

## City of Alexandria, Virginia

10  
6-24-08

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 12, 2008

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: 2006 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

---

**ISSUE:** Acceptance of the 2006 Annual Report from the Commission for Women.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council receive the report and thank the Commission for Women for their efforts on behalf of the City.

**DISCUSSION:** The Annual Report for the Commission for Women was submitted by Commission Chair, Charniele Herring. Highlights from the report include:

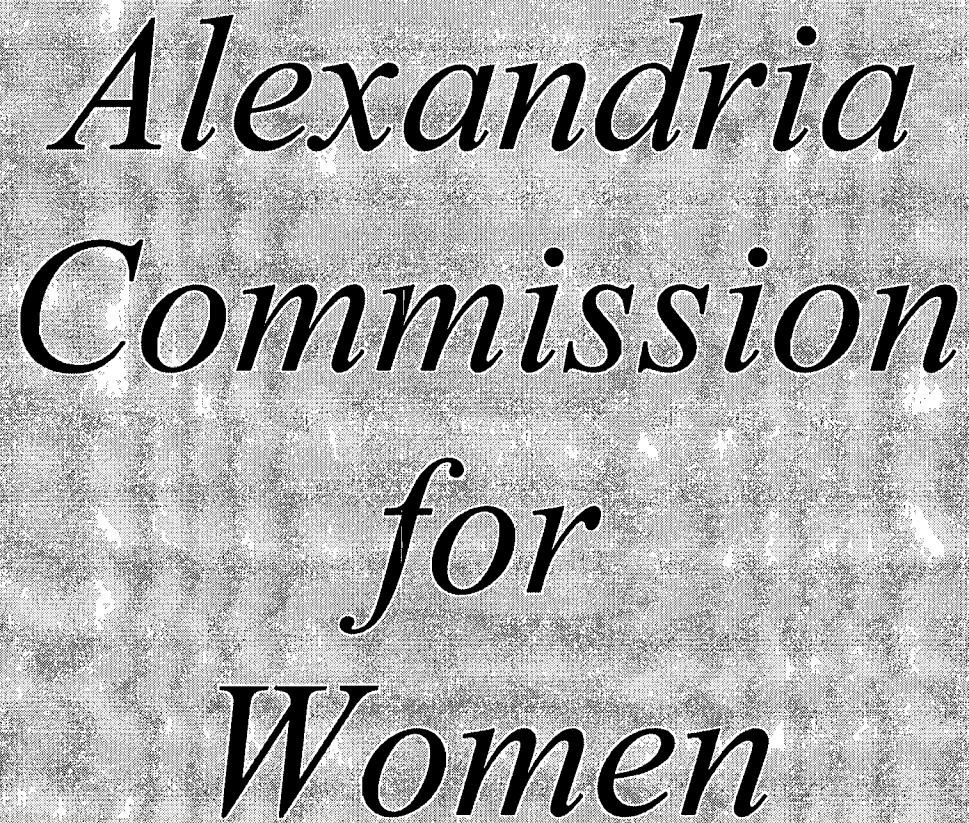
- ❑ The Commission sponsored a "Shower for the Shelter" to raise funds for furnishings needed for a recently completed ADA-compliant addition to the Battered Women's Shelter.
- ❑ Friend's of the Commission for Women hosted several fund-raising events including the Women and Art Party which showcases local women artists and helps raise funds for various Commission projects.
- ❑ The Commission held its 26<sup>th</sup> annual Salute to Women Awards Banquet, honoring 12 women for their accomplishments that benefit the women and City of Alexandria. This event raised approximately \$15,000, which was donated to the Sexual Assault Response and Awareness (SARA) program.
- ❑ The Commission hosted the City's annual Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day event in April. Nearly 75 ACPS students were mentored by mentors from both the public and private sectors.

**ATTACHMENT:** 2006 Annual Report of the Commission for Women.

**STAFF:**

Michele Evans, Deputy City Manager

Lisa Baker, Director, Office on Women



# *Alexandria Commission for Women*

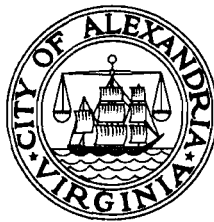
Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2006

Dated: Spring 2008

# Alexandria Commission for Women

## Annual Report Fiscal Year 2006 Dated: Spring 2008



## Alexandria City Council 2006

William D. Euille, Mayor  
Andrew Macdonald, Vice Mayor  
Ludwig Gaines  
Rob Krupicka  
Timothy Lovain  
Redella S. Pepper  
Paul Smedberg

The City of Alexandria complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you require this report in an alternative format, call (703)838-5030.

