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Subject: Women In Government Launches Gabrielle Giffords Leadership Forum Series



Women In Government

Press Release

Civility is the Focus as Women In Government Partners with the Office of Representative Gabrielle Giffords and Center for American Women and Politics

Washington, D.C. - March 2, 2011

Women In Government Foundation (WIG), in partnership with the Office of U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords and the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), announces the launch of the Gabrielle Giffords Leadership Forum Series for 2011.

This series aims to bring civility back to political discussions, reinforce the Women In Government mission of bi-partisanship, and motivate female state legislators to maintain integrity throughout their political careers. The series will kick off at Women In Government's 14th Annual Western Regional Conference in Colorado, Thursday, June 16- Saturday, June 18.

"Congresswoman Giffords remains dedicated to serving her constituents and making sure that our public policy debates are civil, open and respectful of all views," says Pia Carusone, Giffords' chief of staff. "We hope that in the wake of the Jan. 8 tragedy, there is a renewed commitment to civility in political discourse on all levels, and look forward to being a part of that conversation with WIG and CAWP."

The purpose of these sessions will be to foster civility and respect for bi-partisan views on difficult public policy issues, even in today's highly charged political climate. WIG will encourage women to take leadership roles and encourage their colleagues to moderate the tone at all levels of American government, assuming a more respectful attitude toward differing opinions. In response to the current challenges facing states, a new role can emerge for legislators as conveners of consensus-based problem-solving processes.

"As a bi-partisan, non-profit organization, WIG has a long history of promoting civility in political discourse. This is not the time for partisanship. It is a time to work together to bring back civil political discussions, so that all voices can be heard in a constructive and safe forum," says WIG President Emeritus Susan Crosby.

"Representative Giffords' career is an outstanding example of the kind of collegiality and cross-party collaboration shown by our research to be a hallmark of women lawmakers" adds Debbie Walsh, director of CAWP. "As a state legislator and now in

Congress, she has been a bridge-builder and promoter of constructive discourse. This series will provide inspiration and encouragement for others to follow in her path."

The series will continue at WIG's 18th Annual Midwestern Regional Conference, July 28-30 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the 13th Annual Eastern Regional Conference, August 25-27 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and the 12th Annual Southern Regional Conference, October 13-15 in Charleston, South Carolina.

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