Work-Life Activities 2003-2004 (*taken from ADVANCE Annual Report*)

The Work-Life Committee is chaired by Karen Wishner, and also consists of Janett Trubatch, Helen Mederer, and Molly Hedrick.

**Activities**

**Policy Review.** A primary activity of the Committee is to review and revise existing policies and procedures that will contribute to a healthy work environment for women faculty, and, by extension, for all personnel. These will include reviews of family leave policies, dual career hiring practices, child care availability, tenure clock practices, etc. This year, the committee worked over a several month period in collaboration with the President’s Commission on the Status of Women, the Women’s Equity Committee and the URI-AAUP Committee W in developing a new *Family Leave Policy* for URI faculty and staff (see Appendix C). After a thorough review of national standards and policies by Molly Hedrick, a progressive policy was developed and submitted to President Carothers in June 2004.

The issue of *dual career couples* has been a recent focal point for the committee. An interview protocol was developed with guidance from Lisa Bowleg, qualitative evaluator, and interviews are currently being conducted with dual career couples at URI. Interview categories so far include: dual career hires, chairs interviews, and dual career couple applicants who did not come to URI. Molly Hedrick and an undergraduate assistant are compiling best practices. A set of guidelines will be developed for consideration in the fall of 2004.

URI has limited *child care* availability, and a new child care facility on campus grounds is in the planning stages. ADVANCE has been working with other groups on campus (Family Friendly Task Force, President’s Commission on the Status of Women) to move forward with these plans. A web page reviewing all available area childcare has been posted on the ADVANCE website.

**Social Events.** ADVANCE will be sponsoring social events on campus and off campus that connect women to other colleagues and social contacts. The goal is to reduce isolation and increase the sense of belonging, particularly with new faculty.

**Findings**

**Accomplishments**

- A revised Family Leave Policy was presented to the President in June, authored by ADVANCE and the President’s Commission on the Status of Women. He was enthusiastic and will present the policy, which includes a 6-week paid leave clause, to the Rhode Island Board of Governors for consideration. The vision statement for the policy, the set of recommendations that are the foundation of the policy, and the proposed policy itself can be found in Appendix C.
- Dual career interviews have been conducted with: 5 faculty members, 3 chairs
• Social events sponsored by ADVANCE include South County Women’s Networking Socials: November 2003, January, March and May 2004 and Into the Woods reception, October 2003

Difficulties
  1. Collaborating with several organizations on campus in producing policies that reflect broad interests

Best ideas
  1. Collaborating with other organizations on campus (such as the President’s Commission) and being inclusive when considering policy revisions, so that all personnel benefit.

Deviations and Future Plans
  1. Policy review took painstaking efforts, and is proceeding slower than originally planned. We are focusing on dual career guidelines and child care facility development for the 2004 fiscal year.
  2. Development of a brochure for new faculty was also too ambitiously planned; this will also occur in the coming year.
  3. Social events will increase and will often occur in the ADVANCE Resource Center, which only is getting adequately furnished this summer.