

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN

MCNOW Protests Reduced Sentence in Child Rape Case

BY NANCY NYLAND

On Tuesday, May 18, six members of the Montgomery County NOW chapter staged a protest in front of the Montgomery County Courthouse. The case that brought them there was that of Jason Lay, who was convicted of raping his girlfriend's four-year-old daughter. Although Lay was originally sentenced to 14 years, Judge Eric M. Johnson reduced his sentence to the five years that he has already served.

The NOW action brought media attention to the sentence reduction, generating an article in the *Gazette* and coverage on local NBC News. You can read the coverage in the *Gazette* at: www.gazette.net/stories/05192010/germnew174216_32564.php and see the stories on local NBC News: www.nbcwashington.com/news/local-beat/NOW_Protests_Judge_Over_Rapist_s_Sentence_Washington_DC.html and on msnbc: www.msnbc.msn.com/id/37216476/from/ET



MCNOW Chapter members (left to right): Mary Bailey, Marille Herrmann, Susan Martin, Lara Wibeto, Jeannette Feldner, and Fran Porter protesting at the Montgomery County Courthouse against the reduced sentence in the Jason Lay child molestation case..

Conferences: NOW Maryland and Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference and Women of Color (WOCA)

BY HOLLY JOSEPH

On Saturday, May 1, Bowie State was the site for the Maryland NOW Annual Conference, NOW's Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference, and the Women of Color (WOCA) Conference. The co-sponsor of the event was the Bowie State Chapter of the National Council of Negro Women.

The first order of business for MDNOW was to elect new officers:

President	Linda Mahoney
Executive Vice Pres.	Beth Corbin
Action Vice Pres.	Sandy Bell
Treasurer	Holly Joseph
Secretary	Paula Abeles

Similarly, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference elected three representatives to the NOW Board: Linda Berg (Maryland), Elisabeth (Liz) Crum (District of Columbia), and Rosezella Canty-Letsome (Maryland). Attendees to the regional conference came from six nearby states: Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Lois Herr came from Pennsylvania, a candidate for Congress who is challenging the incumbent in her district, Joe Pitts. He was a co-sponsor of the Stupak-Pitts amendment to the health care reform legislation that banned federal funds from being spent on abortion, the effect of which was more restrictive than even the Hyde Amendment.

(see Conferences, page 3)

New Editor Sought for Newsletter

The Montgomery County NOW chapter is seeking a new editor for its monthly newsletter, *From NOW On*. The editor will share editing and layout duties with a co-editor.

If you are interested in co-editing the newsletter beginning in the fall, or writing for the newsletter, send an e-mail to info@mcmdnow.org, leave a message at (301) 368-1917, or attend the June meeting on Monday, June 7th at 7:00 p.m. at La Madeleine Café, 11858 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852.

MCNOW IS ON FACEBOOK

Follow our political actions and monthly meetings and see photos at: www.facebook.com/pages/Montgomery-County-NOW/108512189193581



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MC NOW President's Message

LOOKING BACK ON OUR SUCCESS



*Vanessa Ali
President, Montgomery
County Chapter, National
Organization for Women*

This is my last message as President for our newsletter. I would like to take a moment and thank the chapter for the opportunity to work as your President last year. We finished things up on a high with a great television interview and a gazette newspaper article, and we have accomplished a great deal over the past year. What's more, I am confident that this year's officers will build on this momentum and we will continue to make great progress.

We face several important issues this year. We need help to continue the production of the newsletter. I hope we will at least be able to do this on a quarterly basis, but we need your involvement. Our membership continues to increase and thanks to all who renewed their membership or joined us for the first time. We updated our website to list our chapter meeting and news. Also I am pleased to announce that we are now on Facebook.

Montgomery County National Organization of Women's strength lies in its community members and relationships. We aim to increase communication and sharing between the executive board, youth and adults. We want to create a stronger and vibrant community.

Today, more than ever I want to thank you for your continued support and engagement with our mission. With everyone's support and cooperation we will sustain and enhance our future.

