

2010 IBEW Women's Conference Caucus Report

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Abstract

Improving the successful recruitment and retention of women into the electrical construction industry and providing them attainable pathways to leadership roles have been perennial challenges since women began to enter the trade union movement nearly forty years ago. Unlocking these complex issues and identifying tangible resolutions are responsibilities not only endemic to the IBEW, but for the broader construction industry. Our organizational inability to do so will result in failure to properly address an ever deepening shortage of skilled labor. The rate of retirement within the construction branch of the IBEW is quickly outpacing the influx of new members, threatening the stability of our pension plans, and even more tragically undermining union market share. Women, now more than in prior years can be a pivotal remedy for current and future anemic membership numbers growth if we strategically capitalize on the enormous growth potential viable female candidates already in the workforce provide. We must be significantly better able to attract and retain them in greater numbers.

For these reasons and many others, the Delegates to the 2010 IBEW Women's Conference Construction Caucus were asked to lend their expertise and unique perspective to the ongoing dialog striving to expand understanding of these concerns. After self-dividing into three discussion groups the approximately seventy-five Delegates engaged in an organized and collaborative exchange of information and ideas for over two hours. The materials produced were studied and compounded further with the intent of producing a comprehensive Caucus Report. This report could be widely shared serving as a resource to provide for possible exercise replication and further study by interested parties, aiding in preserving the forward momentum, perpetuating the discussion and potentially generating new ideas with additional solution mechanisms.

The completed body of work and resulting conclusions are undoubtedly captivating, few new groundbreaking recommendations were identified (although still remaining relevant irrespective of their longevity of consensus). What did emerge was a powerful new model of resolution; that success in one area of concern will only occur with a balanced investment of measurable resources into all three. Previous attempts to achieve higher recruitment and retention rates of women in the IBEW and creating realistic pathways for them to leadership

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opportunities have focused on these topics as being isolated considerations, failing to recognize their absolute synergistic relevance. Seeing them as individual discussion topics is fundamentally flawed, as they must be approached as a common problem that will only be solved by “Building Support Through Community” or the comprehensive creation of an ever improving culture of inclusion.

This newly proposed solution model is perhaps better understood if it is viewed through the same lens applied to building a broader acceptance for organizing in the construction branch of the IBEW. The health of a local union’s “organizing culture” is driven by the support and belief in the idea that all organizational levels participate. The same is true for the acceptance and removal of barriers to women in the IBEW and the broader construction trades. We will not continue to realize organizing successes unless we persistently maintain a vibrant and ever improving organizing culture. Similarly we must tirelessly invest in the attainment of an ever more inclusive, organizational environment that welcomes women, encourages them to remain members and provides for them reasonable pathways to valuable leadership roles.

Current circumstances may uniquely position the IBEW to reduce impediments and catalyze significant growth and forward momentum. With the International Office facilitating awareness, accountability, identified best practices and access to tangible tools for local unions, a well-crafted strategic plan effective for the local union’s specific jurisdictional dynamics, can be assembled. The responsibility to foster community support and inclusion lies at every organizational level within the IBEW, just as it does with organizing.

The broader and more rapid amplification of this awareness and implementation will go a long way to address our organizational crisis. Many IBEW members and leaders do not desire their sons, let alone their daughters, nieces, aunts or sisters to join the IBEW and seek a career in electrical construction. This ultimately denies them the opportunity to enjoy equitable pay standards, access to family health insurance, pension security and the ability to participate in the trade union movement as well as weakening the overall strength of the Brotherhood. Development of an inclusive culture through internal and external community building creates a

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cycle of success, reinforcing achievements of women in the classroom, on-the-job and in her union; shattering a systemic poor self-image. This will replace the current held myth “women are not well suited for the trades,” with the positive, self-fulfilling reality that they are and that the trade union movement is a dignified career path.

The leadership of the IBEW is striving to recognize diversity as a resource and to become more fully inclusive as an organization; a noble goal worthy of widespread support not exclusive to the construction branch. We genuinely appreciate the opportunity to invest the time and dedication to this project, providing for the serious exploration of these critical issues impacting women seeking careers in the electrical construction industry, and the IBEW as an organization. The ensuing observations and conclusions are submitted in that spirit and with the hope that the principals may be applied across all branches of the IBEW.

Building Support Through Community: Solution Matrix

Recruitment Through Outreach Solution Matrix		
Recommended Action Items	Responsible Party or Parties (Membership, Local Union, District Office, JATC and/or International Office)	Additional Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host high school Counselor Day event at Apprenticeship Training Center • Create membership task force to count female members, set a target recruitment goal and date to increase membership • Include women’s issues in Code of Excellence • Host activity day for Boys and Girls club, Girls Scouts, YWCA, etc • Host member/daughter breakfast • Create education fund which supplements all levels of higher education cost beyond apprenticeship community college credits • Train and hire female organizers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Union, JATC • Local Union • International Office • Local Union • Local Union • Local Union • Local Union 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will educate counselors about us as well as create working relationship • Applies direct action to the problem • Address the unwelcome behavior and sexual harassment of women – hopefully this will begin to change our image over time • Raise awareness, educate the public, and plant seeds for future involvement • Provide opportunity for discussion and spark interest in electrical industry • Model Local 3 – will attract women who desire a college education • Women may be more successful organizing women – can also be tasked with outreach to schools and other organizations

Building Support Through Community: Solution Matrix

Recruitment Through Outreach Solution Matrix		
Recommended Action Items	Responsible Party or Parties (Membership, Local Union, District Office, JATC and/or International Office)	Additional Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer referral bonus to members who recruit women • Make leadership reflect membership • Rent billboard space • Make “YouTube” commercial • Join campaigns like “Fill A Stadium” with the AFL-CIO • Make a kit for those who want to run for office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Union, Membership • All • All • International Office, Local Union • International Office • International Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gift cards, cash, paid dues for a year if female referral is accepted into apprenticeship or other classification • Percentage of female leadership should at least equal to percentage of female membership – will provide more opportunities for women to be recruited by women and increase physical presence • Awareness of unions and IBEW is an issue which will increase awareness • Use common words in the title like “Jobs” or “How to” which will be pulled up every time someone requests a search using those words – will raise awareness of IBEW • This event and others can be used to bring exposure to the IBEW if we participate • IBEW members like Sylvester Taylor of Missouri who ran for state office and won may assist in telling how they did it; Supporting women to leadership will impact recruitment

Building Support Through Community: Solution Matrix

Recruitment Through Outreach Solution Matrix		
Recommended Action Items	Responsible Party or Parties (Membership, Local Union, District Office, JATC and/or International Office)	Additional Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a best practices manual • Hold membership educational seminars • Publish articles in local union media • Address issue in IBEW Journal • Extend recruitment to unemployment centers, detention centers, prisons, colleges, continuation schools, job corps, etc • Acknowledge members who utilize apprenticeship community college credits for their college degree, gain political office, or other extraordinary feat because of their IBEW training and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Office • Local Union • Local Union • International Office • Local Union • All 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some Locals may already be successful in recruiting women; Documenting successful techniques would be helpful • Most members who do not attend conferences are not current on the issues; This suggestion spreads recruitment accountability to the membership as well • Another means of educating members • Students interested in the electrical trade can pair up with an existing female member for education and support • Utilizing untraditional means of organizing may prove beneficial • Place this acknowledgement on our websites so non-member web surfers can see that we are more than just construction workers thus reducing the blue collar stigma

Building Support Through Community: Solution Matrix

Recruitment Through Outreach Solution Matrix		
Recommended Action Items	Responsible Party or Parties (Membership, Local Union, District Office, JATC and/or International Office)	Additional Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an outreach coordinator or committee and encourage women to participate • Gain positions on the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and increase involvement • Build a relationship with local school boards promoting apprenticeship and spread understanding of entry requirements • Establish partnerships with Job Corp and the Conservation Corp • Host a career day at the training center and invite high school representatives, Regional Occupational Centers, and other appropriate community entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Union, JATC • Local Union • Local Union • Local Union, JATC • JATC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing the apprenticeship program to high schools, Regional Occupational Centers, adult schools, career fairs, and entities that provide support to women and minorities • Promotes apprenticeship and the IBEW in the broader community • A top down effort to educate the school board and community regarding the opportunities apprenticeships provide • Creates opportunity to build relationships with women who already have an affinity for physical and mechanical work • Strive to include female journeymen and apprentices to serve as role models as they participate in the presentation

Building Support Through Community: Solution Matrix

Retention Through Mentoring Solution Matrix		
Recommended Action Items	Responsible Party or Parties (Membership, Local Union, District Office, JATC and/or International Office)	Additional Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with community organizations for women in non-traditional work • Use realistic portrayals of women in outreach and promotional materials/videos • Provide long distance mentoring through online forum or chat room for women • Raise awareness of existing resources such as tradeswomen’s organizations, committees, online resources, etc • Provide mentoring programs for women and encourage men to also get involved and actively serve as mentors • Recruit female steward or advocate for women • Create Local Women’s Committees/Clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Union • Local Union, District Office, International Office • District Office, International Office • Local Union, District Office, International Office • Local Union • Local Union, District Office • Local 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model Local 3 (NEW) “Non-Traditional Employment for Women” – exposes women to different trades and what to expect • CLUW Program – “Construction Field Day” (Pre-Apprenticeship Training for women by women) • Increase awareness of actual expectations of construction industry work and culture • Provide support system to decrease feelings of isolation for women in areas with few or no women • Provide support system to decrease feelings of isolation for women • Model Local 11 (EMPOWER) – Pair female journeyman (mentor) with female apprentice (mentee) and host monthly meetings • Provide support system through apprenticeship program or job site visits to women by women • Model Local 3

