excessive scar tissue at the site of the operation, formation of cysts on the stitch line, child birth obstruction, and increased risk of HIV infection as a result of using the same utensil on numerous girls without sterilization.

Nightmares, depression, shock, passivity, feelings of betrayal are not uncommon among girls who have had this procedure done.

The U.S. Government views FGM as a harmful, traditional practice that threatens the health and human rights of women, and hinders development. Currently, it is illegal in the United States to perform FGM on a person under the age of 18, and sixteen states have passed legislation outlawing this practice altogether.

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All information provided by the U.S. Department of State, "Prevalence of the Practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): Laws Prohibiting FGM and their Enforcement; Recommendations on how to Best Work to Eliminate FGM." Posted Sept. 10, 2002

New York Advocates Respond to Attacks on Reproductive Justice

By Tracey Brooks, Esq.

The health care reform debate surrounding abortion and the resulting onerous restrictions on health insurance coverage for abortion in the final package have put the spotlight on threats to abortion access at the federal level. Simultaneously, various states have passed or tried to pass laws to reduce access even further.

Recently, the Nebraska legislature overwhelmingly passed a virtual ban on all abortions beyond 20 weeks. Most families who seek late-term abortions do so after learning of severe fetal anomalies, usually at or past 20 weeks. The Governor of Oklahoma just vetoed a bill passed by the legislature that would have forced a woman to undergo an invasive ultrasound and listen to a detailed description of the fetus before she could get an abortion. The bill also would mandate the collection of sensitive details and data about a woman's abortion. A threat of an override exists.

In most cases, the intention of these bills is to bring an abortion rights challenge before the United States Supreme Court in an effort to further chip away at women's access to abortion care, as happened in 2007 with the Court's *Gonzalez vs. Carhart* decision which upheld the first abortion ban since *Roe v. Wade*.

To maintain abortion access in New York and protect against threats beyond our state's borders, NOW, Family Planning Advocates of New York State and our coalition partners

in the Alliance for Women's Health are working with lawmakers to update New York's 40-year-old abortion laws through passage of the Reproductive Health Act (RHA) (S.5808). Introduced in the Senate last year, RHA will:

- Provide a health exception should a woman's health be endangered during her pregnancy, which is not already provided for in New York's law;
- Remove the regulation of abortion care from the state's penal code and place it in the public health code with all other medical procedures; and
- Enable a woman to use or refuse contraception.

There is broad support in all areas of the state for this bill. More than two-thirds of New York voters support passage of RHA and say they are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports RHA than one who does not. Make your voice heard. Let your Senator and Assembly member know that you want New York to maintain its status as a pro-choice leader by protecting women's health and the providers who make the right to choose a reality.

Learn more about RHA and sign a petition to your lawmakers urging passage because Women's Health Matters! <http://womenshealthmattersny.org/Learn.htm>

Speaker for the NOW-NYS Convention

M. Tracey Brooks, Esq.
President and CEO

Family Planning Advocates of New York State
and Planned Parenthood Advocates of New York



As president and CEO of Family Planning Advocates of New York State (FPA), M. Tracey Brooks leads a statewide coalition representing more than 125 civic, labor, religious, and health and human services agencies promoting access to and affordability of comprehensive reproductive health care services for women and families statewide. As president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Advocates of New York, as well, she directs the political and advocacy arm of Planned Parenthood. Brooks also serves on the Board of Directors of the Tech Valley High School Foundation.

Prior to leading FPA, Brooks served as the Regional Director for then-Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton. She represented the Senator in her work with government, political and community leaders in 15 counties in upstate New York.

Brooks also has practiced law in both the public and private sectors. She served as Counsel to the New York State Assembly Judiciary and Codes Committees. And, from 1998 to 2002, she served in the litigation department of Hinman Straub, one of the premier law firms in upstate New York, where she worked on a wide range of legal and policy-related issues.

Brooks also has been active in politics. In 2002, she was the Democratic nominee for the New York State Assembly, 108th District. And, in 2008, she was a candidate for the United States House of Representatives in the 21st District.

She received her bachelor's degree in Sociology from LeMoyne College in Syracuse in 1992 and her J.D. from Albany Law School of Union University in 2000.

