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Commissioner

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EEO Officer

What's New in EEO?

The EEO Office is always looking for new ways to improve its programs, and is working together with the Bureaus to ensure our employees' are protected from discrimination and harassment. This year, with the participation of the Bureau Liaisons, we have created an EEO Training Committee to review and update our EEO training curriculum. In the months ahead, you can expect to see more exciting and informative EEO trainings, with new PowerPoint presentations. We have also established a committee to develop "Structured Interview Training," to guide managers and supervisors in conducting effective employment interviews fairly.

We are participating in employment interviews to a much greater extent, and members of this office are being included on bureau interview panels for new hires and discretionary promotions. We are also holding "EEO Concerns" meetings with the Deputy Commissioners to increase their awareness of specific EEO issues that may be present in their bureaus.

We have begun to review demographic data of the Agency's workforce to identify areas where there may be underutilization of particular groups, so that methods of correcting these imbalances can be explored.

The EEO Office is also working with the Office of Information Technology (OIT) to develop a process in which individuals can file, and track, a complaint of discrimination online. And last, but not least, we have expanded our program of site visits to the field. This will allow us to meet more of the employees who make up our diverse workforce, and learn more about how we can assist you with EEO matters.

*Contributed by: Edith Kantrowitz
Deputy EEO Officer*

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July—

On July 2nd, the EEOC celebrated its 45th anniversary. July 22nd also marks the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.



A Visit From Jane
It was a gloomy Thursday morning; I rushed to work running from the rain drops while thoughts of gender inequality invaded my mind. I could not help but wonder if the guy at the local store would still call me "princess," when I'm in my late 30's. Then it dawned on me, journalist and women's rights activist, Jane Latour was going to make a guest appearance this morning in our cafeteria. My mood quickly lightened as I remembered flipping through her book, *Sisters in the Brotherhoods-Working Women Organizing for Equality in New York City*. This book conveys stories told by actual women about discrimination in the workplace and ways to deal with it.

While walking to the 3rd floor low-rise I wondered about Latour's personality—would she be friendly, serious or even somewhat angry. I was curious about her supporters too, would they be predominately women—middle aged or older women? When I arrived in the room, I quickly glanced around, never have I been more surprised to see such a

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diverse group of people. There was no specific gender or ethnicity predominating. I looked at the author, and saw a happy person who appeared delighted to stand in front of us. Her personality kept us engaged; some took notes, most were just eager to listen. Latour promotes awareness and consciousness of labor rights. Her main goal is to stimulate her readers to take chances whether female or male. She encourages consideration, adapting, and learning from mistakes. The sections in the book offer a glance of real life experiences contributed by women from non-traditional occupations. Latour read some of the passages out loud and I felt like I was getting great advice from a good friend.

During this event, Latour highlighted issues such as harassment in the workplace and mentioned that many women are afraid of entering the blue collar workforce because they do not want to be involved in difficult situations. She finds it frustrating that “eighty percent of women are still in traditional jobs” and I must admit so do I.

Latour stresses the importance of having women in leadership positions. The position of women is often thought to have improved during the last few decades. There is, however, considerable debate as to the extent of change and the reasons for it.

I would give Latour my strongest recommendation; her power to motivate the masses is truly inspirational. Through her vision we are able to learn the importance of building confidence and establishing a sense of understanding in the workplace.

Contributed by: *Shastra Singh*

Did You Know?

Did you know that as of 2005, nearly 170 languages were spoken in New York City and 36% of its population was foreign born? English remains the most widely spoken language in New York although there are large pockets in Queens and Brooklyn where up to 20% of people do not speak English at all or not very well.

According to a 2001 study four of the city’s five boroughs ranked among the nation’s twenty most diverse counties. Queens is the only large county in the United States where the median income among black households, about \$52,000 a year, has surpassed that of whites. It is also the nation’s most ethnically diverse county.

% Foreign born by borough 1970-2006

Borough	1970	1980	1990	2000	2006
Brooklyn	17.5	23.8	29.2	37.8	37.8
Queens	21.0	28.6	36.2	46.1	48.5
Manhattan	20.0	24.4	25.8	29.4	28.7
Bronx	15.6	18.4	22.8	29.0	31.8
Staten Island	9.0	9.8	11.8	16.4	20.9
Total	18.2	23.6	28.4	35.9	37.0

(Source: NYC.gov)

Contributed by: *Michael Walczyszyn*
EEO Investigator

Filing an EEO Complaint

No state shall ... deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” (Fourteenth Amendment, United States Constitution) Discrimination and harassment in the workplace is illegal. If you feel like you have been a victim of either, you are advised to file a complaint within statute of limitations.

It is important to recognize that tolerating offensive and unwelcomed comments and actions are not a part of your job. If you believe you are a victim of harassment in the work place, it is recommended that you contact the Bureau EEO Liaison or the Agency EEO Office for further assistance. Complaints filed with the agency EEO office should be made within one year of the alleged incident. Too often small issues are overlooked, which then escalate into bigger concerns. Do not be afraid to report your concerns promptly. All matters are confidential.

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