

the
Gender Fairness Strategies Project

*The National Association of Women Judges • The National Judicial College • The National Center for State Courts •
American Bar Association Commission on Women in the Profession • The National Judicial Education Program*

Steering Committee

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*Gender Fairness in the Courts:
Action in the New Millennium*

The National Judicial Education Program announces the final publication of the Gender Fairness Strategies Project, *Gender Fairness in the Courts: Action in the New Millennium*, by Lynn Hecht Schafran and Norma J. Wikler. This manual will help courts, bar associations and community organizations implement the mandate of the National Conference on Public Trust and Confidence in the Justice System, where 500 justice system leaders – including almost every state chief justice, state court administrator and state bar president – voted to make implementing the recommendations of the Task Forces on Gender, Race and Ethnic Bias in the Courts a priority.

Five organizations cooperated to create the Gender Fairness Strategies Project: the National Association of Women Judges, the National Judicial College, the National Center for State Courts, the American Bar Association Commission on Women in the Profession and the National Judicial Education Program. The State Justice Institute (SJI) funded and supported our work.

Gender Fairness in the Courts: Action in the New Millennium reflects the distilled wisdom of these five organizations plus a diverse group of Gender Bias Task Force Implementation and Standing Committees, gender fairness experts and judicial educators who gathered in January 1999 for the Gender Fairness Strategies Project Maximizing Our Gains Conference. After the conference, participants applied each others' tested strategies and new ideas and reported on their effectiveness. This new publication presents the collective knowledge of this reform effort and aims to aid the nation's court systems and related organizations as they continue their efforts to eliminate gender bias in the courts.

Action in the New Millennium explains how to implement the Institutionalization Plan first presented in the *Gender Fairness Strategies Implementation Resources Directory*, published in 1998. The plan covers the fifteen key components essential to achieving and securing gender fairness in the courts. The new strategies manual examines each element of the Institutionalization Plan, addresses concerns and questions, and synthesizes conference participants' strategies for strengthening the Implementation/Standing Committees.

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Institutionalization Plan

1. A Standing Committee on Gender Fairness;
2. Staff and Funding to Carry Out the Work of Implementation/Standing Committees on a Long-Term Basis;
3. Education on Gender Issues for Judges, Court Personnel and Judicial Nominating and Conduct Commissions on an Ongoing Basis;
4. Initiatives that Address the Court-Related Issues Confronting Women of Diverse Racial and Ethnic Backgrounds and Lifestyles;
5. Codes of Conduct for Judges, Court Personnel and Lawyers that Address Gender Bias with Specificity;
6. Legislation Recommended by Task Forces and Implementation/ Standing Committees;
7. Gender-Neutral and Gender-Appropriate Language;
8. Mechanisms for Handling Formal and Informal Complaints of Gender Bias;
9. Initiatives to Ensure Gender Fairness in the Judicial Nomination, Election, Performance Evaluation and Disciplinary Processes;
10. Initiatives to Ensure Gender Fairness in Court Employment;
11. Data Collection Necessary to Monitor Gender Bias in the Courts;
12. Collaboration and Alliances with Other Groups and Individuals Inside and Outside the Courts.
13. Wide Diffusion of Task Force and Committee Findings and Initiatives Throughout the Justice System and Community;
14. Periodic Evaluation to Assess Implementation Efforts, Analyze their Effect on Reducing Gender Bias in the Courts and Identify New Problems;
15. Initiatives to Ensure that Court Planning and Reform Efforts Address the Relevant Gender-Fairness Concerns.

Of particular significance is the need for collaboration to ensure that every court planning and reform initiative addresses the relevant gender fairness concerns. The authors identify twenty-two initiatives ranging from alternative dispute resolution to courthouse architecture where Gender Bias Task Forces, Implementation/Standing Committees, courts and related organizations must work together to integrate these issues.

Gender Fairness in the Courts: Action in the New Millennium will be useful for a wide variety of audiences, including judges, court administrators, judicial educators, bar associations, prosecutors, public defenders, court watching organizations, judicial nominating commissions, judicial disciplinary commissions, attorney disciplinary commissions, legislatures, law schools, advocates against domestic violence and sexual assault, commissions on the status of women, and civic and religious organizations.

Gender Fairness in the Courts: Action in the New Millennium is available for \$25. Make checks payable to NOW Legal Defense and mail to The National Judicial Education Program, NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, 395 Hudson Street, Fifth Floor, New York, NY 10014. Phone 212-925-6635 or email njep@nowldef.org for additional information. The manual will be available later in the summer via the web at womenlaw.stanford.edu.