



NEWSLETTER

Volume XIII, Number 3

My Journey With The Women's Center

Recently I was asked to write about my journey with the Women's Center. My first reaction was "are you kidding," but I subsequently realized that "I could do this!"

My journey began back in 2003 when a co-worker at my part-time job gave me a copy of the Women's Center newsletter. After much hesitation and debate I finally called for an appointment. I was very lucky to meet with a Career Counselor. She recommended that I start taking computer classes since technology had drastically changed since I left the work force to become a stay-at-home mom. Was she kidding? Change was hardly the word to describe what I had to learn, but the services were provided, and I was getting up to speed in no time. Additionally, I took some career assessment tests, enrolled in a Word class, and began attending the Job Club for moral support in becoming job ready.

Updating my resume became my next challenge; with this accomplished I felt ready to begin looking for full-time employment. My counselor advised me of a full-time teacher's aide position at a school for special ed students. The position did not require a college degree. I applied for the job and they hired me – even with only a few college credits!

All good things must come to an end. I had been assigned as a one-on-one personal aide to a special ed student, but she graduated and moved on; that was my cue to move on, too. I really wanted to join the "big world," so I took Word and Excel classes through the Women's Center so that I could even qualify for office positions. Doing temp work also proved to be a great tool for entering the workforce. Unfortunately, many temp jobs are short - like only a few weeks or a few months. This can be very frustrating, especially when you're looking for full-time work with benefits.

Around this time I heard about a consulting job at my local community college. Although only part time, the hours were convenient, and it wouldn't conflict with any full time temp assignments. This opportunity certainly was a big boost for my self-confidence and also gave me an opportunity to sharpen my other office skills at the same time.
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Preparing for Divorce

While it may be unpleasant to think about "preparing for divorce," there are certain steps that you should take in advance. These steps will reduce the stress of the divorce process by empowering you and helping you to understand your financial situation.

Consult with a Lawyer. The decisions that you will have to make during a divorce can have far reaching consequences that you may not be thinking of now. Thus, it is beneficial to consult with a lawyer as early as possible during the preparation stage.

In selecting a lawyer, look for someone who practices locally and who specializes in family law. Ask friends and family members for recommendations. Make sure that you feel comfortable with the lawyer, as this could be a long relationship.

If you plan to represent yourself as a "pro se" litigant, familiarize yourself with the pro se materials and legal research tools available on the New Jersey Courts website, <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us>. Use the resources available through the Women's Center at CCM.

Establish a Support System. While your lawyer should be a good listener, she is not trained as a therapist and is often more expensive. Find yourself a reputable therapist and have a friend or family member on standby. The break-up of a marriage can be a traumatic experience.

Access to cash. Make sure that you have access to cash and also open a credit card in your own name. This does not mean that you should hide cash from your spouse because all assets are subject to distribution during divorce. It is, however, important to have access to money on which to live in case your spouse stops paying bills or providing support.

Gather Information. Collect and photocopy important documents, such as legal and court documents, financial and credit card statements, business records, paystubs, tax returns, insurance policies, bills and other documents that concern you, your spouse, or your children. In regard to the finances of the marriage, prepare a list of income sources, expenses, assets, and debts. Obtain a copy of your credit report. Start a journal and write about the marital history.
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Patience is a virtue in looking for a full-time job. Would you believe it took me two years and five temp assignments before I finally was offered a permanent, full-time position – and with benefits, too! I had finally accomplished my goal.

One final note – I have finally enrolled at my local community college to get those credits for an Associates Degree in Business Administration. The journey continues, and I am looking forward to this new adventure with enthusiasm and confidence.

- Rosie



Fall 2011 Divorce Legal Workshop Series

Are you facing a divorce, and do you need help understanding family law? Then the Women's Center can help you. Please plan to attend our annual Fall 2011 Divorce Legal Workshop series. This FREE program will begin on Tuesday, October 11, from 7 p.m. – 9 p.m. and will run for seven consecutive Tuesday evenings.

Agenda items include the following:

1. Overview of the divorce process
2. An explanation of the Case Information Statement and what information you need to complete it.
3. Learn about the Collaborative Divorce process.
4. How to choose an attorney and learn about mediation.
5. Major issues such as child support, custody, and parenting schedules.
6. Post matrimonial relief.
7. Financial aspects of divorce, including tax implications, retirement pension plans, insurance, children's education, etc.

One-on-One Computer Labs

Do you need help in maintaining the skills you learned in computer workshops? Would you like to learn a new computer application? Is there a particular computer skill you would like to master?

The Women's Center offers FREE one hour computer lab sessions by appointment. Please call 973-328-5025 or email us at womenscenter@ccm.edu for more information.

WC Newsletter

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The Women's Center at CCM
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973-328-5025

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Mission Statement:

**To serve the varied needs of
women in their quest for
economic self sufficiency.**

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The Women's Center at CCM is a nonprofit organization serving displaced homemakers, single mothers, and other women. It is sponsored by the **County College of Morris** and funded by the **NJ Division on Women** and the **United Way of Northern New Jersey**, the **IOLTA Fund of the NJ Bar Foundation** and the **Morris County Bar Foundation**.

**FREE INDIVIDUAL LEGAL
CLINIC APPOINTMENTS**
1st, 2nd, & 3rd WEDNESDAYS OF EACH
MONTH, 7 – 9 P.M.

Support the Women's Center at CCM by Volunteering!

Volunteers play a key role in our ability to properly service the community. Getting involved helps us and allows you to feel good about giving back. We appreciate and welcome your time and expertise at The Women's Center. We have many opportunities available that range from a few hours for a one time project to a more consistent schedule a few times a week. Please visit our website for more information about our volunteer program or email Susan O'Connor, our Volunteer Coordinator, at soconnor@ccm.edu.

