



# Advocacy Update

Sent June 9, 2011

## **Paycheck Fairness Act**

Friday, June 10th is the anniversary of President Kennedy's signing of the Equal Pay Act of 1963. Nonetheless, on average, women today are paid just seventy-seven cents to every dollar earned by men. It is essential that we support legislation to update and strengthen laws to effectively provide fair pay protections for women. The Paycheck Fairness Act (PFA) provides such protections against sex-based pay discrimination.

Women's earnings are essential for increasing numbers of families in this difficult economy. The National Women's Law Center and the American Association of University Women have prepared and are coordinating an organizational sign-on letter in support of PFA that will be sent to Congress tomorrow, June 10th. Sign on for your sisterhood today.

## **Sacred Conversations**

Cynthia Wolf, WRJ's representative on the URJ\CCAR Joint Commission on Outreach, Membership and Jewish Family Concerns, has informed us about a new initiative, Sacred Conversations. This initiative was developed through a collaboration of the URJ\CCAR Joint Commissions on Outreach, Membership and Jewish Family Concerns and on Worship, Music, and Religious Living (WMRL).

Members of the WMRL shared their stories with one another – stories that spoke of holiness, tragedy, and success, which provided a sense of warmth and connectedness. They wondered if sharing such stories would enable congregations to become communities where people would feel connected and, as noted on the Sacred Conversations website, “help to create a community of communities – a movement of a million and a half Reform Jews, listening, caring, and finding meaning in each other's words.”

WRJ members are invited to share stories of 500-700 words. Some of the stories submitted may be posted to the blog. The website includes a description of the initiative, some ideas and questions to help you start thinking about your stories, and a form on which to submit them.

## **An Experience in Joplin, MO, After the Tornado**

Many of you have expressed continuing concern about the members of the Joplin congregation. Ariel Boxman, the student rabbi at United Hebrew Congregation of Joplin, MO, went to Joplin soon after the tornado and has written a blog that is on the Religious Action Center website about its tragic impact. She writes that “The United Hebrew Congregation of Joplin was very lucky in that we did not have any casualties in our Jewish community; however, many lost homes, businesses and personal belongings. At this point everyone is accounted for and those who lost their homes have found temporary housing in hotels and with friends until they are able to rebuild or find a new residences.”

Donations can be made online to the URJ Disaster Relief Fund for the Joplin community and other storm ravaged areas. Checks can be sent to the Union for Reform Judaism (Attn: Storm Relief), 633 Third Ave., New York, NY 10017.

*For more information on WRJ and Social Justice, visit [www.wrj.org/social-justice-home](http://www.wrj.org/social-justice-home)*