

The WIT Advocate

An Update from the WIT Advocacy Committee March 2005

Welcome to *The WIT Advocate*! This quarterly update is published by the WIT Advocacy Committee as a service to WIT members. Our objective is to provide you with information and tools related to legislative and administrative initiatives that impact the business and work environment. Special emphasis is placed on issues concerning women and the technology community. We're interested in hearing comments, questions, or requests for issues you'd like to see covered in upcoming newsletters. You can contact any of the Advocacy Committee as follows:

Beth Lalik, Chair: elalik@pillsburywinthrop.com
Wendy Freiman, Co-Chair: friemanw@verizon.net
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Upcoming WIT Advocacy Events

The Lifecycle of a Public Policy Issue from an Advocate's Perspective, April 14, 2005.

Ever wonder how to get yourself heard on Capital Hill? Attend this Advocacy Committee lunch program, where Marjorie Sonnenfeldt will outline a winning process for packaging your cause so it gets noticed and potentially enacted into legislation. Ms. Sonnenfeldt is well known for her distinguished career at Fleishman-Hillard, a leading Washington public relations and communications firm. She has also advocated on behalf of developmentally-disabled children and participated in other important civic causes. For more information on this event or to register, visit http://www.womenintechology.org/calendar_day.asp?date=4/14/2005.

Recent Advocacy Events

The Advocacy Committee was pleased to have local author and educator, Joanne Lozar Glenn, speak to WIT members about advocating for themselves in the workplace. The February 24, 2005 lunch session featured a practical 10-step action plan for increasing your political capital in the workplace. Ms. Glenn, author of *Mentor Me: A Guide to Being Your Own Best Advocate in the Workplace*, drew upon her experience mentoring young professionals in the workplace, as well as a course she developed and taught for Georgetown University called Be Your Own Mentor. For those who missed the session, you can receive monthly information and insight about career advocacy and the workplace at large by subscribing to the WaterCooler, Ms. Glenn's e-zine. Visit <http://www.mentorme.info/index.htm> to sign up.

Advocacy News & Updates

Several new developments in the government, private industry and legal communities have emerged that potentially impact women, technology and business:

Government

- ***Performance-Based Contracting on the Rise in 2005.*** The Bush administration wants federal agencies to use performance-based methods in 50 percent of their contracts in 2005. The [new OMB Circular A-76](#) requires agencies to submit annual reports outlining their competitive sourcing efforts for the prior fiscal year as well as for FY2004. Performance based services acquisition (PBSA) contracts identify objective performance measures (such as 'you will answer each help desk call by the third ring') and attach significant financial rewards/penalties to achievement of those objectives. It is a different way of buying services. Not all contracts can be executed in this format. For resources on PBSA, visit http://www.gcionline.net/fpujsp/brknews.jsp?bnews_id=960. To access the Department of Defense Guide Book for Performance-Based Services Acquisition, visit <http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/Docs/pbsaguide010201.pdf>.
- ***New Regulations Promote Energy Efficiency in Government Procurements.*** If your company provides hardware to the Department of Defense, you may be able to take advantage of government "green procurement" initiatives. To learn more, visit http://www.gcionline.net/fpujsp/brknews.jsp?bnews_id=933.
- ***Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Requires Business Case Justification for IT Expenditures.*** OMB officials are requiring at least 60 percent of government agencies' information technology requests to have business cases, which outline long-term plans for an investment as well as the initial budget request. This means that any agency that wants to buy telecom or IT services has to do a better job of justifying the cost/benefit associated with the procurement. Very often it is the contractor or vendor who has to help prepare the justification so that the customer can make a convincing case to OMB. To learn more, visit <http://www.fcw.com/fcw/articles/2003/1117/web-bizcase-11-18-03.asp>. For those interested in or involved with developing required business cases and completing the OMB 300 submission, training is available: <http://www.fms.treas.gov/tas/courses/omb-exhibit.html>

Industry

- ***Self-Employment Rates up Sharply for Women, Blacks and Latinos.*** A study released recently by the Office of Advocacy of the U.S. Small Business Administration found that between 1979 and 2003, the self-employment rate for women increased by 33 percent. This study confirmed the entrepreneurial trend

widely recognized in recent years. For more information on findings from the study, visit <http://www.sba.gov/advo/press/04-38.html>.

Legal

- ***Class Action Sex Discrimination Suit Filed against Novartis.*** A group of current and former female employees at Novartis Pharmaceutical Corp., an international pharmaceutical and consumer health company, filed a sex discrimination suit in February 2005. For more information, visit <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L17298341.htm>.
- ***“New Economy” Workers in Computer and Call-Center Industries Benefit from Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Enforcement.*** The Labor Department has issued an Overtime Pay Rule (<http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/opa/opa20041884.htm>) that modifies eligibility requirements for overtime pay. Customer service representatives who worked “off-the-clock” and did not receive compensation for that work are entitled to back compensation. Two recent cases involve telecommunications companies Cingular (<http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/opa/OPA20050083.htm>) and T-Mobile (<http://www.dol.gov/esa/media/press/whd/whdpressVB2.asp?pressdoc=seattle/2003796.xml>).
- ***SEC Regulations for Publicly-Traded Companies Broaden Responsibility for Code of Conduct and Ethics Adherence.*** The Securities and Exchange Commission has extended the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to broaden applicability and mandate that publicly-traded companies adopt and disclose their business codes of conduct, which extend to all employees of the company. For more information on these rules and what businesses need to do to comply, visit <http://tinyurl.com/4fsjh>.

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