From the Ground Up:
Building Opportunities for Women in Construction
CONFERENCE CO-SPONSORS

The Women re:BUILD NY Conference was co-sponsored by Legal Momentum and the Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center.

LEGAL MOMENTUM, EQUALITY WORKS PROGRAM

Legal Momentum, founded in 1970 as NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, is the country’s oldest national legal advocacy organization dedicated to advancing the rights of women and girls. Since its inception, Legal Momentum has worked to assure equal work and equal pay for women in the workforce. Using a three-pronged approach—public education campaigns, litigation, and public policy initiatives—Legal Momentum works to eliminate the barriers that still keep women out of many jobs traditionally held by men.

Legal Momentum established the Equality Works Program to challenge discrimination and expand opportunities for women working in historically male-dominated fields including construction and firefighting. These occupations provide an important economic opportunity for women. They offer excellent wages, benefits, and career pathways, providing long-term economic security to women who might otherwise struggle with low-wage, dead-end jobs.

Equality Works focused its attention on the construction industry in New York City in the wake of the 9/11 tragedy. Today, the goal of Equality Works is to ensure that women can thrive professionally in high-paying non-traditional fields, both as newcomers and as more experienced workers. The rebuilding of New York City can go beyond revitalizing the city to creating a national model for equal opportunity in the construction trades.

LOWER MANHATTAN CONSTRUCTION COMMAND CENTER (LMCCC)

The Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center (LMCCC) was established in the aftermath of 9/11 and charged with the coordination and general oversight of all Lower Manhattan construction projects. As part of its mandate, LMCCC created Opportunity Downtown, a program that works to ensure that minorities and women have unimpeded access to the employment, contracting, and subcontracting opportunities generated by the downtown rebuilding effort. LMCCC sponsored the Women re:Build NY Conference as part of this commitment. “One of the vital functions of the Command Center,” said its former executive director, Charles Maikish, “is ensuring that there is participation by minorities and women in the opportunity created by the redevelopment of Lower Manhattan.”

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We gratefully acknowledge photographer Joan Roth, whose work has been exhibited and published all over the world, for allowing us to use many of the stunning photographs from her current project focusing on women in traditionally male-dominated industries.

ON THE COVER: The extraordinary photograph on the cover is from the collection “Building the Times,” taken by Annie Leibovitz, one of the most celebrated photographers of our time, at The New York Times Building construction site in Manhattan between July 2005 and July 2006.
From the Ground Up:

Building Opportunities for Women in Construction

By
Jennifer K. Brown
Vice President and Legal Director
Legal Momentum

and

Françoise Jacobsohn
Project Manager, Equality Works
Legal Momentum

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“Our mere presence and persistence challenges assumptions and opens the minds of everyone who sees us working.”

MARGARITA SUAREZ
ELEVATOR MAINTENANCE WORKER
INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS, LOCAL 3

Copies of From the Ground Up: Building Opportunities for Women in Construction are available, free of charge, from Legal Momentum.

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From the Ground Up: Building Opportunities for Women in Construction

Preface

Legal Momentum convened the Women re:BUILD NY Conference in April 2007 for a single purpose: to focus the attention of leaders in the construction industry, government, unions, and education, as well as tradeswomen, on how to make equal opportunity a reality for women in the construction trades. The conference provided a rare opportunity for stakeholders from many distinct sectors to reach across the usual divides and learn from their differing perspectives. The result was a reinvigorated commitment to break down the barriers that have historically kept women out of this vital, thriving industry, and to build a new infrastructure for equality.

The timing for Women re:BUILD NY could not have been better. Construction employment is predicted to continue its strong growth, coinciding with a surge in retirements by the baby boomers who make up the core of today’s skilled trades workforce. Construction jobs pay far better wages than traditional “women’s work,” making them an attractive option for the millions of women mired in poverty at the bottom of the economic ladder. Yet today, fewer than one in 25 construction workers is female.

In this conference report—structured around four “Pillars of Equal Opportunity”—participants share their firsthand accounts of what works to open opportunities for women. Industry and union leaders and government officials share their views on subjects that range from goal-setting and recruitment strategies to worksite guidelines and on-site monitors. Educators describe programs that break down stereotypes about the work women can do, and tradeswomen report on how union women’s committees provide advocacy and support. Women re:BUILD NY has become a catalyst for new collaborations and initiatives in New York City. This report extends far beyond the conference to provide the larger community with a blueprint for action to advance women’s opportunities in construction.

Jennifer K. Brown
Vice President and Legal Director
Legal Momentum

Françoise Jacobsohn
Project Manager, Equality Works
Legal Momentum
The Women re:BUILD NY Conference

The Women re:BUILD NY Conference was a historic gathering, bringing together over 250 people from across the construction industry. It created an unprecedented forum for all sectors of the industry to examine the issues affecting the recruitment, training, and retention of skilled tradeswomen.

The Importance of Industry-wide Communication

The construction industry is a complex web of stakeholders with established channels of communication that rarely include industry-wide discussion of systemic issues. Each group of stakeholders controls a discrete segment of the industry. Rarely do all the sectors come together to discuss issues affecting the entire industry.

The stakeholders are:

- Federal, state, and local governments that are responsible for approximately 25 percent of all construction spending, establish equal opportunity policies, and support community and workforce development.

- Developers that negotiate with governments and communities, fund workforce development projects, and hire and supervise the construction companies and subcontractors.

- Construction management companies that parcel out the work to subcontractors and supervise them and the construction site.

- Contractors that hire and supervise the labor force.

- Unions that control entry into the construction workforce, refer workers to the worksites, protect workers’ rights, and negotiate worksite policies with the employers.
• Workforce development professionals who refer and prepare individuals for construction jobs and work with communities, government, and developers in general and on specific jobsites.

• Educators who prepare the future workforce.

• Local community boards and organizations that negotiate with developers and local government on individual construction projects.

• Tradeswomen, who have a crucial role in describing and defining workplace conditions, as well as promoting the recruitment and retention of women and girls in the industry.

Despite the importance of each of these stakeholders to the construction industry as a whole, most are unaware of the many intersections of their interests. A lack of communication among them can lead to misunderstandings of their needs, expectations, roles, and responsibilities. The absence of a framework for communication among all these stakeholders perpetuates a “business as usual” approach in spite of their interest in and commitment to changing the status quo.

Industry Advisory Committees and Checklists

In advance of the conference, Legal Momentum established two advisory committees—one consisting of educators, trainers, and advocates and one of government, industry, and labor leaders—to identify each sector’s perspective on the issues and to develop commitments for further actions. (See inside back cover.) The Women re:BUILD NY Conference benefited tremendously from the work of the advisory groups, whose questions, comments, and interest fueled the conference content.

The advisory committees were also instrumental in spurring the production of the “checklists” and other appendices to this report. The first is a checklist for developers, but is equally useful for government agencies with public works projects. This checklist emphasizes the need to communicate the importance of equal opportunity to all prospective contractors in bid documents, as well as to contractually bind contractors and subcontractors to specific obligations to promote equal opportunity for all workers. The second is a checklist to assist construction workforce monitors, who often are hired to oversee worksites without a clear mandate or instructions on how to ensure equal opportunity on that worksite.
The third checklist supports communities in their work with developers to secure economic opportunities for community members. The fourth and fifth documents are for unions and contractors to use in establishing standards and procedures for equal opportunity.

Summary
During the dynamic two-day conference, participants from all sectors of the industry had the rare opportunity to talk face-to-face about working together for equal opportunity. They spoke candidly about obstacles, solutions, and pathways to bringing women into construction.

Conference presentations highlighted best practices—including setting high workforce diversity goals—implemented around the country and on several of New York City’s biggest construction sites. Workshops included:

- Case Study of a Project (The New York Times Building)
- Apprenticeship—What is it? How to access it?
- Retention—Staying the Course
- Respect for Workforce Diversity
- Best Practices
- Monitoring and Enforcement
- Educating for the Future

The results were clear: A conference that brought together the various parts of the industry was a critical first step in narrowing the gender gap in the construction labor force and raising industry awareness.

“The relationships forged at this conference,” said Nicholas LaGuardia, director of the Elevator Industry Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee, “have launched a dialogue that continues to this day, fueling the momentum for equal opportunity for women in the construction industry.”
“When the outpouring of support for the city after September 11th solidified into commitments of billions of dollars to reconstruct downtown, it became important to question whether this money would be used to reinforce the discriminatory structures that have kept women of all races out of the trades—or whether it would be used to build a new infrastructure of equal opportunity.”

JENNIFER K. BROWN
VICE PRESIDENT AND LEGAL DIRECTOR, LEGAL MOMENTUM
PILLARS OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

After two days of discussion, debate, and panel breakouts, the conference identified four pillars for building an infrastructure of equal opportunity and improving women’s access to the construction industry.

1. **THE TIME FOR CHANGE IS NOW.** The early 21st century is a historic moment for women’s access to the construction industry because of the national construction boom, the retiring of baby boomers, and an increased number of women entering the workforce.

2. **WE KNOW WHAT TO DO.** Adopting proven best practices in New York City and around the country can ensure an increasing presence of women on construction sites.

3. **THE WORK GOES BEYOND THE CONSTRUCTION SITE.** Union women’s committees, the broader community, and government can all implement structures to attract and retain women in the construction trades, and to address critical child care needs.

4. **EDUCATING AND TRAINING A NEW GENERATION.** Education and apprenticeships are vital tools to recruit the next generation of women for these exciting and economically sustaining jobs.
“Now is the time to create a win-win for everyone. This is an opportunity for all of us to open the doors and let everyone participate in the process. . . . The number one issue on the minds of the contractors is getting good help.”

LOUIS J. COLETTI
PRESIDENT AND CEO
BUILDING TRADES EMPLOYERS’ ASSOCIATION
Women began entering the skilled trades in significant numbers more than 30 years ago, yet remain rare. Conference participants were in consensus that the skilled trades offer remarkable economic opportunities for women. The convergence of economic and workforce development factors in play right now makes this an optimal time for women to enter and thrive in the construction industry.
The State of the Industry

The construction industry is strong and growing. The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics places construction third among all industries in projected employment growth for 2006–2016, anticipating an increase of 781,000 jobs, or 1 percent per year.¹

New York City mirrors the national trend. Former Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff noted that $25 billion of bids for public projects were expected in 2007, resulting in unprecedented demand for labor and material over the next five years. The New York Building Congress projects that construction spending in New York City by government, businesses, and institutions will reach $83 billion for 2007 through 2009, continuing a remarkable trend of accelerating growth in construction activity.²

The increased demand for tradespeople created by this growth is coinciding with a rapidly shrinking skilled workforce caused by retiring baby boomers. At the same time, women are expected to account for 49 percent of the estimated national labor force growth between 2006 and 2016.³

This convergence of economic and demographic trends means that conditions are optimal for increasing women’s participation in the construction workforce. “On the verge of a huge construction boom, we have a fundamental public policy debate—of whether or not this construction boom will empower women and minority employment. . . . If we’re not prepared to answer that question affirmatively over the next two, three, or 10 years from now, then we’ve fundamentally failed. . . . [I maintain] a sense of optimism that if we all focus on it and realize the changes that we have to make, we can in fact increase [women’s] level of participation,” said Christopher Ward, managing director of the General Contractors Association.

