



## LAKE MICHIGAN FEDERATION

May 12, 1993

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To: Sister Pat Lupo, Lynn Andrews, Mary Ginnebaugh, Rebecca Shriener, Jean Jabanoski, Tanya Cabala, Sarah Miller, Brennain Lloyd, and any one else who is interested. *Karen Murphy (how could I forget - Karen!?)*

From: Kathy Bero *KMB*

Re: Great Lakes Leadership Network.

Hi everyone, this is just a quick reminder of what I need from you all to secure the Kellogg funds. I would appreciate your immediate attention to these items. I'm sorry for the "unfriendly" style of this note, but you all know how it is with busy schedules. Thanks so much and we'll all be in touch soon. If you need any further information when your recruiting people, let me know.

I need:

- 1) Evaluation: please give me any questions you would see this project answering as they relate to our goals listed in the grant.
- 2) Letters of support from yours and other organizations interested in participating. This should just be a short letter.
- 3) Ideas on matching funds, including your time, phone, mailings, newsletter notices, etc. Please be specific in giving me dollar amounts. Kellogg just wants to see that there are others committed.
- 4) Ideas for continuation beyond the conferences. We did talk about this at the GLU meeting, but if you have anything further please let me know.

Please don't forget to get this information to me by next week. Thank you!!!

*Citizen Action  
to Save a  
Great Lake*

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*Update, continued from page 10)*

• **Chlorine Bleaching:** WEN USA will also cover the health and environmental impact of the organochlorine pollution that is created from the chlorine bleaching of these disposable paper products.

• **The Environmental Impact of Toxic Pollutants on Women's Reproductive Health:** It is crucial that women are aware of how their health and that of their unborn child can be affected by exposure to pollutants. Links are also being established between exposure to toxic pollutants and breast cancer.

• **Information:** In addition to the above, WEN USA will also provide information about what women can do to positively affect different environmental issues.

*For more information, contact: Marla Fishman, Coordinator, WEN USA, P.O. Box 4560, Chicago, IL 60680-4560 USA; Tel: (312) 666-1401; Fax: (312) 226-2714.*

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## Great Lakes Women Form Leadership Network: The Lake Michigan Federation

In the Great Lakes Basin, toxic contaminants impact our health and community in seemingly subtle ways. Unfortunately, as more contaminants are dumped unchecked into the system, the impacts are dispersed more broadly and become more difficult to correct.

"It is our belief that while environmental problems have typically been isolated from other issues by decision-makers, they impact at least four facets of our community: education, health, crime and economics. For example, recent studies have indicated that toxic contamination influences children's development and restricts their abilities to learn at normal rates. Additionally, the rising costs of health care correspond with the rising number and variety of environmentally related health problems around the Great Lakes Basin.

"More serious attention must be given to how large a role the condition of our ecosystem plays in the condition of our community. The connections must be clearly made between our actions and their impacts over the long-term. Some questions to be asked might include: 'Is there a correlation between the low aptitude scores of our children, the growing crime and suicide rates, and the environmental toxins their mothers were exposed to?'; 'Are toxic pollutants responsible for the growing number of reproductive disorders across the Great Lakes?'

"Historically, the decisions for the paths taken in building our communities, primarily on narrow economic grounds, have been made by men. Women have been excluded from the process and as a result have more objectively scrutinized the effects of past decisions.

"The Lake Michigan Federation (LMF) will initiate a long-term Great Lakes Leadership Network to integrate environmental stewardship into societal and economic decision-making in the Great Lakes Basin.

"The Network will target women leaders across the Great Lakes Basin who are working to improve public health, build a sustainable economy and prevent crime in their communities. This will be a bi-national effort, including both Canada and the United States, by women from active environmental, social justice and educational organizations around the Great Lakes Basin. We will work to identify the links between these areas and the environmental problems that negatively impact and interfere with their progress. In addition, this new network of advocates brought together by this campaign will work to integrate these concepts into mainstream policy and decision-making processes.

"This project is being developed out of frustration surrounding the impact of toxic contamination on our communities and the narrow scope within which these problems are typically addressed. The overall goal is to infuse full participation from women throughout the decision making process as it relates to building a healthy and sustainable community in the Great Lakes Basin. Within five or ten years down the road we hope to have strong regional policies in place based on maintaining a healthy ecosystem as well as a healthy economy.

"This project will be led by women working with the people of their community, making changes from the bottom up. Some of the women represented will be working in depressed communities where environmental racism is rampant, and where polluting industries and hazardous waste landfills are forced upon them in the name of job creation. Other participants will represent native communities who have been almost completely out of the process. Their homes have been taken over for development, and their communities stripped of traditional values. We will use their energy and values to reach out to the native people and build a strong and active movement for restoration of the Great Lakes ecosystem.

"Participants in the Network will be asked to maintain communications with each other to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the overall program. Through a series of workshops, the group will identify an agenda and develop a program under which these concepts can be integrated into mainstream decision-making processes.

"In addition, there will be a leadership development component to aid women in speaking clearly, confidently, factually and effectively in order to influence policy changes to resolve ecosystem problems. Network members will then take the message back to their own communities and spread it across the basin through grass roots organizing, media relations, and communications with government agencies and elected officials.

"The agenda and program will be produced in a report and disseminated to organizers and decision-makers around the Great Lakes Basin. Included in the report will also be a checklist to guide community leaders in successfully implementing the Network's program."

*For more information, contact Kashileen Berni, Lake Michigan Federation, 647 Virginia St., Suite 307, Milwaukee, WI 53204 USA; Tel: (414) 271-5059; Fax: (414) 442-4560. (See Update, page 12)*

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