

Media Release

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Ventura County Commission for Women Celebrates 30th Anniversary

The Ventura County Board of Supervisor presented the Ventura County Commission for Women with a proclamation in celebration of their 30th Anniversary.

“Please join me in recognizing 30 years of the commission for women’s effort to identify resources for women, create awareness of women’s issues and work towards improving the quality of life for women and girls in Ventura County,” said Supervisor Linda Parks, chair of the board. She said it was an honor to recognize the commission.

The Ventura County Commission for Women (VCCW) was established in 1981 as a means to encourage, support and facilitate the empowerment and education of Ventura County women. The commission for women serves as advisers to the Board of Supervisors on issues impacting and relating to women and coordinates efforts with federal, state and local community groups to improve the quality of life for women.

Parks was joined on Nov. 1 by all the members of the Board of Supervisors in saluting the commission. Also in attendance were Celeste Weingardt, past chair of the VCCW; Sandra L. Lopez, president of the Ventura County chapter of the Federally Employed Women; and Christina Chambliss, a sophomore at The Buckley School and junior member of the commission.

“We remain committed to serving the women of Ventura County,” said Lee Riggan, chair of the commission who reviewed the many accomplishments of the group. The commission is currently working on the first comprehensive study of women and girls in Ventura County. Riggan said the study aims to “identify where we are in the journey to equality.”

The commission has been a leader in collaborating and bringing women together in Ventura County as one of the founding members of the Ventura County Women’s Forum. They have also organized the Board of Supervisor’s recognition of women’s accomplishments in the county every March for Women’s History Month.

. Ginny Connell, the first chair of the commission, said the VCCW was initially established to fight for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. The creation of VCCW was endorsed by 16 organizations from throughout Ventura County.

“We were determined to bring about the equal rights of women” Connell said.

The current members of the commission include Debra Bagley, Suzi Caron, Ana Cristina Flores, Ruth A. Funk, Diana Goodrow, Elvia Guizar, Ina Howard, Carmen Hurd, Jan Lawrence, Shanté Morgan-Durisseau and; and Nancy Lee Phillips, Amy Walker-Davis.

For more information about the Ventura County Commission for Women, visit <http://vccw.net/>.

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Upon the recommendation by the Ventura County Women's Equity Coalition (VCWEC) and supported by 16 organizations and individuals the Ventura County Commission for Women was established in 1981 by the Board of Supervisors. Tuesday the Board of Supervisors celebrated and honored the Commission on its 30th Anniversary (1981-2011).

Ginny Connell, who chaired the VCWEC, said, "At the time of the establishment of the Commission for Women, we were fighting for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment and were determined to bring about the equal rights of women." Supervisor Linda Parks said, "That should have been longer than just 30 years ago!" Lee Riggan, current Chair, said, "The VCCW study on the Status of Women & Girls in Ventura County, to be completed in 2012, will identify where we are in this journey to equality." Supervisor John Zaragoza said, "Thank you for the excellent work the Commission does."

In attendance were: Former Commissioners Ginny Connell, Executive Director of PDAP and first co-chair with Yvonne Bodle (1981-1982) and Celeste Weingardt, Past Chair (1993-1994) was in attendance. Current Commissioners Lee Riggan (Chair), Diana Goodrow (Vice Chair & Past 3-term Chair 2005-2007), Ana Cristina Flores (Recording Secretary), Carmen Hurd and Shante Morgan-Durisseau; Representing the sixteen supporters to establish the Commission in 1981 was Sandra L. Lopez (Federally Employed Women Chapter President). Also present was Sonia Kroth the County Liaison for the Commission and Vanise Castillo-Saad, staff to Supervisor Linda Parks.