

OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR JULIANA STRATTON
 Illinois Council on Women and Girls
 Quarterly Meeting Minutes
 February 21st, 2023

A present majority of filled non-ex-officio positions shall constitute a quorum: i.e. 13 members present				
Position	Name	Present	Phone	Absent
Ex-Officio Mem.				
Chair, Ex-Officio (LG's Office)	Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton	x		
Ex-Officio (Refugee & Immigrant Services, DHS)	Vacant			
Ex-Officio (Dept. on Aging)	LaRhonda Williams (rep. Paula Basta)		x	
Ex-Officio (Dept. of Human Rights)	Chris Smith (rep. James Bennett)		x	
Ex-Officio (Dept. of Children & Family Services)	Marla Courts (rep. Marc Smith)			x
Ex-Officio (Dept. of Healthcare & Fam. Services)	Director Theresa Eagleson			x
Ex-Officio (Dept. of Pub. Health)	Shannon Lightner			x
Ex-Officio (Dept. of Labor)	Marina Faz-Huppert (rep. Michael Kleinik)		x	
Ex-Officio (State Board of Ed.)	Jaclyn Matthews (Rep. Carmen Ayala)		x	
Ex-Officio (Board of Higher Ed.)	Director Ginger Ostro			x
Ex-Officio (Community College Board)	Vacant			
Pub. Mem. (Gov.)				
Pub. Mem. (Gov.)	Alexa Rice			x
Pub. Mem. (Gov.)	Pending			
Pub. Mem. (Gov.)	Nikita Richards		x	
Pub. Mem. (Gov.)	Veronica Espina		x	
Pub. Mem. (House Min.)				
Pub. Mem. (House Min.)	Ines Kutlesa		x	
Pub. Mem. (House Min.)	Rhonda Thomas			x
Pub. Mem. (House Min.)	Theresa Forthofer		x	
Pub. Mem. (House Min.)	Pending			
Pub. Mem. (House Speaker)				
Pub. Mem. (House Speaker)	Felicia Davis Blakley		x	
Pub. Mem. (House Speaker)	Kaethe Morris Hoffer			x
Pub. Mem. (House Speaker)	Maaria Mozaffar			x
Pub. Mem. (House Speaker)	Wendy Pollack			x

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Pub. Mem. (Sen. Min.)				
Pub. Mem. (Sen. Min.)	Pending			
Pub. Mem. (Sen. Min.)	Vidhya Prakash		x	
Pub. Mem. (Sen. Min.)	Monique Garcia			x
Pub. Mem. (Sen. Min.)	Pamela Althoff			x
Pub. Mem. (Sen. Pres.)				
Pub. Mem. (Sen. Pres.)	Amina Jaffer		x	
Pub. Mem. (Sen. Pres.)	Pending			
Pub. Mem. (Sen. Pres.)	Rochelle Crump		x	
Pub. Mem. (Sen. Pres.)	Sylvia Matos-Collins		x	
Rep. of Gov.'s Office Mem.				
Rep. of Gov.'s Office	Deputy Governor Sol Flores			x
Guest (non-member)				
Guest	Kim Savage		x	
Guest, Dept. of Healthcare & Family Services	Jodi Carr Babcock		x	
Guest, Women Employed	Ibie Hart		x	
Guest, Women Employed	Sharmili Majmudar		x	
Guest, Women Employed	Mary Kay Devine		x	
Guest, Illinois Dept. of Labor	Anna Koeppel		x	
Guest, Illinois Dept. of Labor	Elizabeth Guerrero		x	
Guest, Girls Committee	Angela Guo		x	
Guest, Girls Committee	Shreya Nallamotheu		x	
Guest, Girls Committee	Maryam Abbas		x	
Guest, Girls Committee	Ranyia Cox		x	
Guest, Girls Committee	Nandana Voolapalli		x	
Guest, Girls Committee	Jennie Ren		x	
Guest, Girls Committee	Cherie Animashaun		x	
Guest, Girls Committee	Sydney Stewart		x	

Lieutenant Governor Stratton's Staff Present:

- Dr. Susan Ogwal, Policy Director
- Rob Baren, Senior Advisor to Lt. Governor Stratton
- Teresa Reyes, Deputy Chief of Staff
- Sarah Richman, Dunn Fellow
- Patrobas Wafula, University of Illinois Illini Science Policy Fellow
- Janelle Gurnsey, Deputy Chief of Staff for External Affairs and Communications
- Ariana Correa, Program Manager, JEO Initiative

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- Natashee Scott, General Counsel & Deputy Chief of Staff
- Joseph McGee, Manager of Intergovernmental Affairs

Agenda

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

- a. Lt. Governor Stratton called the meeting to order at 4:03pm
- b. Roll call was taken, and a quorum established.

