

## **SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES**

### **Sara Manzano-Díaz**

Sara Manzano-Díaz was confirmed as the Director of the Women's Bureau at the Department of Labor on February 11, 2010. The Women's Bureau – created by Congress in 1920, the same year women were granted the right to vote – is the only federal agency exclusively mandated to serve and promote the interests of working women. In her capacity as Director, Ms. Manzano-Díaz' vision is to empower working women nationwide to achieve economic security.

Prior to her confirmation, Ms. Manzano-Díaz served as Deputy Secretary of State for Regulatory Programs at the Pennsylvania Department of State. As the highest-ranking Latina in Pennsylvania state government, she was responsible for protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the public by overseeing the licensure of approximately one million professionals. From 1995 to 2002, Ms. Manzano-Díaz worked in various capacities at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, including as Deputy General Counsel for Civil Rights and Litigation, where she enforced fair housing, civil rights, and anti-discrimination laws. Ms. Manzano-Díaz also previously served as an Assistant Attorney General in New York where she conducted investigations and prosecuted allegations of consumer fraud. She also served as a judicial assistant and pro se attorney in the New York State Judiciary.

A former co-chair of The Forum of Executive Women's Mentoring Committee, which mentors young professional women as they begin their careers, Ms. Manzano-Díaz earned her bachelor's degree in public relations and communications from Boston University and her law degree from Rutgers University School of Law.

### **Ray Fleming Dinneen, Psy. D**

Dr. Ray Fleming Dinneen is the Founder and Executive Director of CLIMB Wyoming, a non-profit organization that trains and places low-income, single mothers in higher paying careers. She developed the CLIMB program in Laramie County, Wyoming in 1986 to meet the job and life skills needs of low-income, single mothers. In 2004, Dr. Fleming Dinneen expanded the CLIMB program to six additional sites across Wyoming, which now serves families in more than 12 counties. The CLIMB program has received both local and national acclaim for successfully moving families out of poverty. Over 1,000 women have graduated from the program to date, consistently doubling their wage income.

A longtime advocate of Wyoming families, Dr. Fleming Dinneen currently serves on the governor-appointed Wyoming Workforce Development Council and on the Board of the Wyoming Children's Society. She also has served on the planning committee for the governor's initiative to bring the Family and Economic Self-Sufficiency Standard to Wyoming, and the United Way of Laramie County's Women's Leadership Council. In 2004, Dr. Fleming Dinneen was honored with the Athena Award by the Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce, which recognizes individuals who have made a significant impact assisting women in reaching their potential. She also was named the 2008 "Atta Girl" Award winner from the Equipoise Fund.

Dr. Fleming Dinneen earned her bachelor's degree in business management from the University of Wyoming and doctorate in psychology from the University of Northern Colorado. Her doctoral research was on the effects of short-term vocational, social, and academic training on employability of public assistance recipients.

## **Renee Owens**

Renee Owens is a native Washingtonian and recent graduate of Wider Opportunities for Women's Building Futures Construction Training Program, a six-week program offered in partnership with the local AFL-CIO and Covenant House, an organization that addresses widespread problems of homelessness and poverty among teens and young adults.

Ms. Owens is passionate about green training and green jobs for women. She has been a member of Green America and attended many local green festivals over the past few years. In addition to the certifications she holds as a Building Futures graduate, Ms. Owens completed a green landscaping training program, where she learned to be an "organic lawn scientist" for her current landscaping jobs. Ms. Owens' new employment goal is to become a cement mason. She also is a true mentor to other Building Futures women students.

## **Joan Kuriansky**

Joan Kuriansky is the Executive Director of Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), an organization that works nationally and in the metro DC area to achieve economic independence for women and girls throughout their lifetime. WOW has worked on a program and policy level on issues relating to literacy, job training, and education, technical and nontraditional skills, and career development.

Previously, Ms. Kuriansky was the Executive Director of the Older Women's League, where she co-founded the Campaign for Women's Health, building a coalition of over eight million women and men. Ms. Kuriansky has been engaged in the issues of violence against women, including as a founding board member of My Sister's Place in Washington, D.C., Executive Director of Women Against Abuse (WAA) in Philadelphia (1981-1987), and in establishing a national program to implement the newly authorized Violence Against Women Act in all states and territories in 1995. Today, Ms. Kuriansky serves on a number of national and local boards. She also chairs the National Coalition on Women, Jobs and Job Training.

Ms. Kuriansky holds a bachelor's degree from Washington University in St. Louis, a master's degree in urban affairs from Occidental College, and a law degree from the University of Virginia. Ms. Kuriansky received "A Gloria Steinem Woman of Vision Award" by the Ms. Foundation. She was appointed to serve on the President's Advisory Board on Violence Against Women between 1995 and 2001.