Building Support Through Community: Solution Matrix

Retention Through Mentoring Solution Matrix		
Recommended Action Items	Responsible Party or Parties (Membership, Local Union, District Office, JATC and/or International Office)	Additional Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct exit interviews for women who leave the IBEW as well as those who successfully complete the apprenticeship • Create a women only publication or newsletter that focuses on women’s issues • Continue to sponsor Women’s Conferences on the regional and international levels • Create other meeting opportunities such as “Women’s Retreats” or “Summer Camp” • Create an “Oath of Solidarity” for IBEW women in support of Union Sisters • Provide continuous and mandatory training and education for all IBEW Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amps, Harassment, Awareness, Diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local • Local, District Office, International Office • Local, District Office, International Office • Local, District Office, International Office • International Office • All 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means of identifying why women leave the trade (both negative and positive reasons) • Decrease feelings of isolation and increase inclusiveness • Alter conference location to reach women in other areas and hold District Women’s Conferences in years with no International Conference • Model “Summer Institute for Union Women” • Use patches, pins and stickers identifying Sisters committed to oath • Decrease workplace discrimination and increase inclusiveness

Building Support Through Community: Solution Matrix

Retention Through Mentoring Solution Matrix		
Recommended Action Items	Responsible Party or Parties (Membership, Local Union, District Office, JATC and/or International Office)	Additional Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to experienced professional assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military counselors or similar - better suited for construction culture • Collect and record accurate statistics of women in construction in the IBEW • Provide resources of accessible day care • Create family friendly meeting and events • Encourage effective apprentice rotation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Union, International Office • Local Union, District Office, International Office • Local Union • Local Union • Local Union, JATC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase retention by providing support system to cope with issues of discrimination, harassment, isolation and other issues unique to construction • International Office request number of women employed and unemployed from Local Unions – update statistics annually at all levels • Create or provide lists of local resources • Encourage family inclusiveness • Producing well rounded female apprenticeship graduates

Building Support Through Community: Solution Matrix

Leadership Roles in the Union and On-The-Job Solution Matrix		
Recommended Action Items	Responsible Party or Parties (Membership, Local Union, District Office, JATC and/or International Office)	Additional Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage female members of local union to become mentors • Recruit female members for teaching position for journeyman upgrade classes and apprenticeship classes • Offer Leadership Training to female and male members of the Local Union • Local Union to "groom" female candidates for elected positions • Open up opportunities for female members to participate in Building Trades Conferences and meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JATC, Local Union, District Office • JATC • JATC, Local Union, District Office • Local Union, District Office • Local Union 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Office to provide Local Union with training on mentorship; JATC to engage 5th year female apprentices into mentoring 1st year female apprentices • This will be a conduit to introduce women to apprentices and the general membership that may have been unseen and allow the female members to develop their leadership skill set by conducting classes where they are controlling the environment • Develop a Leadership Training seminar that will provide people with the skill sets to obtain leadership positions within the Local Union, on the job, or at the JATC • District Office to offer assistance to the Local Union on the appropriate manner for "grooming" potential candidates

Building Support Through Community: Solution Matrix

Leadership Roles in the Union and On-The-Job Solution Matrix		
Recommended Action Items	Responsible Party or Parties (Membership, Local Union, District Office, JATC and/or International Office)	Additional Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Union to publically and privately recognize female members that have demonstrated good leadership skills • Assist female members in developing long term career goals that include leadership roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Union • Local Union, JATC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the Local Union recognizing women that have provided good modeling of leadership within the IBEW, this will encourage more women to become involved within the local union and on the job • In cooperation with the local union, the JATC can provide female apprentices and members with counseling on the career opportunities available within the IBEW

Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

In the spirit of advancing the Objects of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) as well as the goals of the “Diversity and Full Inclusion” resolution adopted at the 37th Convention of the IBEW, Delegates attending the Construction Caucus of the July 2010 Women’s Conference were given the opportunity to select and participate in one of three work groups of their choice. The teams were charged with creating further understanding of three perennial challenges facing the electrical industry and the construction industry as a whole. Group One was asked to identify existing conditions and obstructions negatively impacting recruitment rates for women in construction apprenticeships and membership in the IBEW. Group Two was charged with applying the same analysis to retention rates, and Group Three to explore how to create attainable pathways for women to gain leadership positions within the IBEW. The teams discussed and recognized successful strategies that have been or could be implemented at the local, district and international level and also considered their possible modification and adoption at various levels within the organization.

All involved recognized the monumental nature of this task, as these issues have been the topics of discussion for numerous years by those granted significantly more time and resources for more comprehensive reflection and study (including at the very first IBEW Women’s Conference convened in 1997). There are great similarities between our present and past findings, and rightfully so as all the observations and recommendations remain valuable and contemporary irrespective of their longevity.

What resulted from the investment of nearly seventy-five delegates and approximately 120 minutes of discussion is truly insightful, thoughtful and of tremendous benefit to the entire membership of the IBEW regardless of gender or any other dimension of diversity. The principles discussed and the ensuing recommendations are not solely intended for the construction arm of the IBEW and could be considered and applied in principle across all branches of the Brotherhood.

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While the groups worked independently, significant consistency and overlap of possible solution themes became evident. The greatest source of value of this project may in fact be the acknowledgement of the outright symbiotic relationship between these challenges, and the awareness that success in any one area requires investment in all three. Historically, attempts to achieve higher recruitment and retention rates of women in the IBEW and creating realistic pathways for them to leadership opportunities have focused on these topics as being isolated considerations, with the solutions occupying separate silos. What has been missing is recognition of the synergy between them and concluding that substantial gains in one area will not be realized unless measurable resources and focus are invested in a balanced way into all three areas of concern: Recruitment with Outreach; Retention through Mentoring; Leadership Roles in the Union and On-the Job. Merely understanding these critical areas of study as being intrinsically linked does not sufficiently tell the entire story. “Building Support Through Community” is an absolutely essential solution theme woven through all three categories, binding them together and providing an overarching strategy towards advancing a culture of inclusion and progress towards greater success.

It would be reckless to assume there may not be a need to build the case for why the IBEW even needs to make the investment in understanding these issues and in striving for real solutions. The very lifeline, survival and growth of the IBEW depend upon it. In today’s economic maelstrom, it is difficult to realize we actually face a skilled labor shortage. Yet the retirement of IBEW members is quickly outpacing the influx of new members threatening the health and stability of pension plans, our collective bargaining, political and industry viability, and most importantly the overall strength and market share of the IBEW. Women, now more than in prior years, can be a pivotal part of the solution to dwindling membership numbers and addressing the impending skills gap. On a more tangible level we must recognize there is a significant cumulative financial and industry investment made in training all members to become a competent journeyman. The higher our collective retention rates the greater return on these investments across the board.

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What follows is an executive summary of the work performed by each of the three teams along with further explanation of the crucial binding element of “Building Support Through Community.” Preceding the comprehensive executive summary is a matrix that is designed to be a tool used to address individual challenges, identify responsible parties, desired outcomes, and to summarize with specificity all of the proposed solutions offered by the groups. Immediately following this document are more detailed synopses of the work achieved in the break out groups and an appendix housing all source documents. At the request of the participating delegates and with the desire to preserve a permanent record, all supporting documents and notes, including the workgroup methodology and the recommendations from the 1997 Women’s Conference Construction Caucus have been included in the attached appendix for possible replication and further study by interested parties perpetuating the discussion, spreading the momentum, and potentially generating new ideas and additional solution mechanisms.

RECRUITMENT WITH OUTREACH

In the electrical construction industry, apprenticeship is our predominant form of workforce development. This is particularly true when the dialog is solely devoted to the recruitment of women because so few women work in the electrical construction industry outside of the union. Therefore, their recruitment should be targeted nearly exclusively through entering apprenticeship rather than a broader discussion involving other possible organizing methods. It is not about attracting those already working in our industry, it is about drawing promising candidates into our industry from other occupational paths.

A significant number of successful female apprentices enter our programs because someone they trust and respect referred them to the opportunity. In order to increase our pipeline of capable female candidates we must expand our sphere of community advocacy. This will only be accomplished by including outreach and recruitment to all portions of the workforce, and not limit them to what have been more traditional sources. Our own members, both journeymen and apprentices will need to play a predominant role in becoming advocates for inclusion as well as for the union. This may present a significant hurdle as we internally address a systemic poor

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self- image, where many do not desire their daughters to join the IBEW, reinforcing the myth that the electrical construction industry is not a dignified way to earn a living for a woman.

Traditional sources for areas of recruitment have not been reflective of where the most successful female candidates congregate and find community (i.e. high schools, construction and college sponsored career fairs, adult education facilities, and job sites). Traditional means of recruitment remain necessary as they certainly do yield proficient male candidates and there is an absolute essential need to increase opportunities to familiarize the public with the IBEW. Planting seeds for future involvement and greater partnership with community leaders and members will result in a higher percentage of competent female recruits as well. Recruitment should be designed to build for the future and not be limited to addressing only immediate needs.

The idea of recruitment as reaching into a pool of suitable candidates does not always translate well when considering women. Tragically, there are very few, highly dense pools of women who possess all of the skills necessary to be immediately successful in our apprenticeships without the need for additional training and/or preparation. Therefore, we must act in concert and partner with groups that reach out into the community to train and prepare women for a prosperous career in the construction trades. Investment in these relationships not only grows our pipeline but it also enlarges our sphere of community advocacy.

Not all recruitment efforts will immediately increase the number of successful female candidates but will build these vital bridges within the community and provide additional opportunities to broaden community education. Continuous investment in this model expands the universe of those community leaders who understand and even share our trade union values. Increasing positive public visibility and perception of the IBEW, and promoting the trade as a viable and respectful career path for women, will ultimately help establish and strengthen an external and internal culture of inclusion of women within the Brotherhood. Our ability to attract and recruit women who are and will be successful is clearly a pivotal component of the foundation of improving long term retention and providing pathways for women into leadership positions.

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RETENTION THROUGH MENTORING

Positive results rarely if ever occur when separate parties possess an unequal set of expectations, as what may happen when individuals enter the electrical construction industry without proper preparation and education. Clear and accurate realities must be responsibly conveyed to all individuals, regardless of gender, seeking a career in construction and with the IBEW. It is at the ever paramount recruitment level that a possible cycle of retention success may be created if the recruitment promotes accurate and candid portrayals of the mental, emotional and physical challenges and environment of the construction industry.

