

April 30th

NHWI

Gender Ambassadors Panel (GAP) Contemporary Gender
Equality Listening Session Report

Seacoast, New Hampshire
Authors

About the New Hampshire’s Women’s Initiative (NHWI):

The New Hampshire Women’s Initiative (NHWI) is a new non-profit organization dedicated to continuing the legacy of success of our merging partners: the Commission on the Status of Women, the Women’s Lobby and Alliance, and the Women’s Policy Institute. The NHWI mission is to advance social, economic, and political opportunity and equality for women in New Hampshire.

The NHWI has a unique governance structure. Its board is supported by both a Founding Mothers’ Panel, comprised of the founders of the merging partners, and a Gender Ambassadors Panel, a group of young women leaders who are interested in better understanding and re-framing the dialogue around gender equality issues in New Hampshire. This multi-generational sphere of influence will help the NHWI leverage the rich history and accomplishment surrounding women’s issues in New Hampshire and at the same time craft a new path forward for gender equality born out of contemporary thinking and needs.

About the Gender Ambassadors Panel (GAP):

The goal of the Gender Ambassadors Panel (GAP) is to support the mission of the NHWI by informing its research, outreach, and advocacy with a better understanding of the gender equality issues that younger women and men identify as important to them. GAP members work toward that goal by hosting Contemporary Gender Equality Listening Sessions in various geographic locations around the State. The Listening Sessions are facilitated focus groups consisting of six to ten participants engaged in a formal discussion for up to ninety minutes using pre-determined questions. Results will be documented and shared with the NHWI Board.

About the Authors:

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Executive Summary

Introduction and Background

Methods:

Gaining insight into a community with the use of focus groups is a commonly-used approach to qualitative research. Qualitative research is a systematic approach to understanding human thoughts, behaviors and motivations through thoughtful survey design, observation and inquiry.

The GAP Listening Sessions are focus groups in which a facilitator and note-taker work together to gain insight into participants' thoughts, feelings, and ideas about contemporary gender equality issues.

Prior to conducting a listening session, each facilitator and note-taker receives a facilitation packet that details instructions for conducting an effective focus group. The packet includes instructions for the specific roles of the facilitator and note-taker, how to draft a report after the listening session, and of course the specific questions required to be posed to participants.

Location

Participant Background

Gay men; 49 to 73.

Summary of Findings:

The Summary of Findings is organized by question asked at the Listening Session. Synthesis of material will occur at a later date when all of the listening sessions have been conducted. Please note that participants are identified only by a number to protect privacy.

QUESTION #1: What brought you here tonight?

Participant	Comment	Note-Taker Observation
1	Chuckles – We were told to be here.	

2	My neighbor asked me. But recalls m ... career.	
3	After UNH – upper management in hospital were women – felt it was unequal – took ... program with ... - not going well – gay? Not a woman? ... women – maybe just the industry.	
3	... was male, senior management was male.	
6	Not just because neighbor, but relevant issue to talk about. Largest 100,000 employees. They employ 2,000 in 30 years. Never so political – black woman from Connecticut – department administrator for 2 years. Only wanted a black woman in that position – difficult for others – negative environment lawsuit by those that could have applied. Most of senior management are women.	
5	Is it the industry?	
6	Dept. of Ag. – look at demographics hire to the demographics – numbers ... met the numbers as a government agency.	
3	Question of pay scale.	
6	All the same in government – pay scale grads., vets, being taken care of again. Not an issue of equality for over 30 years – all a numbers game in his agency – minority focus.	
4	Invited by hosts and learning more about organization	

QUESTION #2: How do you define gender equality?

Participant	Comment	Note-Taker Observation
4	Equal pay for equal work – nods. Women's issues – rights to govern their own bodies.	

Participant	Comment	Note-Taker Observation
2	Lifestyle issues – parent/children issues – work/life issues – equal pay / equal rights – look at ... worked – women’s history ... - health care issues	
6	Challenges for women in their 40’s and 50’s entering the work force for the first time (i.e. divorce)	
4	Occupations being available for women	
1	Sex changes, learns about it more, LGBT ... transgender	
5	Habits – generalizing – stereotypes – persona – not okay to think – break the habit of language	
4	Gender sensitivity	
6	We need a sense of humor (women shouldn’t) – don’t copy men – bring in a new vision – culture differences must take into account equal partnership – definition of roles – must take into	
3	Many companies hide behind – treated equally in smaller companies – less than ... employer – don’t have to comply	
4	NH is primarily smaller companies	
6	Minority populations – issues with institutions – factories – subjugation – minority	
1	Shirt waist fires in NY ... locked	
2?	Men wouldn’t walk at those wages	
1	Factories/assembly line rules	
3	... in larger company but what about smaller	
4	Women still treated differently. Comes down to equal pay treated with more respect, not every family is straight and traditional. Acct. cultural	

Participant	Comment	Note-Taker Observation
	differences	
4	More women are not the same – but should be ... equal rights and opportunity	
6	Roles of women ...	