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or individual that needs
to get your message
out there
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Thank you for helping us pass the Strangulation Prevention Act of 2010

1. Choking is often more dangerous than punching, shoving and other kinds of abuse.
2. If an attacker applies 11 pounds of pressure for just 10 seconds, the victim can become unconscious. With greater pressure, death can occur within minutes. And even after the attacker lets up, a victim can collapse and die hours or even days later because of underlying damage to the neck, or to the brain due to lack of oxygen.
3. Ten percent of violent deaths in the United States are strangulations.
4. With no visible signs, strangulations is not charged as a crime.
5. A 2008 study of 310 homicides in 11 American cities, published in *The Journal of Emergency Medicine*, found that 43 percent of women who were murdered by intimate partners had experienced at least one episode of choking before their killing.

The law will provide for severe penalties: intentional choking and suffocation into unconsciousness will be considered a violent felony.

Join NOW!

We need you NOW more than ever! Help us win the ERA, Equal Pay, Reproductive Rights, Stop Violence Against Women. Your membership dues will be put to good use! Look at your address on this newsletter. If you see a date that is past due, that means you are no longer a member of NOW. In order to help us win equality for all women and girls, we need a critical mass. Rejoin NOW at www.nownys.org Or send us a check for \$40 (\$39-\$15 sliding scale for those cannot pay the full fee) to NOW-NYS, 1500 Central Avenue, Albany, NY 12205.

NOW Chapters Taking Action!



Albany Area NOW Mary Richmond and activists at Peace Rally in DC



President Marcia Pappas and newly sworn in Senator Peralta



When Mayor Bradley went to court in White Plains, NY for assaulting his wife, NOW was there!



White Plains NY



President Marcia Pappas spoke at Cornell University on Empowerment of Women



Marcia Pappas, Barbara Berg, Mary Richmond at book signing event for Ms. Berg hosted by Albany Area NOW

"I declare to you that woman must not depend upon the protection of man, but must be taught to protect herself, and there I take my stand."

Susan B. Anthony



NOW activists protest Ralph Lauren for extreme photo shopping of models for ads. The girls and women depicted in ads are unnaturally thin. No wonder, 40% of 8th grade girls have dieted.



NOW-NYC Protests Cache Clothing Stores, which has been sued for underpaying and not providing overtime pay to its garment workers at its midtown Manhattan garment factory.

CANDIDATES FOR NOW NEW YORK STATE OFFICES

All candidates are running unopposed.



Marcia Pappas for President (Full Time Compensated)

I would be honored to have your vote. Under my leadership these past six years we've accomplished many things of which I'm very proud. Some examples are below:

- We've regained solvency and kept NOW-NYS in the black through tough economic times by cutting expenses and still continuing our work on behalf of women and girls. While many women's organizations are folding, NOW-NYS is alive and well and still a vibrant force with which to be reckoned.
- On my watch we've achieved tremendous visibility in local state, and even national media. Major media outlets, including CNN, ABC, NBC, CBS, NY1, Newsweek, NY Law Journal, New York Times, actively seek out the NOW-NYS opinion on issues from domestic violence to reproductive rights.
- We've brought NOW new activists through our intern program and our Young Feminist Task Force, now over twenty-five members strong.
- Our NOW-NYS media clout played a pivotal role in ousting and replacing Senator Hiram Monserrate following his appalling domestic violence conviction. This was the first Senate expulsion in almost a century.
- We hosted the eight hundred strong Fortieth Anniversary National NOW Conference in Albany.
- We lobby for a great many legislative benchmarks, including Reproductive Health Act, Strangulation Prevention Act, and Dignity for All Students Act, Civil Remedies for Victims of Bias-Related Crimes, Ending the Statute of Limitations in Rape, Counsel Fees in Divorce Actions, and Post Marital Income (Alimony).
- We co-sponsor the extremely successful battered mothers/child custody conference in Albany.
- I, personally, have traveled widely around NYS, bringing our NOW-NYS message to rallies, women's equality day celebrations, community groups, and universities including Cornell, SUNY, and Hudson Valley Community College.
- I promise to continue all of the above in full force, and to use the ever-advancing technology to update our informative, effective, user-friendly website.



Gabriela Moreno for Executive Vice President

I ask for your support again this year. As the Secretary on the State Council for the past six years I have kept the minutes and I contribute by making decisions about the future of NOW-NYS.

As a member of NOW since the age of 16, my experience has been achieved through working with the largest chapter in NYS, New York City NOW, where I have co-chaired the reproductive rights committee, tracked legislation, developed action campaigns, and lobbied. During anti-choice Operation Rescue attacks on abortion clinics I worked as a group facilitator. I also marched in the largest pro-choice demonstration in Washington in 1992 along with organizing local ZAP Actions.