¹ http://www.pmmag.com/CDA/Articles/Economics_Week_in_Review/BNP_GUID.9-5-2006_A.10000000000000218218
Women in the Building Trades

“ Tradeswomen represent an alarmingly small share of the industry. We’ve all heard about the barriers that prevent a level playing field, whether it be misguided hiring practices or simply overt discrimination on the worksite. What must be clear is that these conditions not only hinder the growth of the tradeswomen’s workforce, they hinder the growth of New York. We can’t reach our full potential if we’re making use of only half our citizens.”

NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER WILLIAM C. THOMPSON

Through booms and busts, women’s presence in the building trades has remained low. Tradeswomen leave the industry almost as fast as they enter. Participants at the Women re:BUILD NY Conference openly and honestly discussed the barriers to entry, retention, and promotion that women continue to face in the industry. Inhos pitable work environments and inequitable hiring, training, and work assignments have produced a revolving door even for women who have surmounted the initial barriers to entry. “I’m struck by the fact that since the 70s, when I started in affordable housing work, the conversation hasn’t changed very much with regard to women in the workforce,” Kathy Wylde, president and chief executive officer of the Partnership for New York City, told conference attendees.

Yet women who make it through these barriers often express deep satisfaction with their work and their pay. “We are your sisters, your mothers, your daughters, and your neighbors. We are capable of doing this work and we want to do this work,” said Veronica Session, 18-year carpenter, and shop steward, Local 926, in her speech opening the Women re:BUILD NY Conference. Census Bureau figures show that of all occupational groups, average women’s earnings come closest to men’s in the skilled trades.

A 2005 New York Times article reported, “Construction is one of the few professions in which salaries can reach six figures for a worker with only a high school diploma. The hourly wage for a unionized carpenter in New York is close to $40.” This far exceeds the earning potential for most traditional “women’s work.”

The median weekly paycheck for construction workers is $611. Only four of the 20 leading occupations for women—registered nurses, teachers, first-line supervisors, and accountants and auditors, all of which require higher education—pay more. The others pay less. For example, median weekly earnings for receptionists and information clerks are $480 (93 percent women), hairdressers and cosmetologists earn $409 (92.9 percent women) and childcare workers $360 (94.6 percent women).

Women are 40 percent more likely to live below the poverty line and generally earn 24 percent less than men—and these figures don’t even take into account women’s disproportionate responsibility for the expenses of child care. Clearly, women need access to greater economic opportunities.

“I disagree with anyone who says it is not possible, as it has been proven time and time again that women’s participation at high levels is achievable.”

SONYA COVINGTON
ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT, COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
FOREST CITY RATNER COMPANIES
The conference brought together a wealth of expertise on the practical steps all sectors of the industry can take to create genuine opportunities for women to enter and advance in the construction trades. Leaders from industry, labor, and government shared best practices—proven steps that transform women’s experiences on construction sites.

A. Adopt ambitious numerical goals for women’s workforce participation.

B. Set in motion an aggressive recruitment strategy to ensure an open-door policy for female applicants, and guarantee an appropriate, harassment-free work environment for women on the job.

C. Conduct on-site monitoring to identify and remove barriers to equal opportunity, including isolation and inequitable work assignments.
A. Setting Goals from the Top Down

Industry leaders at the conference made it abundantly clear that the determination to make women’s participation happen has to come from the top, and that setting ambitious goals for women’s employment on a project is key to success.

“Increasing the participation of women is first and foremost about having a goal,” said Steven Sommer, Bovis Lend Lease senior vice president and project director for the Time Warner Building project.

The philosophy of equality must trickle down from the management offices through the job-site shanties. Forest City Ratner Companies, the developer that spearheaded building a new headquarters for The New York Times, successfully implemented this top-down philosophy. As for the results, 15 percent of those employed in the project’s workforce were tradeswomen and 13.6 percent of subcontractors were minority- or women-owned businesses.

The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation

The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) established a workforce goal of 14 percent women for the deconstruction of the Deutsche Bank building, and monitored the contractors to achieve that goal. LMDC’s goal and vigilant monitoring resulted in 20 percent women on site, including a superintendent and a shop steward.

The World Trade Center Memorial Foundation request for Proposals for construction Management and General Contractor Services, issued in December 2006, commits to pursuing an overall goal of “over time, staffing 15 percent of journeyperson and apprenticeship positions with women.”

Across the board, industry leaders said that goals must be set and tracked separately for women and minorities. Tradeswomen participants suggested separate reporting on the number of women apprentices and journey-level women to flag patterns of hiring only low-level women workers.
B. Recruiting Women and Establishing a Fair Work Environment

The conference identified three imperatives for recruiting and hiring higher numbers of women.

- Identify and communicate with specific recruitment sources for women and provide periodic, accurate, up-to-date hiring timelines so that those entities can notify and refer qualified women.
- Record efforts to recruit women and keep records of all female applicants, as well as why female applicants were rejected.
- Keep accurate records of the work hours and number of women from each trade who work on the job.

Recruiting and hiring are only first steps. The actual working conditions for women on the jobsites continue to be a barrier to women’s involvement and success in the trades. “It’s my opinion that gender discrimination is the number one cause of women quitting.” This sentiment, expressed by Leah Rambo, a 20-year veteran of Sheet Metal Workers Local 28, reflects the day-to-day conditions for women in the industry.

“Every day is a fight—for a place to change and a place to go to the bathroom. Women aren’t getting the same amount of work as men and women’s basic needs aren’t being met,” said Herlema Owens, a 20-year member of Concrete Excavators, Local 731.

Simple measures can effectively address these problems:

- Adopt and enforce a no-pornography policy.
- Establish separate, secure, and clean restroom and changing facilities for both sexes on every worksite as a matter of course, even if women are not yet employed there.
- Adopt, distribute, and provide training on an effective equal employment opportunity policy that specifies zero tolerance for harassment, including sexual harassment, and includes confidential complaint mechanisms. (See Appendix A: Checklist for Developers and Appendix E: Model Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.)

Best Practices Research

Research supports the view that projects with an on-site staff focused solely on equal opportunity will have high rates of women’s participation. Based on over 30 years of data and a survey sample of the private sector companies providing the data, researchers at Harvard University, the University of California, and the University of Minnesota identified and evaluated three broad approaches to diversity programming. The three approaches were:

1. Establishing organizational responsibility for diversity;
2. Moderating managerial bias through diversity training and evaluation; and
3. Reducing the social isolation of women and minority workers through mentoring and networking.

Diversity training and evaluation were determined to be the least effective, while mentoring and networking showed modest effects. The broadest increases in diversity came from programs that included establishing responsibility for diversity. Organizations that assigned responsibility for diversity (through formal oversight, monitoring, and implementing remedies) found that this structure enhanced the effectiveness of the other two approaches.8

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SPOTLIGHT

Building the Time Warner Center

Over 2,000 workers participated in the four-year construction of the Time Warner building in Manhattan. The almost $2 billion project was completed in 2004. Steven Sommer was the Bovis Lend Lease construction project director for the Time Warner building. Speaking at the conference, he said the project was a success not only because it was built on time and on budget—but also because it was a model of equal opportunity, achieving:

- A high percentage of certified women- and minority-owned contractors;
- A high percentage of women utilized in the workforce; and
- The creation of an environment where owners, management, organized labor, and women leaders in the workforce worked together to discuss issues openly and candidly for mutually acceptable results.

Mr. Sommer told conference attendees that this open environment was the most significant step in ensuring the success of the project. Companies owned by minorities and women won more than 20 percent of trades contracts, valued at over $800 million. Eleven percent of the project’s carpenters and laborers were women, and there were also women elevator constructors, electricians, and operating engineers on-site. These record results were recognized by both the city of New York and the project owner, Time Warner.

Mr. Sommer was emphatic that setting a high goal for women’s workforce participation is critical. After goal-setting, he identified partnering with women and organized labor as an essential element for attracting and integrating women into the project workforce. The third vital step is to secure contractors’ commitments to the hiring goals. Finally, monitoring for compliance, said Mr. Sommer, is “very, very key.”
Today, every Forest City Ratner Companies project has aggressive goals for women’s participation in the workforce. Forest City Ratner’s New York Times Building achieved a 15 percent women’s workforce participation rate. The company’s commitment was evident from the outset: every contractor and sub-contractor knew that goals for women’s participation would be enforced.

Forest City Ratner Assistant Vice President Sonya Covington told conference attendees, “Today’s workforce is evolving and changing. We believe it is critical to provide opportunities to as wide a variety of people as possible, not only for individuals’ futures but for the workforce’s future as well. We have always strongly believed in requiring that women have a real presence in the workforce. By expanding the traditional workforce and pushing for more inclusion, we believe we are not only helping to do the right thing but also ensuring a better future for everyone who works on our projects.”

Forest City Ratner has moved equal opportunity compliance “from the end to the beginning.” The company credits three practices for its success:

1. Stating employment goals in the bid documents;
2. Holding initial meetings with contractors that include guidance on how to find the workers to meet those goals; and
3. Constant on-site monitoring.

The monitoring of The New York Times Building project was conducted in a strategic partnership with The Darman Group, a community labor exchange that located women workers for the project. The Darman Group’s Yvette Dennis credits Forest City Ratner’s use of enforceable contract clauses as fundamental to its success in ensuring large numbers of women and minorities on Forest City sites.
Setting a Goal
Workforce participation goals are perfectly legal—since 1980, Federal Executive Order 11246 has required all federally funded construction contractors to adopt a goal of employing women for 6.9 percent of project work hours and has required them to make good faith efforts to meet that goal. Private employers, as well as states and municipalities, also can and should set such goals. These goals do not set hiring quotas; rather, they serve as objective measures of whether genuine efforts are being made to recruit and retain a workforce that includes women.

The Dos: Employers can do a lot to increase opportunities for women on construction sites. Far from opening employers to “reverse discrimination” lawsuits, the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) actively encourages such efforts: “Because of historic restrictions by employers, labor organizations, and others, there are circumstances in which the available pool,

particularly of qualified minorities and women, for employment or promotional opportunities is artificially limited. Employers, labor organizations, and other persons subject to Title VII may, and are encouraged to take affirmative action in such circumstances.”

