## 05-01-Initiatives and Programs for Women and Girls

| Fund/Agency: 001/05 | Office for Women | |
|---|---|---|
| Personnel Services | $454,292 | This CAPS accounts for 100 percent of total expenditures |
| Operating Expenses | $26,763 | |
| Recovered Costs | $0 | |
| Capital Equipment | $0 | |
| | | |
| **Total CAPS Cost:** | **$481,055** | |
| | | |
| Federal Revenue | $0 | |
| State Revenue | $0 | |
| User Fee Revenue | $320 | |
| Other Revenue | $0 | |
| | | |
| **Total Revenue:** | **$320** | |
| | | |
| **Net CAPS Cost:** | **$480,735** | |
| | | |
| Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this CAPS | 8/7.5 | |

### ▶ CAPS Summary

The Office For Women was previously two programs, the Career Development Center for Women and the Financial Education Center. The Office For Women (OFW) removes barriers to women and girls through: policy development, information and assistance, community programs, and partnerships that effect change. OFW operates in both a county and a regional context, and it is closely aligned with the Commission For Women (CFW), an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors. The Director of the OFW reports to the Commission Chair and has a liaison relationship with the Deputy County Executive. There are some 300 state and local commissions for women across the United States, each different in structure and its relationship with an elected body. However, all commissions for women--and the offices for women affiliated with them-- seek women's full participation in social and economic areas through policy recommendations brought forward to key decision makers. A common goal of these organizations is to include women's perspectives in the decisions of government, where historically women's needs have not been well understood or addressed.

In the early 1980's, offices for women typically were remedying discrimination against women in employment, credit, housing, legal treatment, and education. During this time, OFW designed training for displaced homemakers, helped improve services for sexual assault victims, held job fairs, and provided financial counseling programs for County residents.

In the past twenty years, blatant sex discrimination has diminished through legal recourse and economic changes, but true equality for women and girls remains a struggle in many areas of life and work:

- Single mothers comprise the largest percentage of people living in poverty. More than one-third of female-headed households live below the poverty line. For African-American and Hispanic female heads of household, the number rises to 50 percent.
- The U.S. has the greatest percentage of elderly women in poverty of all the major industrialized nations. Nearly 40 percent of older women who live alone live in poverty or near the poverty level.
- More than 73 percent of women in Fairfax County are in the labor force, compared to 59.7 percent nationally. This makes the availability of high quality, affordable child care, flexible work policies, and family leave all the more critical for families in Fairfax County and for employers who wish to retain their employees.
- Nationally, women represent only 5 percent of senior managers, 11 percent of engineers, 6 percent of machinists, and less than 3.5 percent of firefighters, carpenters, electricians, and pilots. Women are still occupationally clustered into sales, retail, and administrative fields.
- Only 38 percent of women receive employer-provided pension benefits compared to 57 percent of men.
- Women-owned businesses receive less than 3 percent of the over $200 billion in Federal procurement dollars.
- In 1984, women earned 37 percent of undergraduate computer science degrees; in 1999, women earned less than 20 percent of computer science degrees. In the U.S., women hold only 19 percent of science and technology jobs, and they leave them at twice the rate of men. In the Fairfax County Public Schools, boys outnumber girls by 4 to 1 in advanced placement computer science classes.
- The Federal government has provided free breast and cervical cancer screening to more than 2.5 million women over the past 10 years. Still, a recent study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated that the Federal screening program only reaches between 12 percent and 15 percent of eligible women. In addition, women whose breast cancer was detected by the Federal screening program were three to four times more likely to have late-stage disease.
- According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, one in four women report that they have been victims of domestic violence or stalking by a spouse, partner, or date. Violence against women is the number one cause for injury of American women between the ages of 15 and 44.

These realities are a legitimate focus of public policy. Moreover, local government stands as the best vehicle to effect change for women in their communities. The Office For Women is the one entity in Fairfax County that integrates public policy, leadership, advocacy, and information directed toward policy reform for women and girls. Because OFW represents the interests of all the County's women, we have a comprehensive approach to solutions and offer a voice for women who are most disadvantaged economically and socially. It is through collaboration and consensus, rather than regulation or enforcement, that OFW removes barriers. OFW and CFW spotlight these barriers for the community: for example, inadequate treatment of domestic violence victims, the glass ceiling in County government, inequities in girls' athletics, and the under-representation of girls in technology.

**Key Accomplishments**

Fairfax County government has been a regional and national leader on several issues affecting women. The most significant accomplishment for OFW itself has been our ability to identify an emerging issue, act as a catalyst for addressing that issue, galvanize stakeholders, and change or develop policy.