## INTRODUCTION

The Alexandria City Council established the Alexandria Commission on the Status of Women (ACSW) in 1974 to monitor issues that concern women and to educate the public about those issues. The name was changed in 1994 to the Alexandria Commission for Women. The Commission's mandate also includes making recommendations to City officials about actions that would encourage equal opportunity for women and eliminate gender-based discrimination.

The Council appoints the members of the Commission to three-year terms. In 2001, the Council expanded the membership of the Commission to fifteen members appointed at-large from the citizenry of the City. All members serve without compensation. The entire Commission meets monthly from September through June and holds its annual retreat in the summer. Standing committees and task forces meet when necessary.

In addition to participating in numerous community activities, the Commission responds to requests for assistance from other Alexandria boards and commissions. Members stay in touch with local issues by inviting speakers to Commission meetings and attending educational programs.

The Commission continues to work diligently to highlight issues of importance to women including, among a number of initiatives, the development of a Needs Assessment of the economic, health and educational needs of women in the City of Alexandria. The Commission has compiled the data available from the 1980, 1990 and 2000 census to identify and compare the changing needs of women in our City and is feverishly compiling its draft Report.

The Commission takes an active role in supporting and sharing information with other commissions in the City. The Commission also reaches beyond the City limits to establish linkage with other commissions in the region and throughout the United States and has participated in the Health Roundtable with the Fairfax County Office for Women. The Commission reaches out by placing Commission representatives on key City bodies, including the Commission on HIV/AIDS, the Youth Policy Commission and the Human Rights Commission; participating in the National Commission for Women's 'Women's Appointments National Task Force', to encourage appointment of qualified women to major governmental bodies; and actively participating in the National Association of Commissions for Women.

Every year, the Commission takes an active role in advocating to the City of Alexandria and the General Assembly issues of importance to women. The Commission was responsible for saving from elimination the Virginia State Council on the Status of Women. Several Commission members currently serve on the State Council on the Status of Women. The Commission also actively participates in the Court Observation program which monitors the progress of domestic violence and sexual assault cases in the Alexandria court system.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

### Friends of the Alexandria Commission for Women

The *Friends of the Alexandria Commission for Women*, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to raising funds to support the work of the Commission and the Office on Women, was founded in 2000. Fiscal Year 2006 seemed to be the year of fundraising, with upwards of seven events in a 12 month period. Significant opportunities presented themselves to the Friends of the Commission, including:, and

- Co-sponsorship of a local production of the “Vagina Monologues”, a highly successful production of women centered reviews;
- A hugely successful “Shower for the Shelter” commemorating the end of the Domestic Violence Shelter’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year and the opening of its new addition.
- Women’s Art Parties, winter and spring, held each of the last four years, showcasing emerging women artists.
- Women’s History Tours Podcasting

### Needs Assessment

The Commission continues to work on the development of a Needs Assessment of the economic, health and educational needs of women in the City of Alexandria. The Commission, through the generous contribution of our City Council, has compiled the data available from the 1980, 1990 and 2000 census to identify and compare the changing needs of women in our City. Upon requesting and receiving \$20,000.00 from City Council this year, the Commission has hired a consultant to move the Needs Assessment to the next level, compiling the necessary report on the results of the data. The Commission is working hard to finalize that Report for presentation to the public through a series of meeting with interested parties.