The Don’ts: Construction work, like all employment, is governed by federal, state, and city employment discrimination laws. Taken together, these laws prohibit discrimination on numerous grounds, including sex, race, age, sexual orientation, national origin, and religion. Fair employment laws cover all aspects of employment, including hiring, discipline, work assignments, overtime, and working conditions. Equal working conditions for women include access to clean, private, locked changing shanties and restrooms. Laws against discrimination prohibit harassment, including both sexual harassment and non-sexual gender-based harassment. Employers can be held liable for harassment by supervisors as well as by co-workers.

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10 29 C.F.R. § 1608.3(c).
Yvette Dennis, the equal opportunity manager for The Darman Group, goes by the name “Pink Boots” because she wears a pink hardhat and boots. She not only monitors workforce diversity, but also ensures that both a changing room and a restroom are available for women on every site.

C. Monitoring and Compliance

Hiring and establishing ground rules for a fair work environment are only part of the equality blueprint. It is imperative that developers, through worksite monitoring, continue to stress their expectations for women’s participation throughout the life of a construction project. A pattern of on-site monitoring sends the message that women’s participation is not just an aspiration, it is the standard operating procedure.

Yvette Dennis, the equal opportunity manager for The Darman Group, who goes by the name “Pink Boots” because she wears a pink hardhat and boots, not only counts heads, but also ensures that both a changing room and restroom are available for women on every site. Ms. Dennis also serves as an important watchdog to make sure women are given jobs to the full extent of their capabilities and not just routine, repetitive tasks such as coffee runs or traffic flagging.

Even if you don’t wear Pink Boots, taking these measures helps to ensure a “woman-friendly” work environment.

- Regularly walk the site to review work assignments and other workforce issues;
- Enforce a “zero tolerance” policy for pornography, obscene graffiti, and other offensive images on the jobsite;
- Oversee availability and maintenance of restroom and changing facilities;
- Conduct diversity, equitable workplace, and sexual harassment training, including fair training practices and advancement policies; and
- Regularly review work assignments, job classifications, shift schedules, overtime allocation, and other personnel practices to assure equal compensation and equitable work conditions. (See Appendix B, Checklist for Construction Workforce Monitors.)
Looking Ahead

Chris Ward, managing director of the Contractors’ Association of Greater New York, told conference participants, “A public policy goal that is good for society [needs] to incentivize people to work within this market.” This requires building relationships, expertise, and resources, with government, organized labor, owners, and contractors, to implement incentives that reward firms that embody the philosophy of equality.

Conference participants agreed, however, that an incentive system cannot be based on goodwill alone. Developers must contractually bind their construction contractors and subcontractors to achieve these goals. The ideal combination includes incentive and penalty provisions in the contract:

- Achievement awards, public recognition, and monetary awards including preferential bidding status for contractors exceeding goals; and
- Penalties for contractors that do not make good faith efforts to achieve goals, such as withholding payments, paying a subcontractor directly while withholding overhead and profits from the contractor, terminating the contract, reporting the contractor’s perceived violations to administrative agencies for further investigation, and/or barring the contractor from future contracts with the developer.
**SPOTLIGHT**

**The City of New Haven**

The city of New Haven stipulates that every one of its contractors and subcontractors attend a meeting about expectations for hiring women and minorities prior to starting a project. To ensure compliance, fines accrue for every week a contractor does not meet contractual obligations to recruit underrepresented workers. Through enforcement and partnership with the building trades, contractors, educators, and residents, the city of New Haven has achieved 38–40 percent minority, 25 percent resident, and 8 percent women’s workforce participation on all construction sites citywide.

Nichole Jefferson is the executive director of the New Haven Commission on Equal Opportunity (CEO). Created in 1964, CEO is the nation’s oldest municipal civil rights agency. She told conference attendees that currently, the “CEO’s busiest division is the construction contract compliance program. CEO enforcement agents ensure that city construction contractors do their best to employ women and minorities. Last year, they inspected more than 1,200 contractors—with results that included more than 190 women working on school construction sites and 50 women on-site at a time on a $30 million federal project in the city.”

The CEO helps contractors meet their goals by identifying available women and minority workers through recruitment and training programs. The goal of New Haven’s program is to eliminate all barriers for women and minorities on city construction sites and to make equal opportunity compliance easy and simple. The result is the highest minority and women’s participation rates in the state.

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**SPOTLIGHT**

**JetBlue Airways**

JetBlue conducted public outreach for contracting and labor opportunities at its $740 million project at John F. Kennedy Airport International with the goal of increasing women’s and minorities’ participation in both areas. The company succeeded in awarding 14 percent of project contracts to women- and minority-owned businesses. The labor side has been more challenging and, to date, women have been just 4 percent of the construction workforce. “JetBlue is fully committed to women in the workforce on a corporate level, and we want to see our corporate philosophy reflected in the hiring practices in the field as well. We only work with firms and contracts we know are committed to bringing women into the trades,” said Richard Smyth, vice president of JFK Redevelopment, JetBlue Airways Corporation. To carry out this commitment, JetBlue has hired Project Manager Cassandra Hill to monitor the company’s equal opportunity program. The women now have a trailer and a restroom on-site and meet with Ms. Hill monthly to resolve problems informally and to ensure that they are well integrated on the job. “[JetBlue wants] to make [women on the construction site] a normal part of life,” she said.
“We’ve got to find a way to rethink this process because . . . there are still too many barriers to women in the trades getting full enfranchisement.”

EDWARD F. OTT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NEW YORK CITY CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL/AFL-CIO
The conference explored some of the structures that are needed to attract and retain women in the construction trades, and shared information on innovative ways that unions, communities, and governments are implementing those structures.
Women’s Committees

Veteran tradeswomen attending the conference emphasized the importance of keeping women in the industry once they have entered. In the Retention Workshop, they identified women’s committees within unions as a major source of support and empowerment. These committees facilitate mentoring relationships between apprentices and skilled journey workers. They also tackle issues of health and safety particular to women in addition to acting as liaisons to union leadership.

Mentoring is central to the role of the women’s committee and is a cornerstone of retention initiatives in the industry. Mentors typically guide mentees through issues such as what to do if you have been sidelined or how to deal with harassment and other problems on the job.
“There are more than 400 sisters in the New York City District Council of Carpenters,” said Elly Spicer, carpenter, founding member of the Carpenters Women’s Committee and staff member of the New York City and Vicinity Carpenters Labor-Management Corporation. “In the past 22 years, there have been a lot of changes . . . the growth of the number of women in the last 4 or 5 years . . . [it] makes a difference to see another woman there.” Ms. Spicer told the workshop that a fundamental function of the women’s committee is establishing and supporting a dialogue with union leadership. Acknowledging that “it’s still very tough out there,” Ms. Spicer highlighted the dual role of the women’s committee—it supports women members as they deal with conditions in the industry and it works with union leadership to open the doors to change. The NYC Carpenters Women’s Committee runs one of the best union mentoring programs in the country, involving journey level men and women as mentors who are committed to teaching their trade to any sister who wants to learn. The union facilitates the program and gives mentors union credit for their work.

Cheryl Farrell co-founded Amber Lights, the Women’s Electricians Club, 10 years ago. “Only 300 out of 11,000 electricians in Local 3 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) are women,” said Farrell. Today, the Amber Lights group conducts monthly meetings at the union hall, sends speakers to schools, interviews women for apprenticeships, hosts mentorship programs, runs an enhancement program to help tradeswomen further their skills and raises money for scholarship and welfare funds. Ms. Farrell describes Amber Lights as her way to give back to the union and help women. “I first came into the trades as a single mom—the union gave me the opportunity to make a living and not go on welfare.” A 20-year member of Local 3, Cheryl is the proud mother of a daughter who has recently finished her apprenticeship and is now a Local 3 journeywoman as well.
Community Involvement

Conference attendees discussed community involvement in local construction projects as another important means of advancing women’s workforce participation in construction. When community residents are involved as stakeholders in a project, their participation increases the likelihood that they will be involved in the construction as employees, contractors, or suppliers. It can also improve monitoring and oversight of the development. (See Appendix C, Checklist for Communities.)

SPOTLIGHT

Harlem Hospital

Harlem Hospital, in the midst of a $350 million renovation, has been successful at involving women in the construction and development process through its Community Advisory Board. Community members have seats on a steering committee and ensure that the decision-making process is open to meaningful community input. Women are being recruited to work on the hospital in trades apprenticeship programs and the community monitors the project. “The community is watching who is working on the site and it holds the construction manager’s feet to the fire,” said Nicole Beason, associate director of public affairs at the Harlem Hospital Center. “Supporting the project as part of the community with an open and inclusive process is more beneficial to all involved.”
New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s Commission on Construction Opportunity is setting an important example of the positive role government can play in establishing multi-sector partnerships to promote women’s access to construction jobs. The Commission is composed of union leaders, contractors, developers, advocates, and city agency heads. In 2005, it announced an agreed-upon platform of 10 policy actions to “ensure that all New Yorkers, particularly minorities, women, returning veterans, and new high school graduates, are well prepared and can gain access to good jobs in construction.” One is a landmark agreement that for a four-year period (2006–2010), 10 percent of all new union apprenticeships in the construction trades would be filled by women. Another initiative is focused on enhancing the city’s monitoring of equal opportunity compliance on publicly funded construction sites. An especially encouraging Commission initiative is the “magnet sites” program, under which several developers and institutions with significant development projects have agreed to work with the Commission to make these projects models of equal opportunity, complete with the goal of a 15 percent female workforce and a compliance officer to monitor implementation. Magnet sites include Columbia University’s expansion, Forest City Ratner’s development of Atlantic Yards, and Lower Manhattan sites developed by Silverstein Properties.
Child Care

Child care is a significant hurdle to women’s participation and retention in the trades. Because of the construction industry’s erratic work schedules and variable work locations, a one-size-fits-all solution is not readily available. A multi-prong approach is needed. It could include:

• Legislative incentives for employers to help with child care;
• Union purchase of spots at local child care centers that would be available for women to drop off their children; and
• Developers making child care available on construction sites.

Referring to child care needs, Edward Ott, Executive Director of the New York City Central Labor Council/AFL-CIO, said, “we need to begin to engage elected officials, the industry, and ourselves about some of the real obstacles . . . that people face on the ground.”

Communities around the country are addressing the difficulty of finding child care for non-traditional hours through a variety of traditional and innovative approaches. A program in South Carolina trains teenagers to provide care during after-school hours. In California, a center serves families of workers at San Francisco Airport and related businesses by offering care from 5 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week, and allows parents to create new schedules every month. This program was created through the joint efforts of employers, unions, local government, and community groups.