Among OFW's accomplishments (some in conjunction with CFW):

- In 1978, established the first women's shelter for victims of domestic violence in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area — also one of first in the nation.
- Established the Re-entry Women's Employment Center in 1979, the first local government program to help displaced homemakers reenter the job market. In 1985, established the Financial Education Center to provide money management and reverse mortgage counseling for women and their families. Both programs were recognized by the National Association of County Organizations.
- In 1986, OFW sponsored the first of six annual Women's Job Fairs that served over 7,000 job seekers, the first of its type in the metropolitan area.
- A 1993 report on gender distribution of Fairfax County Boards, Authorities, and Commissions brought to public attention the need for the Board of Supervisors to appoint more women and minorities to the Board's advisory groups.
- Work/family policies and glass ceiling barriers were addressed between 1990 and 1997. A report on job sharing led to the Board of Supervisors' approval of new job sharing policies and practices. A 1994 work/family report recommended more flexible scheduling, a work/family task force, and a telecommuting pilot in County government. A 1997 report on breaking the glass ceiling for women in County government has led to a number of workplace improvements: an outreach recruiter position, organizational exit interviews, and more coaching and development for women in the pipeline and in senior management. OFW/CFW was the catalyst and resource for the County's first job fair for Women in Public Safety in 2001. A number of these efforts have been adapted by other local and state governments and recognized by the National Association of Commissions For Women, the United States Department of Labor Women's Bureau, and Northern Virginia Family Services.

- In 1997, only one high school girls' softball field had lighting and irrigation compared to 23 such fields for high school boys. At the recommendation of the Commission For Women, the Board of Supervisors set up a Girls' Fast Pitch Softball Equity Action Plan Review Team to monitor a 5-year equity plan for the 5,000 girls who play softball. Today, there is lighting or funding approved for over 21 of 24 the County's high school varsity softball fields. The Department of Community and Recreation Services funded improvements to 26 field sites, and there is a plan to build two fields at Wakefield Park.

- OFW's Legal Roundtable has brought together judges, attorneys, and service providers to improve women's access to legal information — resulting in expansion of the Fairfax Bar Association's Pro Bono Neighborhood Outreach, a group of volunteer lawyers.

- For the past two years, OFW has been an innovator in developing strategies and programs that encourage girls' participation in technology education and careers. Working in partnership with schools, County agencies, businesses, and non-profits, OFW has advised the Fairfax County Public School Board and administrators on strategies for addressing under-representation of girls in technology education. It has served as a resource to school boards across Virginia through the Governor's Education Conference and to educators in other states, and we have developed a training video for County employees who work with children and technology in recreational settings. OFW is a "go to" program for marketing techniques, methods, and materials for girls in technology, including its *Summer Tech Resource Guide for Girls*, a publication recognized nationally as a new way to engage girls in technology.

- The Women's Business Center of Northern Virginia (WBC), the first such center in Virginia, began service delivery in 2000. Funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration and Fairfax County Government, and supported by the Community Business Partnership and the Mason Enterprise Center at George Mason University, the WBC provides women with the technical assistance and support to start or expand successful small businesses, with special emphasis on disadvantaged women. OFW's role is to help those underserved by existing programs, women who own very small "micro" businesses, and those who face language or cultural barriers. The WBC has trained and counseled over 120 women business owners with truly "micro" businesses: 60 percent of the women were just starting their business and 37 percent had annual business revenues of less than $35,000. Over 80 percent of the trained business owners were minority and/or non-English speaking women.

- OFW has developed unique materials to help women and girls, including:

  - The *Resource Directory for Women Business Owners,* a "one-stop" information guide for women entrepreneurs,

  - The English and Spanish versions of the *Resource Guide for Women*, a women and diversity forum and report, and a multicultural directory represent a cultural outreach to all communities of women,

  - The *Summer Tech Resource Guide for Girls,*

  - *Divorce and Separation Fact Sheets*,

  - *Job Loss Survival Guide,* and

  - *So You Want to Be a Business Owner?*

These materials have reached thousands of women, and three of these publications have been adapted by other organizations. Several publications are already available on the OFW web site. In conjunction with the cable division of County government, we have produced numerous public programs and three training programs for the County government training network.

**Changes in OFW**

In the early 1990's, OFW provided counseling, training, and direct services to about 15,000 clients annually (both County residents and County government employees), paving the way for similar career counseling programs. With the adoption of the FY 1993 budget during an across-the-board reduction in funds, the OFW budget was reduced by 36 percent. In that same year, a resolution by the Board of Supervisors moved the OFW reporting line to the Deputy County Executive, reflecting OFW's cross-cutting role as an agency that "makes recommendations about County policies affecting all agencies of County government" and "responds to and helps rectify community and County government problems and injustices." OFW shifted its focus to long-term changes and policy development.

