



## **NAPE BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE TESTIFIES BEFORE NJ STATE LEGISLATURE ON WAGE GAP**

**February 6, 2012**

NAPE board member-at-large Teresa Boyer, Assistant Professor at the School of Management and Labor Relations and Executive Director of the Center for Women and Work at Rutgers University, testified on February 6, 2012, before the New Jersey State Legislature's newly formed Women and Children Committee in support of resolution AR-50. AR-50, which passed the NJ Assembly on February 16, 2012, and was filed with the Secretary of State a day later, urges Congress to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act (PFA). Passing PFA is pivotal in increasing workplace equity for women and instrumental in their ability to care for their families.

Ms. Boyer informed the Committee, when evaluating overall median earnings for full-time, year-round workers, women earn \$44,166 to men's \$57,738. Over the span of a 40-year career, women with a high school diploma are at a loss of \$415,000. Men and women graduating from college with essentially the same skills in any particular degree enter careers where, by merit of their gender, men earn far more than their female colleagues. Women with a bachelor's degree or higher suffer a median loss of \$798,000. This issue compounds in retirement years; Ms. Boyer made clear that "less earnings during your working life lead to less income in retirement. With women often living longer than their male counterparts, this puts more elderly women at risk of living in poverty." And when factoring in racial and ethnic wage gaps, minority women's ability to save for their future *and* adequately provide for their families becomes critically dire.

Ms. Boyer offered the New Jersey Legislature these seven equity leveling solutions to the pay gap dilemma:

- Commission research on the pay gap and measure the impact it has on New Jersey workers and families
- Encourage employers to publish wage data and make advancement pathways transparent, and recognize employers that exhibit excellence in pay practices
- Provide assistance to businesses to help with equal pay practices
- Strengthen legislation supporting equal pay and women's rights in the workplace
- Continue support of programs that encourage women's entry into high-wage, high-demand nontraditional fields
- Provide awareness and training programs for females on the gender pay gap
- Teach women how to negotiate for better wages

Women have made immeasurable strides in the workforce while managing to continue to invest in the health and care of their families. Business, industry, and government institutions must rally for equal pay for equal work and respect and recognize women's contributions to the U.S. economy.