## **Battered Women's Shelter**

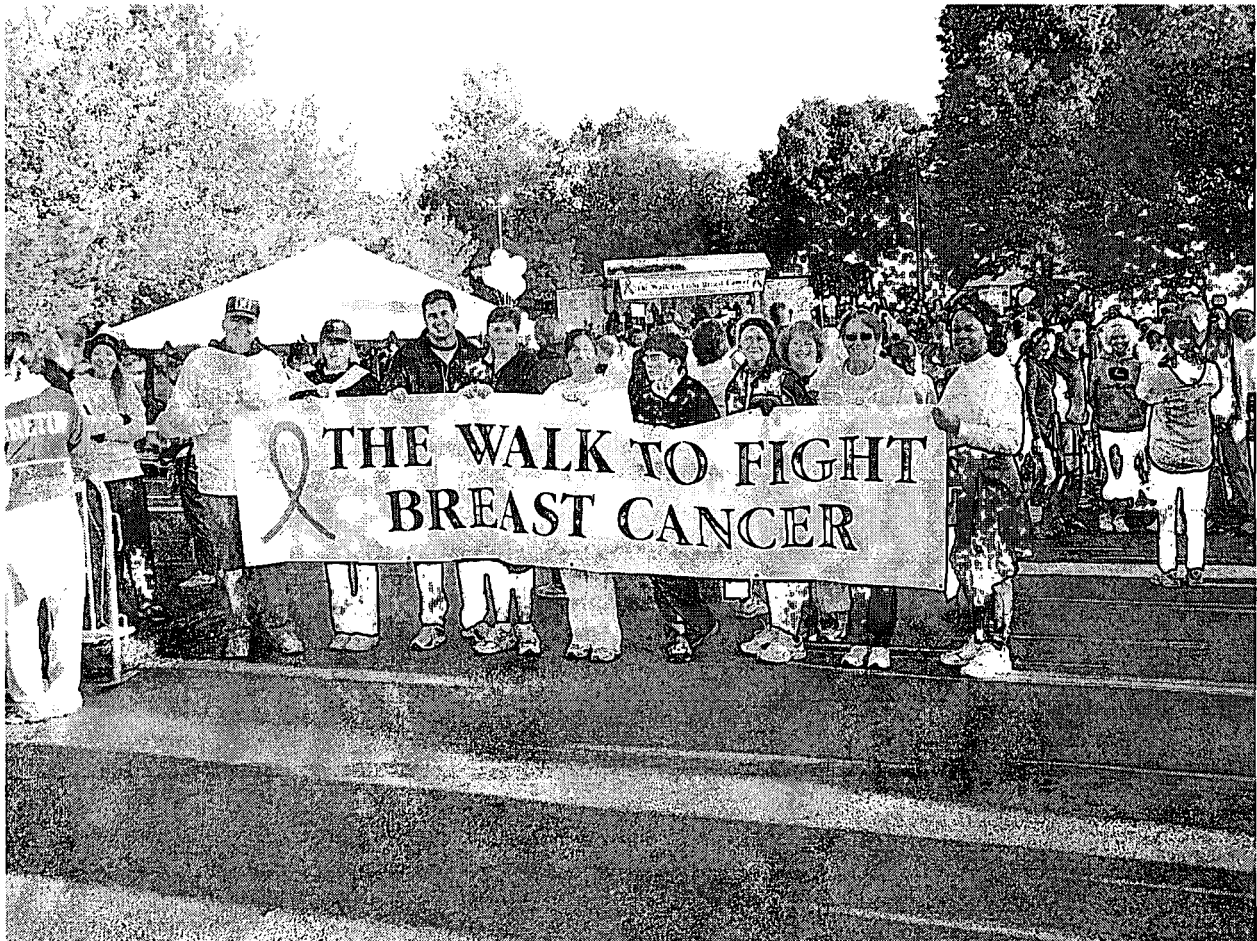
In an advisory role, the Commission promoted the ADA compliant addition to the Shelter in 2005. The addition was completed in the early spring of 2006. The Shelter Committee and the Friends of the Commission for Women worked hard on hosting a fundraiser to decorate the addition and redecorate the existing facility. Called the "Shower for the Shelter" and generously hosted at the home of Joe Viar, the event was a huge success, raising approximately \$5,000.00 in contributions and much more than that in specific items needed not only for the addition but also for "Home-warming" packages for clients of the Shelter who find independent living arrangements.



## ANNUAL EVENTS

### Walk to Fight Breast Cancer

The Commission continued to focus on the importance of early detection of breast cancer. Highlighting Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the Walk to Fight Breast Cancer is held annually during the month of October. Funds are generated for women who are uninsured or underinsured and cannot afford a mammogram. From the first Walk in 1995 to the twelfth in 2006, fundraising dollars have increased from \$15,000 to \$177,000. The need for this important project increases each year, and the Commission will continue to work to offer and expand services to provide free mammograms and other necessary early detection tests to Alexandria women in financial need as well as to hire a health educator. The Commission addressed issues with the reporting of the fund and continues to monitor the fund to ensure that the expanding resources continue to provide necessary mammograms to those in need. With the help of these funds, the Office of Women established the position of Health Educator with hopes to fill the position for FY 2007.



## **Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day**

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day is held on the fourth Thursday in April each year. Initiated by the Ms. Foundation for Women in 1992 to focus on the ideas, needs and dreams of girls and to help ensure that they remain confident, strong and in school throughout their teen years, the day affords young people an opportunity to see the various roles women play in the workforce. Mentors are encouraged to discuss the education and training required for their positions and to encourage the participating girls to talk to other women at work. Since 2003, the event includes both daughters and sons to provide young women and men with an important view of women in career positions as role models for our youth.