Pass It On, Act & Learn

Five MCNOW Members to Participate in Local Conference

Five MCNOW members will be participating in the Mid-Atlantic Regional Women's Studies Conference at the Takoma Park campus of Montgomery College on Friday, June 11. Genevieve Carminati, former MC chapter President, is organizing the conference. Carolyn Cook, campaigner for the ERA, will be speaking on the need for the Equal Rights Amendment. Nancy Nyland will be presenting on how to find reliable statistics about women free on the Web. Mary Bailey and Jill Niebrugge-Brantley will conduct a session on their "Sexualization of Girls" efforts.

A notice of the conference and information about how to register is on page six.

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The Montgomery County Chapter is currently subsidizing the cost of printing and mailing the print version of *From NOW On*. Eventually we may be forced to end print subscriptions due to the cost. Get yourself on the e-mail list now.

If you do not have an e-mail address and must receive the newsletter by U.S. Mail, please call the MCNOW office at (301) 368-1917 and let us know.

Conferences (continued from page 1)

The keynote speaker, Representative Donna Edwards, spoke about the role she saw herself playing in Congress and the challenges of these difficult economic times. Bowie State students delivered a stunning tribute to the life of Dorothy Height, who had died the week before. Two panels covered topics of great importance to women: healthcare and violence. Donna Smith, the Community Organizer and Legislative Advocate for the California Nurses Association, was arrested when she spoke out for single-payer health care and remains a staunch advocate for it. She can be seen on Bill Moyers's Journal: www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/05222009/watch.html.

Tabitha Joyner of Break the Cycle, an organization that seeks to empower youth in DC and MD to end domestic violence, spoke about what her organization does to change attitudes on violence in dating and domestic situations. In all the panel discussion there was a time for questions and the possibility for directing attendees toward future action.

It was a wonderful conference for which its organizers should be proud of the stimulating discussion that it provided for its attendees. Thank you to our out-going leaders: Barbara Hays (Maryland NOW); and board representatives Marj Signer (Virginia), Marian Watkins (Pennsylvania) and Justine Andronici (Pennsylvania). And, congratulations to our new leaders!

Sexualization of Girls: Beyoncé Is 28, These Dancers Are Eight

BY NANCY NYLAND

A video of eight-year-olds dancing to Beyoncé's tune "Single Ladies" went viral on the Internet in May. The YouTube video showing eight- and nine-year-olds gyrating in red satin and black lace at a dance competition provoked comment on *The Huffington Post*, *Good Morning America*, and *The View*. It became so controversial that it was removed from YouTube. Although some commenters felt that the grinding and bumping in the dance routine was clearly an example of sexualization of girls, opinion was widely divided.

To draw your own conclusions, you can view excerpts from the video and hear commentary at ABC News:

www.abcnews.go.com/Entertainment/video/whoopi-goldberg-defends-young-girls-dance-10666809 or *Good Morning America*: www.abcnews.go.com/GMA/Parenting/girl-single-ladies-dance-sparks-controversy-internet/story?id=10644648 or on the *FreeUSNow* blog at wordpress.com: www.freemnow.wordpress.com/2010/05/12/sexploitation-of-seven-year-olds.

The May newsletter of the "Sexualization of Girls Project," *The Watchful Eye*, is available on the MCNOW Web site at www.mcmdnow.org/0510WatchfulEye.htm

United for Equality

BY CAROLYN COOK

MC-NOW member Carolyn Cook has officially founded United For Equality, LLC as a legal entity. United for Equality (U4E) has secured a House sponsor for a new congressional resolution to remove the time limit from the Equal Rights Amendment. U4E is seeking angel sponsors and volunteers to support a new people-powered campaign for the ERA.