Feelings of isolation are perpetuated on the jobsite, in the classroom as well as in the union regardless of the demonstrated level of support since all too often women remain an extreme minority and may in fact never work around, be in class with or even attend union functions with other women. There are few role models and even fewer same sex mentors to help build inclusion and a strong sense of belonging. Destructive feelings of isolation and alienation may be reversed through initiatives both large and small that strive to create opportunities for women to communicate, congregate together, build community and promote awareness of and access to existing support systems and resources.

It should come as no surprise that discrimination was identified as being fundamental to the reasons women abandon their career quest within the IBEW. Women experience real discrimination every day, including enduring hostile work environments, unequal work assignments, and/or lack of career advancement. While it may be true that some discrimination comes with good intentions, the unfortunate end result is the same; a self-fulfilling prophecy propagating the myth that “women are not well suited for the construction industry.” Interruption of this cycle will be facilitated through greater awareness of the issues as well as the realization of training and educational opportunities, mentoring and community building.

Conflicts arising as a result of the societal expectations placed upon women to function as the primary caregiver for children, siblings and aging parents yielded some extremely creative

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and thought provoking resolutions. The responsibility to be the family caregiver calls attention to the reality that the coveted ideal of “family comes first” is not necessarily consistent with our everyday actions and policies within the Brotherhood. This disconnect is even more pronounced when these challenges are viewed through the lens of a single parent, again irrespective of gender.

All types of mentoring programs were recognized as universally fundamental to improving retention of women in the IBEW. The models may vary dramatically depending on the specific needs of each local union, their female membership and the available resources on the local level. Bridges must be built for every woman in the IBEW using traditional and non-traditional means. The IBEW is encouraged to establish long distance mentoring opportunities and accessible resources using technology that would allow women to network and build solidarity no matter the degree of the remoteness of their local situation. Mentoring efforts should provide guidance, encouragement and support throughout the apprenticeship, into journey level status and leadership roles by fostering professional growth, experience and knowledge. Through their experiences in the apprenticeship and with the benefit of nurturing relationships, women will gain the critical skills to become effective mentors themselves, thus creating a cycle of empowerment benefiting all who seek a career in the electrical industry.

LEADERSHIP ROLES IN THE UNION AND ON-THE-JOB

Women enter the skilled construction trade without the benefit of training on how to interact and communicate in a male dominant environment. Yet, these women, by taking the courageous initiative of joining the construction trades, such as the IBEW, possess a core element for leadership. Their presence on the job-site is the first quality of leadership, the ability to stand among their peers, providing a model of behavior. What women lack to further their leadership influence is the language and skills to remove the barriers that test their self-confidence and coping abilities.

Often times the gender specific behavior of women is incongruent with the expectations of the male dominant environment, producing negative consequences and distracting from the

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value women bring to the work environment. Since the construction industry is predominantly male, communication on the job sites center around the behavior and language of men. Though research has shown that teams with a common gender orientation can have higher performance (Scherer & Petrick, 2001), being aware of the construction industry environment, women can adjust their gender-related behavior and influence the dominant male behavior. This demonstrates another core element of leadership, the ability to adjust to different situations utilizing creativity, magnanimity, assertiveness, dedication, and openness.

These qualities of leadership, creativity, magnanimity, assertiveness, dedication and openness, transcend the IBEW and the construction industry. Our industry is dependent on the sphere of community that encircles our jurisdictional areas. As we outreach to political leaders, community based organizations, schools, and individuals, we must employ all the skills our members possess. The existence of the IBEW is based upon its membership and members in today's IBEW will be grappling with the challenges of a society that is facing the demands of an aging population, weakened economy, an evolving manufacturing base and an unskilled workforce. Development of leaders will be the saving grace to face these ongoing obstacles.

CONCLUSION

Recruiting, retaining and building pathways to leadership roles for women are challenges not endemic solely to the IBEW; they are relevant to the broader construction industry as a whole. The future pool of membership in an era of declining union density must acknowledge and embrace the fact that women comprise a significant portion of the workforce. Industries like construction that currently employ small numbers of women are presented terrifically increased capacity for potential growth if we are able to attract them in greater numbers than what has been historically possible. Current circumstances may uniquely position the IBEW to reduce impediments and catalyze significant growth and forward momentum. Only through greater awareness, implementation of strategic action plans and the ongoing development of an inclusive culture will the IBEW be better suited to attract and retain more women, build and expand supportive environments, and create visible pathways to leadership roles.

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The health of a local union's "organizing culture" is driven by the support and belief in the idea that all organizational levels participate. Just as in organizing, investment in development of an inclusive culture through community building creates a cycle that reinforces success of women in the classroom, on the job and in her union (figure 1). Honest, effective recruitment leads to a positive self-image both as members and as an organization, increasing the likelihood of acceptance and achieving longer term retention. The greater duration of supportive exposure and interaction improves the sense of community and organizational sponsorship for inclusion, eroding the negative self-fulfilling prophecy perpetuating the myth "women are not suited for the electrical construction industry" and replacing it with a culture that builds success through inclusion. Long term maintenance of positive organizational affinity will foster a greater willingness to offer and accept leadership roles on the job, in the union and within our greater communities.

Successful performance and behaviors build individual self-confidence creating an environment where our members have higher expectations for themselves, their fellow members and for the organization as a whole. This renewed sense of pride and achievement will translate into a larger percentage of the membership functioning as advocates internally and externally for the organization as well as for the greater presence of women in the IBEW. Allowing the cycle of success to operate fully, and to greater realize the efficacious recruitment and retention of women and enhanced leadership pathways for them in the IBEW, culminating in an ever expanding culture of community building and inclusion at all levels.

Clearly successful development of a strong organizational culture of inclusion through community building is a complex discussion; although necessary should we want to preserve the overall health and vitality of the IBEW. It must be approached with the fundamental understanding that no bright line exists between the three areas of concern and that success will only come with balanced investment in all solution themes employing an approach similar to that devoted to organizing. With the International Office providing awareness, accountability, defined best practices and access to tangible tools for local unions, a well-crafted strategic plan effective for the local union's specific jurisdictional dynamics, can be assembled. It may be

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frustrating for some to understand there is not a more simplistic, prescribed solution to these persistent challenges, but we cannot become overwhelmed by the complexity of the issues and their interdependency. Even incremental steps forward where none have been taken previously will make meaningful strides forward, build community and produce measurable positive results.

In reality, an organization never fully achieves absolute inclusion but must continue to strive toward ongoing development of an ever improving supportive culture. To that end, it is our desire for the caucus discussion and this resulting report to itself serve as a resource compelling continued dialog, inspiring future understanding, and to provide a baseline that may be built upon, modified and improved as we increase our awareness of best practices. For the IBEW to achieve our goals, the conversation cannot remain static, and needs to carry on and be similarly protected and preserved moving forward. The Brotherhood as a whole hopefully will benefit from the valuable insight, experience and passion shared by the IBEW's very own women who uniquely understand the realities they live with every day and who chose to play an essential role in the advancement of a more inclusive IBEW.

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Building Community Success Cycle

