

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN

Wednesdays in Mississippi

147 E. 81st Street
New York, N.Y. 10028

WIMS NEWSLETTER

December, 1966

NCNW - WIMS has gone back to Mississippi. A Mississippi Women's Planning Session was held in Jackson, November 18-19th at the Hotel Heidelberg. Three WIMS team members were present: Dorothy I. Height as Chairman of the Planning Session, Marie Barksdale as a Consultant from OEO and Polly Cowan as Director of the Planning Session.

Miss Doris Dozier, staff member of NCNW Project Womanpower for the southern region, and Polly Cowan went to Mississippi a few days before the session, starting in Oxford, Mississippi and driving down to Jackson, visiting the East Tallachatchie County School System on the way. We saw many friends from the University of Mississippi, and met with the Oxford Section of NCNW. At the Planning Session, which was devised for women from 15 communities in Mississippi to plan for training of volunteer women of the state by NCNW - WIMS, we encountered many of your summer hostesses. At the meeting of the Jackson Section of NCNW, which was timed for Miss Height's visit, we also met with women who had been helpful to WIMS during 1964 and 1965. As we moved around Jackson, we had meetings with Ken Dean, Executive Director of the Mississippi Council on Human Rights, John Mudd and others of CDGM, people from MAP - Mississippi Action Program and Jean Carroll who is the director of the Jackson Head Start Program. One evening, we were invited by Aurelia Young, who had gathered together a group of Deltas and their husbands, all of whom expressed interest in the Planning Session and in lending a hand to the Jackson Section of NCNW.

The Hotel Heidelberg, where the women who were participants from out of town were housed, as were the consultants, and where our planning sessions were held, treated us with consideration which would have astonished those of you who stayed in the hotel in 1964. A sign announcing the Planning Session of THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN was placed where a similar announcement for the Chamber of Commerce might have hung.

In Oxford we saw the metal hanger where the sign "white only" had hung when Ellen Tarry spotted it in the summer of 1965. It swung -- empty.

Not everything in Mississippi is sweetness and light. Although integrated meetings in Jackson are rarely cause for harrassment, this is URBAN Mississippi. Rural Mississippi lags far behind. You all read the reports of shootings, bombings and fires in the churches. Just this month John W. Gardner, the Secretary for Health, Education and Welfare, said that the Hinds County School District has lost its federal aid for failure to comply with nondiscrimination provisions of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. These Hinds County schools are in rural and suburban sections outside of Jackson and include twenty-four schools none of which have desegregated. Those few children who are in desegregated schools in other parts

of the state are not usually treated as equals, either in the school room or on the playground.

We were struck by the polarization around OEO projects (generally Head Start) which has generated warring camps between people who were formerly sympathetic to each other. We noticed also that many of the "haves" in the Negro community are now further apart from the "have-nots". As the gap is widening, it seems to follow the pattern of gaps between the lines (economically) in northern communities.

The Mississippi Women's Planning Session took this matter into account during the discussion of training women for volunteer services. We cannot, in this newsletter, give you a detailed account of the day and a half of sessions, but we will send a complete report to any of you who ask for it. We can tell you that the Mississippi women concluded that NCNW should set up a series of workshops, and that the first of these, to be held early in 1967, will instruct women from wide-spread communities on the art of writing proposals for government or foundation funding. This will be followed by workshops relating to the skills needed in the many aspects of volunteerism.

This is where WIMS team members enter. Some of us have written proposals, or judged them. We would be useful consultants for the first workshop. The rest of us have a background of volunteerism, either as volunteers, or in working with volunteers. Your skills are needed - will you become consultants to these workshops?

NCNW - WIMS would like to hear from each of you about your free time during 1967 and whether you would like to return to Mississippi as consultants. We have built funds for travel into our budget. You would be volunteering your time and experience. Do let us know.

NEWS FROM WIMS AREAS

BOSTON

Laura Avery has moved to Newton. Her husband is the new superintendent of the Episcopal City Mission on Boston.