Help! My Resume Is Ready. What Can I Do About References?

Every job searcher is asked to provide the names and contact information of several references, often three. We realize we need to have references who can objectively speak about our strengths, abilities and accomplishments. Usually the reference individual is someone we are currently working for, a peer from that work site, or a former employer.

Job seekers can also choose to ask an individual from a volunteer or community organization or a place of worship where they have served as the Chair of a committee or as an active committee member. A Director of Volunteers may be willing to be a reference. Although the volunteer is not paid, a supervisor will notice the volunteer's attitude, their ability to be on time, to be organized, to be courteous and helpful to the public.

When women are working fulltime outside the home or working full-time at home with childcare and other family responsibilities, they often do not have the time to volunteer. However, if they are currently unemployed and find they are in need of additional references, volunteer work may offer another avenue to consider. There are several volunteer websites that may be helpful for you to explore:

<http://www.volunteernewjersey.org/vnj/>

<http://www.njcares.org/>

<http://volunteerconnectnj.org/volunteer/>

Guidelines for Choosing Your References

- Ask individuals who are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about your work experience. These are individuals who can discuss your abilities, strengths and accomplishments.
- An individual in a supervisory role is beneficial. A secondary reference could be a peer from your current or former work site.
- Always ask for permission before listing the individual's name and contact information. If the individual seems uncomfortable or unenthusiastic about being a reference, just say "thank you" and seek other references.
- If the person indicates a willingness to serve as a reference, provide an updated resume and information about your current job objective.
- Keep your references informed of your job search and notify them immediately when you accept your new position. These individuals deserve a personal thank-you note for their support during your job search.

Be generous in your availability to serve as a reference for others. A vital component of job search is to continue to build your career network.

Fall 2011 Job Fair

Do you need a new job – or maybe a better job? CCM is sponsoring a Fall 2011 Job Fair on Wednesday, October 19, from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. This program will be held in the Davidson Conference Rooms on the upper level of the Student Center. Come and meet employer representatives who will discuss a variety of potential jobs.

Upcoming Job Club Topics

Sept. 30	Non-traditional Occupations for Women
Oct. 7	Interviewing Tips
Oct. 21	Job Hunting for Mature Workers
Nov. 4	Job Hunting on the Internet
Nov. 18	Health & Wellness
Dec. 2	Dress for Success Presentation
Dec. 16	Job Hunting During the Holidays Q&A

Job Club meets twice a month on Fridays from 10 to 11:30 at the Women's Center for any woman looking for a job. This informal group discusses a variety of issues that lead to a successful job search. Our Job Club is a great way to network and meet other women.

Support Groups?

The Women's Center will be starting a support group open to all this fall. Are there areas of your life that would be helpful to talk about with others who are dealing with the same issues? Please let us know if you would be interested in joining the support group and the times that would be most convenient for you. Email us at soconnor@ccm.edu.

Make Your Appointments by Email

Sometimes busy schedules and working hours make it difficult to call the Women's Center during our daytime hours to make appointments. For some of our clients after dinner may be just the right time to do that. Therefore, we are suggesting that you use email to contact us if that is more convenient. To do so, please email your requests to womenscenter@ccm.edu and let us know what you would like, i.e., a meeting with a Counselor, an appointment for one-on-one computer training, a computer class, resume help, etc. and someone will get back to you the following day.

We, of course, always welcome your phone calls at 973-328-5025, Mon-Wed, 8:00-2:30, and Thurs-Fri 9:00-3:00.

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Have Realistic Expectations. The Court will not be able to solve all of the problems which led to the break down of your marriage. You will have the best chance of being satisfied with the end result if you come into the process prepared and have realistic expectations of what the divorce can accomplish.

By Grace Eisenberg, Esq., Veres & Riordan LLC, Denville, NJ

Special Thanks to our Friends at Weichert



Weichert, Realtors has been extremely generous again this year by donating school supplies to The Women's Center. The Women's Center and our clients appreciate their generosity and want to extend a huge thank you to our friends at Weichert! Each year the price of school supplies and the amount needed increases. Their kindness takes away the worry of cost and allows our clients to give their children the necessary tools to be successful in school. Thank you for getting the 2011 school year off to a great start!

Upcoming Computer Workshops

- . Word 1 - Sept. 20, 22, 27, 29
- . Word 2 – Oct. 4, 6, 11, 13
- . PowerPoint – Oct. 17, 18, 24, 25
- . QuickBooks – Oct. 18, 20, 25, 27
- . Excel 1 – Nov. 1, 3, 8, 10
- . Excel 2 – Nov. 15, 17, 21, 22
- . Outlook – Dec. 5, 6, 12, 13

The Women's Center at CCM
County College of Morris
SCC 115
Randolph, NJ 07869

1st Annual De-Stress Fest - October 4

Stress can be a burden for anyone. At the De-Stress Fest sponsored by the Office of Counseling and Student Success at CCM on Tuesday, October 4, 2011 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Davidson Rooms in the Student Community Center, learn techniques to help work through everyday stressors. Common stressors that can affect your wellness will be explored, and fun activities to learn about these strategies will be provided.

Look for these free events at the Fest:

- Massages
- Expert Nutritionist
- Mindful Meditation
- Yoga
- African Drum Circle
- Scavenger Hunt
- Free Raffles and Giveaways
- Free T-shirts for the first 100 attendees

REMEMBER – Circle October 4 on your calendar.
Look for the Women's Center table – See you there!



\$\$\$ Tips for Saving Money \$\$\$

- Google "Cheap Gas in Morris County, NJ" and find the best places to purchase gas.
- Car pool with friends for after school activities.
- Check out "Goodwill" stores for kids school clothes.
- Don't rule out couponing, especially at food stores.

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