Like construction workers, health care workers have irregular hours. The New York City Health and Human Services Employees Union 1199 negotiated a model agreement with employers to help provide child care to the children of union members. The 1199 Employer Child Care Fund was the result. The Fund provides programs, child care resources, and information to thousands of union families. Under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement, employers support the Fund.¹¹

SPOTLIGHT
Portland Bridge Kids Projects

In 1994 and 1995, the Maine Department of Transportation worked with the Portland YMCA to provide child care to workers at three major bridge and bypass construction sites. The YMCA offered early-morning, evening and overnight care. An on-site consultant was hired to give out information about child care and to encourage additional contractors to adopt similar programs.

“The key to building a strong nation is to provide the means to building strong families. That means jobs for our young men and women from all parts of the city . . . and chances to be educated and trained to take advantage of the opportunities that are coming open in the construction trades.”

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES RANGEL
MAYOR’S COMMISSION ON CONSTRUCTION OPPORTUNITY
PILLAR 4

EDUCATING AND TRAINING A NEW GENERATION

Conference attendees shared successful strategies for introducing girls and young women to the skilled trades in school, from featuring tradeswomen at junior high career awareness days to recruiting girls to attend career and technical high schools. They also explored ways of raising awareness of union-run apprenticeship programs, where adults earn steadily rising wages as they master the skills of the trade to become a credentialed journeyperson.
Education

Pure and simple, conference attendees said, technical education puts young women on the road to a well-paying and satisfying career in the trades. By investing in education for young women, the industry ensures a viable and trained workforce of women at its disposal.

A recurring theme at the conference was the importance of presenting opportunities in construction as real choices for young women early in their educational careers. Training for the trades can start as early as high school. Girls in middle school need to be informed of the option of attending a vocational high school, or enrolling in a pre-apprenticeship program as a first step to working in the construction industry. “[Career and Technical Education] rests on the belief that if we prepare students and young adults for jobs in this economy—real workforce development—then young adults will rise to the occasion,” said Randi Weingarten, president of the United Federation of Teachers in New York City.

The lack of opportunity for women in the trades often begins with the cultural stereotype that construction is a “man’s job.” Teachers, counselors, and parents are often hesitant to encourage girls to pursue work in the trades because they see it as unfeminine. As a result, young women have a difficult time imagining themselves on jobsites. As Ms. Weingarten told the audience, “The bias that women can’t really do this work is baseless—of course they can—it’s about whether women have the opportunity to do so.”

The conference underscored the importance of having tradeswomen interact with middle school and high school girls. Targeted outreach to guidance counselors, parents, and girls must be a priority. Women who work in the trades are an integral part of recruitment and should meet with guidance counselors and parents, and attend career fairs so that girls can see themselves in these occupations.

New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) Commissioner Jeanne Mullgrav reminded the audience of the needs of disconnected youth—young women and men who are not in school or working. These young people also need help to take advantage of opportunities in high-growth sectors like construction. The Commissioner’s program for disconnected youth focuses on connecting them to real jobs. While 7 percent of the young people currently in DYCD non-traditional training programs are female, Commissioner Mullgrav is committed to helping more young women get on the path to economic independence. In her words, “I know we can do better.”
SPOTLIGHT

Chicago Women in Trades
Girls at Work Program

Chicago Women in Trades was founded 25 years ago by tradeswomen. Its Girls at Work program targets both junior high school girls and their guidance counselors with the message that construction offers great opportunities for girls. “The girl’s involvement in the pre-apprenticeship program removes some of the psychological barriers of young girls entering full apprenticeship programs. It also prepares them to excel in the apprenticeship phase and move successfully into the trade,” said Jayne Vellinga, director of policy and special initiatives for Chicago Women in Trades.

SPOTLIGHT

California Building and Construction Trades Council

Debra Chaplan, director of special projects for the California Building and Construction Trades Council, calls apprenticeship “America’s best-kept secret.” This umbrella union group presented its successful program to get girls thinking about the trades and construction as a career. “The commitment to incorporate women and minorities has to come from both the bottom and the top,” Ms. Chaplan told the audience. Building Trades Council representatives regularly make presentations in schools and at assemblies, attend career fairs, advertise at job centers, and make tradeswomen available to talk to students and counselors. A brochure informs parents that a trade provides a viable and fulfilling career for women. These efforts are complemented by an aggressive public relations campaign, including a Web site that allows visitors to explore various trades and the requirements to become an apprentice.

SPOTLIGHT

Queens Vocational and Technical High School

This Career and Technical Education (CTE) high school has a special outreach program, “High School Now,” that offers after-school trades classes for girls who attend surrounding middle schools so they have an opportunity to explore the various trades. Queens Vocational also partners with Legal Momentum to invite tradeswomen to breakfast with the school’s ninth grade girls to give firsthand accounts of their experiences and to encourage the girls to pursue a skilled trade specialization during their sophomore through senior years. Queens Vocational Principal Denise Vittor told conference attendees of the tremendous interest these meetings have generated. While in past years, only three to four ninth grade girls chose non-traditional specializations each year, the number shot up to 15 after the first tradeswoman breakfast in 2007. Ms. Vittor also emphasized her female students’ enthusiasm for learning about trades from tradeswomen firsthand.
SPOTLIGHT

Women in the New York City District Council of Carpenters (NYCDCC) Apprenticeship Program

The NYCDCC runs the largest building trades apprenticeship program in New York State. Martin Daly joined the NYCDCC as an apprentice in 1962. He is now the director of training for the Council’s Labor Technical College. Mr. Daly told the conference that the NYCDCC is committed to providing a trained and diverse workforce that reflects the community. Under his leadership, the number of female union apprentices has more than doubled. “The strength of our recruitment comes from our collaboration with many community partners,” said Mr. Daly. “The NYCDCC apprenticeship program is currently 15 percent female and we will continue to climb in the future.”

The local carpenters have achieved the highest percentage of women in any carpenters union apprenticeship school in the country, and one of the highest percentages in all the building trades. More than 85 percent of these women make it through the third year of apprenticeship. Mr. Daly emphasized the importance of the NYCDCC’s women’s committee and especially its work in mentoring apprentices as an important contributor to this excellent retention rate.

Apprenticeship Training

Apprenticeship training is the usual pathway for men and women to begin their career in a skilled trade. While tremendous opportunities exist through the apprenticeship system, many people continue to be unaware of what apprenticeship programs are, or how they work. Apprentices get paid as they learn the trade, with wage rates rising as the apprentice gains experience. The apprentice receives excellent union benefits and some apprentice programs now offer college credit. At the end of the apprenticeship, the now-skilled worker attains journey worker status.

In New York, most apprenticeship programs are run through joint agreements between a particular trade union and the employers in that field, with a training curriculum that is approved by the state. Employers hire apprentices for a certain portion of their work needs and provide them with on-the-job training, and unions ensure that apprentices get classroom instruction, as well.

Two apprenticeship directors, Nick LaGuardia, of the Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee of the Elevator Industry, and Sean Brennan, of the Mason Tenders District Council Training Fund, spoke at the conference with New York State Department of Labor Apprenticeship Director Christine Timber. Mr. LaGuardia described how women apprentices’ top-notch performance overcame the initial reluctance of contractors to hire them: As more women entered the field, he said, “contractors started to complain that women apprentices were showing up their other workers.” Mr. Brennan stated that while there were very few women in his apprenticeship school a decade ago, today his apprentice classes are 10 percent female. “More and more women want this work, and programs designed specifically to encourage women are important.” He also underlined the importance of career paths for women within the unions: “It is important that young women see women in higher jobs within the union.” Putting these insights to work, Mr. Brennan chose a woman as one of his two apprenticeship coordinators.
“This is an unbelievably perfect and unique time for all of us to move women and people of color forward in the construction industry. . . . We don’t have the luxury to miss this boom. . . . We all have a role in this [to ensure] women’s ability to compete and win in this area.”

CHRISTINE QUINN, SPEAKER, NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

Conclusion: Building the Future

The Women Re:BUILD NY Conference—and this report—demonstrate how the many sectors that influence the construction industry can, and must, work together to build the infrastructure for equal opportunity. The conference embodies the many ways that fostering dialogue among these sectors moves this critical work forward:

• Convening in one place all the sectors whose investment is needed to break down existing systemic sex discrimination enables participants to focus on coordination and consensus-building to reach their common goal.

• Drawing attention to projects and programs from around the country that have succeeded in building women’s visibility and employment in the construction industry provides models for how equal opportunity can be achieved on the ground.

• Designing workshops and plenary sessions that feature the efforts of particular sectors, such as educators, developers, unions, and government, informs each stakeholder about what it can do on its own and in collaboration with others.

• Creating an environment for open interchange and frank discussions allows relationships to be formed that are the necessary foundation for future efforts.

At the end of the day, it is these relationships that will fuel the dynamic for change. Neither Legal Momentum nor any other single organization or even any single sector can transform the construction industry. That transformation can only occur as people dedicated to it meet each other, exchange ideas, and collaborate—and developments since the Women re:BUILD NY Conference have provided gratifying proof that the conference precipitated just such collaborations.

At the conference, the sponsor of a large upcoming construction project learned of a developer’s success with contractual equal opportunity requirements and on-site monitoring, and is now using these examples as a model for its new project. The principal of a career and technical education school who has made enrolling girls into her school a priority met a trade union’s apprenticeship director, and the two are creating a program to give the school’s students advanced training in the trade while in school and accelerated access to apprenticeship upon graduation.

Going forward, the challenge is to keep the excitement and the dialogue alive, a goal Legal Momentum continues to pursue. With the building blocks firmly in place, the many sectors of the construction industry can more easily work together to build an infrastructure for equality and opportunity for the future.
Promoting equal employment opportunity ("EEO") on construction sites begins with developers conveying their EEO commitment from the very first bid solicitations. Developers should go beyond including EEO "boilerplate" language in their contracts and identify specific obligations on the part of the contractor and subcontractors. Finally, developers must actively monitor compliance with the contract's EEO provisions, and must impose timely penalties for noncompliance.

SELECTING A CONTRACTOR

- Establish a workforce participation goal for women, and other targeted groups. The federal government uses a goal of 6.9 percent women, while prominent New York City developers have adopted goals as high as 10 percent (Forest City Ratner) and 14 percent (Lower Manhattan Development Corporation). The Mayor's Commission on Construction Opportunity has set a 15 percent goal for certain "High Impact" projects, such as World Trade Center Towers Two, Three, and Four.
- Inform each bidding contractor of the workforce participation goal, and alert contractors that the developer expects affirmative efforts to meet the goal.
- Inform each bidder that conforming to specific EEO standards will be a condition of satisfactory contract performance, and that a contractor's compliance will be reviewed by an on-site monitor.
- Review a bidder's employment practices, such as its written policies and procedures; its workforce composition; its EEO standards and compliance measures; and any pending lawsuits or administrative charges of discrimination, past court or administrative findings, and consent decrees or court orders to which it is subject.

