



THE EQUALITY STANDARD

December 2011

This is the monthly publication on women's issues, local and global, published by 50/50 Leadership, A non-profit organization promoting women's equal leadership

Merry Christmas Happy Chanukah A Joyful Kwanzaa

And a Happy New Year to you, our Readers

Our Vision
That 50% of
leaders are
women
Our Mission
To transform
the culture
within which
we live to one
that naturally
includes
women on an
equal basis in
the selection
of leaders
www.5050Leadership.org
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In this issue:
Click on the item to jump to it

1. [In the News](#)
2. [The Giving Season](#)
3. [Why We Need Equal Leadership](#)
4. [What Leadership Looks Like](#)
5. [Women at Work](#)
6. [From the Bookshelf](#)
7. [Health](#)
8. [Women Around the World](#)
9. [50/50 Leadership News](#)
10. [Subscriptions](#)
11. [Events](#)
12. [Final Words](#)



IN THE NEWS

Mississippi voters voted down the 'personhood' initiative, a measure that would have defined personhood as beginning at fertilization in that state's constitution. It would have banned common birth control methods and infertility treatments used by women who are not pregnant. There are 19 states, however, that are considering some form of "personhood" initiative.

FOR MORE NEWS, FOLLOW US ON TWITTER @5050LEADERSHIP

Some recent tweets:

❧ Aah, sweet freedom that we enjoy in the U.S. An Afghani woman was raped, sentenced for adultery, freed-but now has to marry the rapist!

❧ Sec State Hillary Clinton met with Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar. 1st Secy of State to visit in 50 yrs

❧ Judges too: Texas suspended judge William Adams caught on camera beating up his daughter Hillary. Video - [youtube.com/watch?v=W19y3S...](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W19y3S...)



THE GIVING SEASON

Along with all the usual gifts to friends, family and co-workers, I hope you will consider giving gifts that will help others, either locally or globally and be meaningful to you, the person you give it to, and the organization you support.

As well as 50/50 Leadership, listed below are nonprofits that were founded by or are run by winners of our Women of the World Awards. I invite you to consider them in your year-end giving. I have included the links to their websites so you can learn more about them and be inspired :

34 MILLION FRIENDS – Improving maternal health in developing countries by raising small amounts of money – as small as \$1 - from lots of people. www.34millionfriends.org

CENTER FOR PARTNERSHIP STUDIES - Working on cultural transformation from domination to partnership in different spheres of life. www.partnershipway.org

KPOSOWA FOUNDATION - Rebuilding High School buildings and infrastructure, providing scholarships and funding for materials and supplies, clean drinking water wells for the community and other sustainable opportunities for the community in West Africa. www.bumpefund.org

ONEKID ONEWORLD – Improving one school at a time by providing training, supplies, facilities and more, and partnering with children in the U.S. to widen their perspectives.

www.onekidoneworld.org

PLAYING FOR CHANGE Foundation– Giving dignity to street musicians and building music schools to provide a future for children where there might otherwise be none. www.playingforchange.org

RISING INTERNATIONAL – Providing a market for goods crafted by women in 24 countries and aiding homeless women in the U.S. by helping them to sell the goods through home parties.

www.risinginternational.org

SMILE ON SIERRA LEONE – Working in partnership with people in Sierra Leone and in the U.S. to build villages, schools and self-esteem.

www.smileonsierraleone.org

SURVIVORS TRUTHS – Aims to challenge assumptions and alter perspective on the challenges and strengths of marginalized communities locally and around the world. www.survivortruths.org



WHY WE NEED EQUAL LEADERSHIP

A study by the City University of New York's Center for Urban Research under distinguished professor of sociology Richard D. Alba has found that if you're white and male and you work on Wall Street, your average compensation (between 2005 and 2009) was \$154,500, 55 percent more than for a white woman and Latino man and 72 percent more than a black man.

I know. Big surprise, right?

It's no myth, all this talk of the 1 percent.

