

NWLC 2013 HIGHLIGHTS

Secured an end to the Defense Department policy banning women from direct ground combat

by documenting U.S. servicewomen's successful performance in Iraq and Afghanistan, pressing for elimination of the policy in meetings with Pentagon officials, marshaling advisory committee and congressional support, and engaging the media and the public in the debate.

Won strengthened enforcement of equal pay laws

by successfully pressing the Department of Labor to rescind two Bush-era guidelines that undercut its ability to detect and remedy pay discrimination among federal contractors, who employ more than one-fifth of the civilian labor force, and focused national attention on the wage gap's harm to women and policy solutions to close it, including by documenting persistent barriers to fair pay in a report, *50 Years and Counting: The Unfinished Business of Achieving Fair Pay*, launching an interactive website (MyWageGap.org) to encourage women to get involved, hosting a prominent Washington D.C. panel that identified policy solutions such as passing the Paycheck Fairness Act, and helping develop and support several ground-breaking congressional economic agendas that address the economic challenges facing women.

Secured Department of Education determinations

that the District of Columbia Public Schools and eight other school districts nationwide must give girls more opportunities to play sports to comply with Title IX, by filing administrative complaints with the Department's Office for Civil Rights based on the districts' own data showing unequal athletic opportunities for girls and conducting a campaign, *Rally for Girls' Sports: She'll Win More than a Game*, to educate parents and schools about the inequality their daughters face in sports programs and mobilize parents to press for change.

Won key victories in the so-called "fiscal cliff" deal,

including extending emergency unemployment benefits and family tax credits, protecting Social Security, Medicaid and Medicare, and requiring the wealthiest Americans to pay a

fairer share of taxes, by playing a leading role in the national tax coalition, preparing and disseminating unique critical analyses, pressing key policymakers, and mobilizing supporters.

Helped win minimum wage increases

in Connecticut and New York, bringing to four the number of states that raised the minimum wage this year, by producing and disseminating state-specific analyses demonstrating the link between a higher minimum wage and fairer pay for women—who make up two-thirds of minimum-wage workers, and helped secure Department of Labor regulations providing minimum wage and overtime pay protections for home care workers—90 percent of whom are women—by generating thousands of public comments in support of the regulations.

Won repeal of the ban on insurance coverage of abortion

for U.S. servicewomen and military family members who are rape or incest survivors by engaging retired service members, playing a leadership role in the campaign to end the discriminatory policy, securing a Defense Department advisory committee recommendation to end the ban, and mobilizing supporters to send over 106,000 messages to Congress.

Expanded the movement to protect reproductive health

by launching an online campaign, *This Is Personal*, which is educating, engaging and activating more than 510,000 women, primarily those under age 35, who have taken more than 1.7 million actions, including in target states and Congress, to fight unprecedented attacks on women's access to birth control and abortion.

Advanced marriage equality by authoring *amicus* briefs on behalf of eight organizations arguing for full equality for individuals regardless of sexual orientation in two Supreme Court cases—*U.S. v. Windsor*, in which the Court struck down two key provisions of the Defense of Marriage Act barring the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriages, and *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, in which the Court's ruling that it lacked

jurisdiction left standing the district court decision declaring unconstitutional the California referendum barring same-sex marriages and cleared the way for same-sex marriages to resume.

Secured protections for pregnant workers by filing an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission complaint on behalf of a pregnant hospital cleaner in Florida who was forced to take unpaid leave when her employer refused to accommodate her doctor's request that she not lift heavy objects and then negotiating a settlement with the hospital that allowed her to return to work, co-authoring a report, *It Shouldn't Be a Heavy Lift: Fair Treatment for Pregnant Workers*, which shows that many pregnant workers—especially those in low-wage jobs—are fired or forced to take unpaid leave when their employers refuse to make the basic accommodations they give other workers with temporary disabilities, and filing an *amicus* brief with the Supreme Court of California arguing that an employer is not legally permitted to deny a pregnant woman a job based on its concern for her fetus.

Advanced Title IX's protections for women athletes by filing an *amicus* brief on behalf of female athletes at Quinnipiac University with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, which resulted in a precedent-setting decision spelling out when an activity can be counted as a sport and ordering the university to retain all women's teams, (including volleyball, which the school had tried to replace with "competitive" cheerleading), and filing an *amicus* brief with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit supporting the District Court's ruling that a California high school had systematically failed to give girls equal participation opportunities, treated girls' teams unequally, retaliated against female athletes whose parents complained, and created an overall chilling effect on students' willingness to report problems, in violation of Title IX.

Advanced health care protections for pregnant women by filing five groundbreaking maternity coverage complaints against institutions that exclude pregnancy coverage from the health insurance benefits provided to their employees' dependent children, believed to be the first complaints to challenge dependent pregnancy coverage exclusions under Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, a provision that the Center secured and that bars sex discrimination in health care programs that receive federal funds.

Rallied support for increased investments in early learning by launching the *Strong Start for Children* campaign with 375 organizational partners to support President Obama's Preschool for All initiative to expand preschool, child care and Early Head Start, delivering 30,000 supportive letters and artwork from children to the White House, holding a national Early Learning Day of Action to educate the public about the initiative joined by President Obama and U.S. Senators, delivering to every Senator stories about the value of high-quality learning, organizing a life-sized game of Chutes and Ladders played by nine members of Congress, and co-authoring a report, *Smart Healthy Kids*, demonstrating that the initiative would give two million low- and moderate-income children access to high-quality preschool.

Launched "Word of Mom," an innovative new website (WordofMom.org) that gives mothers the tools they need to gently nudge their children (with a dash of humor) via Facebook, Twitter or e-mail to learn about and sign up for new affordable health insurance options, and created user-friendly toolkits that physicians, members of Congress and others can use to explain the new health care law to the public.

Helped pregnant students stay in school by securing strong guidelines from the Department of Education on schools' Title IX obligations to protect these students from discrimination and a new policy at the 269,000-student City University of New York (CUNY) protecting pregnant and parenting students and spelling out CUNY's obligations to excuse pregnancy-related absences and allow students to make up work they miss, after filing complaints with the Department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

Helped improve child care assistance for low-income families by analyzing key state policies that affect families' access to financial support for child care costs in an annual report, the most recent of which, *Pivot Point: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2013*, showed positive developments in 27 states between 2012 and 2013, and by working with advocates to encourage states to make policy improvements.

Fought to prevent employers from denying contraceptive coverage to their employees as required under the Affordable Care Act, by leading the effort to successfully convince HHS to limit the number of employers that are exempt from directly covering birth control, authoring 11 *amicus* briefs on behalf of more than 56 organizations in lawsuits brought by for-profit employers that don't want to give their employees this important benefit, and preparing to participate in a case that may reach the Supreme Court this term.