

AMPLIFY & ACT

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What Will It Take to Make Americans Value Caregiving?

A Message From the President of VisionForward

"Fundamentally, to provide paid leave, you have to value women and value their work. Valuing women and their work is a hard thing for the United States."

That's how U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) summed up the most recent opposition to proposals to add our nation to the list of 186 countries that provide paid family leave. Instead, the U.S., Suriname, Papua New Guinea, and a few island countries in the Pacific Ocean remain the only nations that do not require employers to provide paid time off for new parents.



For 50 years, the productivity of women in the workforce has fueled America's rising GDP, and prior to the pandemic, women held 50% of American jobs. Women head 80% of single-parent households and drive the majority of consumer purchasing.

The shared reality for most women in 2021 is the need or desire to work outside the home coupled with primary responsibility for caregiving. This reality unites women across race, religion, age and every other difference.

What will it take to change American attitudes and institutions that perpetuate the under-valuing of caregiving? In a [recent article](#), writer Jo Piazza suggested, "It's time for American women to go on strike. We have to hit the country where it hurts the most: in the wallet, the bank account, square in the GDP."

We wouldn't be the first. Women in Iceland famously took a day off from their jobs and household chores, including childcare, in 1975. Iceland's first female president, Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, said, "So many companies and institutions

came to a halt, and it showed the force and necessity of women — it completely changed the way of thinking.”

VisionForward has not decided to lead the first U.S. Women’s Strike. At least not yet. But we are building a national coalition of influential leaders and organizations working to raise the value of caregiving and find ways to compensate it.

The kickoff will be VisionForward's first National Caregiving Summit, a virtual event to be held during Women’s History Month on March 4, 2022. The summit will raise awareness about the issues, but go well beyond that to focus on actions and solutions.

Should a strike be one of the actions? What do you think? I invite your response to visionforward@drexel.edu.



Lynn H. Yeakel, Founder and President, VisionForward

VisionForward News & Events

SAVE THE DATE: MARCH 4

National Caregiving Summit to Address Issues, Actions and Solutions

VisionForward will host its first National Caregiving Summit on March 4, 2022, from 1 to 3:30 p.m. The virtual event is timed to coincide with Women's History Month, highlighting the fact that caregiving responsibilities have fallen almost entirely on women throughout American history. The interactive summit will feature national thought leaders in a keynote address and a panel discussion.



Page Talbott (second from right), curator of VisionForward's Seat at the Table exhibition, trained volunteers to lead in-person school group tours.

Teachers Can Request Guided Class Tour of Women's History Exhibition

If you are an educator, or know one, take note: Teachers can [request a guided class tour](#) of VisionForward's Seat at the Table exhibition, now through Women's History Month 2022. The exhibition explores progress toward gender equity a century after American women won the right to vote. The interactive experience is sure to spark lively discussion on current issues. There is no cost for a class tour and admission to the exhibition is free.

If your class can't visit in person, you can access a video tour, multimedia content and the Educator's Guide on the [Seat at the Table web page](#).

The exhibition is open to the public in the lobby of Philadelphia's [Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts](#) through March 31, 2022, whenever the box office is open.

News From the Institute for Women's Health & Leadership



Consuelo H. Wilkins, MD, MSCI, accepts the Marion Spencer Fay Award from Lynn H. Yeakel, director of the Institute for Women's Health and Leadership and president of VisionForward.

Dr. Consuelo H. Wilkins Honored With 2021 Marion Spencer Fay Award

The 2021 Marion Spencer Fay Award was recently presented to Consuelo H. Wilkins, MD, MSCI, by Drexel University's Institute for Women's Health and Leadership, home of VisionForward. The national award, now in its 58th year, recognizes an outstanding woman physician and/or scientist who has made an exceptionally significant contribution to health care and exhibits significant future potential. It includes a \$10,000 honorarium to support the recipient's work.

Consuelo is the senior vice president and senior associate dean for health equity and inclusive excellence, and professor of medicine at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She was honored for her leadership and groundbreaking accomplishments in advancing innovative, high-impact health equity work spanning research, education and health delivery; her pioneering approaches to engaging underrepresented populations in research; and her contributions to community-engaged research and health equity that will positively impact health outcomes for generations.

During the event, Consuelo presented a lecture, "It Takes a Village: Why Equity and Engagement Are Needed to Transform Science and Health Care," which focused on the need to transform health care and biomedical research inequities through community engagement, fairness and justice.

She also joined the Institute's Board of National Advisors, which includes women leaders from across the United States.

For more information, visit the [**Marion Spencer Fay Award webpage.**](#)

Empowering Photo of the Month



The Little Devils softball team is a national sensation in Mexico, due not only to their barefoot play in traditional dresses but also to their status as Indigenous women from a traditional community that once discouraged women from pursuing sports. [Article and more photos in The New York Times](#). Photo credit: Marian Carrasquero.

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