

## **N.E.W. Leadership 2004 Participants' Comments**

I now realize how underrepresented women are in Oklahoma politics and I have a greater respect for the women who have fought their way in and paved the way for the rest of us.

The campaign scenario exercise Saturday evening was awesome. Our team did well because we had learned to listen, recognize and understand one another's strengths.

N.E.W. Leadership showed me how vital women are to the political process and how their views have caused important changes in laws concerning families and minorities.

I learned that there are nearly endless ways to get involved in politics and public service; you don't have to hold elective office to make a difference.

Before I came, I didn't have a clue about all the possible ways to get involved. Thanks!

N.E.W. Leadership opened my eyes to unforeseen possibilities. I had never considered public service as a viable career option for me before; that has certainly changed.

I learned ways to apply myself toward making a difference in my world and community.

N.E.W. Leadership brought me into contact with people from a wide range of backgrounds and political perspectives without trying to sway anyone to one view or another.

N.E.W. Leadership's organizers truly did a fantastic job – the program was so well run.

Before N.E.W. Leadership, I had no experience with campaigns, had never been to the State Capitol, met with office holders, etc. N.E.W. Leadership definitely changed that!

I learned that MY concerns can be a part of something significant and meaningful.

Listening to all of the remarkable speakers throughout the week was more than eye opening; it was truly inspiring and empowering.

Since I was raised in a predominantly white, predominantly Christian small town, this experience was fascinating to me. Getting to know the other participants and their stories, issues and backgrounds was invigorating. I feel as if we truly did celebrate diversity at N.E.W. Leadership.

I'm a Democrat and I was able to speak quite comfortably on an array of topics with the Republican participants. It turns out we had a lot of common ground. I learned that it is important to realize your similarities while respecting your differences.