OFW still maintains some services through its community programs, forums, job fairs, and job bank, resource library, and information and assistance. Our client base, however, has changed. In 1996, about 60 percent of clients had a college degree and 53 percent of participants had an income below $30,000. About half had dependents at home and 18 percent were minorities. OFW's clients today are not only those who participate in programs, but those who are the focus of policy initiatives. Overall, they have less education, less income and are far more diverse in ethnicity and ages.

For example, OFW's Legal Roundtable pro bono clients are all low-income, the majority are Hispanic, and 92 percent are ages 18-59. The reason they most often seek legal help is because of domestic abuse.

OFW has also designed business training for family day care providers attending the Women's Business Center — 27 percent are Hispanic, 22 percent African-American, and 17 percent Caucasian. In addition, girls are now part of the client base. In the girls and technology initiative, girls range from middle school age to high school age and they are extremely diverse — over half are minorities, mainly African-American, Hispanic and Asian.

As County government has undergone changes, so has OFW. Continuous improvement has always been part of the mission to improve the status of women. Because of its small size, OFW has improved how it works by leveraging quality through partnerships. We have become known for the quality of our information — in specialized material, a range of cable and video productions, and the expertise of staff on specific topics. A second change is deeper community involvement. Advising County government and the community about changes in policies or programs requires assessing the needs of constituents, so we have deepened our involvement with community-based organizations, ethnic and civic groups, and professional and educational sectors of the community. OFW initiatives also represent the increasing diversity of the community. OFW has led diversity dialogues, issued a diversity report, and publicly advocated for greater numbers of women and minorities in senior level positions and for demographic data that include both gender and ethnicity.

**Future Challenges**

OFW's challenge continues to be selecting the most compelling issues related to Fairfax County within the resources of OFW. In the last four years, OFW has focused on economics of women in the workplace, the under-representation of girls and women in technology, diversity, and athletic equality. Issues for the near future are health, older women, and domestic violence. For example, domestic violence is a cross-cutting theme for women from many cultures, and the County has seen an increase of minority women seeking psychological, financial, and legal help as a result of domestic violence.

Another challenge is to bring together all perspectives on an issue affecting women, to integrate that knowledge and to repackage it in ways that are useful to members of the community and to the County's decision makers.

OFW will provide solutions and models that can improve the lives of women and girls. We will help service providers and County agencies on work/life balance, career development, women's policy issues, and program design. We will remain a resource for County government and its employees on how to institutionalize practices, policies, and a culture that are equitable.

OFW is committed to stewardship. We support a collective vision of the future, and a quality of life that benefits women, girls, and the entire community.

## ► Method of Service Provision

Service is provided directly to customers (County residents and County government employees) who either call or come into the office for information or to use the career reference library, job bank, or to receive individual information or materials. The hours of operation correspond to those of the agency: 8:00 a.m. through 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Expanded service delivery is achieved through partnerships with other County agencies, community-based organizations, businesses, and individuals who share the mission of the Office For Women. Programs are offered during the workday, evenings, and occasionally on weekends — at sites throughout Fairfax County. Information is also provided through the following: "Doing Business with Fairfax," "Fairfax County Newcomers' Guide," "News to Use (Office of Public Affairs)," the OFW's web site, the County's infoline, Channel 16, and through various publications offered directly to the public or through association with other organizations.

## ► Performance/Workload Related Data

(Performance measurements related to assisting individuals and programs include the Commission For Women.)

Performance measurement data in FY 1992 reflect the year prior to a major reduction in the County's budget. OFW had 11 SYEs, a net budget of $354,884, and served nearly 11,000 clients. The agency generated over $10,170 from client fees. These core career planning workshop fees were based on a sliding scale.

In FY 1993, the OFW's funding was reduced 36 percent to a net budget of $225,242. Staffing levels dropped to 7/6.5 SYEs and the Financial Education Center was eliminated.

From FY 1994 through FY 1999, the OFW transitioned to a policy focus. Direct services declined and the agency began to focus on broader issues such as the glass ceiling in County government.

The use of volunteers declined as services shrank, especially when the Financial Education Center was eliminated (a program that was volunteer driven). To leverage its expertise and resources, OFW developed partnerships — alliances with individuals and organizations that supported the goals of our initiatives. These partnerships have increased program delivery and outcomes. Examples of partners are:

- County government agencies and programs: the Police Department, Libraries, Community and Recreation Services, the Circuit Court, Office for Children, and the Hope Center for Women
- Community-based organizations: the Center for Multicultural Human Services, Jewish Council for the Aging, and Reston Interfaith
- Women's organizations: American Association of University Women, League of Women Voters, Institute for Women's Policy Research, the Women's Research and Education Institute, and the Virginia Women's Network
- Educational organizations: George Mason University, Fairfax County Public Schools, and Northern Virginia Community College
- Professional organizations: Women in Technology, the Fairfax Bar Association, and the American Association of Retired Persons
- Businesses: NationsBank, BTG, Inc., J.C. Penney, and MicroCenter.

