



The Advocate

October 2004

Greetings from the Commission

Wendy Thomas, Chair

As chair of the West Virginia Women's Commission, I am pleased to share an update on Commission activities. It's been a busy year, and 2005 promises much of the same. Please join me in looking forward to the future for West Virginia women.

This year, one of the Commission's goals is to produce the third edition of *Women and the Law: A Legal Handbook*. We brought together a team of volunteers who generously donated their expertise to the project. The handbook should be ready for release early in 2005.

Work continues on the second volume of *West Virginia's African American Women of Distinction*. For several months, a committee has worked to collect and review nominations for inclusion in the book, which is set for release in the coming months.

Our executive director has been working on developing a program to empower young women with the confidence and resources necessary to make important life decisions. The program is in the early stages of development, with work continuing through the coming year.

The Commission is also working on plans for our annual Women's Day at the Legislature and Celebrate Women Awards, which will be held in March and April, respectively. More information on these events will be available soon. I hope you find this newsletter a reliable resource in learning more about the Commission, its programs and how you can get involved.

Wendy D. Thomas

Join Us!

WVWC 2004-2005 Calendar of Events

October 21, 2004

9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Nontraditional Career/College Fair
Earl Ray Tomblin Conference Center
Logan

December 4, 2004

Quarterly Meeting
Lakeview Resort - Morgantown

March 2005

Quarterly Meeting
Location TBA

March 2005

Women's Day at the Legislature
Gaston Caperton Convention Center

April 2005

Quarterly Meeting
Location TBA

April 30, 2005

Celebrate Women Awards Banquet
Marriott Hotel - Charleston

West Virginia Women's Commission
State Capitol Complex
Building 6, Room 850
Charleston, West Virginia 25305
Website: www.wvdhhr.org/women
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DaisySeed: "Growing" Your Own Company

Lisa Gasper, West Virginia Development Office

According to Kathleen DuBois, "Starting a business from scratch requires a risk-taking personality, perseverance, belief in oneself and resourcefulness." Although DuBois, president and founder of DaisySeed Communications, Inc. and Progressity Development Solutions, has put tremendous time and energy into managing and growing two businesses, she says the personal rewards of being a small business owner are never-ending. "The sense of freedom that I have and the interesting clients that my team and I serve make me feel as if I haven't truly worked for a living since December 18, 2001—the day I stopped working for someone else!"

From Teaching to Marketing to Fundraising

DuBois, a Charleston native, entered into the marketing communications field by default. When unable to find a teaching job as a new college graduate, DuBois applied for a position with WVU in their newly created office of Marketing and New Student Recruiting. Ms. DuBois was hired to develop and implement marketing strategies targeted toward high school guidance counselors, prospective students and their parents. DuBois eventually lead the University's overall marketing efforts for new student recruiting and directed a team effort that eventually increased student applications by 100 percent and overall freshman class size by more than 25 percent.

After six years, DuBois headed to Pittsburgh where she was hired by Blue Cross of Western Pennsylvania to work for one of its non-profit subsidiaries. The position not only required marketing communications responsibilities, but also grant writing to government entities and securing private contributions from foundations and corporations. "Although my boss knew that I didn't have any experience in professional fundraising, she told me I was smart enough to figure it out," DuBois states. After being with the organization for seven months, DuBois played a lead role in landing a \$750,000 grant for her organization. DuBois was eventually offered a position as the chief external relations and fundraising officer at a prestigious private school in Pittsburgh, where she guided the process of launching a \$10 million capital campaign.

After living in Pittsburgh for seven years, the WVU Foundation contacted DuBois and asked if she would bring her marketing and fundraising expertise back to West Virginia. She was excited to return to her home state and headed back to Morgantown to serve as the chief fundraising and external relations officer for the WVU College of Engineering and Mineral Resources. DuBois was responsible for planning and implementing a \$22.5 million capital campaign, which was part of the WVU Foundation's overall \$250 million "Building Greatness" campaign.

Taking the Leap of Faith into Business Ownership

DuBois was inspired by many entrepreneurial alumni with whom she interacted while at the WVU College of Engineering, and started thinking about starting a consulting business. "I asked a friend of mine who had launched a successful business of his own, if he would help me with all of the mysterious details of establishing a company," she said.

In October 2001, DuBois incorporated DaisySeed Communications. "I told my boss that I was leaving to start my own business and away I went. Since that day, I've never looked back because I love having my own business." DuBois gave the College of Engineering a few months notice and once she left was hired back as a consultant to help with a transition plan and until a replacement could be found for her position.

In June 2002, DuBois was faced with a personal tragedy. Her mother died of cancer after being very ill for several years. "After Mom died, I decided to pack up my things in Morgantown and head to Charleston temporarily to live with my Dad while we both adjusted to the loss." She maintained a satellite office in Morgantown, but Charleston was home to her largest client.

