



The Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women
is a strong recognized and respected voice for women in Oklahoma

ANNUAL REPORT

January 2020 – June 2021



The Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women is a non-partisan state commission that serves as the voice for women in Oklahoma. It strengthens and empowers women in Oklahoma by informing and educating the Legislature and Executive branches about issues to improve opportunities and quality of life for women. Visit the OCSW website at WWW.OK.GOV/OCSW/

As noted in the Bylaws, the Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women shall furtherance its obligation to advance the general welfare of the state, to give all citizens their opportunities to reach their full potential.

The powers and duties of the Commission is to act as an advisory entity on equity issues relating to gender bias not only to state agencies and employees, but also to communities, organizations, and businesses of this state, which desire the services of the Commission.

Act as a monitor on legislation as to whether the legislation is discriminatory toward one gender or the other, or whether the gender of an individual would influence the enforcement of the legislation.

Act as a resource and a clearinghouse for research on issues related to women and gender bias.

Conduct meetings and seminars within the state as appropriate to support the goals and duties of the Commission; and

Report to the Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of its activities under this act. Such recommendations may include concern for needed legislation or regulatory changes relating to equity and gender bias.

Due to COVID-19, the Commission experienced a wave of changes affecting the ability to directly impact women, girls, and families in Oklahoma.

In keeping with our mission, and following our Bylaws, the Commission members participated in several activities, educational social media events, business meetings and planning retreats, during January 2020 - June 2021.



Three Standing committees (Watchdog/Defenders, Community Advisory and Resource) were formed. Each committee was charged with defining three outcomes along with relevant dates and proposed budgets to operate.

- The Watchdog/Defenders Committee's basic responsibility was overseeing legislation,
- The Community Advisory Committee focused on educating the public about the impact of Human Trafficking.
- The Resource Committee, which is the backbone of the Commission, was responsible for creating and/or maintaining value added growth to the Commission.

Below is a list of each committee's goal, objectives, plan of action, community impact, follow up strategy, new goals, and new objectives for 2020 -2021.

Watchdog/Defenders Committee

Leads the efforts in monitoring legislation to share with fellow commissioners, committees, and partners.

Goal: (1) Overseeing and monitoring legislation in Oklahoma.

Objective: Promote awareness without advocating a position.

Plan of Action: (1) Identify specific pieces of legislation affecting women, girls, and families (2) Using data from previous legislation to recommend interim studies (3) Informing and educating the public concerning legislation affecting women, girls, and families

Community Impact: Higher level of awareness concerning state government.

Follow up Strategy: (1) Attending House and Senate Sessions (2) Partnering with Oklahoma Women's Coalition, the League of Women Voters, YWCA, and other organizations to ensure equality and representation of women and girls

New Goal: (1) Being more visible at the State Capitol (2) Relying on our Representatives / Senators who are Appointed Commissioners to be the liaison to the House and Senate to further the mission of the Commission (3) Attending and/or having a Commissioner serving on the Advisory Task Force on Prevention of Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation, created April 21, 2021 (HB 1892.)

New Objectives: (1) Focusing on legislation directly and indirectly affecting women, girls, and families.



Community Advisory Committee

Leads the efforts in soliciting and gathering information from communities, organizations, and state offices which provide key recommendations.

Goal: Identifying issues related to women, girls, and families in Oklahoma.

Objective: Providing expertise or advice in specific areas such as health, education, human trafficking, leadership, welfare, etc.

Plan of Action: (1) Identifying expert subject matters to lead discussions (2) Creating and maintaining Community partnerships (3) Conducting events, summits, workshops i.e., Community Conversations, FB Live, You Tube, etc.

Community Impact: (1) Visibility for Commission (2) Providing expert advice (3) Increasing awareness of issues impacting lives.

Follow up Strategy: (1) Revisit the 2010 Solutions, Initiatives, and Strategies (SIS) Public Action Plan to Lower the Incarceration Rate of Women in Oklahoma (2) Revisit 2014 SIS Human Trafficking in Oklahoma (3) Monitor and evaluate outcomes of events (3) Make recommendations for improvement.

New Goal: (1) Work with organizations currently involved with decreasing/eliminating HT in Oklahoma (2) Formulate a White Paper on HT to present to Legislators (3) Conduct a follow up FB Live event to share additional information since last event (4) Work with Legislators to conduct an Interim Study.

New Objectives: (1) Monitor and evaluate outcomes of events (2) Share key findings with Legislators and other organizations. (3) Make recommendations to Legislators (4) Recommend that a member of the Commission participate in discussions on the Legislative committee.

Resource Committee

Leads the efforts in outward sharing and identification of resources to the community.

Goal: Build, maintain and sustain, partnerships and relationships with other organizations to further the mission of the Commission.

Objective: (1) Work jointly with other organizations listed on our LINKS page (2) Create and implement programs and events (3) Use social media to promote and increase awareness of TAPS and other initiatives of the Commission.

Plan of Action: (1) Consistency (2) Identifying the need for Task Forces to accomplish the mission (3) Using different forms of virtual platforms as needed.



Community Impact: (1) Direct connection to communities (2) Higher level of awareness of resources available to communities (3) Greater awareness of Commission (4) increased visibility for every organization.

Follow up Strategy: (1) Promote activities and share resources (2) Partner with other organizations who share our mission (3) Record brief informational/promotional videos for Commission's initiatives, including Community Conversations, and providing links to partnership's websites.

