



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
MICHIGAN WOMEN'S COMMISSION  
DETROIT

RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

MARY L. ENGELMAN  
DIRECTOR

February 9, 2018

The Honorable Rick Snyder  
Governor, State of Michigan  
State Capitol  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Governor Snyder,

Pursuant to Public Act 1 of 1968, we are pleased to submit to you the 2017 Annual Report of the Michigan Women's Commission for the calendar year of January 1 - December 31, 2017.

Our strategic plan identified three initiatives:

- Advocating for Michigan women in business which includes promoting of women and girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), becoming a resource for entrepreneurs, and increasing women's membership on corporate boards.
- Identifying the needs of Michigan women veterans through a Michigan-specific survey to help advocacy efforts, supporting efforts using social media to help identify and become a resource for veterans and initiating conversations for financial support across Michigan for the veterans' survey.
- Increasing awareness of human trafficking and sexual assault in Michigan through collaborative initiatives with numerous partners.

Our initiatives were operationalized as follows:

**Initiative to partner with statewide organizations such as the Michigan Council of Women in Technology, Inforum, and various chambers of commerce to address the gaps in STEM for young and professional women, women on boards, leadership and entrepreneurial challenges for women.**

The Michigan Women's Commission will participate in the 2018 FIRST Championship Detroit Steering Committee, which is preparing for an International Robotics competition that will bring over 40,000 people to Detroit. The goal is to create an event/venue that promotes and encourages women and girls in sciences.

**Initiative to identify the needs of Michigan women veterans through a Michigan-specific survey to help advocacy efforts and support efforts using social media:**

This committee has created an active Michigan Women Veterans Forum group on Facebook for women veterans to communicate with others across the state. Our focus was to partner with the Michigan Veterans Institute and Grand Valley State University to conduct a statewide survey of Michigan women veterans to identify gaps in areas such as healthcare and education. This was determined to be cost-prohibitive, so we are partnering with Target-Insyght to launch this survey.

**Initiative to Raise Awareness of Human Trafficking and Sexual Assault in Michigan:**

This committee is working with advocates to end sexual assault and is working on the local level to combat human trafficking. Out of this committee, over 40 trainings and presentations have been conducted on human trafficking. Executive Director Mary Engelman was appointed by First Lady Sue Snyder and serves on the Campus Sexual Assault workgroup. The commission was instrumental in creating a campus sexual assault rights and options guide that is featured on most college campuses and their respective websites. In addition, Commissioner Cathy Knauf of the SW Michigan Human Trafficking Task Force partnered with the TraffickCam project. This project created a database of hotel room images that helps agents determine what hotels traffickers are using in the area when investigating criminals that are advertising victims on websites. In Berrien County, 32 hotels participated. The task force also initiated the "Stop" campaign, which placed stop sign stickers in rest areas along I-94 in Berrien County to help those being trafficked. Their efforts resulted in a 32% pull rate of tabs off the stickers. Lastly, Commissioner Knauf attended the National JuST Conference in New Orleans in October. The conference sheds light on juvenile sex trafficking and emphasizes each person's role in preventing and ending commercial sexual exploitation and that a collaborative community response is critical. Experts in anti-human trafficking and sex exploitation from all fields presented at the conference.

**Meetings:**

We held four quarterly meetings of the Michigan Women's Commission:

- 1) January 24 in Lansing where Mary Kramer, publisher of Crain's Detroit Weekly, spoke about the Michigan Women's Directory, which assists Michigan's public and privately held companies, private equity firms, major foundations and large non-profit organizations in finding and selecting talented women to serve on their boards.
- 2) April 25 in Grand Rapids where Executive Director Engelman presented the proposed new commission directives for 2017, including a more robust website, increasing awareness of STEM careers, increasing awareness of sexual assault on

college campuses and providing entrepreneurs resources and leadership in business opportunities to women.

3) August 22 in Frankenmuth where Annie Urasky, Director of the Division on Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing in the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, shared the challenges that the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing face in terms of communications and understanding within the general population. Director Urasky also gave an update on the progress they are making with educating the health care industry, law enforcement and other critical entities on how to improve communications.

4) October 24 in Detroit where Agustin V. Arbulu, Executive Director of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, shared his story about his family immigrating to Dearborn and the challenges they faced with discrimination and how to fight against these sentiments. He encouraged all of those in attendance to speak out against sexual harassment and reminded everyone that it is a protected activity and will not be tolerated under the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act.

#### Other Activities:

Executive Director Engelman spoke at several events this year. At the Women & Leadership event at Grand Valley State University, she moderated a panel discussion with Governor Granholm, former first gentleman Dan Mulhern and Governor Swift of Massachusetts. She moderated a Town Hall meeting in Ypsilanti with Congressman Walberg and Congresswomen Dingell and other state and local veteran officials, presented on human trafficking at Central Michigan University at their Human Trafficking Conference, presented to the Michigan Association of Chamber Professionals Chamber Convention urging them to promote the women on boards initiative at their chambers, and was a guest of Representative Love's cable show on human trafficking.

We have created a millennial advisory committee in support of the commission. The goal of the millennial advisory committee is to identify issues of concern, create solutions and implement plans surrounding issues that impact Michigan's young and future women leaders.

We maintained an active social media presence to communicate with all Michiganders via our Twitter and Facebook platforms, with focus on women veterans, human trafficking and women on corporate boards. Through social media efforts, we have increased our Facebook followers by 12% and our Twitter followers by 6%. The Michigan Women Veterans Forum group has a 93% engagement rate.

Executive Director Engelman serves on the Michigan Career Readiness Program Needs Assessment and Strategic Action Planning Committee.

The Honorable Rick Snyder  
Page 4  
February 9, 2018

Executive Director Engelman served on the Senior Advisory Council on the Subcommittee of Volunteerism and continues to serve in 2018.

Executive Director Engelman participated in over 100 meetings, conferences, committee meetings, trainings and more to move women's issues forward.

We co-sponsored with Inforum Michigan's 20/20 Women on Boards event.

We updated our website, including the addition of an events calendar.

Elizabeth Thompson, Director of Program, retired in August and Jackie Debusschere was hired as department specialist.

It has been the practice of the Michigan Women's Commission to report all out-of-state travel. As such, we attended one event outside Michigan on behalf of the Michigan Women's Commission. Executive Director Engelman attended the National Association of Commissions for Women's Annual Conference in Buffalo, New York in July. At this conference, they voted on national initiatives for 2018 and provided tools to attendees to make a difference for women and families in their communities.

Sincerely,



Chris Etienne, Chair



Mary L. Engelman, Executive Director