QUESTION #3: How have you, in NH, experienced gender equality or gender inequality?

Participant	Comment	Note-Taker Observation
4	Generally higher than the South, black women take on a ... role in the South. Stigma about being the wage - ... - complicated more opp. – more balance here in NH – more respect – different expectations in South	Is this person from the South?
6	Women fighting to come out of poverty – black women. When we look at inner cities – minority/black women – babies having babies - ... support ... → agreeing with ... - 2% minority in NH	
4	NH is light years ahead - ... living in the South. Gender conformity.	
2	Women have come a long way here in NH – more women visible. No ... to him that women are not doing well. Admits that he lives and sees upper middle class	
3	NH – Seacoast geo. Separate – not see here what ... see in the rest of the state.	
2	Good point. Seacoast very different	Less different
6	Western/Monandok region – built a house – much smaller than anticipated – 10 years – never felt isolated but felt welcome.	
5	Stereotyping – class issues – socio-economic	

Participant	Comment	Note-Taker Observation
1	Grew up inner city Chicago WWII – women treated very differently - ... the ... - Post-war women pushed out - ... vets	Different how?

QUESTION #4: The Post-It Exercise!

Participant	Comment	Note-Taker Observation

Limitations:

Conclusion:

Appendix A: Listening Session Script

I. Welcome and Introductions

- Thank participants for coming
- Distribute participant information sheets (and agendas if using)
- Introduce facilitator and note taker
- Overview of New Hampshire Women's Initiative
 - The New Hampshire Women's Initiative is a new non-profit organization
 - A unification of:
 - The Commission on the Status of Women
 - The Women's Lobby and Alliance
 - The Women's Policy Institute
 - ***NHWI Mission: To advance social, economic and political opportunity and equality for women in New Hampshire.***
 - Has a Board of Directors and two advisory panels
 - Founding Mothers
 - Gender Ambassadors Panel
- Objective of Listening Sessions & GAP
 - Gender Ambassadors Panel will support the mission of the NHWI through researching and better understanding the gender equality issues that younger women and men identify as important to them.
 - Members of GAP will host a series of Contemporary Gender Equality Listening Sessions in various geographic locations around the State.
- Introduction of participants: *First name, age, town, occupation*

II. Overview of the Process

- Description of plan for Listening Session by facilitator
- How discussion will be documented during the Session
- How a report will be prepared after the Session
- Assurance of confidentiality (inform participants that any report will only identify participants by age, zip code, and industry/occupation)

I. Establishment of Ground Rules

- Ground rules encourage active and honest participation and a safe discussion environment.
- If a participant violates a ground rule, they will be politely reminded of the ground rule.

- If a participant continues to violate a ground rule, they will be asked to leave the group.

Ground Rules (The 5 A's)

Participants of this group...

- Agree to maintain confidentiality
- Agree that there are no “right or wrong” answers to the questions
- Agree to speak honestly based on our own experiences
- Agree that only one person will speak at a time
- Agree to respond to one another politely and respectfully

II. Discussion of Contemporary Gender Equality

1) What made you interested in attending today’s listening session on gender equality?

2) How do you define the term gender equality?

What does gender equality mean to you?

What does gender equality not mean to you?

What issues or subjects do you think about when you think of gender equality?

3) In New Hampshire, have you experienced or observed gender equality or inequality?

III. Post-it Note Exercise

What issues relating to gender equality do you think are most important for the New Hampshire Women’s Initiative to address?

(Each participant receives 3 standard yellow Post-it notes and a black sharpie; they must write their top three issues, one per Post-it note. Ask them to put the Post-its up on a white board or wall. Then each person gets one red dot. They must place their red dot on their top issue, which doesn’t have to be one of the ones they originally wrote.)

** Facilitator must collect the Post-its and return to the GAP Committee when complete*

IV. Wrap-up

- Do you have any other thoughts or ideas that you really want to share about gender equality in NH?
- Thank you to participants by facilitator
- Collect participant information sheets; distribute NHWI information sheets

V. Adjourn