

# State and National Strategies California's Women Leading Government

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# Women Leading Government (WLG) California

- Purpose of WLG
- History of WLG
- Words of Wisdom about how to create a similar organization

# Women Leading Government (WLG) California

- Created 8 years ago out of Cal-ICMA's Preparing the Next Generation Committee
- Nine founding members lead by our first chair, Penny Gilbreth-Graft, City Manager, Huntington Beach

# Women Leading Government (WLG) California

- First planning meeting held in early 2006 in which we:
  - Created a mission statement
  - Established the first goals for the organization
  - Identified our target membership
  - Planned our first event

# WLG Mission

*“To help women succeed in public service by enhancing career-building models that develop leadership skills and by networking professional women in government”*

# WLG 2006-07 Goals

- Create an accessible, affordable and inclusive statewide organization that provides support for women in local government
- Create a model for establishing an organization that supports women in local government that can be used in other states

# WLG History

- Informal WLG events created excitement and interest for a more formal organization
- Seed money provided by:
  - City of Huntington Beach - \$5,000
  - Founding members - \$150 each
- March 2007 - established a website and hosted our first roundtable lunch event in March 2007 in Southern California with 25 women

# WLG History

- This success led to planning more formal and informal events throughout the state
- In November 2007, we formed the first board of directors and adopted the bylaws





***WLG Event Richard Nixon Library – October 2008***

# WLG History

- Our goal was to create a model the other states could follow
- WLG has a current board position in which a member represents Arizona and Texas
- Today, our paying membership includes over 150 members statewide and is growing
- We continue to work hard to provide quality educational information to our members as well as networking opportunities

# WLG 2012 Accomplishments

- Well attended “Noshing and Networking” lunches (the “no program” informal luncheons our members organize)
- WLG presence at various state conferences
- Successful roundtable luncheons (the formal luncheons with speakers)
- Successful coaching calls
- Monthly executive network conference calls for chief executives (city managers, county managers, general managers of special districts)

# WLG 2012 Accomplishments (continued...)

- Assisting MMANC produce several successful Women's Leadership Summits in San Jose, CA and co-sponsor the event
- Establishment of sessions at the ICMA Conference, the League of California Cities City Managers' Conference, MMANC & MMASC annual conferences
- Adoption of an Affiliation Agreement with ICMA
- Connections with other state women's organizations

# Words of Wisdom

- Gather a core group of individuals who are passionate about the initiative and who want to work hard to support the effort
- Be strategic in your approach and develop a strategic plan (e.g. mission, vision, values, goals and strategies)
- Do not forget the value of networking in small groups - every event does not have to have a formal program

# Words of Wisdom (continued)

- Communicate your goals and accomplishments with your members regularly
- Continue to cultivate people who want to plan and organize events which support the mission of the organization
- Reach out to those who have created similar organizations and ask for advice

*Our goal is to build not just a professional organization with a roster of quality individuals, but a network of active women that mentor and support each other in a purposeful way.”*

*Jennifer Phillips  
Assistant City Manager  
City of Santa Rosa, California  
WLG Co-Chair*

# Questions/Comments?

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