

# 2010 Annual Report Pima County/Tucson Women's Commission

Submitted to the Mayor and Council of Tucson

And the

Pima County Board of Supervisors

December 28, 2010

Pima County/Tucson Women's Commission, 240 North Court, Avenue, Tucson, AZ 85704

[www.pimatucsonwomen.org](http://www.pimatucsonwomen.org)

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December 28, 2010

Dear City and County Elected Officials,

Per the requirements for appointed commissions, I am pleased to submit herewith the 2010 Annual Report of the Pima County/Tucson Women's Commission.

The beginning of the year offered many challenges for the Commission, but ended with successful action steps being implemented that made a difference in the social and working conditions of many women and girls in Pima County and the City of Tucson.

We are especially grateful to you for your cooperation with us during this challenging year. A number of Commissioners resigned, and you collaborated closely with us to ensure new appointments were made in a timely manner.

As you will see when you review this report, the majority of the Commission's 2010 achievements occurred between the months of August and December. Notably, during this period, we functioned as an all-volunteer organization without staff assistance. Our achievements are the result of a dedicated group of Commissioners who are committed to the Commission's purpose and to the city and county's need to continue efforts to eradicate the practice of discrimination against women.

On behalf of the Commission members, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alison Hughes".

Alison Hughes, MPA  
Chair

### Commission Purpose

The Pima County/Tucson Women's Commission provides Pima County and the city of Tucson with an official agency to assist women to achieve equality of opportunity in all aspects of life in our Republic, and to take positive action to expose, eliminate, and prevent the practice of discrimination against women.

### Commission Funding

The Commission has functioned since July, 1, 2010 without the benefit of City of Tucson or Pima County funding. Donations received largely from Commission members have enabled many of the accomplishments cited below.

Prior to that time, city and county funding was received at reduced rates through the end of the fiscal year. These funds were spent largely to cover the salary and ERE for the Executive Director. Regular fiscal reports were submitted, along with copies of invoices, and service activity reports to County and City officials covering the funding period.

### The Challenge at the New Year

During the first few months of 2010, there were an insufficient number of commission members to reach a quorum needed for decision-making. It is unknown to the current commission members why this situation existed. Nevertheless, a small core group of committed commissioners continued to make administrative decisions and conduct business through executive sessions held by Commission officers.

The executive committee sought input from the community regarding the future of the Commission by holding two community stakeholder meetings on February 17 and 27. At these meetings the Commission Chair and Executive Director informed the attendees that they did not expect the City or the County to continue to fund the Commission following the end of the current fiscal year. The leadership anticipated that without public funding, it would be impossible to continue to maintain the Commission-owned building at 240 North Court Avenue. They proposed donating the building to an organization such as the Hope Network, Inc., an organization that had been using Commission space free of charge to plan its annual Hopefest event that is a collaboration of helping agencies, organizations and individuals that provide free groceries, dental services, medical services, clothing, prayer and other services. In return, the organization would be responsible for building maintenance, and would permit the Commission to be housed in the building free of charge.

These meetings generated a great deal of valuable input from the community. Their opinions were digested by the Commission members in attendance, and later, discussed in Executive Session. Another issue raised during these meetings surrounded the Commission's purpose and activities, with disagreement regarding the Commission's role in providing services versus advocacy. Also at issue was

the question of whether the Commission should drop its 501© (3) status. Finally, there was recognition that without funding, the executive director position would necessarily be eliminated, and the Commission would face the challenge of how to function as an all volunteer organization.

By April, 11 out of 13 Commissioners were able to attend a full Commission meeting and create a quorum. Two community stakeholders who had attended the February meetings approached their city council members and were appointed to the Commission. Also at the April meeting, the Commission appointed some at-large commissioners. The additions offered the potential for increasing the Commission's capacity to reach quorum and conduct business. Also at the April meeting, the Commission formally decided in a six to five vote to lay off the Executive Director at the end of May. With the director's departure, four Commissioners resigned, leaving the remaining commissioners with the continued challenge of achieving meeting quorum.

The Commission nevertheless persevered. No quorum was reached during May, June, or July, 2010, and business continued to be conducted at the Executive Committee level. By August, the wind shifted to the Commission's benefit. Contacts made with elected officials regarding their filling commission vacancies saw results. A new Commission was emerging, and major decisions were being made. The youngest commissioner is age 17, and the oldest is in her 70's.

Between August and December, the Commission meetings regularly met quorum requirements. A Strategic Action Plan was adopted, and implementation started. The Commission chair who had faithfully served on the Commission for six years resigned. New officers were elected and a new era begun. This report concentrates on the achievements of the Commission between August and December, 2010.