White women on Wall Street also have higher salaries than their counterparts of other races and ethnicities. The salary for a white woman working on Wall Street is \$100,000, 59

percent more than for a Latina woman and 65 percent more than for a black woman. [Read More](#)



WHAT LEADERSHIP LOOKS LIKE

Interview by Lorraine Johnson

Sharon Kyle is a woman of high integrity and was not afraid to speak up when something at work did not align with her values. She is a dynamic woman leader well respected by her peers and all levels of management at Jet Propulsion Laboratories (JPL) and who mentors many new hires. She was honored by NASA with an exceptional achievement award and taught numerous professional development classes.

Currently, Sharon Kyle is the publisher of the “LA Progressive”, Adjunct professor of law at Peoples College in Los Angeles. She sits on the executive board on the “Progressive Caucus of California Democratic Party”, the “ACLU Pasadena/Foothills Chapter” and is on the editorial board of the “BlackCommentor.com”.

1. What is your definition of leadership?

Leadership is the act of communicating a vision in a way that inspires others to become engaged. My two favorite quotes characterizing leadership are:

“Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.” – Dwight D. Eisenhower

and

“A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.” – John C. Maxwell

2. What can you say about managers who confuse “managing a project/manager title”, with having leadership skills, when in-fact a lot of them don’t know how to lead.

The ability to distinguish between management and leadership comes with time, experience and study. I lean towards believing that true leadership cannot be taught. While I think it is possible to make a great leader out of someone who possesses natural leadership traits, I don't believe that those who lack natural leadership talent can ever be trained to be great or even adequate leaders.

It took many years of observation and research for me to come to this conclusion. To answer your question, I'd say that most managers are not and never will be leaders. Some know this about themselves others don't but, in either case, it would be self-defeating for them to admit this because it is in their self-interest to maintain the façade. I wouldn't expect them to do otherwise.

Having said that, I do believe that both leadership and management skills are essential to achieving great goals as an organization. It's unfortunate that we value leadership over management hierarchically. The truth is that they are different and the use of these different skills produce different outcomes but both are necessary. We should keep in mind that they are simply tools that should be used appropriately. I wrote a little article about this during the 2008 Presidential primary. You can read it here:

<http://www.laprogressive.com/election-reform-campaigns/why-i-support-barack-obama/>

3. Can you name a person who has had a tremendous impact on you as a leader? Maybe someone who has been a mentor to you?

I've had a couple of very good managers in my career who were also true leaders and mentors. One was the project manager of the Mars Pathfinder project, Tony Spear – another was a manager of a small transportation company. Both did similar things – they led by example, demonstrated that they had

confidence in and respect for their subordinates, openly acknowledged and rewarded those who made contributions, and took responsibility for their own mistakes. They also avoided using the term “I” and often replaced it with “we”.

4. Did your political aspirations come about because of stuff you cared about, things that mattered, the invisible victim?

I can't say that I have political aspirations. What I have is a deeply entrenched aversion to injustice and hypocrisy. Whenever I've taken personality trait tests, my intolerance for injustice ranks off the charts. Because I stay abreast of what is happening politically, I can't help but see injustice and hypocrisy – both run rampant in our political system. As a black woman, I am exposed to a disproportionate share of the consequences of political and social injustice. People I love have been harmed by policy decisions that were/are unjust. I simply reached a point in my life where I had to jump in and lend my hand at making a difference.

5. How do you feel as a woman in the male dominated political arena, are there challenges?

I am currently serving on a political caucus in an elected position but this position hasn't exposed me to gender related issues. What I see more than anything is race based challenges. As a black woman, who is frequently in the minority, I am challenged regularly by people who are oblivious to their racial biases. The biggest thing I deal with is tokenism. Being the only one – I'm frequently looked to as the voice of black people. This is frustrating and serves to create division.

6. Have any of your political friends encouraged you to run for political office?

It has been mentioned but I'm quite sure that I don't want to be an elected official. I prefer working to

effect change in policy from the outside. There are organizations that focus on specific issues. I'd like to work with these organizations. The three issues that are near and dear to my heart are 1) dismantling the prison industrial complex; 2) working towards public financing of campaigns; and 3) maintaining net neutrality. I don't think I could be able to do this work as an elected. More than half of an elected official's time is spent raising funds for his/her campaign and a great portion of the other half is spent campaigning. Increasingly, they are becoming shells of the corporations. We have to change this system.