II. Approval of the Agenda for 2/21/23 and Minutes from 8/23/22 and 12/13/22

a. Approval of the Agenda for 2/21/23

- i. Motioned by Ines Kutlesa
- ii. Seconded by Felicia Davis Blakley
- iii. All in favor
- iv. None opposed
- v. No abstentions

b. Approval of the Minutes from 8/23/22

- i. Motioned by Nikita Richards
- ii. Seconded by Dr. Vidhya Prakash
- iii. All in favor
- iv. None opposed
- v. No abstentions

c. Approval of the Minutes from 12/13/22

- i. Motioned by Ines Kutlesa
- ii. Seconded by Theresa Forthofer
- iii. All in favor
- iv. None opposed
- v. No abstentions

III. Chairperson's Remarks

- a. Lt. Governor Stratton welcomed everyone to the first quarterly meeting of 2023. She said it was great to see so many members of the Girls Committee.
- b. She introduced Felicia Davis Blakley, President and CEO of the Chicago Foundation for Women. Felicia introduced herself to the group and said she is very excited about working with the young people on the council.
- c. Lt. Governor Stratton introduced LaRhonda Williams, the new representative for the Illinois Department on Aging. Lt. Governor Stratton said that LaRhonda serves as the Benefits, Eligibility Assistance, and Monitoring Administrator for the Division of Advocacy & Prevention Services in the Illinois Department on Aging. LaRhonda introduced herself to the council.

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- d. Lt. Governor Stratton said that members of the Girls Committee would introduce themselves during New Business.
- e. Lt. Governor Stratton said that since the last quarterly meeting with the Chicago Women in Trades, the council wanted to continue the conversation around women's rights and opportunities in the workplace. She thanked council member Marina Faz-Huppert for helping coordinate today's presentation between Illinois Department of Labor and Women Employed.
- f. Lt. Governor Stratton reminded council members that they are required to serve on at least one subcommittee, and she told them to fill out the council committee selection form which was sent out by Sarah Richman.
- g. Lt. Governor Stratton said she was thrilled with Governor Pritzker's remarks in his State of the State Address. She said she has been traveling around the state with Governor Pritzker to talk about the proposed budget and the \$250 million being proposed for early childhood development. She said that access to early childhood education is a critical issue for children, as well as for working women who are often impacted by childcare deserts.
- h. Lt. Governor Stratton requested that her team share highlights from the budget address to the Illinois Council on Women and Girls.
- i. Lt. Governor Stratton said that next week, she would be heading to Washington, DC to testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee on matters relating to the Equal Rights Amendment.

IV. New Business

- a. Presentation by Illinois Department of Labor and Women Employed
 - i. Lt. Governor Stratton introduced the mission of Women Employed, and said they pursue equity for women in the workforce by advocating for fair and inclusive workspaces and employment opportunities. She said she visited the Women's Entrepreneurship Hub at Women Employed in September 2022. Lt. Governor Stratton said that the Illinois Department of Labor is working together with Women Employed through the FARE Grant Program to raise awareness of pay equity and pay transparency standards among women workers, particularly for women of color and women in low-wage positions.
 - ii. Lt. Governor Stratton introduced the following presenters: Elizabeth Guerrero from the Illinois Department of Labor, Sharmili Majmudar from Women Employed, Anna Koeppel from the Illinois Department of Labor, and Ibie Hart from Women Employed.
 - iii. Elizabeth Guerrero introduced Sharmili Majmudar. Sharmili presented on recent trends in equal pay legislation. She discussed how Women Employed has been advocating for women in the workplace for the last 50 years by shaping policy change, expanding access to educational opportunities, and

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ensuring fair and inclusive workplaces. She highlighted that as of September 2019, Illinois employers are prohibited from screening job applicants based on their current or prior wages. She said this will help close the wage gap and increase wages for women and people of color.