June 30th is the 28th anniversary of the ERA's expiration. In honor of the anniversary, supporters who give to a "\$28 for the 28th Amendment" fundraiser will be listed by state on U4E's upcoming Web site. Donations to United For Equality, LLC are not tax-deductible, but 100% will be applied to the campaign to lift the Congressional deadline on passage of the ERA. Checks can be mailed to: United For Equality, LLC- PO Box 42606, Washington, D.C. 20015.

To follow the progress of United for Equality's campaign, become a friend of [United for Equality on Facebook](#), or Follow U4E on Twitter at www.twitter.com/united4equality.

HOW IT WAS IN JUNE 1920

Countdown to Women Getting the Vote

- 4 The Delaware legislature adjourns without ratifying the suffrage amendment.
- 5 The International Woman Suffrage Alliance Congress begins in Geneva, Switzerland with an address by Carrie Chapman Catt, President. The Alliance only meets in countries where women have not yet been granted the vote.
- 11 Members of the National Woman's party picket the Republican National Convention in Chicago, demanding the vote.
- 20 Democratic women pressure representatives to the Democratic National Convention to nominate a woman candidate for Vice President.
- 23 Senator Warren G. Harding, the Republican candidate for President, is in favor of women having the vote. In spite of this, he tells Republican women that he does not have the authority to force the governors of the Republican states of Vermont or Connecticut to call special sessions of their legislatures to ratify the vote for women.
- 25 President Wilson asks Governor Roberts of Tennessee to convene a special session of the legislature to ratify the suffrage amendment before the November election.

The attorney general of Tennessee issues an opinion that the legislature can legally ratify the nineteenth amendment in special session.

- 26 The Democratic National Committee sends a message from the Democratic National Convention to the Tennessee governor, urging immediate ratification of the nineteenth amendment to the constitution.

Source: *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*

When Women Won the Vote

Year Women Could Both Vote & Be Elected

1906	Finland	1956	Benin, Egypt, Gabon, Mali, Mauritius, Somalia
1913	Norway	1957	Malaysia
1915	Iceland	1958	Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea
1918	Austria, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia	1959	Madagascar, Tunisia, Tanzania
1919	Belarus, Luxembourg, Ukraine	1960	Canada, Cyprus, Gambia, Tonga
1920	Albania, Czech Republic, Iceland, Slovakia, United States	1961	Burundi, Malawi, Mauritania, Paraguay, Rwanda, Sierra Leone
1921	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Sweden	1962	Algeria, Australia, Monaco, Uganda, Zambia
1924	Mongolia, Tajikistan	1963	Afghanistan, Congo, Fiji, Iran, Kenya, Morocco,
1927	Turkmenistan	1964	Bahamas, Libya, Sudan
1928	Ireland, United Kingdom	1965	Botswana, Lesotho
1931	Spain, Sri Lanka	1967	Ecuador
1932	Brazil, Maldives, Thailand, Uruguay	1968	Swaziland
1934	Cuba	1970	Yemen
1937	Philippines	1971	Switzerland
1938	Uzbekistan	1972	Bangladesh
1942	Dominican Republic	1974	Jordan, Solomon Islands
1944	Bulgaria, France, Jamaica	1975	Angola, Cape Verde, Mozambique
1945	Croatia, Indonesia, Italy, Senegal, Slovenia, Togo	1976	Portugal
1946	Cameroon, Guatemala, Liberia, Panama, Romania, Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yugoslavia	1977	Guinea Bissau
1947	Argentina, Malta, Pakistan, Singapore	1979	Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Palau
1948	Belgium, Israel, Niger, South Korea, Seychelles	1980	Iraq
1949	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, China, Costa Rica	1984	Liechtenstein
1950	Barbados, Haiti, India	1986	Central African Republic
1951	Grenada, Nepal	1989	Namibia
1952	Bolivia, Cote d'Ivoire, Greece, Lebanon	1990	Samoa
1953	Bhutan, Syria	2005	Kuwait
1954	Belize, Colombia, Ghana		Still waiting: Saudi Arabia
1955	Cambodia, Ethiopia, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru		Both men and women still waiting: United Arab Emirates