IMPLEMENT CONTRACT TERMS THAT ENSURE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Developers must contractually bind their construction contractors and subcontractors to these specific obligations to promote equal opportunity for all workers:

Contract Terms: Commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity

- Adopt an explicit policy of non-discrimination and state this policy in all solicitations for workers, distribute it to applicants and workers on the job, and convey it to all unions supplying workers to the project.
- Adopt a comprehensive EEO policy that includes a simple, confidential procedure for employees to lodge complaints, identifies a specific person(s) charged with receiving complaints, and explains how investigations will be conducted.
- Distribute the EEO policy to applicants and employees.
- Train on-site supervisory personnel and workers in the EEO policy.

Contract Terms: Recruiting and Hiring Practices

- Identify and communicate with specific recruitment sources for women, and provide periodic, accurate, up-to-date hiring timelines so that those entities can notify and refer qualified women.
- Record efforts to recruit women, and keep records of all female applicants, as well as why female applicants were rejected.
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☐ Keep accurate records of the work hours and number of women from each trade working on the job at any time.
☐ If a union’s referral practices inhibit the contractor’s ability to recruit women workers, identify alternative recruitment sources and report the union to the relevant administrative enforcement agencies.

**Contract Terms: On-the-Job Opportunities**

☐ Regularly review work assignments, job classifications, shift schedules, overtime allocation, and other personnel practices to assure fair wages and equitable work conditions.
☐ Place qualified women in leadership positions, such as foreperson and crew leader, and encourage them to participate in management training programs and other promotional opportunities.

**Contract Terms: Worksite Conditions**

☐ Prohibit all forms of gender-based harassment, specifically including non-sexual harassment, that conveys animus toward women.
☐ Adopt and enforce a “zero tolerance” policy for pornography, obscene graffiti, and other offensive images on the jobsite.
☐ Maintain women’s restroom and changing facilities that are accessible—clean, private, and close to the jobsite.

**CARRY OUT MEANINGFUL COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT**

**Construction Workforce Monitors**

☐ Hire a construction workforce monitor for each site. The monitor (i) helps locate qualified targeted workers; (ii) maintains records of applications received; (iii) regularly generates reports reflecting workforce composition, including decisions to hire, fire, promote, train, and assign workers; (iv) promotes and assesses contractor and union compliance with the EEO mandate; (v) acts as a liaison with sources of qualified workers; (vi) regularly walks the site to review work assignments and other workforce issues, and to communicate directly with workers and contractors; (vii) ensures that supervisors and employees receive EEO training; (viii) holds regular meetings with stakeholders to identify and resolve equal opportunity problems and challenges; (ix) may receive complaints under the EEO policy, conduct investigations, and resolve disputes. (For more information on a monitor’s role and activities, see “Checklist for Construction Workforce Monitors.”)

☐ Provide the monitor with on-site office space and administrative support services.

**Penalties and Incentives**

☐ Include penalty and incentive provisions in the contract. If the EEO provisions are violated, promptly impose the contractual penalties during the life of the contract.
☐ Financial penalties may include withholding payments, paying a subcontractor directly while withholding overhead and profits from the contractor, terminating the contract, and/or barring the contractor from future contracts with the developer.
☐ Penalties also may include reporting the contractor’s perceived EEO violations to administrative agencies for further investigation.
☐ Incentives may include achievement awards, public recognition, and monetary awards, including preferential bidding status, for contractors exceeding goals.
☐ To encourage a contractor to achieve workforce participation goals, pay a portion of the contract price in increments, such as assigning a defined sum for every tenth of 1 percent by which contractors exceed a minimum workforce percentage and approach the stated goal.
The success of workforce participation goals for women or other targeted groups (such as minorities and/or community members) depends on a concentrated effort by all parties. This includes the participation of construction management, unions, government representatives, and interested community groups in a systematic approach that translates the workforce goals into on-the-ground worksite action. The construction workforce monitor is the person who puts the goals into action by facilitating communication among the various groups, scrutinizing the actual worksite, and reporting and remedying obstacles to equal opportunity.

RECRUITING AND HIRING

☐ Identify and communicate with specific recruitment sources for women and other targeted groups, and provide periodic, accurate, up-to-date hiring timelines so that those entities can notify and refer qualified workers.

☐ Conduct aggressive recruitment from community, training, and trades organizations.

☐ Record all contractors’ and subcontractors’ efforts to recruit members of targeted groups, and keep records of all such applicants, as well as why those applicants were rejected.

☐ Refer community job seekers in need of additional training to workforce development training programs that have links to the developer and/or community as well as strong ties to construction employers and unions. Record all referrals.

WORKSITE CONDITIONS

☐ Enforce a “zero tolerance” policy for pornography, obscene graffiti, and other offensive images on the jobsite.

☐ Oversee availability and maintenance of women's restroom and changing facilities that are accessible—clean, private, and close to the jobsite.

☐ Conduct or oversee diversity, equitable workplace and sexual harassment training, including advancement policies, for all foremen and supervisors in conjunction with ongoing safety training.

☐ Develop and/or maintain EEO policies, receive complaints under the EEO policy, conduct investigations and resolve disputes formally and informally.

☐ Regularly walk the site to review work assignments, job classifications, shift schedules, overtime allocation, and other personnel practices to assure compensation and equitable work conditions.

REPORTING

☐ Establish a team responsible for meeting monthly to monitor progress toward equal employment goals and to develop rapid, practical, results-oriented solutions to problems and challenges. Team members should include construction management, unions, government agencies, elected officials, subcontractors, tradeswomen organizations, and other community-based organizations, and meetings should be open to the public.

☐ Collect and generate regular reports of employment data, including workforce composition, by trade and experience level, and decisions to hire, fire, promote, train, and assign workers. Circulate these in advance of monthly meetings and make them available to interested members of the public.

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- Report and disseminate workforce needs projections by trade, with timelines for anticipated hiring.
- Report number of EEO complaints and resolutions by contractor and trade.

EVALUATION AND REMEDIATION

- Establish working procedures, including remediation, in compliance with government regulations and contractual stipulations.
- Institute results-oriented solutions with timelines for remediation.
- Recommend incentives or penalties in accordance with contract.
Community negotiations with developers include securing job opportunities for community members. Construction work, especially union work, long has been a pathway to economic self-sufficiency. It is important for communities to differentiate between community members in need of workforce training and credentialed community members (including women and minorities) ready to work. Construction has a cyclical employment sequence. At any given time, credentialed construction workers will be looking for work. To ensure that all community members can be a part of construction projects, communities and developers must negotiate explicit goals. Actions, reporting, and accountability measures must be part of the negotiations.

**SET GOALS FOR WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION, INCLUDING SEPARATE GOALS FOR WOMEN**

The higher the goal, the higher the actual workforce participation. Without specific goals, measurements of success and failure are largely subjective. For women, many construction sites use the federal goal, set in 1968, of 6.9 percent for women’s participation. Some recent New York City goals range from 10 percent to 15 percent. Minority goals are often set around 30 percent. Community hiring goals have been more variable and can range from 5 percent to 35 percent. Experience shows that goals for women must be stated separately to give women in the community genuine opportunities.

**DETAIL THE STEPS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS**

For community members in need of construction training, it will be necessary to link to existing workforce development programs or create programs with direct relationships to unions and/or employers.

For skilled workers, require developers and their contractors to:

- Identify and communicate with specific recruitment sources and provide periodic, accurate, and up-to-date hiring timelines.
- Record all efforts to recruit community members, minorities, and women, and keep records of all these applicants, as well as why applicants were rejected.
- Keep accurate records of the work hours and numbers of community members, women, and minorities from each trade working on the job at any time.
- Report their efforts and outcomes to the community on a regular basis.

**CARRY OUT MEANINGFUL COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT**

**Construction Workforce Monitors**

- Hire a construction workforce monitor for each site. The monitor (i) helps locate qualified targeted workers; (ii) maintains records of applications received; (iii) regularly generates reports reflecting workforce composition, including decisions to hire, fire, promote, train, and assign workers; (iv) promotes and assesses contractor and union compliance with the EEO mandate; (v) acts as a liaison with sources of qualified workers; (vi) regularly walks the site to review work assignments and other workforce issues, and to communicate directly with workers and contractors; (vii) ensures supervisors and employees receive EEO training; (viii) holds regular meetings with stakeholders to identify and resolve equal opportunity problems and challenges; (ix) may

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receive complaints under the EEO policy, conduct investigations, and resolve disputes. (For more information on a monitor’s role and activities, see “Checklist for Construction Workforce Monitors.”)

☐ Provide the monitor with on-site office space and administrative support services.

**Penalties and Incentives**

☐ Include penalty and incentive provisions in the contract. If the EEO provisions are violated, promptly impose the contractual penalties during the life of the contract.

☐ Financial penalties may include withholding payments, paying a subcontractor directly while withholding overhead and profits from the contractor, terminating the contract, and/or barring the contractor from future contracts with the developer.

☐ Penalties also may include reporting the contractor’s perceived EEO violations to administrative agencies for further investigation.

☐ Incentives may include achievement awards, public recognition and monetary awards, including preferential bidding status, for contractors exceeding goals.

☐ To encourage a contractor to achieve workforce participation goals, ask the developer to pay a portion of the contract price in increments, such as assigning a defined sum for every tenth of 1 percent by which contractors exceed a minimum workforce percentage and approach the stated goal.
The Union’s Role
As advocates for members’ rights in all terms and conditions of their employment, unions have a vital role to play in assuring equal employment opportunity (“EEO”) for women workers. To that end, unions should negotiate for inclusion of antidiscrimination provisions in each collective bargaining agreement (“CBA”). As the touchstone for the union-employer relationship, the CBA is a powerful tool for contractually binding employers to meet specific EEO standards and to take specific measures. By treating EEO on par with such matters as wages, hours, safety, and job security, unions send a powerful message to employers and members alike.

Additionally, unions should take steps to assure that EEO standards apply to their members and leaders with regard to all aspects of union membership, such as training (including apprenticeship training, inside and outside the classroom), referrals, and processing grievances, and that regular EEO training is provided. If women workers are not treated equitably by the entity that should be their best advocate, the principles of unionism are substantially undermined.

Model CBA Language
The below CBA provisions should be supplemented with reference to a Model Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, which is attached as Appendix E. (Note that the Model Policy may be adapted for use by both employers and unions.)

The [employer or employer entity] and the Union commit to equal employment opportunity for all employees, without regard to race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, and all other characteristics and status in any group protected by city, state, and federal laws. This provision applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, benefits, compensation, training, and workplace environment.