- iv. Sharmili discussed how Illinois amended its equal pay law to require equal pay for “substantially similar work... the performance of which requires substantially similar skill, effort, and responsibility.” She said this is a fairer basis for comparison. She discussed another amendment which ensures that victims of pay discrimination can be provided relief. She also said that in 2021, the equal pay law was amended to require businesses to report on their pay data. She also discussed salary and pay transparency as a method to level the playing field. Sharmili passed the meeting to Elizabeth.
- v. Elizabeth shared the mission of the Illinois Department of Labor. She discussed two labor laws: (1) Victims’ Economic Security and Safety Act and (2) Family Bereavement Leave Act. She discussed how IDOL enforces the Equal Pay Act which prohibits employers from paying unequal wages to men and women for equal work.
- vi. Elizabeth discussed how IDOL is using the Fostering Access, Rights, and Education (FARE) Grant program to raise awareness of pay equity and pay transparency standards among women workers, particularly low-wage women of color. She said IDOL is working to strengthen Illinois’s capacity to enforce equal pay and other employment protections. She passed the meeting back to Sharmili.
- vii. Sharmili discussed how in a survey with Illinois women, 61% did not believe there were resources or organizations available to help with fair pay issues. Additionally, 79% of women in that survey had not seen news or information about the new equal pay rules and laws.
- viii. Sharmili talked about the FARE Grant Resource Page which is available at equalpayillinois.org. This page has more information about state and federal rights resources. She said that Women Employed is running a Statewide Advertising Campaign on social media. She asked that the council share the “know your rights” resources via the digital community outreach toolkit.
- ix. Sharmili talked about the passage of the Paid Leave for All Act. She said the bill was first introduced 15 years ago. She said this Act applies to full- and part-time workers and provides workers with up to 40 hours of paid time off. She said leave can be used for any reason. She said this is specifically related to short-term leave when someone needs a few days or a few hours off. She passed the meeting to Anna Koeppel.
- x. Anna Koeppel from IDOL discussed the implementation of the Paid Leave for All Act. She said the law takes effect on January 1, 2024. She said that before implementation, IDOL will develop back-end enforcement

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operations, such as building a complaint form and conducting outreach to employers and workers to make sure they both understand their rights and responsibilities under the law. She added her email: anna.koeppel@illinois.gov and then passed the meeting to Ibie Hart.

- xi. Ibie Hart presented on the Women's Entrepreneurship (WE) Hub. She said that since the pandemic, many women were interested in starting their own businesses, but they didn't know how to locate resources. She said that the WE Hub helps women in various stages of starting a business or managing an existing business, with a specific focus on helping women of color. She said that the WE Hub partners with business resource organizations. She said that everything is completely free, and the site provides a step-by-step guide for getting to the next level in the business development process. The WE Hub also directs women to different business certification resources.
 - xii. Lt. Governor Stratton thanked the presenters for the work they do to protect equal pay and provide opportunities for women. She asked the council if there were any questions. There were no questions.
- b. Girls Committee Introductions
- i. The following members of the Girls Committee introduced themselves:
 - 1. Angela Guo
 - 2. Anna Gagne
 - 3. Cherie Animashaun
 - 4. Jennie Ren
 - 5. Maryam Abbas
 - 6. Nandana Voolapalli
 - 7. Ranyia Cox
 - 8. Shreya Nallamothe
 - 9. Sydney Stewart
 - ii. Lt. Governor Stratton thanked the girls for introducing themselves, and she said that she looks forward to working with them further.
- c. Committee Updates
- i. Health and Healthcare Committee
 - 1. Dr. Vidhya Prakash said the committee has been planning a webinar on the prevention of firearm violence, with a focus on safety, for Firearm Violence Prevention Month in June. She said that Shreya Nallamothe and Sylvia Matos-Collins would moderate the panel. She said that the second panel would be moderated by Rochelle Crump and Jennie Ren.
 - ii. Leadership and Inclusion Committee
 - 1. Dr. Susan Ogwal said that Maaria and Nikita had to leave the meeting early, but Patrobas Wafula would share updates.

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2. Patrobas said that the committee would hopefully launch the Girls Lead application on March 8th, and the selection and matching process should take about 6 weeks. He said the committee was working on logistics for the rest of the program.
- iii. Gender-Based Violence Committee
 1. Ines Kutlesa shared that the committee was holding the second installment of the Know Your Rights virtual summit on March 15, 2023 to highlight resources to address gender-based violence across the state. She said that Amanda Pyron, Executive Director of The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence, would moderate. She said there would be panelists from Brave Space Alliance, KAN-WIN, Mujeres Latinas En Accion, and Crisis Center Foundation.
 2. Ines said that in the third installment of the Know Your Rights series, the committee could possibly partner with Women Employed and raise awareness around the Victim Economic Opportunity and Safety Act.
- iv. Girls Committee
 1. Jackie Matthews shared that the Girls Committee elected officers: Angela Guo as Chair, Shreya Nallamotheu as Vice Chair, and Maryam Abbas as Secretary. She said the next committee meeting would be on March 1, 2023 from 5:30-6:30pm. She said that throughout the next few months, the Girls Committee would hear from guest speakers and brainstorm projects to work on.
 2. Jackie told the council that if anyone wanted to be a speaker at a Girls Committee meeting, they should let her know.
- v. Academic and Economic Opportunity Committee
 1. Lt. Governor Stratton encouraged anyone interested to chair the Academic and Economic Opportunity Committee.

V. Member Updates

- a. No member updates.

VI. Public Comments

- a. No public comments.

VII. Adjournment

- a. Lt. Governor Stratton entertained a motion to adjourn at 5:25pm.
- b. Motioned by Jackie Matthews.
- c. Seconded by Rochelle Crump.
- d. All in favor
- e. No opposition
- f. No abstentions