The citywide event includes children of City employees and a number of students from Hammond Middle School and Minnie Howard Ninth Grade Center. Mentors include women on City staff and women volunteers from various agencies and organizations throughout the City. Strongly supported by the City, the Mayor and the City Manager address the group of students and mentors at a kickoff event at City Hall. The Alexandria City employee participation in this event is co-sponsored by the City Manager's Office in conjunction with the Commission and the Office on Women. This year's event was a huge success and placed 75 students with 62 mentors for a rewarding day. Our coordinator, Commissioner Jenny Wade, working with Jen Harris in the Office on Women, utilized the help of an intern to make this program the success it has become.

## **Salute to Women Awards Banquet**

The Commission presents its Banquet every March to recognize the contributions women have made to the City of Alexandria. Originally known as Women to Women Awards prior to 1993, awards are presented to commend women who have exhibited outstanding leadership skills in a variety of areas including education and training, the arts and cultural affairs, youth mentorship, and business and economic development.

This was the second year that the Salute to Women Awards Banquet was considered a fundraiser. Event sponsorships for the 2006 event brought over \$15,000 to the City's Sexual Assault Response and Awareness ("SARA") program. While SARA is a City program, it is heavily reliant on funding from grants and private donations and this fundraiser enables the program to ensure that the victims of sexual assault are provided for in their time of need. 2006 was the first year that the Banquet offered advertisements in the program as part of the sponsorship package. This was a big draw for many of this year's Banquet sponsors.

The keynote speaker at the Banquet was Delegate Jennifer McClellan of Richmond, who was recently elected to her position. She is a lifelong resident of the Richmond area and has served her community as a public servant and volunteer for more than 20 years, dating back to high school. She spoke about her efforts to strengthen the voice for women as a representative to the House of Delegates and encouraged more women to become politically involved in many issues affecting them, from employment to transportation, jobs, and the environment.



The 2006 Banquet was also monumental for other reasons as well, including that for the first time in Banquet history, a signature award was created. The award design was created by emerging Alexandria artist, Patti Cleary - who specializes in fused glass artwork.

A special presentation was made to Councilwoman Joyce Woodson by the Alexandria Commission for Women and Alexandria Office on Women to express their gratitude for her service and commitment to women during her two terms of office as a Council member.



A list of this year's winners is printed after the picture of this year's honorees.



**SALUTE TO WOMEN AWARD WINNERS**

**Marguerite Payez Award, Lifetime Achievement Award**

*Kathy Wilson*

**Women's Health and Safety Advocate Award**

*Linda Dwyer*

**Youth Community Services Award**

Adult winner: *Michele Thorell*

Youth Winner: *Hiwot Tilahun*

Youth Winner: *Courtney Wu*

**Cultural Affairs Award**

*Pat Miller*

**Career Development and Education/Training Award**

*Barbara Wyles*

**Legislation and Public Policy**

*Kathy Prudden*

**Rising Star Award**

*Desiree Maxwell*

**Women's Business Award**

*Wendy Albert*

**Woman-to-Woman, Making a Difference Award**

*Joan Dale*

**Vola Lawson Award, given to honor a City employee**

*Michele Evans.*

**COMMISSIONERS**

**2005-2006**

Charniele Herring, Chair

Joan Dodaro, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair

Tina Games-Evans, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair

Susan Lowell Butler

Deborah Connor

Diane Crawford-Batt

Mary Catherine Gibbs

Susan Kellom

Donna Kloch

Laura Mandala

Laura Zabriskie Martin

Marian Pegram

Susan Ross-O'Brien

Jenny Wade

Lisa Baker, Director, OOW

Monique Jackson-Asante, Secretary, OOW

**ALEXANDRIA OFFICE ON WOMEN STAFF  
(AS OF JULY 2006)**

**Full Time Staff**

Lisa Baker, Director

Monique Jackson-Asante, Secretary

Jennifer Harris, Health and Community Education Specialist

Claire Dunn, Domestic Violence (DV) Program Coordinator

Erika Callaway Kleiner, Sexual Assault Response and Awareness (SARA) Program  
Coordinator

Patricia Lopez, SARA Outreach/Prevention Specialist

Lorena Escalante, SARA Hispanic Outreach

Stacey Calhoun, SARA Volunteer Coordinator

Jen McLish, SARA Social Worker

Soffia Fraser, DV Hispanic Outreach

Lyn Myers, DV Social Worker

Betsy Greene, Children's Social Worker

Debbie Evans, DV Social Worker

Josephine Walker, DV Shelter Supervisor

Shirley Avery, DV Shelter Supervisor

Cailin Daly, Social Worker

Doreen Broderick, DV Shelter Supervisor

Lacie Hughes, DV Volunteer Developer

Melva Williams, ACAP Community Education Specialist

**Part Time Staff**

Myra Stafford, Project StepOut Program Coordinator