The parties to this Agreement shall cooperate to achieve the following objectives:

1. Written equal employment opportunity (“EEO”) policies that prohibit unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, if such policies do not already exist, in conformance with the Model Equal Employment Opportunity Policy attached hereto. Such policies should define specific prohibited conduct, including all forms of unlawful harassment.

2. Equitable worksite conditions for all employees, including a “zero tolerance” policy for pornography and other offensive images, and clean, private, and accessible restroom and changing facilities.

3. Effective, periodic dissemination and communication of the applicable EEO policies to all employees, such as through posting at the jobsite.

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4. A complaint procedure for employees who reasonably believe they have experienced discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, which is disseminated and communicated to employees with the applicable EEO policies, and identifies a specific person(s) charged with receiving complaints.

5. Regular training for all supervisory personnel, including on-site personnel, in the applicable EEO policies and complaint procedure.

6. Assurance that employee complaints are appropriately and promptly investigated, with maximum protection of complainants’ confidentiality.
Assuring Equal Opportunity for Women in Construction:  
Model Equal Employment Opportunity ("EEO") Policy

1. [Union or employer] is committed to equal employment opportunity ("EEO") for all [members or employees], without regard to race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, and all other characteristics and status in any group protected by city, state, and federal laws. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of [membership or employment], including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, benefits, compensation, training, and workplace and classroom environment.

2. This policy expressly prohibits any form of harassment. “Harassment” includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and all other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or otherwise offensive nature, especially where:

   • Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or membership;

   • Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting an individual’s employment or membership; or

   • Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

3. This policy also protects every [member or employee] against retaliation because [the member or employee] complained of discrimination or harassment; opposed discrimination or harassment; filed a charge of discrimination; or testified, participated, or assisted in any manner in any employment discrimination claim, including claims complaining of harassment.

4. This policy applies to all incidents of alleged discrimination, harassment, or retaliation where the alleged offender is a supervisor, co-worker, co-member, co-participant in a training program, shop steward, or Union business agent or official, or even a non-[employee or member] with whom the [employee or member] has contact in the course of his or her [employment or Union membership].

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EEO Complaint Procedure

All claims of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation will be promptly and thoroughly investigated and corrective action taken as warranted by the results of the investigation.

If you believe you have experienced discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation, promptly report the incident to ___________________________. You may complain orally or in writing. There is no need to follow any formal chain of command when filing a complaint. If you are not comfortable making your complaint to your ___________________________, you may bypass that direct chain of command and file your complaint with ___________________________.

After receiving a complaint, the ___________________________, or someone under his or her supervision, will commence an impartial and confidential investigation in a timely manner. The investigation will include (1) review of the alleged offender’s response; (2) interviews of all potential witnesses; (3) review of all documentation or other support submitted by the complaining party; (4) review of all documentation or other support submitted by witnesses; (5) review of all documentation or other support available to the [Union or employer] through its own recordkeeping measures; and (6) determination of appropriate action based on the findings of the investigation. Upon conclusion of the investigation, the [Union or employer] will promptly inform the complaining party of the results of the investigation and what remedial action, if any, is taken or planned.

The ___________________________ will keep all complaints confidential to the maximum extent possible. Personnel who receive and/or investigate such complaints shall (1) inform the complaining party that confidentiality is of paramount concern; (2) refrain from discussing information related to a complaint with anyone other than ___________________________ personnel with a need to know, or persons with knowledge relevant to the investigation; (3) keep his/her notes in a safe place; and (4) emphasize to the complaining party and any other ___________________________ personnel or ___________________________ involved in the investigation, including witnesses who are interviewed, the importance of not discussing the matter with others.

If the ___________________________ investigation substantiates a complaint of discrimination, retaliation, or harassment, the ___________________________ will take prompt disciplinary action to stop the conduct immediately and to prevent recurrence.
CONFERENCE AGENDA
AND
PRESENTER BIOS
Conference Agenda

DAY 1

8 a.m.  Breakfast

9 a.m.  Opening Greetings by Veronica Session, Carpenter, Local 926
Welcome and Remarks by Kathy Rodgers, Legal Momentum

9:15 a.m.  Message from Charles Maikish, LMCCC

9:30 a.m.  Getting the Job Done
Lou Coletti, BTEA; Christopher Ward, GCANY;
Ed Ott, NYC CLC; Randi Weingarten, UFT;
Moderator—Katherine Wylde, Partnership for NYC

10:45 a.m.  Case Study of a Project—
The New York Times Building by Forest City Ratner
Sonya Covington, Forest City Ratner Companies
Yvette Dennis, The Darman Group

12 noon  Luncheon
Speaker—Frances Walton, Empire State Development Corporation

1:30–3 p.m.;  Workshops (repeated)
3–4:30 p.m.

1. Apprenticeship—What is it? How to access it?
Nick LaGuardia, JATC IBEW Local 3 Elevator Div.
Sean Brennan, JATC Mason Tenders
Christine Timber, Apprentice Training New York State Dept. of Labor
Requirements; Earn While You Learn

2. Retention—Staying the Course
Elly Spicer, NY Dist. Council Carpenters
Cheryl Farrell, IBEW Local 3
Veronica Session, Carpenter, Local 926
Work environment & behavior issues
Challenges of managing the work

3. Respect for Workforce Diversity
Leah Rambo, Sheet Metal Workers Local 28
Gillian Thomas, Legal Momentum
What’s happening on the site?
Respect, Cooperation, Training
Day 2

8 a.m.  Breakfast

9 a.m.  Greetings—New York City Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott; Colleen Gardner for New York State Commissioner of Labor Patricia Smith

Best Practices—New York
Steven Sommer, TimeWarner; LMDC (Deutsche Bank); Rich Smyth, JetBlue; Nicole Beason, Harlem Hospital; Martin Daly, NYC Dist. Council of Carpenters; Robert Harvey, LMCCC
Facilitator—Maria Torres, Office of Deputy Mayor for Economic Development & Rebuilding

10 a.m.  Monitoring and Enforcement
Sunu Chandy, U.S. EEOC; Julian Birnbaum, New York State Attorney General’s Office; Cassandra Hill, JetBlue
Facilitator—Jennifer Brown, Legal Momentum

11 a.m.  Remarks—New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn

11:15 a.m.  Plenary A—Best Practices—National
Nichole Jefferson, New Haven Commission on Equal Opportunity; Debra Chaplan, California Building Trades Council; Lauren Sugermain, Chicago Women in the Trades
Facilitator—Jacqueline Cooke, Regional Administrator, U.S. Dept. of Labor/Women’s Bureau

11:15 a.m.  Plenary B—Educating for the Future
Career options, CTE schools, Pre-Apprenticeship
Mike Mulgrew, UFT; Jeanne Mullgrav, NYC DYCD; Patrick Dail, Borough of Manhattan Community College; Denise Vittor, Principal, Queens Vocational & Technical High School
Facilitator—NYC Workforce Investment Board—Marilyn Shea

12:30 p.m.  Luncheon
Greetings—Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer
Remarks—New York City Comptroller William Thompson

Future Projects
Philip Pitruzzello, Columbia University; Quentin Brathwaite, Port Authority

2 p.m.  Redefining the Future for REBUILDING NY
Martha Baker, Françoise Jacobsohn
Comments from participants

Establish a Working Group

Introductions by the following tradeswomen:
Femi Agana • Angela Olszewski • Joyce Peoples-Clark • Tammy Rivera
Deborah Star Reed • Margarita Suarez

Thank you, Pam Chmiel and Klatch Coffee Bar, for feeding the Advisory Committees.
Conference Presenter Biographies

Martha Baker, Conference Designer, Legal Momentum
Ms. Baker is an independent consultant providing program design, advocacy, and training. She was formerly executive director/CEO of Nontraditional Employment for Women, executive director of the NYC Commission on the Status of Women, and assistant director of operations for the NYS Workers’ Compensation Board. She has authored reports on vocational education, the prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace, and safety in the workplace. In addition to designing this conference, Ms. Baker is a consultant to the NYS Paid Family Leave Coalition.

Julian Birnbaum, Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Bureau, New York State Office of the Attorney General
Mr. Birnbaum joined the Civil Rights Bureau in 2006. He works on a wide variety of discrimination and civil rights issues, including an initiative on employment of women and persons of color in the construction industry. From 1986–2006, he was in private practice with Vladeck, Waldman, Elias & Engelhard, representing employees in all aspects of discrimination and employee rights law.

Quentin Brathwaite, Assistant Director, World Trade Center Construction, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
Mr. Brathwaite has more than 20 years experience in various program direction, project and construction management, and architectural and planning roles at the Port Authority. He is currently leading major design and construction efforts toward the redevelopment of Lower Manhattan. Mr. Brathwaite led the team that selected Daniel Libeskind as the master planner of the World Trade Center Redevelopment.

Sean Brennan, Director, Mason Tenders District Council Training Fund
Mr. Brennan has directed the Mason Tenders District Council Training Fund in NYC since 2005. The fund provides training for laborer Locals 78 and 79, representing over 10,000 NYC construction workers. He previously served as the training director of Local 66, establishing its first apprenticeship program. Mr. Brennan was elected to serve on his community’s school board and is currently a trustee serving a three-year term. He also serves on the Mayor’s Scaffold Worker Safety Task Force and is a member of the NYC Building Code Revisions Labor Advisory Committee.

Jennifer K. Brown, Vice President and Legal Director, Legal Momentum
Ms. Brown is also the acting director of Equality Works, Legal Momentum’s program to improve opportunities for success for women in the skilled trades, the uniformed services, and other jobs traditionally held primarily by men. Ms. Brown came to Legal Momentum from the New York State Attorney General’s Office, where she directed the first-ever Reproductive Rights Unit in the Civil Rights Bureau. She was formerly an assistant U.S. attorney in the Southern District of New York, a fellow with the ACLU’s Reproductive Freedom Project, and a clerk to the Honorable Pierre N. Leval on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Sunu P. Chandy, Senior Trial Attorney, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Ms. Chandy is a senior trial attorney with the New York District Office of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). She began her tenure with EEOC in 1999, and is responsible for litigating employment discrimination cases in federal court. Ms. Chandy has litigated cases involving issues of race and national origin discrimination, sexual harassment, religious discrimination, disability
discrimination, and retaliation. She has also worked to coordinate outreach to various community groups regarding federal equal employment discrimination laws and charge filing procedures. Ms. Chandy earned her J.D. from Northeastern University School of Law in 1998 and her B.A. from Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, in 1994. She has served on the boards of directors of various NYC advocacy organizations including LeGal (Lesbian and Gay Law Association), SAWCC (South Asian Women’s Creative Collective), and ALP (Audre Lorde Project).