7. What has been the most strategic decision that you made, or you had a huge influence over in your career?

One of the most strategic decision made by me was to go to law school. It has changed my life and given it greater depth and meaning.

8. What's an accomplishment that you are proudest of?

This is a no-brainer. I am proudest of what I accomplished as a mother. I raised two children – for many years as a single mother. They are adults now with great careers, homes, and families of their own. Both of my children went to great universities and completed their undergrad degrees in four years. They both went on to complete graduate school. One is a teacher the other is an attorney. They're both married to great lovely people and now I have a granddaughter.

9. If you were mentoring women what would you tell them are the necessary tools/actions, for them to grow and develop as a leader?

I think the Serenity Prayer says it best – They should accept the things they cannot change; change the things they can and develop the wisdom to know the

difference. Developing the wisdom takes time and also requires the ability to discern truth. For me, education (which doesn't necessarily have to come through traditional channels) is essential for leadership development. We don't come out of the womb knowing things. We have to learn by exploring our world through books, travel, and connecting with others.

10. Do you think that women should follow what they are interested in, or what may help them grow, versus a career ladder?

I tried to demonstrate to my children, through my actions, that they should follow their dreams. I value dreams. I think our society doesn't always give the appropriate level of attention to developing the ability to take dreams and make them reality. As my children were choosing their educational paths and later as they've made career decisions, I've encouraged them to aspire to do what they have a passion for – not just an interest but a passion. I think women should do the same.

Lorraine Johnson is an analyst at JPL and currently a member of the Pasadena Leadership Circle



WOMEN AT WORK

🌀 If you are afraid of public speaking and know that you need to get over the fear, call **Marion Claire**. Marion recently worked with the members of the Pasadena Leadership Circle so I got to see her work up close and personal, and she is good! She gives solid advice on how to write a speech, rehearse, prepare yourself, and how to speak so that your goals for the speech are met. Marion has overcome her own fears to become the charming and disarming speaker she is today, making her empathetic to those who are unsure.

Marion puts out emails with advice for which you can sign up from her website, www.MarionClaire.com, or you can give her a call at 310-659-8956

☞ *Know of someone who is or was in the military and does not have a job? Here are three great job resources for military families:*

The Military Spouse Employment Partnership

lists jobs from dozens of partners across the country—including big names like Citi, UnitedHealth Group, and 3M.

The Military Spouse Corporate Career Network

is a nonprofit organization that helps military spouses and veterans find jobs and get training.

Military to Medicine trains spouses and veterans for healthcare positions, and it offers a scholarship program to help people complete their training.

☞ "The New "Old Girls Club"

The Boston Globe ran this article about a group of entrepreneurial women who meet to help each other as they grow their companies. Too bad they had to title their article as a version of the male club rather than reporting about a dynamic group of women who are up to something.

On a spacious terrace in Brookline, a group of 30 women sip wine and dine on salad and sirloin. Dressed in suits, slacks, and colorful frocks, they could be members of a book club, a garden club, or an offshoot of a PTO. But talk doesn't revolve around kids, weeds, or reads.

"I am looking for a level-C cofounder," said Tara Cousineau of Milton.

The woman next to her nods and goes through her mental Rolodex to call forth a few names. At the monthly meeting of the SheEOs, a diverse network of female CEOs in Boston, help comes in many forms.

"You've heard of the old boys' network?" says Bettina Hein, founder of Pixability, a Cambridge-based video marketing company. "Well, this is the old girls' network."

Bootstrapping, scaling up, and hiring investment bankers are all on the minds of this growing crop of female entrepreneurs. Many have sold businesses to Microsoft and AOL and have made themselves and their employees a bundle. Some have recently moved from lunching to launching. In the 2 1/2 years that SheEOs has been together, the group has swelled from two to 120 active members.

“It’s a way of having one place where you can let your hair down and talk amongst peers, not to be afraid to really say ‘this is what I’m grappling with,’ ” said Hein, who started the group with Robin Chase, founder of Zipcar, to help women take the steps to success so often walked by men.

