



Family Planning Advocates of New York State

www.fpaofnys.org

January 2008

Memo

It's Up To Us in '08!

Get In On the Action at FPA's 31st Annual Conference

Roll up your sleeves! It's time to get down to business at FPA's 2008 Annual Conference. This year's March 10 event will offer reproductive health advocates information and inspiration – and even more opportunities to meet with state policy makers than in the past.

The day will begin with a policy brunch to jumpstart discussions about family planning funding and Governor Eliot Spitzer's *Reproductive Health and Privacy Protection Act*. The Governor himself tops the list of elected officials addressing this year's conference. Participants will be busy with legislative meetings and workshops throughout the day.

Washington, DC's "Capitol Steps" will provide comic relief in the afternoon with a hilarious musical spoof on state and national politics. Plan to stay for an early evening reception to enjoy cocktails and conversation with pro-choice leaders and legislators.

To register, go to www.fpaofnys.org or mail in the form on the back panel of this newsletter.

FPA's 31st Annual Conference

Monday, March 10, 2008

Albany, New York

10:00 am	Registration
10:30 am	Brunch with Elected Officials
12:30 pm	Legislative Meetings and Workshops
3:30 pm	Performance by Capitol Steps
5:00 pm	Legislative Reception

State Adds Needed Funding For Reproductive Health Services

New York State Health Commissioner Dr. Richard Daines received a standing ovation at Family Planning Advocates' 2007 Annual Meeting for his leadership in addressing critical women's health needs.

The Commissioner announced that the Department of Health will provide \$2.2 million to help cover the cost of emergency contraception. The state also added a supplement to the Medicaid rate for Implanon and IUDs – two highly effective, but more costly, methods of birth control. New York is also now covering critical follow-up services for family planning clients, including those being treated for sexually transmitted infections. Federal coverage for these services was recently denied by restrictive Bush Administration policies.

State funding was essential to the continued provision of quality reproductive health services in 2007. But budgetary pressures continue to build. Securing fair Medicaid reimbursement and additional funding in the 2008 State Budget will be essential to keeping clinic doors open this year.



State Health Commissioner Dr. Richard Daines discussed budget issues with Planned Parenthood CEOs including Carol Love of Planned Parenthood of the Rochester/Syracuse Region, Family Planning Advocates President JoAnn M. Smith, Kathie Wunderlich of Northern Adirondack Planned Parenthood, Ruth Ellen Blodgett of Planned Parenthood of Northern New York, and Patricia McGeown of Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood.

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President's Column

How long should a woman go to jail for having an abortion?

This is the question I intend to ask anti-choice legislators in 2008.

Specifically, I want to know the length of the sentences they'd prescribe for:

- A single mother with three children under the age of five and no job.
- A 12 year old girl who is not even sure how she got pregnant.
- The legislator's own daughter, a sophomore in college.


Women have abortions for many different reasons. Each one is a personal – and often difficult – decision.

It is a decision we must respect. And protect in law.

That is why the *Reproductive Health and Privacy Protection Act* is so important. It recognizes women as moral agents. It protects the right to abortion. And it even protects the right to contraception, which has also come under threat.

Our efforts to pass the *Reproductive Health and Privacy Protection Act* are essential to women's health and rights. It will be the core of our work this year and the focus of our March 10 conference. Please join us to pass this vital law and protect abortion in New York State.

Sincerely,


JoAnn Smith
President and CEO

Youth Welcome to Participate in Leadership Conference

Young people, between the ages of 14 and 21, are invited to participate in the annual Get the Facts NY Youth Leadership Conference – where the next generation of reproductive rights activists come together to share ideas and learn new skills.

The Youth Conference will be held on the same date as FPA's Annual Conference, March 10, at the Empire State Plaza in Albany. This is an opportunity for teen advocates to meet new people, try new advocacy tools and hear from leaders in the reproductive rights movement.

Reproductive Health Advocates Honored at FPA's Annual Meeting



One of FPA's founding members and former board president, Phoebe Bender, received the Alfred F. Moran Public Advocacy Award. The award was presented by Bender's friend and fellow activist, Mary Kahl, who also served as FPA board president.



Khadija Abukar and Sadiya Omar were honored with the Rev. Beatrice Blair Courageous Service Award for their work to provide perinatal and reproductive health services in their community, particularly for Somali refugee women. The award was presented by Kaelyn Rich of Planned Parenthood of the Rochester/Syracuse Region.



Ellen Anderson, Phyllis Silver and Barbara McTague received the Shirley Gordon Public Policy Leadership Award for their tireless work at the State Health Department on behalf of family planning. Former FPA Executive Director Shirley Gordon (pictured second from right) congratulated the women on their accomplishments.

Restrictive Laws Do Not Reduce Abortion

The largest study of abortion ever undertaken confirms that restricting abortion has little effect on the number of pregnancies terminated. The Guttmacher Institute found that restrictions merely drive women to unsafe methods of obtaining abortions, resulting in an estimated 67,000 deaths around the globe each year.

Latin America, which has some of the world's most stringent abortion laws, has the highest abortion rates, at 31 percent. In contrast, Western Europe, where abortion is generally readily available, has a rate of just 12 percent.

This year, the Youth Conference will also be hosting a panel of experts on high tech advocacy. Participants will learn about the latest activism techniques, including podcasting, social networking and blogging.

A limited number of full and partial scholarships are available for exceptional young people seeking funding for registration, travel and/or lodging. Don't miss this opportunity to learn how to make a difference in your community today.

