

## **Committee for Women 2005-2006 Year-End Summary**

This was a busy year for the ORNL Committee for Women (CFW), whose mission is to enhance the work environment for women at the Laboratory. The Committee was chaired by Sylvia Milanez, with Roxanne Raschke serving as vice-chair, and Karen Downer representing the Leadership Team. Other CFW members representing the different directorates at the Laboratory were Cathy Cheverton, Jaigne Christman, Sarah Cousineau, Kristy Herron, Jane Howe, Glenn Jennings, Cecilia Jones, Philip King, Lynn Kszos, Madhavi Martin, and Julia White.

A major effort was put forth this year on the child care initiative, which aims to establish an ORNL associated child care center at or very near the Laboratory. The effort is being led by representatives from the CFW with support of the Association for Women in Science. The CFW subcommittee (Kristy Herron, Cecilia Jones, and Lynn Kszos) met with a representative of Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL), who provided information about the BNL day care facility. The committee members also surveyed a number of day care centers throughout Knoxville and Oak Ridge. They found the University of Tennessee (UT) Early Learning Center to be a high quality day care facility with an interest in working with the CFW to develop a branch associated with ORNL. Following these meetings, and after discussion with Human Resources Director Lori Barreras and several other key Laboratory personnel, a more formal collaboration was developed with two teams: (1) an Advisory Team consisting of members from the CFW and other interested ORNL employees and (2) a Project Team consisting of subject matter experts from both ORNL and UT. The teams are now moving forward with a formal plan of action.

One of the highlights of the CFW program in 2006 was the Woman-to-Woman seminar series, featuring discussion-oriented talks by ORNL women staff members who have achieved success at the Laboratory. The CFW sponsored three seminars in the series. On September 20, 2005, Dr. Michelle Buchanan, Associate Laboratory Director for Physical Sciences, presented a talk entitled, "Woman-to-Woman: Succeeding at ORNL." On January 24, 2006, ORNL Human Resources Director Lori Barreras, partnered with Kristina Thiagarajan, ORNL National Institutes of Health Program Manager, to address the topic, "Woman-to-Woman: What we can learn from other federal and state institutions?" The third presentation was held on August 10, 2006, featuring Karen Downer, Director for Environment, Safety, Health and Quality, and Nicole Porter, General Counsel, who discussed "Woman-to-Woman: Choices—How they impact our success." All three seminars were well attended and highly stimulating.

The official opening of the Women's Professional Development Resource Learning Center, initiated by former CFW chair April Lewis, took place on February 16, 2006. The opening was attended by Laboratory Director Jeff Wadsworth, Computational Science Associate Laboratory Director Thomas Zacharia, Biological and Environmental Sciences Associate Laboratory Director Reinhold Mann, the 2005 and 2006 Chairs of the CFW, April Lewis and Sylvia Milanez, respectively, along with other past and present CFW members. The resource center, located in the ORNL Library, offers a selection of

books geared toward helping women develop more rewarding careers and advance in the workplace.

During Women's History Month in March, the CFW organized a poster display in the cafeteria area featuring a timeline of noteworthy women in science throughout history, accompanied by posters explaining the mission of the CFW and of the ORNL chapter of Women in Nuclear. The display was hosted during the lunch break by representatives from both committees who answered questions from interested parties on the role of the organizations, and made note of suggestions for future directions.

In May, the CFW hosted its second annual "Celebrate Women in Science" poster session, which featured over 50 ORNL women researchers, and spanned the spectrum of research being performed at the Lab. The annual event facilitates discussion and interaction among women researchers at the Lab, and serves as a breeding ground for future collaborations. A special feature of this year's poster session was attendance by Dr. Patricia Dehmer, Associate Director of U.S. DOE Basic Energy Sciences, who gave a sobering talk on the nation's energy challenges and the role of science and technology in meeting those challenges.

A group of eight grade girls came to visit ORNL on May 3<sup>rd</sup> as part of **Project GROW: Girls Reaching OutWard,** which was sponsored by the Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce Women's Council and Girls Inc. This is a mentoring program for eighth grade girls who demonstrate the potential of becoming future leaders, and encourages girls to consider a wide range of future career paths. Sylvia Milanez, CFW Chair, along with several other notable ORNL women, gave a short presentation about their work at the Laboratory. Afterwards, the girls toured the posters prepared for the "Celebrate Women in Science" event held May 1<sup>st</sup> at ORNL, for a memorable and fun experience.

Following closely on the heels of the poster session, the CFW participated in a luncheon hosted by the ORNL Physics Division which featured guest speaker Chancellor Robert Birgeneau of Berkeley University. Chancellor Birgeneau, formerly Dean of Science at MIT and President of the University of Toronto, has been an active, longtime advocate for equality and diversity in the academic workforce. During the luncheon, Chancellor Birgeneau led a discussion on the progress of women in scientific careers, particularly in academia, and highlighted the need for further effort in this area.

Other notable activities included:

- CFW participation in the woman-owned small business event held July 28, 2006, at the ORNL Conference Center. The event attracted over 200 participants representing 107 women-owned small businesses.
- Eva Magazine editor Inga Treitler requested CFW input on a piece for the magazine.
- Several CFW members served on the selection panel for the Oak Ridge 2006 YWCA Tribute to Women awards.

The CFW also took a step forward towards establishing a formal charter. A draft of the charter was composed and will be finalized in the coming year.