

## NEW Leadership Oregon 2013

By Misty Freeman

I would like to express my gratitude to the School of Public Policy at Oregon State University for sponsoring me to participate in National Education for Women (NEW) Leadership Oregon this June. NEW Leadership Oregon is a program designed for college women to encourage civic engagement and leadership, based on a model developed by the Center for American Women and Politics at the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. The intensive six day program has been implemented in a number of locations across the country, including Oregon, where it is administered through the Center for Women, Politics & Policy, housed in the Hatfield School of Government at Portland State University. Ours was the 10<sup>th</sup> class of women to graduate from the program.



OSU Students Megan Haverman, Jandee Todd, Tori Geter, Misty Freeman, and Elba Moise with Governor Barbara Roberts at the Oregon State Capitol, 6/24/13.

NEW Leadership Oregon is a selective program that brings together women of diverse backgrounds from a variety of colleges and universities across the state who have demonstrated leadership potential to introduce them to different ways they can become leaders in their careers and their communities. The program was founded in 2003 by Oregon University System Interim Chancellor Melody Rose, who continues to be dedicated to fostering engaged and confident women leaders across the state. The Center for Women, Politics & Policy was officially launched in 2009, and now runs both NEW Leadership Oregon and Teens Lead, a leadership program for high school women to encourage their development and engagement as leaders.



Jennifer Ruks from Western Oregon University, Jules Garza from American Public University and Misty Freeman from OSU listening to a panel, 6/25/13.

The impetus for establishing NEW Leadership Oregon was concern about the historical and current underrepresentation of women in all levels of U.S. policy making, and there is a fair amount of emphasis on running for office in the program. One session, called Elect Her, is designed to introduce women to the importance of running for student government on their college campuses as a first step towards running for public office. Another session concentrated on developing public speaking skills and refining presentations. A group of women who work on campaigns came to speak about what it

takes to run a successful campaign, and another group spoke about public service and how to work with

the media. We also took part in a powerful diversity workshop led by Rut Martinez-Alicea, Rape Prevention Education Specialist at Portland Community College.

Dr. Kim Williams, Academic Director for the Center, presented a lecture on the history of women's civic engagement in the U.S. to lay the foundation for the week, and then many of the sessions were panels that brought remarkable women to speak on an assortment of topics related to leadership. Topics included how women get into politics, networking and developing professional relationships, community activism, and balancing personal and professional life, to name a few. Some of the incredible women who shared their experience and expertise included:

- Margaret Carter, Former Oregon State Senator
- Susan Castillo, Former Oregon State Senator
- Amanda Fritz, Portland City Commissioner
- Loretta Smith, Multnomah County Commissioner
- Martha Pellegrino, Portland Director of Government Relations
- Andi Zeisler, Co-founder and Director at Bitch Magazine
- Bobbie Dore Foster, Executive Editor of the Skanner News Group
- Connie Seeley, OHSU Chief of Staff
- Reyna Lopez, Civic Engagement Director at CAUSA
- Jeanne Atkins, State Director for Senator Merkley
- Julia Pomeroy, Chief of Staff for Congressman Blumenauer
- Abby Tibbs, District Director for Congresswoman Bonamici
- Cylvia Hayes, Oregon First Lady & CEO 3E Strategies
- Kendall Clawson, Director of Executive Appointments for Oregon
- Deborah Kafoury, Multnomah County Commissioner

Barbara Roberts, former Oregon Governor and founding Chair of the Center for Women, Politics & Policy Board of Advisors, is actively engaged in NEW Leadership Oregon. She hosted a full day of the program, taking the class to Salem to tour the Capitol. While at the Capitol, the class participated in a mock legislative committee hearing. This exercise was the culmination of a policy project that we had been working on throughout the week. The class was divided into six groups, tasked with arguing for or against each of three policy topics. My group was assigned to advocate for increased funding for Employment Related Day Care. We were given a binder of information and links to additional information to research the issue, we spent time hearing from an expert on the topic, and then we crafted testimony and prepared responses for questions, to be used in the mock hearing. The hearing took place in a hearing room at the Capitol that



Tour of the Oregon Capitol with Governor Roberts, 6/24/13.

is actually used by legislative committees, and we took turns testifying and then acting as the legislators hearing the testimony and asking questions of our opposing side. The microphones were on, and the session was recorded, which made it very exciting.

Another aspect of the program that was intentional and effective was that all meals were included. Meal times were meant to be periods for engaging with other women in the program and guests. This gave us an opportunity to get to know other participants, who were incredible up and coming women, as well as many of the speakers who stayed to eat with us. One evening the class was broken up into groups and went out to dinner at various locations with a member of the Board of Advisors; my dinner was at the Raven & Rose Restaurant in downtown Portland with Mary Faulkner, Vice President of Marketing at Ferguson Wellman Capital Management. Other groups went to restaurants around the city or to Board members' homes, including one group who went to Secretary of State Kate Brown's house for dinner.



The intimate setting was fantastic for helping us get to know other participants and the remarkable women who hosted us.

This program is one I highly recommend for other women interested in public leadership. Many of the participants were undergraduate women, but the number of graduate students continues to increase each year. The programming is very useful, and the connections with other college women and influential women in public and private sector leadership are invaluable. The

program also brings back alumnae to speak on rears and to meet socially with the current class.

t in NEW Leadership Oregon in 2012, and she was able to participate in one of the events. I am so glad to have had the opportunity to take part in NEW Leadership Oregon, and I am grateful to the School of Public Policy for making that possible.