Agency partnerships increased from 27 in FY 1998 to over 66 in FY 2001. OFW's process of developing partnerships is being outlined in a guide that will be distributed to all agencies as a result of many requests for a model of how to develop win-win partnerships.

OFW continues to assess ways to measure long-term outcomes of removing barriers to women and girls and to measure what is "value-added" through partnerships. While number of individuals served has remained somewhat stable, the demographics of clients have shifted to lower-income, more ethnically diverse populations. The agency has also expanded its focus from programs that assist women to include girls. Given this shift to serving economically disadvantaged populations, OFW has moved away from user-fee programs to initiatives developed through donations and in-kind assistance provided by partners to offset program costs.

The following table summarizes performance and workload related data:

| Indicator | FY 1992 Actual | FY 1993 Actual | FY 1994 Actual | FY 1995 Actual | FY 1996 Actual | FY 1997 Actual | FY 1998 Actual | FY 1999 Actual | FY 2000 Actual | FY 2001 Estimated | FY 2002 Estimated |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| OFW Staff | 11/11 | 7/6.5 | 7/6.5 | 7/6.5 | 7/6.5 | 7/6.5 | 7/6.5 | 7/6.5 | 7/6.5 | 8/7.5 | 8/7.5 |
| Net Budget | $354,884 | $225,242 | $257,820 | $276,534 | $288,931 | $303,170 | $303,615 | $303,785 | $329,937 | $406,842 | $480,735 |
| Individuals served through OFW programs | 5,797 | 2,868 | 3,404 | 3,529 | 3,500 | 2,615 | 1,725 | 2,716 | 3,007 | 3,000 | 3,000 |
| Individuals provided with information by OFW staff | 10,100 | 4,469 | 3,613 | 3,249 | 3,800 | 4,222 | 7,510 | 9,367 | 10,321 | 10,000 | 10,500 |
| Total Individuals Served | 15,897 | 7,337 | 7,017 | 6,778 | 7,300 | 6,837 | 9,235 | 12,083 | 13,328 | 13,000 | 13,500 |

| Indicator | FY 1992 Actual | FY 1993 Actual | FY 1994 Actual | FY 1995 Actual | FY 1996 Actual | FY 1997 Actual | FY 1998 Actual | FY 1999 Actual | FY 2000 Actual | FY 2001 Estimated | FY 2002 Estimated |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Active partnerships (programs/ initiatives) | N/A | 13 | 15 | 15 | 17 | 21 | 27 | 34 | 45 | 45 | 50 |
| Volunteer/ Intern hrs | 3,352 | 4,000 | 1,611 | 762 | 803 | 439 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Cost per program participant | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | $5.77 | $5.76 | $5.51 | $6.10 | $6.10 | $6.10 |
| Fees charged/ revenue impact | $10,170 | $5,455 | $6,360 | $1,855 | $1,155 | $1,477 | $2,054 | $1,105 | $314 | $320 | $320 |

Note: Performance Measurements included are those that best reflect history of programs and initiatives.

## ▶ User Fee Information

| Subobject Code | Fee Title | FY 2002 ABP Fee Total |
|---|---|---|
| 0603 | Core Career Workshop Fee | $320 |

| Current Fee | Maximum Allowable Fee Amount |
|---|---|
| $0 to $75<br>Fee was based on sliding income scale.<br>Family Income Level = Core Career Workshop Fee<br>$0 - $14,999 = $0.00<br>$15,000 - $24,999 = $25.00<br>$25,000 - $34,999 = $35.00<br>$35,000 - $44,999 = $45.00<br>$45,000 - $54,999 = $55.00<br>$55,000 - $64,999 = $65.00<br>$65,000 and above = $75.00 | $75 |

**Purpose of Fee:**
To recover a portion of the materials provided by the agency in career planning workshops from 1979 through 1999.

| Levy Authority | Requirements to Change the Fee | Year Fee Was Last Adjusted |
|---|---|---|
| None | None | Approximately FY 1990 |

**Other Remarks:**
OFW has charged fees in the past two years for some events such as networking roundtables for established women entrepreneurs. This type of service is now provided by the Women's Business Center (WBC) of Northern Virginia, an organization for which OFW is a partner. OFW designs specialized WBC programs and materials for minority or lower-income participants.

At the time the agency submitted its FY 2001 budget, program development for the WBC had not been finalized. With the full operation of the WBC, OFW has eliminated user fees from its former business programs.

Since 1979, OFW has assisted over 280,000 individuals.