For more information about registration and scholarships visit www.getthefactsny.org.

Around New York

First Lady Silda Wall Spitzer to Lead Roe Anniversary Event in Rochester

The *Reproductive Health and Privacy Protection Act* will be the topic of a discussion led by New York's First Lady Silda Wall Spitzer on the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*. The January 22 event will be held in Rochester. For information, go to www.pprsr.org/aconversation.

Clergy Project Offers Religious Perspectives on the Need for Real Sex Education

Concerned Clergy for Choice Director Rabbi Dennis Ross and Reverend Doug Marlow discussed pastoral perspectives on sex education at a "Lunch and Learn" session hosted by Planned Parenthood of Northern New York.

Campus Connection

Elmira College Vox made colorful no-stitch fleece blankets for AIDS patients in Namibia and conducted a survey to determine the viability of a Planned Parenthood center on campus. They also held a candlelight march on December 1 to commemorate World AIDS Day.

SUNY Albany Vox sponsored a screening of *The Abortion Diaries* which led to a lively post-film discussion facilitated by staff at Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood and a local college professor.

Voices for Choice, Law Students for Reproductive Justice and NOW:NYU worked with Planned Parenthood of New York City to hold a rally in Washington Square Park to call attention to the issue of skyrocketing birth control prices. This successful event was attended by Rep. Joseph Crowley and Speaker of the New York City Council Christine Quinn.

SUNY Geneseo and SUNY Brockport Vox leaders hand delivered 400 letters from concerned students to Rep. Tom Reynold's office, asking him to work to fix the birth control crisis.

Planned Parenthood Welcomes New Staff

Emily Brown, Program Assistant, Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood
Debra Cloos, Human Resources Coordinator, and Georgia Rennie, Development Associate, Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes

From the Hill and Beyond

Rep. Crowley Introduces Affordable Birth Control Pricing Bill

Rep. Joseph Crowley (D-Bronx) introduced the *Prevention Through Affordable Access Act* (H.R. 4054) to reduce the cost of birth control for poor women and college students. The bill had the immediate support of 103 original co-sponsors, including many members of the New York Congressional delegation.

Republican-Led Attacks on Planned Parenthood Continue

Rep. Mike Pence (R-IN) introduced another measure to prevent family planning providers like Planned Parenthood from receiving federal funds. Almost all of New York's Members of Congress opposed the Pence amendment. But Reps. Peter King (R-Massapequa) and Randy Kuhl (R-Bath) voted to defund Planned Parenthood. Call Rep. King at 516-541-4225 and Rep. Kuhl at 607-776-9142 and tell them you're outraged by their votes against New York's women and families.

New Studies Show Need for Comprehensive Sex Education

Two new studies by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy and the University of Florida found abstinence-only sex education to be ineffective and inadequate. While the federal government continues to pour funding into failed abstinence-only programs, health advocates in New York are working to pass the *Healthy Teens Act* to provide young people with age-appropriate, medically accurate information.

Global Gag Rule Stands

Although both the House and the Senate approved an exemption from the Global Gag Rule, the provision was stripped from the federal budget in the face of an unwavering veto threat from President Bush.



Planned Parenthood staff from around New York State received technical training at the Masie Center in Saratoga Springs. Emily Brown of Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood, and Hallie Stinehour of Northern Adirondack Planned Parenthood, took advantage of this opportunity to upgrade their skills at the state-of-the-art facility that was made available by FPA Board Member Cathy Masie.

FPA Albany Memo

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Concerned Clergy for Choice

Rabbi Dennis Ross
Director

Register Today for FPA's 2008 Conference

Monday, March 10, 10:00 am – 7:00 pm
Empire State Plaza Convention Center
Albany, New York

Completed registration form and payment must be received by February 29, 2008.

Checks should be made payable to Family Planning Advocates, or payment may be made using MasterCard or Visa by registering on-line at www.fpaofnys.org. Registration applications with incomplete information will be returned, unprocessed.

Please mail this form with your payment to FPA's conference coordinator:

Debbie Radzyminski
Plaza Meetings
3 School Street
Latham, NY 12110
877-666-3404 (PHONE)
518-785-7146 (FAX)

Contact Plaza Meetings with questions or if you would like to be considered for late registration. A full refund may be obtained for cancellations received by Debbie Radzyminski by February 29, 2008.

FPA Mission Statement

To advance public policies that fulfill the rights of individuals to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services and education that are consistent with principles of justice and fairness and respect diversity, personal dignity and privacy.

Please print clearly

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

ORGANIZATION (IF APPLICABLE) _____

PHONE 1 _____

PHONE 2 _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Conference Registration

- General Admission \$50.00
 Student Admission \$25.00

\$ _____

Parking at the Empire State Plaza

- \$10.00 (this fee is non-refundable)
 Check if you need handicapped parking

\$ _____

Additional Contributions

- Contribution to subsidize a low-income student (includes transportation) \$50.00
 Contribution to subsidize a low-income attendee (includes transportation and lodging) \$150.00

\$ _____

Total Amount Enclosed

\$

I would like to receive more information from Planned Parenthood Advocates of New York, our political and advocacy arm.

Yes, I support FPA's mission.

Signature (ALL APPLICANTS MUST SIGN TO COMPLETE REGISTRATION) _____

**For a complete
conference schedule
and to register
online, go to:
www.fpaofnys.org**



**Family Planning Advocates
of New York State, Inc.**

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