#### Strategic Plan of Action.

The Commission adopted a detailed strategic plan of action at the August meeting. The plan includes goals, activities, and timelines, and was submitted to Mayor and Council and the Board of Supervisors to alert the public officials that the Commission was "back in action." The Commission views the plan as a working document that is used to review progress, as well as add new action items, or delete others, as achievements occur or issues emerge or fade. **The Strategic Action Plan is posted on the Commission's website and available to the general public.**

#### Women's Equality Day Proclamations

The Commission voted to ask the Governor, the Mayor, and the Board of Supervisors Chairman to sign proclamations declaring August 26, 2010 as Women's Equality Day. We wrote suggested proclamations for the three elected officials, each of which was accepted without modification, and signed. The proclamations were presented to the community at large during the Women's Equality Day luncheon sponsored by the National Organization for Women on August 28, 2010.

#### Publication of a Women's Health Resource Directory

By the end of August, the Commission published 2,000 copies of a Guide to Women's Health Care and Information. The Guide was made possible with funding support from Tucson Electric Power Company

as well as from revenues generated from advertising sales in the Guide. It contains over 30 listings of agencies that provide health resources especially for women and girls. It was the result of an all volunteer effort by commissioners and a former commissioner. It was distributed widely throughout the city, through clinics, doctor's offices, small businesses, and the like. Few copies remain. A future goal is to find funding support to expand the Guide by adding more listings and gaining wider distribution. Its current length was limited by funding available.

#### Opposition to Strip Dance Warehouse Exploitation of Young Women

The Commission was contacted by Sunnyside Neighborhood Association regarding Club Turbulence, a strip dance warehouse located at the Tucson Airport which hired 18 year-old young women to dance nude. The warehouse was seeking a liquor license, and the neighborhood association asked the Commission to join its opposition. The Commission researched the situation thoroughly and produced a power point revealing the raw reality of the warehouse's presence on the Internet. Two members of the Executive Committee visited the warehouse to study the situation first-hand. The issue was reported to the Commission members who unanimously voted to oppose the liquor license request, and to also support Council Member Kozachik's proposal to raise the age limit from 18 to 21 for nude dancing in buildings such as these. The Commission submitted a strong letter of opposition to the liquor license to the Arizona Department of Liquor Licenses and Control (ADLLC) on September 20, 2010.

The Commission also testified during the City Council hearing on the request by this nude dance warehouse. We also arranged for a University of Arizona researcher to testify on the long-term damage to young women who are lured into warehouses like Club Turbulence. Unfortunately, ADLLC awarded the license and the warehouse was permitted to sell liquor. The Turbulence lobbyist, former City Councilman Brent Davis, actively strategized the warehouse's effort to obtain a liquor license, and noted informally to the Commission Chair that the strategy was to offer to increase the nude dance age to 21 if a liquor license was approved.

In December, the Commission was again contacted regarding another strip dance warehouse request for a liquor license. The Candy Shop, a warehouse located at 1104 South Craycroft Road, Tucson is seeking a re-issuance of its liquor license. The Commission chair researched this warehouse, and learned of ongoing violence and neighborhood disruption in this vicinity. She personally visited the residents in the neighborhood located closest to the warehouse, and learned first-hand of their opposition and concern regarding the activities going on at the Candy Store strip dance warehouse. The neighbors were also eager to sign a petition offered by the Commission opposing the reissuance of the liquor license due to the history of violence on or near the premises, and the over-saturation of liquor licenses in the area. The signatures were submitted to Council Member Kozachik for use by the City Attorney and ADLLC.

The Commission congratulates the members of the City Council for passing an ordinance amending Chapter 7 of the City Code to increase the minimum age of adult entertainment license applicants to 21 years of age throughout the City of Tucson. While increasing the age will not necessarily eliminate the exploitation of women at these warehouses, this action provides an important signal of serious community concern and willingness to take action.

#### House concurrent Resolution 2019/Proposition 107 – A Ballot Initiative Opposing Equal Opportunity Programs in State-Funded Organizations

The Commission was approached by some community residents who asked us to examine the potential impact of this ballot initiative on the status of women, if it was passed by the electorate. The initiative states that the State [of Arizona] shall not grant preferential treatment to or discriminate against any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting. We voted unanimously to hold a public hearing in order to better understand how individuals and organizations were interpreting the initiative. An *ad hoc* committee was formed to plan the event, and was composed of interested commissioners, community residents, and a n interested staff member from Councilwoman Romero's office representing herself.