I served as Secretary of the NOW-NYC Board for several terms, and I also served on the Service Fund Board, along with NOW-NYC PAC. In 2001 I proudly accepted the Susan B. Anthony Award from NOW-NYC.

As a Mexican/American woman my life experience and knowledge of women of color issues I bring a diverse perspective to the organization that I love and respect. I am a feminist with feminist values. I am a team player and enjoy working with other feminists, as we look to achieving equality for all women.



Barbara Kirkpatrick for Legislative Vice President

I'm your current Legislative Vice President and I'd very much like to continue serving NOW-NYS for another two years. Our visibility is good and growing, our press releases are quoted in major media, and our legislators no longer ask "where is NOW?" They ask "What does NOW want?"

Throughout the past two years I've prepared lobbying reports, assisted with support/oppose memos, discussed policy, and organized for conferences and rallies. In addition I've revised the PAC questionnaire, lobbied legislators, and attended a host of NOW-NYS functions. As some of our Executive Committee will be leaving or changing jobs, I can provide continuity and experience for the new team.

In this economic downturn our finances have suffered. But even in this context, NOW-NYS is functioning economically. We've had significant legislative successes, and actually got a domestically-violent senator expelled from the NY State Senate, the first such action in almost a century.

Over the next two years we'll face many threats, especially to reproductive rights. So we certainly need to be there, and I'd certainly like to be there too. In short, I ask for your vote. Thank you.



Mary Richmond for Secretary

I ask for your vote. I am currently a researcher, working on a study in childbirth, previously trained in gerontology and grief and loss.

As Secretary I will keep accurate records for NOW-NYS working closely with NOW leadership and its members, continuing to speak truth to power, while promoting women's equality.

I have been President of Albany Area NOW for two years and member of NOW for 4 years.

I have given tremendous visibility to NOW locally, statewide and nationally by:

- Producing/Directing of a monthly TV show entitled "Feminism in a Time of Tyranny" interviewing prominent authors, public policy analysts and legal advocates for women.
- Participating in workshops and focus groups at the National Battered Mothers Custody Conferences, NOW-NYS Conferences, and National NOW Conferences.
- Rallying with the Bethlehem Neighbors for Peace and National Peace March in DC, aided in organizing the Stupak/Pitts Rally in NYC, and Equal Marriage Rally in Albany
- Organizing and supporting community and Statewide events to bring visibility to NOW's issues; i.e. reproductive rights pay equity, domestic violence, health care, anti-gun violence and oppression of marginalized communities.
- Lobbying NYS Legislators on issues such as domestic violence, domestic relation laws and the equal rights amendment.

Speaker for the NOW-NYS Convention



**Andrea D. Lyon
Attorney, Educator and
Author**

Andrea D. Lyon is Clinical Professor of Law, Director of the Center for Justice in Capital Cases, and Associate Dean for Clinical Programs at DePaul University College of Law in Chicago.

She is nationally recognized for her work to promote social justice, equity and improvement in the criminal justice system.

She first worked for the Cook County Public Defenders' Office-in the felony trial division, post-conviction/habeas corpus unit, preliminary hearing/first municipal (misdemeanor) unit, and the appeals division. Her last position there was Chief of the Homicide Task Force, a 22-lawyer unit that represents persons accused of homicide.

Lyon has tried more than 130 homicide cases, both within the public defender's office and elsewhere. She has defended more than 30 potential capital cases at the trial level. Of these, she has taken 19 through the penalty phase, and won them all.

In 1990, she founded the Illinois Capital Resource Center and served as its director until joining the University of Michigan Law School faculty in 1995 as an Assistant Clinical Professor. In 2000, she joined the faculty at DePaul.

Lyon, who is a graduate of Rutgers University and the Antioch School of Law, is the first woman to serve as lead attorney in a death penalty case. She provides an inside look into her work, from her early days in the public defender's office to her founding of the Center for Justice in Capital Cases, in her book *Angel of Death Row*, (Kaplan Publishing, 2010).

Jerin Alam was at Somos to celebrate with Zenaida Mendez as she was presented with an achievement award.



Marcia Pappas, President of NOW-NYS with Dr. Carhart at the National NOW Conference in Boston.



NOW marches for peace



NOW-NYS Annual Convention

***Women With Opinions:
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