Source: *Women's Suffrage: A World Chronology of the Recognition of Women's Rights to Vote and Stand for Election*, Inter-Parliamentary Union, www.ipu.org



Working together toward health care for everyone in Maryland

Maryland Women's Coalition
FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM

The Reform "Party": Leadership Forum and Coalition Bazaar

June 5, 2010 – 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

YWCA Annapolis and Anne Arundel County, Arnold, Maryland

The *Maryland Women's Coalition for Health Care Reform* proposes to celebrate and strengthen its partnership with its member organizations as a critical strategy in its efforts to see that every Marylander has access to the health services they need and deserve.

Why hold this event now? In March 2010 federal health care reform legislation was signed into law. Now, the work of implementation begins. The Coalition has identified a two-pronged strategy for its work. It will work to ensure that the legislation and state policies, procedures and resources are in place. But, first, it will work with its member organizations and state partners to educate Marylanders about the specific ways they can benefit from health care reform.

What type of event will it be? The morning will include an educational forum to provide participants with information on the (1) impact of federal reform on the state; (2) specific benefits to Maryland's residents, and (3) ways that member organizations can be involved in the Coalition's work. Following lunch there will be an opportunity to network while enjoying a crafts and fashion bazaar to benefit the Coalition.

Why support the Coalition? The Coalition is a state-wide alliance of individuals and women's organizations, including 16 County Commissions for Women, working to ensure that all Marylanders have affordable, accessible, high quality health care. Membership in the Coalition is free and its work is coordinated by an all-volunteer Steering Committee that partners directly with its members. The Coalition was founded in 2006 because women have a particularly powerful voice on the issue of health care reform – both as care givers and as the keepers of their own and their families' health. They often face the greatest barriers to health care. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, approximately 325,000 non-elderly women in Maryland were uninsured in 2007-08 and that number has continued to rise during the recession.

How will the event benefit its members? This will provide an opportunity to learn about the new law and how member organizations can reach out to their own constituencies in order to achieve advancements for women and their families.

What do we ask of our member organizations for this event? To inform their own members of this opportunity to learn more about health care reform and to encourage them to participate.

What will be the outcomes? This event will: (1) raise awareness of the status of women's health in Maryland, the positive impact of health care reform legislation, and the issues surrounding its implementation; (2) reinforce the positive image of our member organizations and the Coalition, and (3) increase their impact in serving the women and families of Maryland.

The Coalition is particularly grateful to our host members:

Anne Arundel County Commission for Women

YWCA of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County

www.mdhealthcarereform.org

School Reform

BY LINDA MAHONEY

The Obama Administration has recently announced initiatives on school reform and faith-based initiatives. Billions in taxpayer dollars are promised to improve education through funding of charter schools and merit pay.

Why you should care:

Faith-based charter schools discriminate in hiring, providing tax-funded jobs based on religious belief or affiliation. They are allowed to teach that women are inferior to men. They are allowed to mandate that girls wear clothing which restricts their physical activities. There are generally few requirements and little-to-no oversight re required coursework or nondiscriminatory pupil acceptance requirements or Title IX mandates – equal educational opportunities including sports. We are supporting “educational” institutions which contravene every principle of equal opportunity for girls.

Educational improvement is correctly being tied to the nation’s long-term economic viability. Goals include improved early childhood education programs, higher standards in elementary and high schools, a longer school calendar, better teacher pay and recruitment, and expanded college aid programs. However, more charter schools are a key component of the increased education funding. President Obama called on states to lift caps on the number of charter schools, despite several recent comprehensive studies indicating that fewer than 20% of charter schools offer a better education than local public schools and 37% were “significantly worse”. This despite the charters’ ability to pick and choose their students, increased parental involvement and improved parental emphasis on educational importance.

Candidate Obama said that he was opposed to employment discrimination, but a Justice Department spokesman has repeatedly stated that the Administration would review potential such problems “on a case-by-case basis.”

