

## ATTACHMENT B

### County Commission for Women – Women Speak UP Notes

March 9, 2017 Falkner Gallery

**Commissioners in Attendance:** Everett (moderator), Juarez (moderator), Wright, Partridge, Peck

**Public in Attendance:** over 100 women and girls

**Entities represented:** Family Services, Community Action Commission, Girl Scouts of Central Coast, Girls Inc. Carpinteria, Goleta and Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara School Board/First 5, San Marcos High School, Antioch student, What Is Love, Restorative Community Network, UCSB students, CALM, SB School District, Planned Parenthood, SBCC Student Equity Committee, Carpinteria High School, North County Rape Crisis Center, Boys & Girls Club of Santa Maria, Beyond the Bruises, Santa Barbara City Council, County Supervisors, Santa Barbara Women's Political Committee, Rumi Educational Center, Fund for Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara Rape Crisis, AHA, Mujercitas.

**Public Comment categories:** women's health (physical/mental), women's equality (all female ages, ethnicities, races, in life, school, sports, and activities like Girl Scouts), domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault and date abuse, drug abuse, demand for senior and other services, immigration and immigrant identity, equality and treatment; hate crimes, racial profiling, education including promoting girls in science/engineering, juvenile offenders restoration, LGBTQ equality, health and discrimination, Islamophobia, service demands – resource constraints including girls access to sports and after school activities, need for mentors and counselors.

**Speakers:** Wendy Sims-Moten First 5 and School Board member, Yolanda Robles VP with Planned Parenthood, Elizabeth Diaz Family Violence Prevention attorney with the Legal Aid Foundation. Speakers shared the services their respective agencies provide to assist children, youth and all women. Examples, First 5 - early childhood education, School Board - schools as free from fear zones; Planned Parenthood - health services including family planning and abortion as well as cancer screenings, education and advocacy; Legal Aid – assist victims of crime, eviction and landlord tenant resolution, immigration services, family and civil matters, human trafficking assistance and elder abuse

**Comments in order of speakers (their words):**

- ❖ Carpinteria Mental Health - stress is at a high level for school girls – need education about stress, mental health, and personal hygiene. Girls aged 10-18 have 3 times greater risk of suicide since 1989

- ❖ FSA - long wait list for family services to assist girls, elderly with health, mentoring and advocacy for women. 140 on wait list for Behavior Health and 70 on wait list for Big Brothers/Sisters and a wait for senior citizens services
- ❖ Students of San Marcos High – concerned about administrations different standards for boys vs. girls i.e., dress codes including during sports. Concern about how to get boys to know what really matters and to respect women vs. women blaming themselves (work on how to speak to another gender). Students shared concerns about “dating abuse” and the need for boys to understand girl’s points of view about how to handle this issue. No menstrual products available at school is an issue (they should be provided and free).
- ❖ Behavioral Wellness Commissioner and attorney - survivors of sexual abuse are scared long-term; you have to look beyond the surface after the physical injury is healed. A holistic approach is needed (body & spirit). We must educate people at a very young age about what is appropriate behavior and what is normal. Need to prioritize resources for survivors of abuse.
- ❖ Girls Inc. Carpinteria – working with girls 5-18 in after school programs, the “Eureka” summer programs, and workshops. Immigration policy have brought about a great deal of fear of deportation including fear of leaving the state even for a college exploratory road trip. Not having equal access to sports is an issue for girls. Girls are often not allowed to apply to participate in sports until High School. Boys do sports throughout. Girls encouraged those in attendance to become mentors and serve as role models including guiding the girls who in their own family/lives.
- ❖ UCSB Engineering student – We need more respect for female engineers to stop the judgements that can linger a lifetime. Hiring committees pick men for engineering positions. Advisors need to support female engineering students and to increase the number of girls in science and technology and to mentor women. Female engineering students work on mentoring other young women.
- ❖ SB Women’s Political Committee – announced the Women’s Literacy Festival September 30<sup>th</sup> ([womensliteraryfestival.com](http://womensliteraryfestival.com)). The purpose is to address women’s rights, literacy and social justice. They use books and literacy to reach out to others and communicate important issues.
- ❖ 3 Girl Scouts – volunteers working with girls to be prepared in the world and offer national awards; emphasize life skills, outdoor skills and community involvement, inspiring young girls with a “Girl Like” program. Making an impact, offering awards and encouraging girls to attain higher levels of scouts like the boy’s “Eagle Scouts”. Royal Gems program to encourage girls with disabilities to participate in activities including cheer leading.
- ❖ What is Love Program – priority is to help young people in school to navigate dating. 1 in 3 experience dating abuse (87% on school grounds). Confusion with current climate teaching about what is appropriate behavior. There is an uptick in young people grabbing each other’s genitalia. Boys getting mixed messages in current climate.