New Goal: (1) Identifying organizations still in existence since COVID (2) Updating website (3) Working with Watchdog/Defenders and Community Advisory Committees.

New Objectives: (1) Providing awareness of issues affecting women, girls, and families in Oklahoma (2) Referring individuals to available resources (3) Continuous updating of information.

2020 Activities

January – Each committee was charged with defining three outcomes along with relevant dates and proposed budgets to operate.

February – Online nominations for the Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame opened. Committee calendars were presented.

March – Meeting cancelled due to Coronavirus.

April - Meeting cancelled due to Coronavirus.

May – First Virtual meeting. FY2020 -2021 Budget presented. Commission votes to approve postponement of Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame due to the impact of COVID – 19.

June – Second Virtual meeting. Commission work on setting goals for remainder of 2020. Commission participates in National Women's History Project history.

July – Third Virtual meeting. Commission introduces new Commissioners and discuss plans for upcoming Business meeting and Planning Retreat. Commission collaborates with National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) to discuss plans of moving the organization forward by recruiting new members.

August – Fourth Virtual meeting. Commission launch webinar highlighting women in Oklahoma who were instrumental in passing the 19th amendment. Commission host Press Conference at State Capitol commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment. Representative and Commissioner Cyndi Munson assisted in planning the event and presenting a Proclamation of support on behalf of the Commission. Commission host first ever virtual Annual Business meeting and Planning Retreat. Standing Committees' breakout into meeting rooms and discuss activities for 2021.



September – Fifth Virtual meeting. Commission partnership with Oklahoma Department of Commerce, and Oklahoma Senior Partnership Specialist for the United States Census to present FB Live event, “Stand up and Be Counted”: Shape your Future, an informational conversation concerning the importance of filling out the 2020 Census Report. Over 1,055 viewers connected.

October – Sixth Virtual meeting. Commission vote to sponsor FB Live Human Trafficking event in 2021

November and December – Due to Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, Commission postpone meetings.

2021 Activities

January – Commission passes out 167 goody bags to members of the legislature, statewide elected officials, and members of the judiciary. Commission creates Yellow Rose Announcements to highlight the work Commissioners and Advisory Council members are doing in their communities to further the mission and vision of the Commission.

February – Commission votes to use social media to promote and increase awareness of the Appointments Project (TAPS) and other initiatives. Commission discusses exploring the possibility of creating a podcast as a communication and outreach tool.

March – Commission forms partnership with Dragonfly Home, Domestic Violence Intervention Services, The Spring, Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, and No Boundaries International to present a FB Live Human Trafficking event on the eve of International Women’s Day (March 8.) <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=210868487460411>. Commission creates Whitepaper highlighting some of the cause and effects of HT as well as recommendations to address the problem. A copy of the White paper is available on the front page of our website at <https://www.ok.gov/ocsw/>

April – Orientation and Training conducted for newly appointed Commissioners and Advisory Council members. Commission introduces Chronological Events documenting the events and activities from 1965 – 2021.

May – Election of Officers. Commission submit request for operating funds. To date, appropriations have not been allocated to the Commission to fulfill the legislative intent, powers and duties set forth in Article I, Section 3 of the Bylaws.

June – Oath of office administered by Governor Stitt to newly elected Officers. Executive Board members will take office effective, July 1, 2021.



January 2020 – June 2021 Executive Board

Gloria Torres – State Chair
Dr. Delores Runnels – State Vice Chair
Dr. Mary Larson – Secretary
Brenda Jones Barwick – Financial Officer
Dr. Nyla Khan – Advisory Council Chair

Executive Board Advisors

Riki Snyder – Immediate Past State Chair
Kitti Asberry – Executive Director

Note: Due to expired terms, prior to elections, Commissioners Karen Sneary served as Secretary, and State Vice Chair, Dr. Delores Runnels served as State Chair. Elections of new officers were held May 27, 2021. Below is the list of current officers and Commissioners.

Executive Board Officers

Victoria Woods - State Chair
Molly Whrenberg - State Vice Chair
Karen Sneary - Secretary
Shondra McCage - Financial Officer
Dr. Nyla Khan - Advisory Council Chair

Executive Board Advisors

Dr. Delores Runnels - Immediate Past State Chair
Kitti Asberry - Executive Director

Commissioners

Representative Rhonda Baker
Jan Barrick
Brenda Jones Barwick
Marci Bond
Representative Carol Bush
Pat Carr
Denise Castelli
Lee Denney
Julie Dermody
Jana Gridley
Joy Hammons
Linda Haneborg
Carol Hefner
Estela Hernandez



Executive Board Officers (continued)

Jean Lehr

Rachel Mathew

Representative Cyndi Munson

Shauna Peters

Jill Shero

Ollie Starr

Maria Trapp - Braly

Representative Tammy West

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Due to the number of virtual meetings held, the Commission was unable to capture a lot of pictures.



Commissioners and Advisory Council members attending a Business meeting and Orientation and Training after on-site meetings returned.





About Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women:

The Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women is a non-partisan state commission that serves as the voice for women in Oklahoma. It strengthens and empowers women in Oklahoma by informing and educating the Legislature and Executive branches about issues to improve opportunities and quality of life for women. We encourage you to visit our website at www.ok.gov/ocsw/. For additional information concerning the Commission, please contact Kitti Asberry, Executive Director at ocswadmin@omes.ok.gov or Pakita.asberry@omes.ok.gov. You may also call 405/401-6970 to speak with someone.