Debra Chaplan, Director of Special Projects, State Building and Construction Trades Council of California
Since 1998, Ms. Chaplan has developed a variety of programs including Building California Construction Careers (BC3), a WIA-funded project that creates materials to promote careers in the construction industry. She has conducted outreach at schools and one-stops, and has worked with emancipating foster youth. She oversees the Council’s nationally recognized tobacco education project, BUILT, and its OSHA training projects on construction hazards and hearing conservation. Ms. Chaplan has taken on the issue of gender equity in the trades, and has spearheaded the organizing of the Council’s annual Women Building California Conference, now in its sixth year.

Louis J. Coletti, President and CEO, Building Trades Employers’ Association of NYC
Mr. Coletti has led the BTEA, representing 1,200 union construction companies doing business in NYC, for 10 years. He served as a senior vice president of Bovis Lend Lease and prior to that as president and CEO of the New York Building Congress. He currently serves as a member of NYC Workforce Investment Board, chairman of Construction Skills 2000, and co-chairman of Nontraditional Employment for Women and the NYS Apprenticeship Training Council. Mr. Coletti also serves as chairman of the Mayor’s Building Industry Advisory Council, and serves on the Mayor’s Commission on Construction Opportunity and the Governors’ MTA Blue Ribbon Panel on Construction.

Jacqueline Cooke, Regional Administrator, Regions I and II, U.S. Department of Labor, Women’s Bureau
Ms. Cooke is responsible for developing programs and implementing national policy for the Bureau in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Prior to joining the Women’s Bureau in 1995, Ms. Cooke served for 11 years as a legislative agent at the Massachusetts State House.

Sonya R. Covington, Assistant Vice President, Commercial & Residential Development, Forest City Ratner Companies
Ms. Covington is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Atlantic Yards Community Benefits Agreement, which promotes the inclusion and involvement of the community in all aspects of the estimated $4.2 billion development planned for downtown Brooklyn. Previously, Ms. Covington coordinated a planned $100 million retail outlet and entertainment complex in Atlantic City, and managed the daily activities for the development and construction of the $100 million retail component of the 42nd Street Hotel, Entertainment, and Retail project.

Patrick Dail, Director, Continuing Education Programming, Borough of Manhattan Community College
Mr. Dail has been working with private sector businesses, governmental agencies, and public policy organizations for almost a decade in the development and delivery of workforce training programs. In the fall of 2006, he oversaw, with BTEA and LMCCC, the creation of a new Construction Project Jobs Scheduler training program. Mr. Dail is committed to providing a variety of continuing education programs directed to the trades.
Martin T. Daly, Director of Training, NYC District Council of Carpenters
Mr. Daly joined the New York City District Council of Carpenters in 1962 as a first-year apprentice. In 1989, he joined the New York City District Council of Carpenters Labor Technical College staff as the assistant director of training, and in 1996 became the director of training. He is responsible for the operations of both the New York City District Council of Carpenters Apprenticeship Program and the Journey Level Skills Advancement Program. Mr. Daly is a member of the Mayor’s Commission on Construction Opportunity, the NYC Department of Education CTE Advisory Council, and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters International Training Committee, serving as chairman of the Northeastern States District 1.

Yvette Dennis, Labor Compliance Officer, The Darman Group
Ms. Dennis has worked as a labor compliance officer for 15 years. She is currently working on the New York Times Building, Beekman Tower, Atlantic Terminal, Arverne by the Sea, and East River Plaza. Past projects include the Jay Street Courthouse, Metrotech, and the Jewish Heritage Museum. Ms. Dennis was formerly a member of Elevator Constructors Local 1 and has also worked for the New York City Department of Education.

Cheryl Farrell, Electrician, IBEW, Local 3
Ms. Farrell is an A-journeywoman electrician and shop steward. She is a 19-year member of Local 3 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Ms. Farrell was one of the founding members of the Amber Light Society, a non-profit organization for women electricians in Local 3, and its past president. She is an activist in her union as well as with other community-based organizations. Ms. Farrell will graduate this summer with a B.S. in labor studies. Her daughter is following in her footsteps as an electrician and Ms. Farrell also has two brothers who are electricians in Local 3.

Colleen Gardner, Executive Assistant for Labor Affairs, New York State Department of Labor
Ms. Gardner was recently appointed the executive assistant for labor affairs to the New York State Department of Labor by Gov. Eliot Spitzer. In that capacity, she works with the NYS commissioner of labor to develop and implement public policies and strategies to strengthen worker protection and labor standards and to promote workforce development throughout the state. Prior to joining state service, Ms. Gardner was the director of organizing and community services for the New York State AFL-CIO.

Robert Harvey, Deputy Executive Director, Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center
Mr. Harvey is the Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center’s (LMCCC) deputy executive director of capital planning and construction. LMCCC was established by executive orders issued by New York governor George E. Pataki and New York City mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. The LMCCC is charged with the coordination and general oversight of all Lower Manhattan construction projects south of Canal Street worth more than $25 million. In addition to performing other Lower Manhattan construction coordination functions, Mr. Harvey has taken over the LMDC function as the LMCCC’s project administrator for the Deutsche Bank deconstruction.

Cassandra Hill, JetBlue Airways, Program Manager
Ms. Hill monitors the Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity program to ensure contract compliance and workforce diversity. She tracks prime and subcontracting opportunities as well as participation of minority and female workers. Ms. Hill’s responsibilities also include addressing compliance deficiencies through regular project status meetings, report preparation, and submittal to the monitoring agency.

Françoise Jacobsohn, Project Manager, Equality Works, Legal Momentum
Ms. Jacobsohn is the project manager for Equality Works, Legal Momentum’s program to expand women’s participation in high-paying nontraditional employment. She has worked in the fields of women’s rights, human rights, and community building for over 20 years, both in Europe and in the United States. Ms. Jacobsohn is a member of the Mayor’s Commission on Construction Opportunity.
Nichole Jefferson, Executive Director, New Haven Commission on Equal Opportunities

Ms. Jefferson has been a public servant for the city of New Haven for 12 years and has 21 years of experience in the construction industry. She oversees five divisions within the Commission: Fair Housing, Equal Employment, Contract Compliance, Construction Workforce Initiative 2, and the newly created Career Development School. Under her direction, the Commission has achieved the leading workforce development construction site hiring in Connecticut. She received the 2006 Empower NH Honors Outstanding Workforce Development Award and was selected among the 2004 Forty Under 40 Most Successful People in New Haven County.

Nicholas R. LaGuardia, Director, Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee, Elevator Industry and Joint Employment Office, Elevator Industry

In 1994, Mr. LaGuardia was appointed committee director, operating under a Joint Trust Agreement between the Elevator Industry Association and Local 3, IBEW (EE Division). Previously, he had been a senior financial analyst, vice-chair of the Shipbuilders Council of America, chairman’s advisor to the U.S. Congressional Advisory Board on Shipbuilding Technology, and president of Central Elevator Co. Mr. LaGuardia is an advocate for increasing awareness of apprenticeship in school programs and providing greater opportunities and support to female applicants.

Charles J. Maikish, Executive Director, Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center

Mr. Maikish was appointed to his job by the governor and mayor of New York. Mr. Maikish is responsible for coordinating all public and private construction in Lower Manhattan south of Canal Street, from river to river. He will oversee construction of the Fulton Street Transit Center, the permanent PATH Terminal, and the World Trade Center site, among numerous other residential and commercial developments. The Command Center, established by the governor and the mayor, is charged with assuring that the dozens of projects planned for Lower Manhattan are completed on schedule while minimizing their impact on businesses and residents.

Michael Mulgrew, Vice President, United Federation of Teachers, Career & Technical Education High Schools

Mr. Mulgrew currently chairs the NYS United Teachers CTE Statewide Committee, where he is helping to spearhead the growth of CTE throughout the numerous BOCES in New York State. As the officer liaison to the UFT Safety and Health Department, Mr. Mulgrew worked through summer 2006 to help reorganize the department so that the union would engage the Department of Education for its lack of responsibility in the safety of the schools. He served as the chapter leader at William E. Grady Career & Technical Education High School for six years and on the State Education Department’s Committee of Practitioners representing the UFT and CTE teachers.

Jeanne B. Mullgrav, Commissioner, New York City Department of Youth and Community Development

Ms. Mullgrav was appointed commissioner of the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg in 2002. Since becoming commissioner, Ms Mullgrav has steered the organization through a tremendous period of growth, change, and capacity building, and has initiated several agency-wide reform efforts focused on creating a more coherent, efficient, and research-based funding organization. Prior to her appointment at DYCD, Ms. Mullgrav served New York City children and families through successive positions in government and the non-profit sector, including that of deputy director of intergovernmental relations for New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer.

Edward F. Ott, Executive Director, New York City Central Labor Council/AFL-CIO

The council Mr. Ott leads represents over 1.5 million working men and women from 400 affiliated labor organizations throughout New York City. He is best known for being able to bring together unions from every sector of the labor movement in support of a common goal. Dedicating himself for over 37 years in the “fight for fairness” within the labor movement, Mr. Ott believes “as long as we have economic inequality, we have work to do.” He has been instrumental in securing critical public funding for worker training and safety programs.
Christine C. Quinn, Speaker, New York City Council
In January 2006, Ms. Quinn became speaker of the City Council. Since 1999, Speaker Quinn has served as the representative for the Third Council District of Manhattan. She has been a longtime pioneer for equal rights, comprehensive health care, improved schools, tenants’ rights, and affordable housing. Prior to becoming speaker, she was the Council’s Health Committee chairperson.

Leah Rambo, Instructor, Sheet Metal Workers, Local 28
Ms. Rambo began her career with Local 28 in 1988. She became a journeyperson after a four-year apprenticeship and spent the next 10 years working primarily as a field mechanic and draftsperson. In July 1998 she was appointed a full-time instructor, becoming the first woman at Local 28 to hold this position. She is especially proud of her development of the “Respect for Workforce Diversity Curriculum,” which teaches members how to identify and prevent various types of discrimination that exist in the workforce.

Kathy Rodgers, President, Legal Momentum
Ms. Rodgers is a lawyer, educator, and activist. She joined Legal Momentum—the nation’s oldest organization of legal advocates for women and girls—in 1995. Under her leadership, the organization has expanded in size and scope, developing new programs in child care, economic opportunity, and violence against women—including battered immigrant women—while scoring multiple legislative and legal victories to protect women’s reproductive rights, gain economic justice for women, protect poor women’s interests under welfare reform, and combat sexual harassment and violence against women.