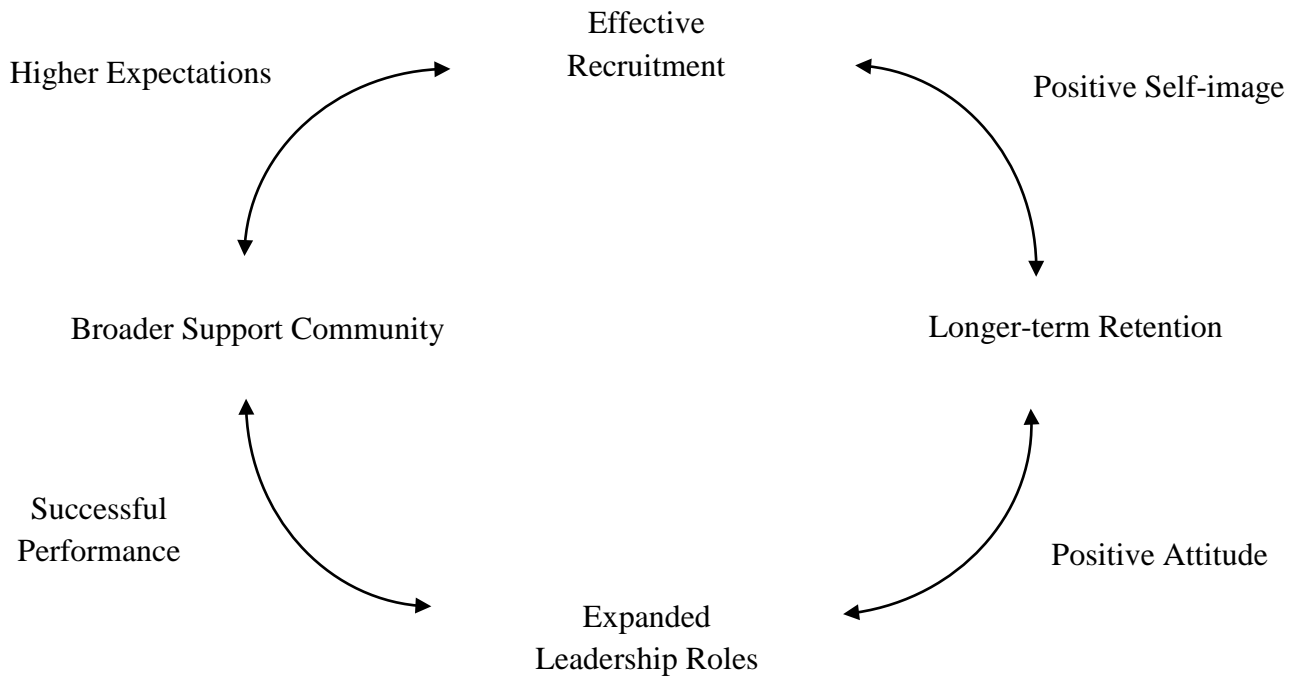


Figure 1

Building Support Through Community: Action Matrix

Sphere of Community Advocacy =		
Recruitment/Outreach	+	Retention/Mentoring
		+
		Leadership/Promotion
<p>Outreach to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School Boards ▪ Adult Schools ▪ High Schools ▪ Community Colleges ▪ Vocational Schools ▪ Continuation Schools ▪ Job Corps ▪ Military ▪ Unemployment Agencies ▪ Job Centers ▪ Career Fairs ▪ Non-signatory job sites ▪ ROTC/ROP programs ▪ Local union membership ▪ Women union members as role models ▪ Tradeswomen-focused groups ▪ Community-based organizations ▪ Local Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) <p>Advertise/Promote/Present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internet (You Tube) ▪ Skills Camp ▪ Sponsor Apprenticeship Night at Local Union ▪ Adopt A School ▪ Promote a Group/Team ▪ Create Bumper Stickers ▪ Promote athletic events ▪ Promote Women's events ▪ Use local male members to promote benefits of industry to women ▪ Promote earn/learn concept ▪ Promote academic rewards, i.e. college credits ▪ Promote workforce diversity ▪ Promote union impact on American lifestyle ▪ Promote pre-apprenticeship program 	<p>Support for women apprentices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish mentoring program ▪ Involve all local members in mentorship (women and men) ▪ Develop a women's committee/support group ▪ Assign a 5th year woman to assist new women entering the program ▪ Provide on-line/phone mentoring opportunities ▪ Use current stewards from local union to help mentor women ▪ Establish on a bi-monthly bases a day for socializing for women at the training facility/union hall ▪ Provide mentoring training to women and men of the local union ▪ Sponsor an educational day for men of the local union on women's issues vs. men's issues (use a qualified mediator, i.e. psychologist) ▪ Local union to sponsor a Family breakfast bring a child to Union morning ▪ Outline best practices for women in the electrical industry ▪ Provide women with classes on 'tools for survival' (i.e. understanding workplace culture, expectations and appropriate behavior, finding allies, job-site communication) ▪ Provide women and men with classes on harassment, sexual and conduct ▪ Provide women and men with diversity training ▪ Coordinate with local JATC to place female apprentices with journeymen who are willing and allowed to teach them the electrical trade 	<p>Advancement Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contractors to recruit and aggressively seek out females for on-the-job supervisory roles (i.e. foreman, general foreman, superintendent) ▪ Encourage women to become mentors ▪ Encourage female apprentices to participate in continuing education ▪ Assist female apprentices in developing long-term career goals that include leadership roles ▪ Recruit women for positions at the local JATC as instructors ▪ Offer training programs on leadership to men and women ▪ Local union to recommend women to run for elected positions ▪ Local union to recruit women for committee appointments ▪ Local union to recognize women who are currently modeling good leadership qualities ▪ Provide women the opportunity to participate in trade conferences ▪ Provide training on job-site communication

Recruitment Team Summary

IBEW Women's Conference - Construction Caucus - **Recruitment** - 23 July 2010

Facilitators: Kevin Burton – Local 26 Recorders: Jessica Sowa – Local 11
Jane Templin – Local 11 Lynn Minor – Local 569

Objective

The group set out to identify potential physical locations and innovative techniques to attract women workers to the IBEW. We also identified existing obstacles that hinder current methods of recruitment and solutions to these challenges.

Innovation

The mass media, the most popular undercurrent of the discussion, is not effectively utilized by the IBEW and labor in general. For example, there are no mainstream commercial advertisements, and few billboards, television shows, or YouTube videos dedicated to promoting labor unions and their connection to and impact on women, human rights, politics, healthcare or the world economy. The IBEW and labor in general are also not connected with other organizations that have the media's influence and would attract young workers. The NFL, NBA, WNBA, and other organizations who utilize collective bargaining should be partnered with to actively recruit and change the image of labor unions. Stepping outside of our traditional union recruitment efforts by becoming involved with local Boys and Girls Clubs, YWCA, and Girls Scouts would allow unions to not only educate youth about who we are, but also make us friendly household names. Our presence in these non-political environments would change our image to the community oriented and human rights organization we desire to be known as.

Challenges

Most of the suggestions declare that labor is destroying itself from the inside out. On a large scale we do not internally educate and mentor our youth or young women. This breeds segregation and animosity within the ranks of the IBEW which lessens the desire of women and youth to join, get involved, and stay in the labor movement. The lack of education and mentoring perpetuates the blue collar stigma inside of the IBEW as well as outside to public schools, community colleges, and universities. Many existing members have a poor self-image and do not desire their daughters or sons to join the IBEW which reinforces the myth that labor unions are not a dignified way to earn a living.

Recruitment Team Summary

Solutions

Committing staff and resources at both the International Office and Local levels, and approving resolutions requiring new ways of organizing is a start. Partnering with major organizations as well as local sports teams and community groups will attract new young workers. Committing staff to this endeavor will place accountability and allow reasonable goals and timelines to be obtained. Implementing the existing Diversity Resolution and including diversity, women's sexual harassment and lack of presence statistics in the Code of Excellence would be monumental. Similar to the way we invest in our local and national politicians, we also need to commit resources into school boards. They control the education of our children. Just as promoting our own history at a Local level will recharge our pride and purpose, integrating this knowledge into the everyday learning of our youth will have a similar positive long lasting effect on recruitment. Nationally and locally promoting the possibilities that exist within the union structure, the college credits offered through apprenticeship, and the impact unions have had on middle class America will let people know who we are as well as attract new IBEW members.

Retention Team Summary

Retention of IBEW Women in Construction

“Why Do Women Leave the Trade and What Can We Do to Keep Them?”

Posing this two part question to some of the Construction Caucus Delegates of the 2010 IBEW Women’s Conference elicited a litany of emotional, personal and powerful reasons why women leave the IBEW and electrical construction and also yielded some tremendously insightful, creative and thought provoking solutions to those identified challenges. The group facilitators and recorders performed their level best to capture the nearly thirty distinct sources of conflict and discouragement shared by the Delegates that would act to tip the scales towards a woman’s decision to depart from the trade and the IBEW.

Although there is great diversity in the recorded responses, as some presented more logistical barriers as opposed to other more complex, societal constructs, it soon became apparent that the identified challenges could be grouped into four distinct categories, as common themes began to develop. Those themes were: Unequal Expectations, Isolation, Discrimination, and Family Clash. The participants then worked to cluster the challenges into those four umbrella themes as a mechanism to address our responses both as individual concerns and as larger, overarching deterrents in order to create possible solutions for consideration.

We universally recognized the physicality and sometimes dangerous nature of our scope of work as well as the persistence of a male dominated culture or perspective in the work place. Not every woman who attempts to pursue an electrical construction career with the IBEW understands nor expects these truths to be self-evident, resulting in obvious culture clash and potentially inappropriate mechanisms to address the potentially vast inconsistent expectations by all parties.

Clear and accurate realities must be responsibly conveyed to all individuals seeking a career in construction with the IBEW, and every instrument to achieve that end should be employed including: investment in partnerships with community organizations that promote women in non-traditional work, involve women in recruitment efforts in the broader community to create candor and comfort in establishing expectations, usage of realism in the portrayal of women in the electrical construction industry for the purposes of promotional/recruitment

Retention Team Summary

materials and videos, and provide ongoing, strong mentoring programs for female apprentices offering support when dealing with newly evolving experiences and challenges.

Mentoring programs were offered as a means to improve retention of women in the IBEW almost universally across all four deterrent themes, and mentoring was identified to play a major role when reducing feelings of isolation women experience on the job, in the classroom and in their union. In the creation of mentoring programs we must recognize that not every construction local has a significant, female membership and bridges must be built for every woman in the IBEW, especially those who are in very rural settings and/or very small IBEW Locals. Ideally, the IBEW would provide long distance mentoring opportunities through online forums or chat rooms that would allow women to network and build solidarity regardless of the remoteness of their situation.

We must strive to raise the level of awareness of existing resources and support systems like tradeswomen organizations, committees, community groups and online resources, as much positive work and investment has been made however, not all women are familiar with those existing resources. A means to that end would be identifying female Stewards who would function as an advocate and guide especially for those women who have just begun their career in the IBEW so they are better able to find their way on a positive path.

Building inclusion and a strong sense of belonging may also be accomplished by creating opportunities for women in the IBEW to communicate and come together in groups both large and small. Feelings of isolation will be markedly reduced through the successful generation of local union women's clubs/committees, ongoing sponsorship of the International Women's Conference along with wider acceptance and hosting of District and regional women's conferences in different IBEW jurisdictions, offering industry related retreats or camps, and the launch of an IBEW women's only publication or newsletter that would focus on issues of great importance to women. These community building events and publications would also serve as tangible vehicles to raise awareness of existing support systems and resources as well as reducing feelings of alienation and isolation.

Retention Team Summary

Sometimes significant achievement of identified goals may be achieved through small but powerful incentives. Destructive feelings of isolation may be reversed through the institution and promotion of an “oath of solidarity” for IBEW women not to abandon our union Sisters. “Sisters of Solidarity” who practice the principles of the oath would identify themselves by displaying a defining sticker, pin, patch or other acceptable symbol of their sisterhood and dedication to the IBEW signifying their approachability to other IBEW women.

Additionally, exit interviews should be conducted whenever possible for women who decide to leave the trade, and for those who are successful in their careers within the electrical industry and the IBEW. To learn what we as an organization on all levels are doing to positively and negatively impact rates of retention and to appropriately react to our successes and weaknesses as identified in real time by those individuals who experienced the greatest impact.

It should come as no surprise that discrimination was identified as a fundamental reason women abandon their career quest within the IBEW. Women feel real discrimination every day, at the hands of their employers, their journeymen, other tradesmen, union leaders, their instructors and other members. Some of that discrimination is generated with good intentions, assigning less physically challenging work to women in order to avoid their injury, unfortunately still, yielding identical harms to the woman both professionally and personally. Interruption of this cycle will be facilitated through the realization of training and educational opportunities.

