

# Pulling up our seats to the tables of power

In growing numbers, women are taking seats at the tables of power. This brings new challenges, and new opportunities. How do we make our voices heard at the table? How do we use that power to make significant and lasting change in our communities and our country? The ninth WILL/WAND national conference raised these questions, and then provided some good answers and some good strategies.

**For three inspiring days on Capitol Hill, hundreds of women legislators and community leaders from across the country gathered for vital training and strategizing. We celebrated the gains women are making. We addressed the challenge of amplifying women's voices in pressing policy debates. We shared our visions and our hopes for our communities and our country. Some highlights of the conference:**

- Lively interactive trainings sharpened skills on making the most of media opportunities, framing effective messages, deflecting attacks, and reaching new audiences.
- Marian Wright Edelman's lifetime of dedicated service was recognized with the 2007 Torchbearer Award. She inspired with her urgent call to ensure a bright future by truly leaving no child behind.
- Jane Fonda accepted our Keeping the Faith Award, and addressed the challenges of overcoming the barriers to women's voices and views being fully represented at every level of media. She engaged with panelists Carol Jenkins (Women's Media Center) and author/activist Ellen Bravo (*Taking on the Big Boys*) in a dynamic discussion.
- Jeanne Shaheen, former New Hampshire Governor, and Colorado Senate President Joan Fitz-Gerald inspired us as they launched their bids for Congress.
- Illinois Senate Majority Leader Debbie Halvorson, fueled by the energy and encouragement at the conference, made the decision to run for Congress in 2008. **"The more I listened to these groups, the more I talked to other people in Congress, the more I realized this was not about me, it's not about titles. It's about what I can do for the people and the country,"** Halvorson said.
- At meetings with Members of Congress, nearly 40 state constituent delegations talked about the Iraq war, the military budget, plans for new nuclear weapons, and a new study on how we can create more jobs without adding more weapons to our obsolete arsenal of military gadgets and weapons systems.
- Special challenges for women in the workforce were highlighted by Valarie Long of SEIU and Naomi Walker of AFL-CIO. Pollster Celinda Lake and Page Gardner (Women's Voices.Women's Vote.) focused on central issues facing women and their families, the unique concerns of unmarried women, and the potential of mobilizing female voters.
- Noted author U.S. Army Sergeant Kayla Williams and U.S. Army Sergeant Carolyn Schapper shared experiences of women serving in our armed forces.

The urgency of bringing women's voices to help shape true national security was amplified in vitally important sessions on: federal budget priorities, women's political empowerment, and domestic preparedness. **The time is right, and we are here to take our seats at the tables where these conversations happen.**

The WILL/WAND 2007 conference illuminated the vital issues of our day and showcased inspiring women who are leading in state legislatures and in the U.S. Congress.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I expect to meet and enjoy so many dynamic women. Wow! As a freshman legislator, I have been honored to be in the presence of women with such wisdom, devotion and concern for our country and our neighbors throughout the world. Thank you!"

Rep. Carla Skinder, NH

- 1:** Sen. Vivian Davis Figures (AL); Alice Lynch, WAND Board of Directors
- 2:** Susan Cundiff (OR), WAND Board of Directors; Edie Allen (MA), WAND Education Fund Board of Directors
- 3:** Sayre Sheldon (MA), WAND Board of Directors; Dianne Valentin (GA) and Bobbie Paul (GA), Atlanta WAND
- 4:** Carol Jenkins (center), president of the Women's Media Center, with some of the young women from STAND (Students Take Action for New Directions)



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# Visiting Capitol Hill

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Delegations from nearly 40 states headed to Capitol Hill for meetings with Members of Congress.

- 1:** U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar (MN)
- 2:** Congressman Mark Capuano (MA)
- 3:** U.S. Sen. Byron Dorgan (ND)
- 4:** Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter (NH)
- 5:** Congressman Thomas Allen (ME)
- 6:** Congressman Tom Udall (NM)

I love the opportunity to spend a few days in a friendly environment (where each women's voice can be heard, even if she doesn't out-talk others). I feel rejuvenated and validated. Thank you!"

Rep. Elaine Makas, ME

*bottom, l to r:* Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz (PA); Congressman Barney Frank (MA); Congresswoman Corinne Brown (FL); Congressman Keith Ellison (MN); Congressman Steve Cohen (TN)



# Honoring great women who sit at the tables of power!

## 2007 Will Pacesetters



The best women legislators conference that I have attended. It was focused and well organized. Thanks!"

Sen. Carolyn Nelson, ND

Will Pacesetters are recognized for their noteworthy legislative service, contributions to sound, progressive policy, and groundbreaking leadership.

