

# Overview of N.E.W. Leadership Institute

## May 14 – May 18, 2004

This year's class contained 33 undergraduate women from 14 different colleges and universities and ranged in age from 17 to 50. Their hometowns included Altus, Anadarko, Broken Arrow, Cherokee, Del City, Edmond, Kellyville, Lawton, Locust Grove, Marietta, Moore, Norman, Oklahoma City, Okmulgee, Perry, Purcell, Shawnee, Tahlequah, Tulsa and Wagoner. There were also students from Baxter Springs, Kansas; Little Rock, Arkansas; and Ethiopia.



N.E.W. Leadership Class of 2004

Our "Faculty-In-Residence" this year were Oklahoma County Court Clerk **Patricia Presley** and Native American rights advocate **JoKay Dowell**, who were available to participants during the 5-day program. These adult mentors attended the sessions along with the students and also stayed with the class at the Sooner Hotel during the program.

The 2004 program included a political women scavenger hunt and skills building workshops led by: **Catheryn Koss**, organizing and motivating volunteers; **JoKay Dowell**, grassroots organizing and media strategies; **Valerie Thompson**, analyzing your leadership effectiveness; **Ginger Decoteau**, successful career planning strategies; **Linda Terrell**, team building and personality styles; **Teresa Collado**, leading in an increasingly diverse society, and **Gaetane Jean-Marie**, effective conflict resolution.



Sunday Morning Community Activism Panel  
Sandra Rana, Kay Holladay, Penny Painter, and Dana



Participants listen to Sunday Evening  
"Faculty in Residence" Panel in the OU  
Honors College Library

Saturday evening, participants enjoyed a campaign simulation exercise and received campaign advice from four political campaign experts: **Leslie Blair**, Assistant to the OK Secretary of Commerce & Tourism and former campaign manager; **Sheryl Lovelady**, Executive Director of the Oklahoma State Senate Democratic PAC; **Dana Murphy**, Vice Chair of the Oklahoma Republican Party; and **Shelly Perkins**, Assistant to Corporation Commissioner Jeff Cloud.

Four "Career Jump-Start" sessions featured advice on government internships, volunteering in campaigns, graduate school options, and paths to and from law school.

Throughout the conference, participants listened to and interacted with several keynote speakers including Lieutenant Governor **Mary Fallin**, Oklahoma Corporation Commissioner **Denise Bode**, State Senator **Angela Monson**, State Representatives **Jari Askins** and **Susan Winchester**, Secretary of Commerce and Tourism **Kathy Taylor**, Secretary of State **Susan Savage**, Oklahoma Supreme Court Justice **Yvonne Kauger**, and US District Judge **Vicki Miles-LaGrange**.



Participants watch Scavenger Hunt Videos at Sooner Hotel



“Behind the Scenes” at State Capitol with Anne Roberts

At the State Capitol, round robin networking panels allowed participants to be exposed to the many opportunities available in government service and featured **LaRita Aragon**, Brigadier General of the Oklahoma Air National Guard; **Melissa McLawhorn Houston**, Chief of Staff of the Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security; **Vanessa Thurman**, Chief Probation Officer with the United States Probation Office for the Western District; **Wanda DeBruler**, President of DeBruler and Associates; **Susie Graves**, Executive Director of the Communities Foundation of Oklahoma; **Gena Timberman Howard**, Deputy Director of the Native American Cultural & Educational Authority; **Sandy Ingraham**, attorney and social policy consultant; and **Sharon Neuwald**, Director of Legislative Relations for the Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

In addition, participants went “Behind the Scenes” at the State Capitol with **Margaret Erling**, lobbyist and President of Erling & Associates; **Kathryn Jones**, Executive Director of the Higher Education Alumni Council of Oklahoma (HEACO); **Lou Kohlman**, Law Clerk for Oklahoma Criminal Court of Appeals Judge Charles Chapel; **Anne Roberts**, Director of the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy; and **Trish Weedn**, Director of the Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils.



Trish Weedn and her “Behind the Scenes” group at State Capitol

Other panels focused on the “Options of Public Service” featuring **Terry Neese**, President of Women Impacting Public Policy and **Nance Diamond**, Oklahoma Arts Institute President. A panel entitled “Community Activism and Politics” included **Kay Holladay**, Oklahoma Interagency Coordinating Council for Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Diseases Chair; **Penny Painter**, Executive Director of Tulsa’s Resonance; **Sandra Rana**, Majlis Shura Member of the Islamic Society of Tulsa; and **Dana Tiger**, Native American artist and community activist.

Our evening reception at the State Capitol celebrated women in political leadership, including legislators, state-wide elected officials, state and federal agency heads, judges, and political party officers.



Networking Panel at State Capitol  
Vanessa Thurman, LaRita Aragon,  
Melissa McLawhorn Houston

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Read more about N.E.W. Leadership – including how to become a financial supporter – and view photographs of the 2004 institute at:  
<http://ou.edu/special/albertctr/NLO/>.