These opportunities will come in the form of continuous and mandatory harassment/hostile work environment awareness training, wide spread amplification of AMP=S at all membership levels, assertiveness training for women in the IBEW to ensure they feel comfortable advocating for themselves in a variety of situations and education of employers to reduce work assignment discrimination. Clearly there is also a need to provide industry related training to women of the IBEW who, as a result of job assignment discrimination or for other factors, do not believe they possess a strong skill set necessary to be successful as a journeyman or for advancement in supervisory roles.

These educational initiatives along with mandatory apprentice rotation, aggressive recruitment and demonstrated support for men to serve as mentors for women, and a national

Retention Team Summary

mandate for accurate statistics capturing the number of women in the construction branch of the IBEW including data reflecting their employment rates, years of membership, and classifications will go a long way in reducing discrimination, decoding some of the chronic sources and defining its existence in objective terminology. However, it would be naïve to believe these efforts will result in the complete eradication of discrimination. Which is why we must provide access to experienced, professional, assistance in the form of counselors better suited for understanding the frequently harsh construction culture and the strong sense of isolation and discrimination women in the IBEW may endure, like possibly those who have the benefit of past or current military experience.

Our final umbrella theme, Family Clash, or conflicts arising as a result of women's societal responsibility to function as the primary caregiver for children, siblings and aging parents yielded some extremely creative and thought provoking resolutions. Finding reliable childcare options that mirror traditional construction work hours is a constant struggle regardless of geographic locations. In the least we must publish the names and locations of those providers willing and able to provide care within those parameters and in greater advocacy, actually provide licensed daycare at the local union facility consistent not only with work requirements but also to help foster family friendly meetings and events.

Our message in the IBEW, of "family comes first" is not necessarily consistent with our actions in many ways on the local union level. Routinely women are retaliated against for missing work due to family issues or emergencies and are viewed as unreliable. Or are unable to attend union meetings, functions or events because they are not able to bring their children and thus are pigeon holed as uncommitted or disloyal to the union. All too often, that assessment could not be further from the truth. And if little investment was made to determine what could be changed to allow involvement, the IBEW would be the true beneficiary of movement towards full inclusion. The same disconnect exists in the workplace and perhaps could be mitigated through job sharing programs, adoption of flex hour systems, and adjustments to our own referral system creating dispensation rules for single parents.

We recognize that some of the leadership of the IBEW is striving to recognize diversity as a resource and to become more fully inclusive as an organization. And we applaud that noble

Retention Team Summary

goal and pledge to do all that we can to support and assist in its attainment. Our dedication to this project, the serious exploration of critical issues impacting women seeking careers in the electrical construction industry, and to the IBEW as an organization, as well as the resulting observations and conclusions are submitted in that spirit.

Leadership Team Summary

Women Leadership in the IBEW

Women enter the skilled construction trade without the benefit of training on how to interact and communicate in a male dominant environment. Yet, these women, by taking the courageous initiative of joining the construction trades, such as the IBEW, possess a core element for leadership. Their presence on the job-site is the first quality of leadership, the ability to stand among their peers, providing a model of behavior. What women lack to further their leadership influence is the language and skills to remove the barriers that test their self-confidence and coping abilities.

Often times the gender specific behavior of women is incongruent with the expectations of the male dominant environment, producing negative consequences and distracting from the value women bring to the work environment. Research has shown that teams with a common gender orientation have higher performance (Scherer & Petrick, 2001). Since the construction industry is predominantly male, communication on the job sites center around the behavior and language of men. Being aware of the construction industry environment, women can adjust their gender-related behavior and influence the dominant male behavior. This demonstrates another core element of leadership, the ability to adjust to different situations.

During the leadership caucus women discussed techniques on how to communicate effectively on the job; how to minimize job communication barriers between men and women; how to acquire self-confidence that provides the resiliency to withstand unacceptable behavior; how to approach the issue of women in leadership through education and mentoring; how to approach diversity training to inform and educate men and women in the IBEW of each other's abilities, differences and commonality; identify what significant organizational knowledge is required for leadership in the IBEW; and how to provide a support system to provide guidance to inform women of the opportunities that are afforded through membership in the IBEW.

Specific solutions offered by the caucus are the following:

1. Bring educational programs to the local union. Working with the Business Manager (Agent) and the Executive Board, find the financial support to provide classes on leadership, negotiation skills, function and running of a union meeting, labor history, organizing labor.

Leadership Team Summary

2. If there is no local union resource for funding educational programs, establish a scholarship program to provide leadership development skills.
3. Provide information on educational programs even though the local union may not be able to provide financial support.
4. Development of a mentoring program starting in apprenticeship and continuing beyond to the journeymen level, where the mentoring program provides the one-to-one support for taking the initiative and being involved on the local union level.
5. Integrate leadership training into the apprenticeship and journeymen upgrade program.
6. Using the local union media, newsletters, web-site, inform the membership with an emphasis on women of conferences, meetings, leadership opportunities, i.e., involvement with building trades.
7. The IBEW Journal to provide information on training opportunities, such as training provided by the NJATC.
8. Diversity training to be incorporated into the Stewardship training which expands the training out two (2) days instead of one (1) day.
9. Provide conflict resolution and effective communication workshops on a local union level. The workshop be developed on a national level and made available to the local union. The educational provider of this training can be done through the apprenticeship program, which currently provides training on an apprentice and journeyman level.

Leadership Team Summary

10. Require local union representatives, i.e., officers, stewards, office staff, to attend tradeswomen's events in their district. This will provide perspective on the number of women that are currently working within the construction trades.

During the 1997 IBEW Women's Conference, the construction industry branch caucus acknowledged the following guiding principles for the IBEW on all levels:

"The fair and full inclusion of women at all levels for the IBEW requires the combined efforts of the entire membership, as well as the resources of our union."

While there has been a sufficient improvement in the inclusion of women into the construction trades, women still represent a mere 0.8% of the workforce. However, the women that are involved with the construction trades and the IBEW yearn for more inclusion within the leadership ranks. This inclusion may yield a positive improvement in the number of women entering the IBEW. It is through the leadership that the face of our organization is recognized. When more women are the face of the IBEW, more women will follow.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful the IBEW and its leadership team have a high regard for diversity as a resource and are striving to become a more fully inclusive organization. We also sincerely appreciate the opportunity to invest the time and dedication to the successful completion of this special project.

A large debt of gratitude is owed to the Delegates themselves, who participated in the 2010 IBEW Women's Conference Construction Caucus workshop. Because of your courage and willingness to share your experiences and expertise this report is terrifically more valuable. Thank you for your honesty, candor and commitment to identify constructive ideas and useful solutions. Your contributions will undoubtedly have measurable, positive impacts that will strengthen the IBEW at all levels. Thank you.

APPENDIX

Recruitment Source Materials

Retention Source Materials

Facilitator Methodology

Findings from the 1997 IBEW Women's Construction Caucus

Recruitment Team Discussion Summary

IBEW Women's Conference - Construction Caucus - 23 July 2010

Recruitment

- Need more women

Membership dying

My pension

- Where to Look
 - High Schools Faith Based Organizations Membership
 - Colleges Gay/Lesbian Events Career Fairs
 - Prisons Middle/Elementary Schools Continuation Schools
 - Rehab Facilities Military ROTC/ROP Programs
 - Job Corps Unemployment Centers
 - Job Sites (Salting) Job Centers
- If resources were not an issue what could we do/where would we look
 - Commercials PBS Specials Cartoon Channel
 - Internet Town Meetings YouTube
 - Skill Type Camps Adopt A School Billboards
 - Bumper Stickers Corporate Sponsors Reality TV
 - Partner w/ Lego Community Events County Fairs
 - Handout out Flyers School Posters Women's Events
 - Athletic Events Sponsor Groups/Teams
- Challenges and Obstructions
 - Not Using Men to get Women
 - Uniformed Counselors
 - Developing Mentorships
 - Lack of Commitment to Recruit
 - School Guidelines

- Blue Collar Stigma
- No Job Site Access for Show and Tell
- Self-Image
- Segregation
- Actions
 - Physical Presence Follow Up Commitment
- Solutions To Segregation
 - Don't Exclude Anyone Lead by Example Fight Back Immediately
 - Highlight Similarities
- Solutions to No Job Access
 - Don't Bring Kids to Work – Go to Where They Are
 - Bring Kids to An Organized (PLA) Jobsite Show and Tell
 - Community Helps and Habitat for Humanity Sites
 - Identify Older Teens who can be Safe on the Job
 - Find Out When Owner/GC is Bringing Kids In and Schedule
 - We Have to Do This – Non Union is
- Solutions to Lack of Commitment
 - Commitment Contracts Buddy System Mentor Incentive
 - Mentor/Mentee Competition
 - Task Specific – Don't Overwhelm
- Solutions to Poor Self Image
 - Before and After (Work the Cleaned Up) Photos in Advertisements
 - Apprenticeship was the Original 4 years Degree Reminder
 - Flaunt Your Wealth
 - Preach Our Success Stories During Outreach

- Promote College Credits
- Promote Our Diversity
- Promote Union Impact on Middle Class in America
- Solutions to Mentor Challenge
 - Take Time To Set a Mentor Program w/ Apprentices
 - New Journeymen Make Great Mentors
 - Make Mentoring mandatory
 - Mentor All Apprentices (Men and Women)
 - Have Multiple Mentors
 - Online/Phone Mentoring
 - Put an AD for Mentors in Local Union Newsletter
 - Put Women w/ Women initially for Mentoring
 - Match Goals for Mentor and Mentee
 - Get Mentor Support from Stewards
- Solutions to Uniformed Counselors and School Guidelines
 - Counselor Day at Training Facility/Union Hall w/ Food
 - Counselor Training
 - Have Membership Reconnect with their Schools
 - Job Banks
 - School Board Buy Ins
 - Promote Educational Benefits (College Credits)
- Solutions for Not Using Men to get Women
 - Educate Men of Women's Issues
 - Family Breakfast/Bring Child to Union Day
 - Field Trip Tours of Training Facility
 - Become A Leader