**The 2007 class:**

Rep. Barbara Ballard (KS)  
Del. Bonnie Brown (WV)  
Rep. Edna Brown (OH)  
Sen. Meg Burton-Cahill (AZ)  
Sen. Gloria Butler (GA)

Rep. Marilyn Canavan (ME)  
Rep. Sydney Carlin (KS)  
Assemblywoman Barbara Clark (NY)  
Rep. Merika Coleman (AL)  
Sen. Dede Feldman (NM)  
Sen. Joan Fitz-Gerald (CO)

Sen. Debbie Halvorson (IL)  
Rep. Pricey Harrison (NC)  
Rep. Ana Hernandez (TX)  
Rep. Kay Khan (MA)  
Sen. Jeanne Kohl-Welles (WA)  
Rep. Joni Jenkins (KY)

Sen. Carolyn Nelson (ND)  
Congresswoman Laura Richardson (CA)  
Sen. Barbara Toles (WI)  
Rep. Diana Urban (CT)  
Sen. Loretta Weinberg (NJ)



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- 1: Jane Fonda and Spelman College President Beverly Daniel Tatum
- 2: Christina Cernansky (Will Washington Associate) and Rep. Audrey Gibson (FL)
- 3: The Janice Kelley Award went to dedicated WAND volunteers Trudy Ehrhard (OR WAND) (not pictured) and Cathy LaPointe (center, SW MI WAND). Susan Cundiff (left, WAND Board of Directors) and Judy Rutherford (right, SW MI WAND) presented.
- 4: WAND Executive Director Susan Shaer and Will President Sen. Nan Grogan Orrock (GA)
- 5: WAND Executive Director Susan Shaer, U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg (NJ), Sen. Loretta Weinberg (NJ)
- 6: A few of the Will State Directors were recognized at the conference. There are 92 in all, from all 50 states.



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# Understanding the issues, managing the message



This is one conference I have attended since first elected in 2001. In 2007, the conference brings me special meaning as a mother sending my son off to Iraq. It brings me into contact with other activists and legislators working on issues I consider critical. Knowing there is this network of other women out there gives me great comfort.

Sen. Meg Burton-Cahill, AZ

*left: top:* WAND and WiLL women mobilizing to visit Members of Congress on Capitol Hill.

*bottom:* Professionals from the media coached women legislators on their presentation skills on camera, from message to make-up. *In photo:* Sen. Dede Feldman (NM).



The conference inspired and motivated me. I was so empowered and feel capable after spending three days immersed in change, feminism and hope. This conference clinched my decision to run for office."

Christina Knowles, MA

*below: top row, l to r:* Valarie Long, Vice President of SEIU; Page Gardner, founder, Women's Voices. Women Vote; Karen Jacob, Chair of WAND, Inc., Kayla Williams, author of *Love My Rifle More Than You* and former sergeant, WAND Executive Director Susan Shaer; WAND Board Member Hon. Joyce Elliott (AR); Dr. Anita Dancs, Research Director, National Priorities Project

*bottom row, l to r:* City Councilwoman Rachel Quintana (El Paso, TX); Sen. Gloria Butler (GA); STAND member Lanine Toote; Delegation with U.S. Senator Ted Kennedy (MA)



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**WiLL** is a national, non-partisan network of women state legislators who work together to influence federal policy and budget priorities.

[www.willwand.org](http://www.willwand.org)



**WAND** empowers women to act politically to reduce violence and militarism, and redirect excessive military resources toward unmet human and environmental needs.

[www.wand.org](http://www.wand.org)

**Women Legislators' Lobby (WiLL) • [www.willconference.org](http://www.willconference.org)**  
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Susan Shaer, WAND Executive Director • State Sen. Nan Grogan Orrock (GA), WiLL President • Christina Cernansky, WiLL Washington Associate

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Save the date!

## 2009 WiLL/WAND CONFERENCE

**October 3 - 6, 2009**

Washington, DC



GIVING WOMEN A SEAT AT THE TABLE OF POWER FOR 25 YEARS

## 2007 WILL/WAND CONFERENCE REPORT

# WOMEN AT THE TABLE OF POWER



**September 30 - October 2, 2007**

Washington Court Hotel • Washington, DC

WAND is THE premier organization that teaches women to be smart about defense and security."

Congresswoman Gwen Moore (WI)

*top, l to r:* Jane Fonda; U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters (CA); Marian Wright Edelman; Hon. Jeanne Shaheen; U.S. Rep. Yvette Clarke (NY)

*bottom, l to r:* U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore (WI); U.S. Rep. Laura Richardson (CA); U.S. Army Sergeant Carolyn Schapper; Ellen Bravo (author/activist); U.S. Rep. Stephanie Tubbs Jones (OH)

