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Commission for Women

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Women's Week Activities Scheduled

To help celebrate National Women's History Month and International Women's Day, the UTK Commission for Women, in conjunction with other UTK organizations, is sponsoring Women's Week from March 5-9.

The week will kick off on Monday, March 5, with a Brown Bag luncheon. Denise Bentley, Assistant Professor in Accounting, will discuss property law in Tennessee. The luncheon is set for noon in the University Center. Later Monday afternoon, from 3:30 to 5:00, the Women's Studies Department will host an Open House at the Women's Studies Building at 2012 Lake Avenue.

Women in Concert will be featured Monday evening at 7 p.m. in the University Center Auditorium. Performers from the Music Department will include Mary Fraley, Mary Ann O'Connor, Ann Erwin, Pat Carter, Kathy Leach, Sarah Searle, and Ellen Eleager. Each will perform selections composed by women. Following “Women in Concert,” at 8 p.m., the Women's Coordinating Council will present Irina McClellan who will speak on “Women Behind the Iron Curtain.”

On Tuesday, March 6, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Women in Leadership Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency. Performers from the Music Department will include Mary Fraley, Mary Ann O'Connor, Ann Erwin, Pat Carter, Kathy Leach, Sarah Searle, and Ellen Eleager. Each will perform selections composed by women. Following “Women in Concert,” at 8 p.m., the Women's Coordinating Council will present Irina McClellan who will speak on “Women Behind the Iron Curtain.”

Research by women faculty members will be the focus of Thursday's Spotlight on Women's Research. Scheduled from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the University Center, room 227, the Spotlight will feature displays, photos, and exhibits from a variety of UTK faculty. Included among the exhibitors are Dr. Carol Hardin, Geography; Dr. Dragana Brzakovic, Engineering; Dr. Rosalind Hackett, Religious Studies; Dr. Susan Mett, Art; Dr. Pat Walni, Botany; and Dr. M. Breining, Physics. The Science Alliance and School of Veterinary Medicine are also planning displays.

The Black Cultural Programming Committee has tentatively scheduled Angela Davis to speak on Thursday, International Women's Day. Her lecture is slated for 7 p.m. in the University Center.

The Film Committee has scheduled two films by women directors during Women's Week. On Wednesday, March 7, at 7:30 p.m., the Blue Light a film by German director Leni Riefenstahl will be shown. On Thursday, March 8, at 7:30 p.m. in the University Center Auditorium, Lina Wertmuller's Seven Beauties will be presented.

For more information about the activities planned for Women's Week, contact the Commission for Women at 974-4739.
Mommy Tracks Making Waves in the Workplace

by Thura Mack

Business and industry experts agree the challenge in the 1990's and beyond will concern meeting predicted labor shortfalls and a shrinking workforce. This climate, they agree, means "women are becoming an increasingly precious commodity." (Working Woman, September, 1989) According to Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989 as well as various other statistical resources, a growing percentage of women are obtaining educational degrees and are entering the workforce in record-breaking numbers. While there is no doubt that the future success of women in the workforce has never been brighter, their increased participation in the workforce and the pressures of family and child care responsibilities have combined to create a conflict for both the career-oriented woman and the company which employs her.

Many working mothers, while managing promising careers, are faced with balancing the demands of bearing, rearing, and caring for children. These women, unwilling to forego the pleasure and rewards of both a successful career and a healthy family life, have struggled to "have it all," creating the image and myth of the "Superwoman." Trend watchers, and women themselves, have come to the realization that the "Superwoman" is truly a myth and is an unattainable goal. In an effort to deal with this reality, Felice Schwartz, founder of Catalyst, a New York research firm that studies the issues affecting women's careers, has introduced the concept of "Mommy Track" employment for women.

Mommy Track is an informal corporate system under which companies identify and promote career-committed women willing to make the same sacrifices (personal) as men. Family oriented women, on the other hand, are tracked to less demanding middle management positions.

In order to display the type of ambition companies most often identify with male employees, these women have decided to forego having children, or to let others raise the ones they have, shifting child care responsibilities to those outside the family structure. "Historically women would quit their job or take a long leave of absence when their children were born, today that is not the case. Women are returning to work within months after the baby is born." (Executive Female, May/June 1989) Since there are such vast numbers of working mothers the question comes to mind, who's minding the children?