- Remind Men of Educational Benefits of Apprenticeship
- Implementation
 - Accountability
 - Set Goals with Specific Dates Attached
 - Collect Accurate Data of Current Status
 - Make Leadership Reflect Membership
 - Delegates Report Back to Membership
 - Utilize Existing Models
 - Create Regional Templates for Smaller Locals
 - Best Practices
 - Actually Implement Diversity Resolution
 - Have 1 Person responsible/Accountable on a Local Level
 - Include Women's Issues/Obstacles in Code of Excellence

Retention of IBEW Women in Construction
 “Why Do Women Leave the Trade and What Can We Do to Keep Them?”
 Notes and Flip Chart Summary and Evolving Solution Matrix

Challenges Under Mismatched Expectations	Solutions
<p>1) Not knowing what you are getting into</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lax screening process without letting women know what they are getting into <p>2) Heavy industrial work / exposure to toxins</p> <p>3) Physically challenging work / heavy labor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When injured, don't return to work • Getting injured to prove we can do the work as well as males • Physical limitations – size of hands, height, and weight of women <p>4) Overly sensitive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Thin skin or not thick enough skin” for construction industry culture • Differences in social interactions between men and women <p>5) Construction culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male dominated attitudes about women not belonging or lasting in trades • Discouraging attitudes from other workers – “Want equal pay do equal work” 	<p>Create mentoring programs modeled after Local 11</p> <p>Partner with community organizations for women in non-traditional work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model program after Local 3 (NEW) “Non-Traditional Employment for Women” – exposes women to different trades and what to expect • CLUW Program – “Construction Field Day (Pre-Apprenticeship Training for women by women) <p>Use realistic portrayal of women in promotional materials/videos</p>
Isolation Challenges	Solutions
<p>1) Feelings of being “alone”/no other women on the job and in the classroom</p> <p>2) Lack of support system</p> <p>3) Treated unequally / higher expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different standards for men over women • Constantly being judged for quantity 	<p>Provide long distance mentoring through online forum (IO or District wide) or chat room for women in areas with few or no women to network with</p> <p>Provide mentoring programs for women</p> <p>Raise awareness of existing resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tradeswomen organizations,

<p>and quality of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always in the spotlight to outperform other workers <p>4) Fear of Camaraderie</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women in competition with each other /constantly compared by men (divide and conquer) • Two men are “tool buddies,” two women are a “gang” attitude <p>5) Constant spotlight</p>	<p>committees, online resources in existence, etc.</p> <p>Assign female Stewards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferably a woman checking up on women, an advocate • Women visiting women on jobs or at apprenticeship programs <p>Conduct exit interviews (both successful women and those that leave the trade)</p> <p>Create Local Union women’s committees/clubs modeled after Local 3</p> <p>Create a women only publication or newsletter that focuses on women’s issues</p> <p>Continue to sponsor women’s conferences perhaps in different parts of the country</p> <p>Support “District” women’s conferences in between international women’s conferences</p> <p>Provide family friendly meetings</p> <p>Create an “Oath of Solidarity” for IBEW women not to abandon our Union Sisters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patches, pins and stickers identifying a true Sister <p>Provide summer camp or a retreat related to industry</p>
<p>Discrimination Challenges</p>	<p>Solutions</p>
<p>1) Hostile work environment</p> <p>2) Discrimination in job assignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women assigned to same tasks (e.g. lighter work, material handling, sweeping, not heavy cable pulling or 	<p>Provide continuous and mandatory training and education for all IBEW Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amps, Harassment, Awareness, Diversity <p>Create a cost benefit analysis of a well-rounded JW to create contractor buy-in of training/assigning women on all tasks</p>

<p>equipment)</p> <p>3) Accumulative sexual harassment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women get tired of constant harassment over and over again <p>4) Frustration in lack of change/improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bitterness over no proper actions being taken by members or supervision in improper scenarios <p>5) Treated unique</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instead of being treated as a member of the group, gender is an issue • Being used or pointed out as a “side show or novelty” <p>6) Discriminatory statements</p> <p>7) Lack of career opportunities/advancement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are the first to be laid off, not kept employed or laid off more than men • Lack of promotions • Being qualified but overlooked for advancement because of being female <p>8) Hotel room assignments when travelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractor has to pay for single room if only one woman • Difficult for women to travel with a family/kids for work <p>9) Tools and PPE not sized for women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory apprentice rotation • Work with employers to reduce work assignment discrimination <p>Encourage men to mentor women</p> <p>Provide assertiveness training for women Provide access to experienced professional assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military counselors or similar - better suited for construction culture <p>Provide resources for awareness of educational opportunities</p> <p>Create a national mandate for accurate statistics of the number of women in construction in the IBEW, including those employed and unemployed</p>
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Family Challenges	Solutions
<p>1) No access to child care during early a.m.</p> <p>2) Pressure of being primary caregiver</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caretakers of children and aging parents • Taking care of family when they are sick results in more missed work time <p>3) Conflicts between travelling requirements and family responsibilities</p>	<p>Provide resources for accessible day care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create or provide lists • Create single parent special referrals (referral system that allows single parents to get first pick for in-town jobs or alter referrals favoring families) <p>Discourage retaliation for missed work because of family issues</p> <p>Create a family friendly workplace</p> <p>Create family friendly meetings and events</p> <p>Provide job sharing</p> <p>Encourage women to become contractors</p> <p>Discourage repercussions for work missed over family emergencies/illnesses</p> <p>Create flex hours that benefit working families</p>
Other Challenges	Solutions
<p>Higher learning curve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young girls not exposed to math, science, and tool handling in comparison to boys • Females start out socially with less mechanical aptitude <p>Lack of respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having to prove yourself to everyone all of the time • Being judged based on the behavior of other women not as an individual <p>Restroom facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timed restroom breaks because of location <p>Inappropriate job site behavior</p>	

Retention of IBEW Women in Construction
 Why Do Women Leave the Trade and What Can We Do to Keep Them?
 Recorder One Outline Summary

Challenges Topic: Retention of Women in IBEW (why leave?)
<p>Topics: Heavy Industrial - exposure to environmental toxins / physically challenging work Women may get injured to the point where they cannot return to work a) May try to prove we can do all the work as well as a man Discouraged by other workers (male) hostile work environment</p>
<p>Employment discrimination (laid off more often than men) Accumulative sexual harassment Isolation from other women during work / lack of support</p>
<p>Frustration with job site Women are behind when we start (lack of experience with tools and mechanical aptitude) Used or pointed out as a side show or novelty Women still caregiver must get kids to day care / take care of sick Physical limitations – men resent (equal pay – equal work) Take all candidates – not aware of what is expected Constantly having to prove your worth / lack of respect Competition on the job between women to stay employed (Fear of camaraderie) Always in the spotlight to out-perform other workers Lack of facilities for restroom business (being timed) Some “thin-skinned” people, sometimes we need to not take things in the wrong context. They are over-sensitive Some men try to not treat women any different then they treat anyone else Women acting and dressing, talking inappropriately Can’t travel with a family for work</p>
<p>Training Women put to material handling, sweeping (discrimination in work assignment) *Be assertive, make them teach you Men judge us from experience with other women they have worked with Qualified but over-looked for advancement – lack of career opportunity Tools don’t always fit our hands (too big) Work clothes can be an issue. PPE not sized for women *Think smarter do the work with brains not brawn Out of town work – can’t put 2 to a room Some women don’t get along with men bring some things on themselves.</p>
<p>Mismatch of Expectations (physical challenges, toxic hazards) Mentoring Program Keep going don’t panic</p>

<p>Isolation</p> <p>Access to resources for support (long distance mentoring) Online forums – chat rooms Newsletter type publication for women Human factor – women visiting women on jobs at apprenticeship (female steward) Local Union women’s committee / club (Local 3 similar) Family-friendly children welcome Industry Summer Camp Mentoring</p>
<p>Oath of solidarity not to abandon our Union Sisters (patches, hardhat stickers, pins, etc.)</p>
<p>Mismatched expectations Mentoring program (Local 11) Partnering with community organizations for women in non-traditional work. Tech trades training (magic camp), job fairs, pre-apprenticeship classes for women by women Female stewardship – with apprentice and JW women More realistic construction videos</p>
<p>Discrimination</p> <p>National Statistics for Women / Minorities Access – to professional help that understands our problems and work environment Military counselors (PTSD) Educate – our men that we work with all JW, Amps, Harassment, Awareness Job Assignments – train our Foreman and GF’s to trust the women to self-perform Assertiveness training for women Women take all classes you can - take advantage of opportunities that are unavailable Work with employers to reduce work assignment discrimination Exit interview after apprenticeship graduation not associated with the JATC and when they drop-out</p>
<p>Family Issues</p> <p>Family-friendly meetings / events No retaliation for missed work because of family issues Access to daycare that is convenient for our work hours Keep childcare business contacts Special referral rules for single parents Become your own boss / family-friendly Job sharing</p>
<p>Umbrellas</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mis-matched expectations 2. Toxic hazards 3. Physical challenges 4. Overly sensitive 5. Challenging construction culture
<p>Isolation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher expectations - Lack of support system

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treated unequally - Fear of camaraderie - Constant spotlight
Discrimination in Employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discrimination in job assignments - Discriminating statements - Hostile work environment - Accumulative sexual harassment - Treated unequally - Frustration with lack of change / improvement - Tools not sized for women
Family <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary caregiver - Travelling for work - Childcare problems

Retention of IBEW Women in Construction
 “Why Do Women Leave the Trade and What Can We Do to Keep Them?”
 Recorder Two Outline Summary

