

## NCCWSL 2015 Report

### **Your personal background:**

20 years old, St. Cloud State University, Information Systems Major, 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Student

Career Objectives: To do something meaningful that I enjoy and that will make a difference, small or large scale

### **Your "new outlook" on what leadership really is:**

My new outlook on leadership is that leaders can reach out to other leaders. As a leader, I tend to take charge and go in at something alone. I'd never really thought about it, but other leaders make great contacts and are the people you want to be working on projects with. They make the perfect idea generators, or sounding boards, and can help with just about anything. Networking and connecting with so many young female leaders inspired me and made me more aware of what diversity there is out there and I'd like to think that I'll take back what I experienced and use it.

### **Finally, exactly what did you learn that you can apply to your life in the near future:**

I learned just how important it is to have strong female leaders who stick up for others. All of the women at this conference are in the position to make a difference. They have the passion, the support, and the obvious affinity to take charge that people seek in a leader. I was very inspired when I got back, ready to jump into my leadership responsibilities at work and campus, already buzzing with ideas. I also met a lot of people and improved my networking. I've already followed up with a lot of these women and heard back. I think I made some valuable connections and friendships that may help me with my endeavors down the road.

### Day 1: Wednesday, May 27

Our flight landed around 1pm Maryland-time and we hopped on the Metro to College Park, then took a bus to the university and headed to the Denton Hall dorm where we'd be living for the duration of the trip. Our group checked in and received our NCCWSL tote bag filled with accessories including the event program, a *Glamour* magazine, free Pantene products, our official nametag, and water bottle. We each spent the next hour unpacking in our dorm rooms and relaxing. My roommate was fellow AAUW sponsoree, Hannah Kangas. The rooms weren't bad necessarily, just small and the sheets unfitted, the restrooms were adequate, but honestly we didn't spend much time in our rooms. Once we were all unpacked, re-energized, and ready to take off we wandered away from campus to find some dinner. We ended up just off-campus at this pizza place called *Blaze*. Imagine Punch Pizza meets Subway, it was a build-you-own style pizza restaurant and it was delicious! Shortly after dinner we all stopped by a CVS Pharmacy to pick up little necessities, such as shower shoes which I hadn't even thought to bring. With hunger subsided and our needs met, we headed back to campus for the speed-networking event which was held in the dorm basement. I met two girls from Qatar who were pursuing my same major, Information Systems, and a girl from the University of Minnesota! It was pretty neat. After the event, I was pretty tired and headed off to bed. The day was long and exhausting but I was also really excited! The campus was so big and everyone seemed very nice and easy to talk to.

### Day 2: Thursday, May 28

Thursday was the of the pre-conference activities, which we couldn't take part in because we hadn't signed up in advance and paid for. I was a little disappointed, to be honest, because there was one activity I really wanted to see: the panel of politicians' staff somewhere on Capitol Hill. I thought it sounded interesting. Apparently we were supposed to sign up in advance, but didn't know. Next year, I'd recommend the individuals pay the extra \$30 and do it. I ended up sleeping in that morning and then doing some work before the conference officially kicked off after lunch at 1pm.

"Finding Your Voice" Opening Session (that morning)

Presenter: Dr. Marsha Guenzler-Stevens, Director of Stamp Student Union Building

1. Will we see a female president in your lifetime? (she asked the audience to stand or sit in response)
  - a) Most of the room stood up, agreeing to her question
  - b) 30 years ago, when the first NCCWSL happened, 50% may have stood
2. Has your confidence grown in college?
  - a) Most stood up, 10% or so didn't, we got into discussing why
3. Dr. Marsha asked 6 or 7 more questions

Conference Statistics:

College Fair: 80 grad schools at the fair  
Career Fair: 25 companies (including GEICO, Peace Corps, Glamour)  
Nearly 1000 ladies from 44 states and 3 countries (Jamaica, Qatar, Ethiopia)

"Women of Distinction" Awards Ceremony (that evening)

Woman Senator from Maryland, spoke about leading just before the panel started:

1. Seize Opportunities
2. Be Gracious
3. Engage your community
4. Trust your feelings

WoD Award given to:

Marcia Ann Gillespie (couldn't make it)  
Debbie Sterling (couldn't make it)  
Miriam W. Yeung, MPA  
Lynn Rosenthal  
Amanda Simpson  
Elizabeth Acevodo (Quote: "You are completely necessary")

### Day 3: Friday, May 29

Opening Ceremony

Bele Bele Rhythm Collective performed African drum music  
Such a diverse atmosphere!!!  
Students started joining in to the dancing  
You could see the blend of young women and different cultures

Speaker: Maysoon Zayid

Palestinian, Muslim, Female Comic from New Jersey with Cerebral Palsy

I'd recommend her TED talk

"Stick your head in your ass and roll out of here!" (when referring to the word *popple*)

"Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me...That's bullshit!"

"Don't be an internet troll!"

"The world is broken but we can fix it by saying 'No'"

She talked about being different, making environments inclusive, and how the ladies in that room are the future

Session 1: ElectHer

1% of women in congress are under 40- that's 7 ladies (ageism)  
19% of congress is made up of women  
The presenters had us write elevator speeches about our passionate subject and then held mini-elections

Session 2: Politic Panel

This was a panel of politicians/D.C. Staff who talked about how to get involved, gave some tips, and answered questions

Session 3: "It Ain't Easy Being Green"

Dana S. Branham- Financial Planner/Advisor

She spoke about how to be "weird" with you money because normal people have students loans, credit card debt, and so on

Session 4: Women in Engineering and Computing

Learned about the statistics of girls in STEM and thoughts as to why that might be  
Women in the room, who were in engineering and technology, shared stories

**Day 4: Saturday, May 30**

Closing Session

A Capella group called "Capital Blend" was an all female group of women from D.C. Area (they were amazing!)

"Room was energized!"

Final song ended with "We are family" and everyone was up clapping, singing including Nancy Hogshead-Makar the speaker

Speaker: Nancy Hogshead-Makar

Former 3 time Gold Medalist in Olympic Swimming in 1984 (and is now a lawyer)

Talke about girls in sports, Title 9, and how we as women can make differences on our campus

Remainder of Saturday

The conference ended around 12pm. The remainder of the trip we spent walking around the Monuments Mall exploring.

We went into the National Archives, walked to Constitution Park, went to the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, Vietnam Memorial, Reflection Pool, Dupont Circle, Union Station and more. Our feet were pretty sore, but it was all worth it! We spent nearly 10 hours outside visiting D.C.