An early 1989 survey by Phillip Morris Companies, Inc. addresses this very issue. (See graphic)

In addition to the array of child care options available to working mothers, these women are in need of more flexible work schedules in order to pursue both careers and family roles without the fear that their choices will cause their careers to stagnate or come to an abrupt halt. With women comprising such a large and growing segment of the workforce, economic reality is convincing companies to rethink their attitudes toward female employees and seriously consider becoming more "family-friendly" in accommodating talented, valuable and productive working mothers.

The good news is that several major corporations are beginning to create a more favorable climate for working women by offering flexible work schedules, company-sponsored child-care assistance and extended parental leave, in addition to the option of working from the home in an effort to help employees balance family and career commitments more successfully. According to an article in the December 25, 1989 issue of U.S. News and World Report, major companies currently committed to innovative pilot programs in an effort to deal with mommy tracked employees include DuPont, IBM, Time Inc., Colgate-Palmolive, Consolidated Edison and Home Box Office.

The Mommy Track system has encountered such critics as Madeline Swain, president of the Center for Organizational Effectiveness, a division of Swain & Swain, a New York-based outplacement firm. She and others contend Schwartz's concept reinforces prejudices of some male executives. These executives believe women really aren't committed to careers and use the system as an excuse for not hiring and promoting women with children. "If women were given greater opportunities to begin with," says Swain, "they would earn more, have greater footing in the corporate world and be better able to deal with such things as child care. Give women equal opportu-
How To Combat Those Winter Colds

Flu and colds plague most everyone during the winter and early spring season. If you can't afford to miss time from school and work, here are eleven tips on how to stay well during this time of year.

1. Pamper yourself—It takes more energy to get through colder days than warmer days. Walking in coats and boots on cold days and walking through wet, blowing rain taxes your energy level. Take time to relax, sit in a warm bath, and try to fit an hour of quiet time into your weekly schedule. An hour or more sleep also often helps prevent sickness.

2. Ask about flu and pneumonia vaccines—If you’re over 65 you need a flu shot. If you have a chronic disease, diabetes, asthma, heart or kidney disease, you should probably get one as well. Vaccines change every year because the flu viruses change. The flu vaccine reduces the risk of catching the disease by 70 to 80 percent. The vaccine does have side effects. For one thing, it hurts. For another, infections at the injection site are common and if you are allergic to eggs you will, in all likelihood, have an allergic reaction to your flu shot. If you are young, healthy and are not in the category of people who need to be vaccinated, go without.

Immunization against pneumonia is recommended for the same group of people who need flu shots. By getting the pneumonia vaccine, you reduce the risk of catching the disease by 60 to 70 percent.

3. Be careful around people with colds—Infections can be spread by hand to mouth contact. A cold virus can survive on the hands for as long as four hours, so wash your hands frequently. Transmission through the air is also possible. If you have a cold, don’t forget to cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze. Use disposable tissues and don’t drink from the same glass as someone with a cold.

4. Dress for the weather—Just as your grandmother always told you, most body heat does escape through the head, so wear a hat in cold weather. Carry your umbrella in case of cold rain.

5. Keep exercising—Most people prefer to be outside for their exercise, but if weather doesn’t permit, work out an indoor exercise program. Both of Knoxville’s malls are open for walking in the mornings. Climbing the stairs in McClung Tower can provide a major cardiovascular workout.

6. Reset the temptation to overeat—Cold weather may make you hungrier, but unless you are a North Woods lumberjack you don’t need to eat heavier meals in winter. People gain weight in the winter because they eat more. Why? They are more isolated, bored and depressed.

7. Avoid alcohol—Alcohol appears to warm you up because you feel a flush when the blood vessels dilate. Since those expanded blood vessels are then closer to your skin surface you lose body fat.

8. Fight against winter depression—A significant number of people get depressed during the winter developing a condition called Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). Getting less sunlight can indeed affect mood and depression can lower resistance to disease. Some doctors now use fluorescent lights to treat severe cases of SAD. Boredom also contributed to depression, so try to do something every day other than go to work and return home. Also, open the window shades and doors to let in more light.

9. Stay off the winter injury list—Avoid icy areas, wear boots, and be careful around the hilly UT campus in case of inclement weather.

10. Protect skin and eyes from cold—Use moisturizer more in winter. Heated homes are dry and the windy weather can be harmful to skin. Also, bright winter light can damage your eyes. Wear good sunglasses with high ultraviolet protection.

11. Don’t overdose on vitamins—Many people take Vitamin C to ward off colds. In very high doses (15 to 20 grams a day), Vitamin C can increase the likelihood of kidney stones and cause diarrhea. Other vitamins taken to excess result in physical problems. Take vitamins in moderate quantities.