Laya Weisner and Ruth Batson are having great success with METCO, transferring 220 Negro children from Roxbury and North Dorchester to suburban schools. Their program might turn out to be a model for other communities throughout the United States.

NEW JERSEY

Edith Savage was a recipient of the Lane Bryant Annual Awards Citation as an individual for her volunteer service. Neither WIMS, (group Award) nor Edith, were winners. But it was a happy thing to have had these citations.

Dr. Hannah Levin substituted for Dr. Molly Harrower on a panel at the National Convention of the Psychological Association. Her speech included a discussion of her work with WIMS. Hannah's sister-in-law, Sue Miller, is in England with her family. Sue is working on remedial reading with a Ford Funded program in London.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mildred Pitt is now Mildred Pitt Goodman. All of WIMS congratulates Mr. Goodman. Billie Hetzel and Marguerite Cassell were together in Gatlinburg, Tenn. Billie is to be congratulated on the passage of a bill setting up a public college in Washington due largely to her persistence and hard work. Geraldine Woods (California, but a member of one of the Washington Teams) President of Delta Sigma Theta, wrote us about a meeting she and her board has with President Lyndon Johnson in August. Discussion was on programs the President would like the Deltas to support with its womanpower. Gerry also recently attended a DACOWITS meeting.

Peg Roach moved from Washington to Chicago where she is working with the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice.

Jane McClary told us that her new book was published early November. We urge you to try your bookstores to buy it: THE WILL TO WIN is the title.

Mary Cushing Niles is in India once again working on the Friends World Institute.

CHICAGO

Elizabeth Haselden was a delegate of the American Baptist Convention to the World Order Conference of the World Council of Churches, held in Geneva, Switzerland.

Selma Taub writes: "I saw Buddy Mayer and asked her if the women who are participating in our Fine Arts Program (National Council of Jewish Women) could go on a tour of her galleries. Of course Buddy said 'yes'. The women were thrilled with Buddy, her home, and the art collection. Besides my vice presidency in NCJW, I'm social chairman of our temple where we are in the process of holding a series of speakers and discussion sessions on Open Occupancy. Our Skokie Fair Housing Committee is not too successful ... We haven't gotten to first base with the realtors."

NEW YORK

Trude Lash was named by Mayor Lindsay to the new Council Against Poverty of New York City. This council is the policy-making body for the whole anti-poverty program, responsible for the allocation of both federal and city funds. It operates within the newly created Human Resources Administration.

Betty Barnes is working with the School Volunteers operating under the New York City Board of Education. Betty's interest is libraries: School Volunteers have instituted a crash program in schools that have overcrowding and understaffing to help with cataloguing and other library mechanics so that libraries will be fully utilized.

Marion Logan ran a party for Fanny Lou Hamer in October, and is planning another affair for Mrs. Hamer to collect clothes for the people of Ruleville. Mrs. Hamer will be in New York for another speaking engagement this month.

Susie Goodwillie is working with the press corps of the United Nations.

Ann Doubilet finished her job with the Civil Liberties Union (on F.A.I.R. during the campaign for the Police Civilian Review Board) and is now working at the Committee for Democratic Voters.

Rae Dudley is on a job for the New York City Board of Education as a community coordinator spending most of her time at one of the elementary schools which is a feeder school for I.S. 201.

Dorothy I. Height and Margaret Bender were the "planners and executors" of a two-day leadership seminar at the United Nations, directed toward "The Responsibility of Women in Human Rights." Marge Gross and Marguerite Cassell attended this first joint seminar run by the NCNW and the Women's Division, Board of Missions of the Methodist Church.

Gladys Zales is giving the final push to the Life Membership Awards Dinner for Monday, the nineteenth of December at the Plaza Hotel. Awardees are: Mrs. Arthur Goldberg, A. Philip Randolph and Walter Reuther. Lena Horne is co-chairman with Gladys.