Challenges Topic: Retention
IBEW Women in Construction
Solution One: Retention – What are the reasons women leave? How do we fix them?
Industrial work – Chemical toxic exposure Heavy work – Labor intensive
Got hurt – A lot of times don’t come back Getting hurt because we want to prove something
Male attitude promotes women not lasting in the trade – “no women last to get a 40 year pension”
Women are the first to be laid off – not kept employed
Cumulative sexual harassment – hearing stuff over & over – it gets to you
Creates isolation
Bitterness that things don’t change – get jaded / give up – Lack of support / isolation backstabbing – start out socially with less mechanical aptitude – spend a lot of time playing catch-up
Lack of child care – working times don’t give
Treated as unique – instead of as a member of the group. Gender is an issue
Men’s attitude: want equal pay do equal work = equal rights although there are physical limitations that tend to be overlooked
Screening process is too lax – let any women in – not knowing what they are getting into
Having to prove myself to everyone all the time wears you down – lack of respect
Women are primary caregivers – missed time at work – women in competition with each other –

divide & conquer – fear of camaraderie
Two men are “tool buddies” – two women are a “gang” constantly being judged for quantity & quality of work. Different standards for men over women.
Bathroom situation – timed – because of where its located – misperception of what men are doing – taking things too seriously
Differences in social interactions – perhaps women are overly sensitive
Repercussions of women over-reaching to comments / situations not comfortable with the “construction culture”
Inappropriate behavior by women on jobsite – sexy dress / flirting
Potential need to travel – not practical for women with families
Training? – Not being trained properly – stuck in the material trailer – experiences are not well-rounded – this lead to being laid off – not as well trained
Being judged base on the behavior of other women not as an individual
Lack of promotion
Physical limitations = size of hands / height / weight
Not being able to safely perform the work because PPE is not sized to fit
Costs more to work out of town as a women – company has to pay for single room if only one women
Expectations – Not knowing what you’re getting into <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical challenges - Hostile work environment - Toxic environment – only place to work - Overly sensitive - “Construction culture”
Isolation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of support system
Discrimination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job assignments - Sexual harassment - Lack of career opportunities / advancement - Lack of training
Caregiver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family & traveling
Isolation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online support groups through I.O. or District wide: advertise to females - Formal mentor’s program on the local level – breaks down the barriers - A female “steward” – charged with checking up on the women - An advocate - Newsletter that focuses on women’s issues - Continue to sponsor women’s conferences perhaps in different parts of the country - How about “District” conferences in between International Conference? - Local Union Women’s Committees / Clubs modeled after Local 3 - Pin / Button / Sticker pledging not to isolate another sisters “Oath of Solidarity” - “Summer Camp” Oregon trades women has program for pre-apprenticeship

<p>Expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local 11’s “Employer” mentoring program - Local 3 – “Non Traditional Employment for Women (NEW)” – Exposes women to different trades and what to expect – using community organizations to expose women to trades - “Construction Field Day” – CLUW program. Pre-apprenticeship taught by women for women - Rural areas have different issues – not as close to other women by distance alone - Use/make realistic promotional videos - Changing the “construction culture”
<p>Discrimination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need professional help – therapy access to professional counselors who understand what we do - Educate our men that we are capable. Give them the confidence to mentor our females - Assertiveness training - Education – The more you are trained the more chance you will have to move up – the more marketable you are, the more likely you can move up - Working with employers so they understand the importance of diversity - Cost benefit analysis of the well-rounded JW - Exit interview with female apprentices and when we lose them in the apprenticeship - Get real statistics on women employed / laid off
<p>Situational / Caregiver</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family-friendly meetings - Day care access – during our work hours & during meetings - Letting single parents get first pick for in-town jobs – alter referrals favoring families - Flex hours that benefit working families

Retention of IBEW Women in Construction
“Why Do Women Leave the Trade and What Can We Do to Keep Them?”
Flip Chart Summary

There are three flip charts that capture the identified issues, and they are in order as follows:

Issues	Assigned Solution Theme
Toxic hazards	Mismatched expectations/lack of other work
Physical challenges	Mismatched expectations
Hostile work environments	Discrimination
Discrimination in employment	Discrimination
Accumulative sexual harassment	Discrimination

Isolation	Isolation
On the Job	
In the classroom	
Lack of Support System	Isolation
Frustration in lack of change/improvement	Isolation Discrimination
Higher learning curve	
Child care	Family
Treated unique	Discrimination/Isolation
Discriminatory statements	Discrimination
Mismatched expectations	Mismatched expectations
Lack of respect	
Pressure of being primary care giver	Family
Fear of camaraderie	Isolation
Higher expectations	Isolation
Constant spotlight	Isolation
Restroom facilities	
Overly sensitive	Mismatched expectations/spotlight
Challenging construction culture	Mismatched expectations
Inappropriate job site behavior	
Conflicts between traveling requirements and family	Family
Discrimination in job assignments	Discrimination
Lack of career opportunities	Discrimination
hotel room assignments	
Tools and PPE not sized for women	

There are four flip charts capturing the umbrella themes and they are in order as follows:

SOLUTION

Isolation

Long distance mentoring

Online forum

Raise awareness of existing resources

Female Stewards

Conduct exit interviews (both successful women and those that leave the trade)

Local union women's committee/club

Potentially modeled after local 3

Women only publication

Family friendly meetings

Oath of solidarity

Patches, pins and stickers identifying a true Sister

Summer camp related to industry

Discrimination

Access to experienced professional assistance

Military counselors

Training and education for all journeymen

Amps

Harassment

Awareness

Assertiveness training

Awareness of educational opportunities

Cost benefit analysis to create contractor buy-in

Mandated Apprentice rotation

National mandate for accurate statistics

Mismatched Expectations

Mentoring program modeled after local 11

Partnering with community organizations

- Pre-apprenticeship training

- For women by women

Female Steward

Exit Interviews

Realistic portrayal of women in promotional material

Family

Family friendly meetings and events

Accessible day care

- Create or provide a list

- Single parent special referrals

Creating a family friendly workplace

- Job sharing

- No repercussions for work missed over family emergencies/illnesses

2010 IBEW WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

CONSTRUCTION CAUCUS

FACILITATOR NOTES AND GENERAL GUIDELINES

Structure for Caucus: The caucus will convene at 3:10 pm on Friday, July 23rd and will conclude at 5:30 pm. After very brief opening comments, all delegates will be asked to consider participating with one of the three work groups based on interest of assigned challenge. Volunteers for each group will share their report with their sister delegates. This report will be given to all delegates at the plenary session on Saturday. Facilitators will work collaboratively to generate a summary document that will be delivered to International President Hill for his consideration and reflection.

Discussion Topics:

Group One: Identify existing challenges and obstructions negatively impacting recruitment rates for women in construction apprenticeships and membership in the IBEW. Discuss and recognize successful strategies that have been implemented on the local level, and consider their adoption, modification and amplification. (Jane Templin and Kevin Burton)

Group Two: Identify existing challenges and obstructions negatively impacting retention rates for women in construction apprenticeships and membership in the IBEW. Discuss and recognize successful strategies that have been implemented on the local level, and consider their adoption, modification and amplification. (Diana Limon and Tracy Prezeau)

Group Three: Identify existing challenges and obstructions resulting in limited pathways for women to gain leadership positions within the IBEW, brainstorm strategies for their removal, and the creation of new paths to leadership opportunities. Discuss and recognize successful strategies that have been implemented on the local level, and consider their adoption, modification and amplification. (Kathleen Barber and Denise Johnson)

Proposed Ground Rules:

1. Job titles and rank are left at the door.
2. Differences or conflicts will be handled openly and positively
3. Allow individuals to participate at their level of comfort
4. One person speaks at a time, and interruptions will not be allowed
5. Remain focused on the given subject matter, avoiding sidebar conversations
6. Ask questions whenever necessary
7. Honesty and candor are appreciated
8. Privacy will be given the utmost protection
9. Respect differences, and be supportive rather than judgmental
10. Criticize ideas, policies, and situations

11. Practice mutual respect and understanding
12. Be motivated by the results and positive outcomes
13. Remember our ideas will be shared with key decision makers

Group Dynamics:

Each work group will need volunteer to serve as the recorder, the moderator and the reporter. The recorder will capture in detail all discussion points, suggestions, resolutions and conclusions. The moderator will document discussion topics on the flip chart for all participants to follow. And the reporter will give a summary report to all Conference delegates.

Role of Facilitator:

1. Keep track of time
2. Make sure everyone understands the topic, process, and goal
3. Ensure ground rules are observed and intervene appropriately when violated
4. Practice both active and reflective listening.
5. Check for understanding, summarize and paraphrase to ensure that what is being shared is being heard and understood.
6. Allow the recorder to participate in the conversation, but make certain the material discussed is being captured effectively.
7. Add your own expertise
8. Redirect and restart the conversation if it gets mired down, off track or stagnates
9. Use the supplied recommendations as a possible guideline in the event the group falters, or has difficulty getting started
10. Collect all materials and documents at the end of the session
11. Document contact information for the group volunteers

Recorder Contact

Information: _____

Moderator Contact

Information: _____

Reporter Contact

Information: _____

Possible Recruitment discussion topics should the conversation get bogged down or for possible use in other situations at the facilitator’s discretion should they prove useful to stimulate conversation or thought.

1. Ensure fair and effective selection process

2. Adopt processes employed by successful programs and engage them in providing technical assistance to programs who have not met their goals
3. Review and consider revising or eliminating selection criteria that have a disparate impact on women
4. Promote pre-apprenticeship programs and standardize graduation recognition in ranking systems as applicable
5. Emphasize what it requires to establish a successful career in the trades to all applicants
6. Establish honest and detailed expectations for all applicants
7. Use hands-on demonstrations whenever possible to give potential applicants a real understanding of job requirements and situations
8. Articulate the physical requirements of the work and provide basic safety training
9. Involve female presenters and showcase them as role models
10. Employ targeted advertisement and outreach
11. Create presentations for non-traditional community groups and organizations
12. Partner with groups to create apprenticeship preparation programs
13. Turn successful women into recruiters
14. Provide all candidates with a check list of suggested and necessary items
15. Partner with adult learning centers
16. Aggressive outreach to middle and high school girls
17. Ask participants to share what has worked and what has not worked in their local union
18. Develop a regional or statewide outreach campaign
19. Expand trade preparation training
20. Ensure women are included in all outreach teams

Possible Retention discussion topics should the conversation get bogged down or for possible use in other situations at the facilitator's discretion should they prove useful to stimulate conversation or thought.