WCC Plans Spring Semester Events

The Women’s Coordinating Council has scheduled several programs for Spring Semester which should be of interest to the UTK community. On Thursday, March 1, at 7:30 p.m. in the Hodges Library Auditorium, Jane Curry will perform her program “Just Say Know: Educating Females for the 21st Century.” Curry depicts the fictional Pandora College, an institution of higher learning for the 1990’s, and portrays some of its faculty and staff. This performance satire explores the impact on women in higher education of the use and misuse of science, the recurring nature of biological arguments, and the back-to-the-classics movement.

Typical of Curry’s program is the character Dr. Mildred Avon, Pandora’s Dean of Wellness, who announces during the show that “females are born without the math gene. Calculus transplants have been performed, but so far the body has rejected the foreign matter.”

The presentation is approximately forty minutes long and is followed by a discussion period during which the audience is invited to question the characters.

In conjunction with Women’s Week (March 5-9), Irena Shvetsova McClellan will be speaking on “Women Behind the Iron Curtain.” McClellan is the author of Of Love and Russia which recounts her experiences as a Soviet citizen prior to glasnost and her attempts to be reunited with her American husband Professor Woody McClellan.

McClellan tells audiences about the Soviet Union—both the one of her childhood and the one of recent years. Her story is not only fascinating, it is history in the making.

On Thursday, April 19, Mignon Anderson, author of the short story collection Mostly Womenfolk and a Man or Two, will read from her own works. Mostly Womenfolk and a Man or Two, set on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, represents a sensitive author’s portrayal of her dilemma of growing up in a world where “white is right.” The book explores many subjects—slavery, death in childbirth, a young child’s discovery that she is Black, standing up to racist forces in a segregated town, and the role of the Black man in the white man’s war.

In addition to her reading, Anderson will announce the winners of the 1990 WCC spring writing contest. For more information about the writing contest and the events planned for spring semester, contact the Women’s Center at 974-1029.
Rand Study Examines Housework

The January 1990 issue of Home Economics News and Information included an informative piece on who does the housework. As reported in the newsletter, The Rand Corporation collected data on household chores and who did them. The sample included married women with at least one child at home between the age of 6 and 18. When the data was analyzed, the researcher found:

- Wives, whether working or nonworking, did 80% of the shopping, laundry and cooking.
- Wives did 2/3 of the housecleaning, washing dishes, child care and family paperwork.
- Children’s work around the house eased the mother’s burden appreciably.
- Husband’s help around the house reduces the wife’s load very little.
- Husband’s among highly educated families took on 80% more chores than in couples with only a grammar school education.
- Children with highly educated parents did 68% less housework than those in less educated families.

Linda Waite, one of the Rand Corporation researchers, said, "It is clear that most of the effect on increasing education has been to shift who is helping the wife/mother. Her share decreased, but only slightly."

Women Writers Data Base Project Established

A full-text database of writings by pre-Victorian women is being prepared at Brown University. Women Writers in English 1330-1830: A Full Text Data Base Project is supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities. It was described by five literary scholars in a session at the Modern Language Association (MLA) convention held in Washington, D.C., December 27-30, 1989. The scholars at the MLA session included Project Director Susanne Woods (Brown University), Patricia Caldwell (Brown University), Margaret J.M. Ezell (Texas A&M University) and Stuart Curran (University of Pennsylvania). The works of over 1,000 British and American women writers are being loaded into what is essentially a gigantic anthology. The database will eventually link scholars around the country with previously unknown and inaccessible texts.

Project Director Susanne Woods said the goals of the project are to recover the texts of early women writers and to disseminate them. The amount of material uncovered or recovered in recent years is extraordinary and promises to keep scholars busy for decades. Fiction, poetry, drama, criticism, letters, memoirs, diaries, and travel literature, among other genres, some of it in manuscript form, will be entered into the database. The electronic format was chosen to facilitate literary research and to allow materials to be linked via Hypertext.

Many texts have been loaded into the database and copies are available for classroom and research use. Inquiries about the project can be made to Elaine Brennan, Project Manager, Women Writers Project, Box 1841, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912 or through BITNET (WOMWRITE@BROWNVM) or INTERNET (WOMWRITE@BROWNVM.BROWN.EDU). Information can also be obtained from Susanna Bartmann Pathak, Reference Librarian at Hodges Library. The number is 974-0009.

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