- ❖ Restorative Community – restorative justice in SB/SM is helping juvenile victims with restorative practices and recommends this be expanded to the 500+ in Juvenile Hall along with training. Lots of drugs and alcohol crimes and most don't qualify for the restorative program; studies show effectiveness. Blacks and women of color more likely to be victims and arrested. Recommends a Restorative Commission.
- ❖ Girls Inc. SB – girls live in fear of being deported and are afraid to even go to school. Girls Inc. empowers them to be strong and that their voice matters, hold mock elections even on ice cream choices so they see they can make a difference. Mentors and volunteers are needed to have conversations with these girls.
- ❖ Question about hate crimes and what can be done – A Commissioner said more data is needed about what is happening (i.e., racial profiling). There is a diverse coalition against hate in Santa Barbara, a forum to report that feeds into national tracking. Referrals are made to appropriate agencies i.e., Pacific Pride. There is an African American/Jewish group addressing this and profiling concerns. Forums like this one bring attention to it too.
- ❖ General comment from women about experiencing profiling. A Commissioner expressed that she too had the experience i.e., being followed while shopping. There is an anti-defamation youth group working on this with the schools.
- ❖ CAC – Concerned about “some new horror every day” and an overwhelming shifting of priorities. The City of Santa Barbara has announced that the HUD federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program that funds many Santa Barbara services may be in jeopardy of losing funding. What we are all counting on to cover basic services may not be there. There would have to be an increase in philanthropy.
- ❖ Supervisor Wolf – shared her support for the event; she has 3 daughters who all went to San Marcos High School. One daughter had experience with discrimination on the part of the administration with regard to boys vs. girls' sports attire. Boys were allowed to go shirtless but girls not permitted to wear athletic sports bras. It is important for you to have your voices heard; to go to policy makers at every level including City Council, Supervisors, School Board, especially young people.
- ❖ UCSB professor – March is Mental Health Awareness month for bisexual persons; they experience greater discrimination, poverty, along with other LGBTQ persons, transgender persons are targeted and have no access to bathrooms.
- ❖ Question about future forums – Commissioners stated they will prepare a report on the concerns and take it to the Board of Supervisors to determine next steps. They mentioned the regular meetings of CFW in Solvang and how to contact county staff.
- ❖ County staff in attendance – her daughter and she personally experience prejudice due to their multi-ethnic heritage (i.e., not black or white = identity crisis). Need a way to address the concerns of minorities who do not fit in a box and how to assimilate into Santa Barbara and feel welcomed and respected. Other attendee agreed and said she had been profiled racially on the streets of Santa Barbara and in establishments. Commissioner response - mentioned she (as a professor) discusses this with her

students all the time. Careful not to put people on the spot but the issue needs visibility too. Should be brought to attention of school board and political bodies.

- ❖ Mujercitas – “Little Women’s Club” – at San Marcos High, teaches Hispanic girls, most who are in criminal system, counsels them so they know they have someone to talk to about their concerns (i.e., race, immigration, sexism). School counselors are academic yet the need is for personal counseling. They need support to keep from turning to drugs, alcohol and gangs. We need more programs like this one and maybe to turn this one into a non-profit program and expand it to other schools. Now they get out of jail and their right back there without support. School Board Member –will bring to attention of the School Board. Other comment – need more programs that transition these kids back into life as statistics show fewer return to crime, drugs etc.
- ❖ Santa Barbara Rape Crisis – share concerns about how Obama had a focus on sexual assault which isn’t continuing in the current administration.
- ❖ Medical personnel in attendee – concerned about immigrant families suffering physical and psychological consequences. Young kids and families don’t want to come to the clinic out of fear of deportation. Basic rights might not be there.
- ❖ CALM – childhood trauma leads to lifelong negative health outcomes (physical and psychological). Those with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) have a 20 year shorter life span than others. They experience ongoing abuse, domestic violence, incarceration of a parent. CALM’s focus is 50% on prevention.
- ❖ Participant – there is a rape culture in Santa Barbara. She is the only one of her roommates that hasn’t been raped. She is fearful.
- ❖ Participant – recommended a similar event be held in North County.
- ❖ Participant – inquired about how to determine what County district they were in.
- ❖ Closing remarks – thanks from Commissioners; mentioned again the way to reach staff; purpose of meeting for them to be eyes and ears of Board of Supervisors and work on women’s issues to improve equity, safety, and lobby for resources.