1. Establish women's committees, mentorship programs and promotion of women into leadership and instructor roles
2. Establish support for female apprentices
3. Safeguard against isolation and provide access to other women in the trade as allies
4. Provide a point person to be available to assist female apprentices and help navigate their experience
5. Maintain and update a list of resources in a variety of venues and forms
6. Provide diversity training and discrimination prevention training
7. Equip all with an understanding of workplace culture, organizational dynamics, expectations and appropriate behavior
8. Develop educational training to assist in broader recruitment opportunities
9. Raise awareness of specific challenges facing women in construction
10. Establish procedures to ensure proper rotation and work assignments
11. Conduct exit interviews for those who leave the program
12. Conduct exit interviews for those who are successful in the program for their input and suggestions
13. Connect women with available support services
14. Employ strategies to ensure all parties understand their responsibilities and expectations

15. Employ strategies to ensure equal training and work opportunities
16. Provide clear expectations for skills development
17. Adopt a strong policy against harassment and follow it to the letter
18. Ask participants to share what has worked and what has not worked in their local union
19. Collect and make public membership demographics

Possible Leadership discussion topics should the conversation get bogged down or for possible use in other situations at the facilitator's discretion should they prove useful to stimulate conversation or thought.

1. Employ women as staff members
2. Identify and mentor women with leadership capabilities
3. Offer additional training opportunities
4. Appoint women to every leadership level
5. Highlight successful women as role models
6. Encourage and promote women at every level and in all conversations and actions
7. Encourage women to hold elected office and participate on committees
8. Ask participants to share what has worked and what has not worked in their local union
9. Foster and promote a culture that supports women in leadership positions
10. Promote mentoring programs
11. Strive for a fully inclusive culture

Small Group Work Instructions

Select a recorder – this person will fill out the provided forms and take notes that will be given to the group facilitators

Select a reporter to summarize your discussion and share your small group work outcomes

Select a moderator to record discussion topics using flip chart paper

Discuss why you think the challenges exists/why it has not been resolved. Look for reasonable, positive solutions that we may be able to control and will challenge negative thinking. Discuss how a success or promising practice works and how it can be replicated, improved or strengthened and amplified.

Record the best solutions and positive ideas your small group identifies through its discussion of the challenge topic as well as the success/promising practice topic. Solutions should address the steps, people and assets at hand or needed and should contain an appropriate level of detail.

Challenges Topic:

Solution One:

Solution Two:

Solution Three:

Who are the external partners and what can they do to help?

Successes/Promising Practices Topic:

Components for Adoption:

Program Improvements:

Plan for Amplification:

Who are the external partners and what can they do to help?

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY BRANCH CAUCUS

“Submitted by Susan Eisenberg, Kathy Luz Herrera, Carolyn V. Johnson, Nancy Mason, Vivian Price and Geri Sheldon”

These are recommendations from the construction industry branch caucus of the IBEW Women’s Conference in September of 1997 in Washington DC. The conference provided a tremendous opportunity to utilize the energy and talents of IBEW sisters to create a positive plan of action for our union as a whole. We propose that these guiding principles be adopted at all levels of the IBEW.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE IBEW AT ALL LEVELS:

The fair and full inclusion of women at all levels of the IBEW requires the combined efforts of the entire membership, as well as the resources of our union. We therefore recommend that the following principles be adopted by the IBEW; and that they be **actively used** in developing and implementing policies and programs in all aspects of our union’s work. We recognize that our day to day efforts must be consistent with our goals and responsibilities as trade unionists.

The IBEW recognizes that:

1. All members, as representatives of the union and ambassadors of the labor movement, carry a responsibility to combat discrimination in all its forms, giving specific attention to sexism, racism and homophobia.
2. Workforce diversity is most successful in workplaces where high standards of dignity and safety are respected, and is therefore a measure of the strength of trade unionism.
3. Family responsibilities, including childcare and eldercare, are a primary concern to working people.
4. Fair distribution of work is an extension of collective bargaining.
5. Achieving a critical mass of women in our workforce (recruitment, retention and leadership) will be the best measure of our commitment to affirmative action and equity.

PROJECT PLANS:

We further recommend that the IBEW adopt the following project plans, to be implemented with the same efficiency, ingenuity and perseverance that our construction industry members bring to their jobs. We honor the progress that has already been achieved by making a commitment to follow through on this program until completion.

- The IBEW welcomes women (a message for men and women).
- The IBEW trains women.
- The IBEW advocated for a workplace that is safe, fair and harassment free for all members.
- The IBEW represents women.
- The IBEW contractor employs women at all levels of the workforce.

- The IBEW promotes women's leadership on the job, in the union and into the industry.
- The IBEW advocates for women in all political arenas: local, national and international.
- The IBEW actively solicits the input and leadership of women members.

We further propose that:

1. The International develop and distribute an informational booklet addressed to the particular concerns of women in our union, to clarify standards, policies, procedures and services of the IBEW. We recommend that this booklet be available in April of 1998, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of federal affirmative action policies. (See addendum).
2. The International conduct research relevant to achieving the full and fair inclusion of women. The goal of research at the International level shall be to dramatically increase the percentage of women in our workforce by identifying obstacles to women's participation and recommending solutions. (See addendum).

IMPLEMENTATION

Achievement of these project plans will depend on the combined efforts of all members and all parts of the industry, in particular that

Women members:

- Encourage and support other female members,
- Participate in women's groups conferences,
- Participate in diversity training,
- Address problems of sexual harassment and discrimination when they arise,
- Develop their skills as capable workers and union leaders,
- Participate in local union meetings, committees and events, and
- Assist their local in developing an action plan for the recruitment, mentoring, training, and retention of women

All members, male and female:

- Participate in diversity training,
- View the issues of women as unions issues,
- Encourage and support female members,
- Address problems of sexual harassment and discrimination when they arise, and
- Assist their local in developing an action plan for the recruitment, mentoring, training and retention of women.

Local leadership:

- Provide diversity training to all members with particular attention to officers, stewards, foreman, teachers and new apprentices,
- View the issues of women as union issues,

- Encourage and support female members,
- Develop and implement an action plan for the recruitment, mentoring, training and retention of women,
- Establish and communication to all members clear policies and complaint procedures against harassment and decimation and pro-actively address problems of sexual harassment and decimation,
- Strongly advocate in their communities and local legislatures for issues of particular concern to working women, including pay equity, family leave, and childcare,
- Encourage contractors to hire and promote women through education, advocacy and contract language,
- Establish a women's committee and/or ombudsperson,
- Personally welcome new women members, and
- Appoint women to union leadership positions.

International leadership:

- Hold an Annual Women's Conference, insisting on attendance of male representatives, and encouraging locals to inform and send their female members,
- Support district conferences for women,
- Establish and International women's advisory committee,
- Develop and provide to locals outreach materials designed for the recruitment of women into our industry,
- Develop and distribute informational booklets designed to encourage the retention and leadership of women in our industry,
- Appoint a woman as an international vice-president,
- Strongly advocate legislatively and in the AFL-CIO for issues of particular concern to working women, including pay equity, family leave, and childcare,
- Document and publicize, for the purpose of replication by other locals, best practices that lead to the successful recruitment, training, retention and advancement of women members, with the attention to the importance of racial and ethnic diversity in our organization,
- Publicize the contributions of women members,
- Increase female representation in the IBEW Journal, and
- Ensure that all materials distributed by the International are gender-sensitive.

Apprenticeship training programs:

- Inform all applicants to the apprenticeship program of a "zero tolerance" policy for sexual harassment and discrimination,
- Provide diversity training and sexual harassment prevention training for all apprentices,
- Give particular attention to positive first job placements for new female apprentices,
- Provide mentoring to all apprentices,
- Include women in apprenticeship teaching staff and administration,

- Monitor both classroom and on-the-job instruction to ensure that female apprentices graduate with equitable training in the full range of work in our industry, ready to be employed at levels comparable to men, and
- Ensure that all training materials are gender sensitive.

Contractors:

- Place female apprentices on the full range of job assignments available
- Hire, encourage, and promote journey level women
- Support women who are in leadership and supervisory positions,
- Provide worksites where there is “zero tolerance” for harassment and discrimination by having clear policies and complaint procedures, and educating supervisors in prevention techniques.

Other Organizations:

- Become partners in the IBEW’s recruitment efforts for women,
- Become partners in the IBEW’s efforts to educate all members in the practices of workplaces that respect diversity,
- Become partners in the IBEW’s efforts to respond to the childcare needs of its members.

ADDENDUM

1. The International develop and distribute an informational booklet addressed to the particular concerns of women in our union, to clarify standards, policies, procedures and services of the IBEW. We recommend that this booklet be available in April of 1998, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of federal affirmative action policies.
2. The goal of research at the International level shall be to dramatically increase the percentage of women in our workforce by identifying obstacles to women’s participation and recommending solutions. We appreciate that this will not only benefit all our members and move our own union forward, but will also be a significant contribution to the labor movement as a whole.

In particular we recommend that the International:

Monitor, by the local and district, the membership levels of female apprentices and journeywomen. Offer assistance to those locals and districts where figures are low or dropping. Share best practices from those locals and districts where figures are strong or rising. We recommend that statistics always be broken down by racial/ethnic categories, in recognition of the particular urgency to recruit, retain and advance African America, Latina, Asian America, and Native American women in our industry.

Monitor, by local and district, the leadership levels achieved by female members. Offer assistance in promoting women to those locals and districts where figures are low or dropping. Share best practices from those locals and districts where figures are strong or rising.

Link with the AFL-CIO focus on pay equity by conducting a comparative study of members by gender to examine:

- ANNUAL wages,
- whether or not covered by health and welfare,
- whether or not vested in pension plan, and

At the apprentice level:

- hours worked per year,
- length of time required to complete apprenticeship, and
- number of contractors worked for during apprenticeship.

Survey women who have left the industry or who have been unemployed for an extended period of time, to identify the cause and to identify under what circumstances they might return.

Initiate and participate in a cross-trade study of health concerns for women working in the construction industry, including medical problems resulting from stress of harassment and issues particular to members who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Research solutions to the problems of childcare for members of our industry.