[Read More](#)

Thanks to Monica Hubbard of Wired Women for sharing this item



From the BOOKSHELF /At the MOVIES

✿ **Jesmyn Ward** won the National Book Award for her book, "**Salvage the Bones**," a bleak but determined novel about a black community in Mississippi devastated by Hurricane Katrina, won the fiction prize. Ward's acceptance, the culmination of a night of emotional speeches and tributes to those who had been silenced, noted that the death of her younger brother had inspired her to become a writer. She realized that life was a "feeble, unpredictable thing," but that books were a testament of strength before a punishing world.

"I wanted to write about the experiences of the poor and the black and the rural people of the South," said Ward, whose brother was hit by a drunk driver the year she graduated from college. Earlier in the week, she told The Associated Press that writing was a way to "ease the looming fact of death."

Ward's novel, picked over such better known works as Tea Obreht's "The Tiger's Wife," was based partly on first-hand experience. She was with her family in Mississippi when Katrina hit. They fled the house, fearful of drowning in their own attic.

"We went out into the storm, sheltered in our cars for hours, were denied shelter by a white family who told us we could sit outside in their field but couldn't shelter in their house, and then made our way to an intersection where another family, again white, took us in," she said. "To say the least, it was traumatic."



HEALTH

🌀 An orgasm has now been imaged in 3D video in the brain as it happens — and for possibly the first time in the history of science, women came first.

The video, which was presented at the recent Society for Neuroscience conference in Washington, D.C., is the first to look at the exact order in which women's brain regions are activated in the progression that culminates in sexual climax. [Read more](#)

🌀 A new study indicates that many patients undergoing spine surgery have low levels of vitamin D, which may delay their recovery. [Read More](#)



WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD

🌀 Among Sunni Muslims, a husband can end a marriage with the “triple talaq.” By saying “talaq”, a form of repudiation, three times a divorce becomes final and irrevocable. Usually, there is supposed to be time between the three talaqs for the husband to carefully consider his decision and consult with others around him. [Read More](#)

🌀 December 1st was **World AIDS Day** and the theme this year is “Getting to Zero.” Meanwhile 215 million women worldwide are not using an effective method of contraception despite the fact that they want to avoid pregnancy. The largest segment of these women live in sub-Saharan Africa and many are at risk of HIV. Women account for 60 percent of people living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa, and young women between the ages of 15-24 are up to

eight times more likely to be infected than men of the same age. [Read More](#)

✿ In Kyrgyzstan young men steal women from their homes or snatch them from city streets. They take them home, and as soon as the women in their family are able to tie the bride scarf around the victim's head, the stolen woman has "agreed" to the marriage.

Bride kidnapping can land its perpetrators in prison for up to three years, but other kinds of abductions are punished with prison time of up to ten years. That is just one sign of the persistence of a custom whose origins are lost in time but whose cultural power continues to guide the behavior of both men and women in Kyrgyzstan. [Read More](#)



50/50 LEADERSHIP NEWS

Building the leadership potential of local women and girls is essential to our future. As half the population, women still make up only a small percentage of leadership making decisions that affect us all. **Both** voices, male and female, are needed at the decision-making tables.

Will you help us? Our main program, Leadership Circles, is helping hone skills and develop local women. Whatever you can give will be appreciated. YOU make the difference for helping these women realize their dreams and passion for making the world a better place:

- \$295.00 sends one woman through a Leadership Circle
- \$150 funds one trainer at a Leadership Circle
- \$50 purchases the supplies needed for one person attending a Leadership Circle
- \$20 pays the rent on the room for one session of the Pasadena Leadership Circles

Or if you prefer, you can set up a monthly payment that can be made directly. \$5, \$10, \$20 a month is sometimes easier on your pocketbook and helps us to continue to do our work.

Every dollar counts and I thank you for your consideration.
www.5050Leadership.org/Donations



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EVENTS

Everyone is busy with the holidays it seems, so there are no events this month



FINAL WORDS

“There is a deep moral influence in these periodical seasons of rejoicing, in which whole communities participate. They bring out, and together, as it were, the best sympathies in our natures.”

Sarah Josepha Hale (1788-1879), American writer, editor, poet; first woman magazine editor in U.S.; established Thanksgiving as national holiday; established Mount Vernon as national shrine



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