DuBois' father died suddenly only five months after the death of her mother. "With so many transitions in my life, I decided to stay put in Charleston rather than going back to Morgantown. I had no choice but to make my business work. I wasn't about to fail, even though I was struggling personally with the loss of my parents. I had clients that depended on me and they gave me the motivation and support to keep going," said DuBois.

DaisySeed Grows!

DaisySeed's client base has included The EdVenture Group in Morgantown, the WVU Technical College of Engineering in Montgomery, Leadership West Virginia and the University of Pittsburgh School of Engineering. In addition, DaisySeed is developing



and implementing a marketing campaign to reduce and prevent gun violence throughout the Southern District of the United States Attorney's Office—a 23-county region.

In June 2004, DuBois announced DaisySeed's newly created division, Progressity Development Solutions. Progressity focuses solely on fundraising consulting for nonprofit organizations and academic institutions. Since strong external relations and strategic planning are essential elements of a successful fundraising program, these services are also provided to Progressity clients.

DuBois and her team stay extremely busy. "Almost all of our clients come from referrals. It's extremely humbling and rewarding to know that people call because they've heard that my team and I do quality work." These days, bringing on new staff members to meet the new business opportunities is DuBois' greatest challenge. "It's difficult to find superior people who can be in front of a corporate CEO one minute and facilitating a focus group with ex-convicts the next."

Success Doesn't Occur in a Vacuum

Accessing the quality resources available to small business owners has been extremely helpful to DuBois. "Two particular organizations that provided the necessary advice and technical expertise needed by a small business owner are the Secretary of State's Office and the Small Business Development Center. My contact from the Small Business Development Center has been such an excellent advisor. Early on, he helped me to refine a business plan and work through the challenge of bringing on employees and deciding whether or not I could hire certain professionals on a contractual basis. He reviewed our website and gave excellent feedback. He also shared with me the opportunity to apply for a WWSBDC grant for technical training for my administrative assistant and me. I attended two extremely helpful training courses to improve the management and efficiency of my company."

Information from the Secretary of State's office and from the West Virginia Small Business Development Center are available on line at www.wv.gov.

2004 Celebrate Women Award Winners

- Arts:** Catherine Miller, Buckhannon
- Business:** Nanya Friend, Charleston
- Education:** Barbara Bias, Huntington
- Government:** Sharon Weaver, Clarksburg
- Labor:** Rita McCrobie, Bretz
- Math/Science:** Loretta Haddy, Charleston
- Mountaineer Spirit:** Joan C. Browning, Lewisburg
- Professions:** Eunice L. Green, Dunbar
- Public Service:** Patricia H. White, Charleston
- Sports:** Alexis Hornbuckle, South Charleston
- Unsung Hero:** Lucille Pianfetti, Cross Lanes
- Volunteer Service:** Tonya Daft, Mannington
- Student Essay Contest:** Carol McCauley, Tucker County; Lana Stiles, Monongalia County; Johnna Shumate, Raleigh County
- Guardian Angel Award:** Sue Julian and in memory of Diane Reese; Delegate Bonnie Brown

WVWC Publications in 2005

Women and the Law

The third edition of *Women and the Law: A Legal Handbook* is in production and should be ready for release early in 2005.

African-American Women of Distinction

African-American Women of Distinction, Volume II is currently being compiled. Please contact our office for an update or to order this publication.



The West Virginia Women's Commission is an office of the Department of Health and Human Resources. It was created in 1977 to advocate issues relating to women. The Commission also works with public and private agencies to provide needed services to enhance the lives of state women.

Mission Statement: The West Virginia Women's Commission promotes the equality and empowerment of all West Virginia women through advocacy, research, education and consensus building. The Commission exists to foster women's economic, educational, political and social development, to ensure their full participation in society and to recognize the achievements and accomplishments of state women.



Commissioners, Ex-Officios and Staff Listing

Chair: Wendy Thomas, Huntington

Vice-Chair: Elaine Harris, St. Albans

Commissioners: Cheri Heflin, Charleston
Jerry Henderson, Buckhannon
Margaret Jarvis, Poca
Kasey Russell, Charleston
Mary Pat Steptoe, Clarksburg
Robin Stultz, Weston

Ex-Officios: Sally Brown, Human Rights Commission
Jennifer Burgess, Department of Labor
Tari Crouse, Division of Personnel
Joyce Daniels, Higher Education Policy Commission
Sallie Harrington, Department of Education
Emily Hopta, Department of Health and Human Resources
Dawn Warfield, Attorney General's Office

Staff: Alison E. Wood, Executive Director
Shirley Belcher, Secretary

Volunteer Opportunity

The Women's Commission is always looking for volunteer support from West Virginians, both male and female. You can become a "Friend of West Virginia Women" by:

- ⌘ Assisting the Commission with various special events and outreach projects.
- ⌘ Attending quarterly Commission meetings.
- ⌘ Joining local groups dedicated to improving the status of West Virginia women.
- ⌘ Donating goods or services to the Commission.
- ⌘ Offering recommendations to the Commission for projects or actions.
- ⌘ Sharing your views on women's issues with the Commission and your legislators.

Contact us today!



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