The recently signed stimulus bill includes \$5 billion in new funds for Head Start and Early Head Start. Overall, the \$787 billion stimulus package includes \$41 billion in total grants to local school districts. No one can argue that children in Mississippi deserve an education inferior to that of their Pennsylvania or Iowa counterparts, and the President’s discussion of “benchmarks for academic success” is encouraging.

But we shouldn’t be funding schools which have lower expectations of their female students than the males. And there should be absolutely no state or federal funding of any entity which discriminates in hiring or in student eligibility based on religion or sexual orientation, any more than we would tolerate taxpayer funding of schools which would bar African-American or Latino children.

Additionally, the Administration’s insistence on merit pay for teachers will disadvantage children in the ghetto or the barrio. There is no question that teachers who aren’t effective shouldn’t be maintained in their current situations. However, the teachers fired in the Rhode Island “underperforming” high school were making extraordinary efforts in an unstable, transient community whose median income is \$22,000, where 65% of the students are hispanic and for most of them, English is a second language. In those circumstances, the best teacher in the world cannot unilaterally raise her students’ academic performance to that of average middle-class kids who go to the same school every day all year long, have books and computers in their homes, and have parents who can help them with their homework. In fact, despite subsequent grandstanding on this issue by a variety of politicians media reports documented improved test scores and graduation rates in recent years. But school performance, as reflected in student achievement, must be understood and improved only in the context of their communities. Certainly, rewarding the teachers who teach in the affluent neighborhoods and have the easiest job and withholding pay increases for those whose students are the most challenging will result in fewer experienced teachers for the children who need them the most.

www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2009-03-10-obamaeducation_N.htm: David Jackson, “Obama urges education reform” *USA Today* (March 10, 2010).

Sam Dillon, “Obama Calls for Major Change in Education Law”, *New York Times* (March 13, 2010).

Michelle Boorstein and Kimberly Kindy, “Faith-based office to expand its reach under Obama”, *Washington Post* (Feb. 5, 2009).

David Waters, “Obama council approves recommendations to reform, expand faith-based initiative”, *Washington Post* (Feb. 26, 2010).

Trip Gabriel, “Despite Push, Success at Charter Schools Is Mixed”, *New York Times* (May 1, 2010).

Randi Kaye, “All teachers fired at Rhode Island school”, *CNN* (Feb. 24, 2010).

thebostonchannel.com: “Obama Points to School That Fired Teachers”.

Amanda Paulson, “Rhode Island school to rehire fired teachers, shelving drastic plan”, *Christian Science Monitor* (May 17, 2010).



MAWSA Conference 2010

Women and the politics of possibilities: What have we made possible, what could we dare to do?

Friday, June 11th, 2010, 8:00 am – 6:00 pm
Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus,
Montgomery College

The theme of the 2010 Mid-Atlantic Women's Studies Association (MAWSA) conference is "Women and the Politics of Possibilities: What have we made possible, what could we dare to do?" Through this theme, the conference will offer a full day of presentations that look at women's capabilities and capacity for making change as leaders, activists, organizers, teachers and artists – "what have we made possible?" — as well as those that explore what might be possible: "what could we dare to do?"

The afternoon keynote speaker is journalist and bestselling author Amy Goodman, who will speak from 4:00 to 5:00 PM. Her talk will be followed by a book sale and signing.

Amy Goodman is an award-winning investigative journalist and syndicated columnist, author and the host of *Democracy Now!*, airing on more than 800 public television/radio stations worldwide.



Goodman is the first journalist to receive the Right Livelihood Award, widely known as the Alternative Nobel Prize for "developing an innovative model of truly independent grassroots political journalism that brings to millions of people the alternative voices that are often excluded by the mainstream media." *The Independent of London* named Amy Goodman and *Democracy Now!* "an inspiration"; pulsemedia.org placed Goodman at the top of their 20 Top Global Media Figures.