On October 18 at El Pueblo Neighborhood Center, the Commission provided an opportunity for the general public, especially women, to state their viewpoints on the pending Proposition 107 ballot initiative. With approximately 100 people in attendance, 25 people chose to address the Commission. All were given the opportunity to speak. We believe that the collective experience that was voiced by the speakers represented the most diverse body of organizations ever to participate in such an event in Tucson's history. The speakers were unanimous in opposing the ballot initiative as they believed that its passage would signify a backward trend in the state government's commitment to equality.

The Commission submitted a detailed report of the event to the members of the City Council and the Board of Supervisors and recommended that these elected bodies reaffirm their commitment to eliminating discrimination of every kind, and to promoting equal opportunities in governmental hiring and promotion programs, regardless of the election outcome. **The report of this event is available on the Commission's Website.** With the electorate having voted to pass Proposition 107, House Concurrent Resolution 2019 becomes the law of Arizona. The Commission is committed to monitoring, assessing, and addressing any discrimination action that may emerge from its passage.

The Commission congratulates the City Council for taking action to reaffirm their commitment to equal opportunity.

#### Women's Health Assessment

At its September meeting, the Commission formed an *ad hoc* committee to implement a Pima County women's health assessment. The assessment will be conducted in collaboration with faculty at the Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health and the Southwest Institute for Research on Women. By the end of December, the design was being put into place, with preparations for submittal to the University's Internal Review Board. Implementation is not expected until January, 2011.

#### Skill Building Seminar Series

In September, the Commission sponsored a weekly series of skill-building seminars on business communications, minority business ownership, media publication skills, grant writing skills, math anxiety reduction, and the basics of intellectual property. The seminars took place in the Commission building, were well attended, and were highly regarded by the participants.

#### Other Activities

- Co-sponsored "Coming in Hot," a play about women in war, based on a book published by Kore Press.

- Sponsored a “meet and greet” event with Christine Lavin, a performance artist who focuses on social justice and women’s rights issues.
- Co-sponsored, with the League of Women Voters, a workshop for young high school age women on “Running and Winning.”
- Disseminated the report published by the Southern Arizona Women’s Foundation on the Status of Women in Pima County.
- Voted to co-sponsored with the Association of Business and Professional Women an event featuring Lily Ledbetter, who successfully sued Goodyear tire Company for sex discrimination. (Event is scheduled for February, 2011.)
- Generated outreach to the community through staffing a Commission table/booth at the during the following events:
  - Black Women’s Task Force event to interest women in political office
  - People of color Festival
  - Sunnyside Night out
  - UA Cares campaign
- Established “Friends of the Commission,” and generated invitations to community residents to join.
- Examined the issue of the availability of GED educational opportunities for women and girls in Pima County. Finding was that there is no discrimination on the basis of gender for such services.
- Heard a case against the Tucson Country Club regarding the Club’s discrimination on the basis of sex among its members.
- Voted to sponsor a screening event to support “Girls Making Media,” a project that supports young women learning media development skills.

### Preparing for the Future

The Commission’s capacity to continue its work depends on our capacity to generate revenues, whether through private or public funding sources. The Commission members recognize the funding challenges faced by our governments at this time in the state’s history. We are nevertheless hopeful that you will allocate some discretionary or social service funding in 2011 to enable us to continue our work. At the same time, we will continue our efforts to generate private revenues from individuals and organizations that support our mission.

**MEMBERS OF THE PIMA COUNTY/TUCSON WOMEN'S COMMISSION AND THEIR APPOINTMENT**  
**SOURCE EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 28, 2010**

Nena Ashton (Ray Carroll, District 4)

Joyceen Boyle, Ph.D. (Paul Cunningham, Ward 2)

Maxine Goodman, MA (At-Large)

Lucy Howell (At-large--awaits BOS confirmation prior to taking office)

Alison Hughes, MPA, *Commission Chair* (Steve Kozachik, Ward 6)

Lucinda Hughes-Juan, MPA, *Commission Vice-Chair* (At-Large)

Emma Juan (At-Large)

Marietta Martin (At-Large)

Lori Mennella, CPA, *Commission Treasurer* (At-Large)

Martha Moore-Monroy, MPH (Day, District 1)

Mohar Sidhwa, MA (Richard Elias, District 5)

Deena Stewart (Mayor)

Sheila Tobias, *Executive Committee Member* (At-Large)

Mercy Valencia, Ph.D. (Ramon Valadez, District 2)

Cecilia Vindiola, MA (At-Large)

Donna Whitman (Richard Fimbres, Ward 5)

Kathleen Williamson, Ph.D., J.D. (Karen Ulich, Ward 3)

Vacancy (Regina Romero, Ward 1)

Vacancy (Shirley Scott, Ward 4)

Vacancy (Sharon Bronson, District 3)