Veronica Session, Carpenter, Local 926
Ms. Session switched to carpentry from a low-paying bank job 17 years ago and hasn’t looked back. She is a shop steward, looking out for the carpentry crew as the eyes and ears of the union on construction sites. Ms. Session is also a Steering Committee member of the NYC District Council of Carpenters Women’s Committee, the co-leader of the Habitat for Humanity women carpenters, a middle and high school career day speaker for the carpenters, and a member of the Women Carpenters’ Education Committee.

Marilyn K. Shea, Executive Director, New York City Workforce Investment Board
Ms. Shea is executive director of the NYC Workforce Investment Board (WIB), where she leads the development and implementation of the WIB’s strategic initiatives in support of the mayor’s workforce and economic development agenda and executes the WIB’s policies and procedures for governing the operation of the city’s workforce investment system. Prior to becoming executive director in 2004, Ms. Shea served in the Senior Executive Service of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.

Richard J. Smyth, Vice President, JFK Redevelopment, JetBlue Airways Corporation
As part of the Corporate Real Estate team, Mr. Smyth focuses on major development projects including hangars, training centers, and the new Terminal 5 at JFK International Airport. Construction recently commenced on Terminal 5, which includes a 26-gate terminal, associated aprons, roadways, and a new 1,500-space parking garage. He has been an adjunct professor in NYU’s program in construction management.

Steven Sommer, Principal, Phoenix Constructors
Mr. Sommer is a principal with Phoenix Constructors, Joint Venture, a consortium comprising Fluor Enterprises, Inc., Slattery Skanska, Inc., Granite Northeast Construction Company, Inc., and Bovis Lend Lease. He was the Bovis Lend Lease senior vice president and construction project director for the AOL Time Warner building.

Elly Spicer, Carpenter, NYC District Council of Carpenters
In 2000, Ms. Spicer joined the staff of the NYC Carpenters Labor Management Corp., where she is involved in public relations, policy advancement, research, and prevailing wage issues on behalf of the union. Her interest in the construction industry began while she was an employment specialist for Nontraditional Employment for Women. She became a carpenter apprentice and, after earning journey level status, she went on to become one of the only women foremen in the carpenters union. She was the first woman to join the full-time teaching staff of the
Carpenters Labor Technical College and the first woman delegate elected to represent Local 608. Ms. Spicer has been active in starting the Sisters in the UBC, the Women’s Committee of the Carpenters Union.

Scott M. Stringer, Manhattan Borough President
Mr. Stringer became Manhattan’s 26th borough president in January 2006 after serving 12 years in the NYS Assembly, where The New York Times credited him as having “a sterling reputation as a catalyst for reform.” During his first year in office, Borough President Stringer helped breathe new life into Manhattan’s community boards, ensuring that every neighborhood will have a strong voice in decisions that impact local residents’ lives. He revamped the Borough President’s Land Use Division and continued his advocacy for development, resulting in victories for local residents from Battery Park to Washington Heights.

Gillian Thomas, Senior Staff Attorney, Legal Momentum
Prior to joining Legal Momentum, Ms. Thomas represented employees in employment discrimination cases at Vladeck, Waldman, Elias & Engelhard in New York City, and at Willig, Williams & Davidson in Philadelphia. She received her B.A. in history from Yale University and her law degree from the University of Michigan, where she taught an undergraduate course, “Women and the Law,” and was a contributing editor to the Michigan Journal of Race and Law. After law school, she clerked for the Hon. John T. Nixon on the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee.

Christine J. Timber, Director of the Apprenticeship Training Office, New York State Department of Labor
Ms. Timber is responsible for apprenticeship policy development and implementation statewide, including development and approval of new programs and monitoring existing programs. Prior to directing the Apprenticeship Unit, Ms. Timber served as a senior attorney and associate attorney in the Department’s Counsel’s Office. Her area of responsibility was state programs, including safety and health and apprenticeship.

Maria Torres, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Deputy Mayor
In the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development & Rebuilding, Ms. Torres coordinates area-wide planning and economic development initiatives including Atlantic Yards, Brooklyn Bridge Park, and the redevelopment of Coney Island and the Greenpoint-Williamsburg waterfront. She also helps oversee the Mayor’s Commission on Construction Opportunity and manages relations between the Mayor’s Office and the Department of Small Business Services. Prior to this role, she worked as a consultant for Ernst & Young’s Real Estate division and in affordable housing development for Local Initiatives Support Corporation. Ms. Torres holds a B.A. from Yale University and a Master’s in public policy from Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government.

Jayne Vellinga, Director of Policy and Special Initiatives, Chicago Women in Trades

Denise Vittor, Principal, Queens Vocational and Technical High School
Ms. Vittor has been an educator for 24 years. She started at Queens Vocational and Technical High School, a New York City Career and Technical Education High School, in 1995 and has been the principal for six years. The school has over 1,200 students and includes the School of Skilled Building Trades and the School of Computer and Electronic Engineering Technologies. She received a B.S. in elementary and special education from New York University, and an M.S. in administration and supervision from Fordham. She has done postgraduate work in technology and curriculum at Columbia Teacher’s College.

Dennis M. Walcott, Deputy Mayor of the City of New York
Mr. Walcott is the Deputy Mayor for Education and Community Development. In that capacity, he oversees and coordinates the operations of the Department of Education and the Department of Youth and Community Development, as well as maintains liaison with and reviews the activities of the NYC School Construction Authority, the City University of New York, the City University Construction Fund, and the NYC Housing Authority. Mr. Walcott is also responsible for maintaining liaison with community-based organizations citywide and coordinating policies concerning youth programs and adult education. He serves as co-chair of the Mayor’s Commission for Construction Opportunity.
Frances A. Walton, Chief Financial Officer, Empire State Development Corp. (ESDC).
Ms. Walton is responsible for directing all the Corporation’s financial activities, including Treasury Operations, Portfolio Management, Debt Issuance, Budget, Accounting, Contracts Administration, Financial Analysis, and Underwriting. Prior to joining the Corporation in 1997, Ms. Walton was senior vice president and director of the State of New York Mortgage Agency’s Mortgage Insurance Fund.

Christopher O. Ward, Managing Director, General Contractors Association
Prior to becoming managing director of the General Contractors Association, Mr. Ward was president and chief executive officer of American Stevedoring, Inc. He has served as commissioner of the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, as chief of planning and external affairs, and as director of port redevelopment at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Mr. Ward has also served as an adjunct professor at the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University.

Randi Weingarten, President, the United Federation of Teachers
Ms. Weingarten represents more than 150,000 active and retired educators in the New York City public school system. She is also a vice president of the 1.2 million-member American Federation of Teachers and a board member of NYS United Teachers. Ms. Weingarten, a vice president of the NYC Central Labor Council of the AFL-CIO, also heads the city’s Municipal Labor Committee, an umbrella organization for some 100 city employee unions. The MLC negotiates benefits on behalf of the unions’ 365,000 members.

Kathryn S. Wylde, President & CEO, Partnership for New York City
Ms. Wylde leads the city’s preeminent business leadership organization. She joined the Partnership in 1982 and served as founding president & CEO of its major two affiliates, the New York City Investment Fund and the Housing Partnership Development Corporation. Under her leadership, the Partnership played a major role in the revitalization of the city and its neighborhoods. An internationally known expert in housing, economic development, and urban affairs, Ms. Wylde serves on a number of boards and advisory groups, including the Port Authority of NY/NJ Security Task Force, the Mayor’s Sustainability Advisory Board, the NYS Commission on Public Authority Reform, the NYC Economic Development Corporation, and the NYC Leadership Academy.
Women Re:BUILD NY
Conference Advisory Committee Members

Advisory Committee of Government, Industry and Labor Leaders

Nicole Bertran | New York City Department of Small Business Services
Michelle Centeno | New York City Office of the Comptroller
Louis J. Coletti | Building Trades Employers’ Association
Jacqueline Cooke | United States Department of Labor Women’s Bureau
Sonya Covington | Forest City Ratner Companies
Yvette Dennis | The Darman Group
Denise Echevarria | Laborers International Union Construction & General Building Laborers Local 79
Felice Farber | General Contractors Association of New York
Lash Green | Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
Susie Han | Office of the New York City Public Advocate
Cassandra Hill | JetBlue Airways
Walter Maxwell | New York City Department of Small Business Services
Ida Perich | Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
Philip Pitruzzello | Columbia University
Danielle Porcaro | Office of the Speaker of the New York City Council
Flora Ramos | Tishman Construction Corporation
Anne Rascon | Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
Vincenza Restiano | Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center
Mel Ruffini | Tishman Construction Corporation
Elly Spicer | New York City and Vicinity District Council Carpenters Labor-Management Corporation
Christine Timber | New York State Department of Labor Apprenticeship Office
Maria Torres | Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and Rebuilding
David Worsley | Silverstein Properties

Advisory Committee of Education, Training and Advocacy Leaders

Femi Agana | Operation Punch List, Carpenter Women’s Steering Committee, Carpenters Local 608
Susan Arroyo | New York City Workforce Investment Board
Bevly Bobb | Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center
Teresa Boyer | Rutgers University Center for Women and Work
Sean Brennan | Mason Tenders District Council Training Fund
Janice Burl | Operation Punch List, Laborer, Local 79
Jacqueline Cooke | U.S. Department of Labor Women’s Bureau
Patrick Dail | Center for Continuing Education and Workforce, Borough of Manhattan Community College
Lily Dalke | Nontraditional Employment for Women
Robin Delk | Sheet Metal Worker, Sheet Metal Workers Local 28
Cheryl Farrell | Operation Punch List, Electrician, Local 3
Cynthia Fowlkes | New York City Department of Education Career and Technical Education
Florence Jackson | New York City Department of Education Career and Technical Education
Catherine Judge | New York City District Council Carpenters Women’s Committee
Megan Keenan | New York City Department of Youth and Community Development
Nicholas LaGuardia | Elevator Industry, Joint Employment Office
Michael Mulgrew | United Federation of Teachers, Career and Technical Education
Jeanne Mulligrav | New York City Department of Youth and Community Development
Angela Olszewski | Operation Punch List, Tilesetter, Tile, Marble and Terrazzo, Local 7
Herlema Owens | Association of Women Construction Workers of America, Laborer Local 731
Leah Rambo | Operation Punch List, Sheet Metal Worker, Sheet Metal Workers Local 28
Nancy Rankin | Community Service Society
Veronica Session | Operation Punch List, Carpenter Women’s Steering Committee, Carpenter, Local 926
Sonia Torruella | New York City Housing Authority
Denise Vittor | Queens Vocational and Technical High School
Women re:BUILD NY Conference

• Ensuring opportunities for the diverse workforce NY needs to rebuild Lower Manhattan and beyond.

• Engaging developers, contractors, unions, educators and tradeswomen in advancing women’s participation in the construction of New York.

• Identifying and promoting the mechanisms necessary to implement equal economic opportunities.