Goodman is the author of four New York Times bestsellers. Her latest book, *Breaking the Sound Barrier*, proves the power of independent journalism in the struggle for a better world. She co-authored the first three bestsellers, *Standing*

Up to the Madness, *Static*, and *The Exception to the Rulers*, with her brother, journalist David Goodman. Find more information about Amy Goodman and local broadcasts of *Democracy Now!* at www.democracynow.org.

Registration for the full conference, including lunch and Ms. Goodman's talk, is \$65; \$20.00 for students and seniors. Admission for Amy Goodman's talk alone is \$20.00; \$10.00 for students and seniors; free to MC students. Contact information for the conference is womensst@montgomerycollege.edu, or (240) 567-5355. The Mid-Atlantic Region Women's Studies Association (MAWSA) is the regional branch of the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA).

MCNOW NEW OR RENEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Yes, sign me up for _____ years of NOW membership @ \$35/1 yr, \$65/2 yrs, \$95/3 yrs

- I am a New Member
- I am a Renewing Member

Member # _____
(Please fill in if you know your number. If not, MCNOW Membership Chair can find and fill in.)

Yes, I would like to join/renew, but have limited resources. I am enclosing \$ _____
(\$15-\$34/year sliding scale: what you can afford)

Yes, I would like to affiliate with MCNOW (chapter # MD0200)

I am enclosing an additional contribution to MCNOW in the amount of \$ _____

Name _____

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Email* _____

* By giving us your email address, you will receive a periodic MCNOW Feminist Calendar, keeping you up to date on local news and events of interest to women.

Please make your check payable to **Montgomery County NOW** and mail along with this application to: **MCNOW**, P.O. Box 2301, Rockville, MD 20847-2301 (To renew online with credit card, visit www.mcnow.org)



Montgomery County Chapter of the National Organization for Women

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MC NOW Calendar of Events

Chapter Meetings generally take place on the first or second Monday of each month. All members are welcome.

JUNE

- 5 (Sat) 9:30 am – 3 pm The Reform Party, Maryland Women's Coalition for Health Care Reform. Celebrate passage of health care reform at Leadership Forum and Coalition Bazaar. YWCA Annapolis, 1517 Ritchie Highway, Arnold, MD. RSVP by May 28th, (410) 279-4525, eastportelise@comcast.net, www.mdhealthcarereform.org
- 6 (Sun) 10 am – 4 pm Women's History Symposium, MD Women's Heritage Center, 39 W. Lexington St., Baltimore. Co-sponsored by MD NOW. \$35 admission (sliding scale) For more information, contact Paula Abeles spabeles@patriot.net
- 7 (Mon) 7:00 – 9 pm MCNOW Annual Elections Dinner, La Madeleine, 11858 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852. For more information: info@mcmdnow.org
- 11 (Fri) 8:00 am – 6:00 pm Mid-Atlantic Women's Studies Annual Conference: Women and the Politics of Possibilities, Montgomery College-Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus. www.montgomerycollege/Departments/wstudies/MAWSA2010.html
- 16 (Wed) 12 – 1:00 pm DC and HIV/AIDS, Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington Brown Bag Lunch, 1110 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. Call (202) 347-8500 x6300 or e-mail events@ppmw.org to RSVP.
- 17 (Thu) 10 am – noon, How to Budget and Use Credit in Today's Economy, Janet Akman, LCWS-C, \$20, Montgomery County Commission for Women, 401 N. Wash. St., Suite 100, Rockville, MD 20850-1703, www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw
- 22 (Tue) 12 – 1:30 pm Clearinghouse on Women's Issues monthly meeting, American Council on Education 8th floor conference room, One Dupont Circle, N.W., Washington, D.C. Free and open to the public. No reservations required. For more information: www.womensclearinghouse.org
- 30 (Wed) 28th anniversary of the expiration of the Equal Rights Amendment Deadline on June 30, 1982

SAVE THE DATE

July 2-4 (Fri – Sun)

Loving our Bodies, Changing the World, 2010
National NOW Conference, Boston, MA