ROUND-UP

From Jackson, Mississippi: Patt Derian is a consultant to OEO assigned to the Mississippi Action Project. Ann Hewitt has been in New York for two months, and as usual has been seeing more team members than we have seen of each other. Her volunteer work is for the MUST program, financed by the Methodist Church. She has promised WIMS her services when she returns to New York next summer.

From Omaha, Nebraska: Susie Buffett, long a friend of WIMS, is working on a new housing committee. WIMS answered a request from Susie for material on housing, tutoring programs and job training.

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NEW PROJECTS FOR NCNW

All of you received the NCNW progress report, so you know of Project Womanpower, whose director is Mrs. Christine Clark, and Volunteers Unlimited which has Dr. Annabelle Sherman as its national director. Chris has assembled a staff which is ready to move regionally and will be marching off to train volunteer leaders who will in turn train volunteers for many services. Eventually, Project Womanpower will be working in 30 cities in the United States.

Annabelle has three target areas for Volunteers Unlimited: Danville, Virginia, Minneapolis, Minnesota and Miami, Florida, where her professional staff will train women of varied backgrounds and experience as volunteers to work, under supervision, with girls who might otherwise be headed for trouble.

WIMS Northern Projects

PATERSON, NEW JERSEY

WIMS' new technique of a "Conversation Caravan" proved to be successful in Paterson, on September 17th. At the request of the local NCNW Section President, an all-day meeting was held at the Paterson "Y", attended by over 100 women representing different religions, races, organizations and economic groups. A panel discussion was held, followed by lunch, buzz sessions and a final plenary

session. The three local Paterson women were joined by Trude Lash and Ilza Williams on the panel. Polly Cowan was moderator and Dorothy Height was the summarizer. The women discussed the most pressing needs of Paterson, and decided that the first and most important one that they wanted to tackle was housing. They proceeded to set another meeting date on October 5th for the purpose of establishing an organization to provide a mechanism through which those who had been working in their own individual ways can work in concerted fashion and develop a community action program encompassing all elements in the community. Esther Cooke from Jersey City attended the day's proceedings.

The October 5th meeting was held at the "Y". The new organization was named "Women's Council for Community Service." A steering committee was appointed, and it is already working to establish educational and action programs to meet the housing needs of Paterson.

An educational meeting of WCCS was held on November 9th and the first step was taken to move toward establishment of a Fair Housing Committee.

Because new issues arose regarding urban renewal problems, a November 29th steering committee meeting planned the next full meeting, December 14th, on the subject of urban renewal. At that time officers will be elected, and WCCS will take a formal structure.

APPENDIX I

Several WIMS team members have moved, or changed their phone numbers since we had our team lists printed. NCNW has changed offices in Washington and in New York. We suggest that you bring your list up-to-date by making the following corrections:

- p. 1 - National Council of Negro Women, Inc.
1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036 office: (202) 223-2363
- National Council of Negro Women, Inc.
145 E. 52nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10022 office: (214) 355-0205
- p. 3 - Miss Margaret Roach
5814 N. Rogers Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60646 home: (312) Mu 5-6840
office: (312) 314-1530
- p. 9 - Dr. Hannah Levin office: (201) 621-1766
- p.10 - Mrs. Leroy Savage
150 Penna. Avenue
Trenton, New Jersey home: (609) 883-0422
- p.11 - Mrs. Gilbert S. Avery
34 Elmhurst Road
Newton, Mass. 02158 home: (617) 969-9774
- p.14 - Mrs. Lloyd Miller (winter only, 1966)
20 St. Paul's Place
Islington, London, N 1
- p.14 - Mrs. Lorna Scheide
Jockey Hollow Road
Morristown, New Jersey 07960 home: (201) 267-6656
- p.15 - Mrs. Frank Cassell
5617 Montgomery Street
Chevy Chase, Md. 20016 home: (301) 657-9449
- p.16 - Mrs. Mildred Pitt Goodman office: (202) 386-6248