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# VIEW

Vermont Information Exchange for Women

## Newsletter



June 27th, 2019

## News & Resources

### Vermont Commission on Women Elects New Chair

Lisa Senecal of Stowe is now Chair of the Vermont Commission on Women (VCW), an independent non-partisan state government commission dedicated to advancing rights and opportunities for women and girls.

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Ms. Senecal, elected unanimously, takes the helm from Marcia Merrill of Jericho. Ms. Merrill steps down after ten years, leading the only entity in Vermont expressly considering broad implications of state policy and budget priorities for women in our state.

"Like the women's movement, VCW has evolved over our 55-year history in response to current issues," said VCW's director Cary Brown. "Our Chair helps to

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guide and steer this process, and we've been blessed with gifted leaders, like Marcia and Lisa, who volunteer hundreds of hours of their time in service to women of Vermont. We celebrate and thank Marcia for her service to the women of Vermont and we welcome Lisa to this position."

Ms. Senecal is a founding partner in The Maren Group, a consultancy that works with businesses, investors, and campaigns to identify and remedy business and cultural practices that increase risk of sexual harassment and other forms of gender discrimination. An experienced entrepreneur with a background in media relations and marketing, her successful ventures include an award-winning children's entertainment company and a New Media consultancy. She has consulted and provided media relations and new media strategy for dozens of companies and organizations; gubernatorial and US Senatorial campaigns; and statewide policy initiatives.

She developed her voice as a women's advocate as a civilian student at Norwich University, from which she graduated cum laude. As one of a handful of women in each class, she developed perspectives invaluable both personally and professionally. Commissioner Senecal writes and speaks with an emphasis on issues of equity, equality, opportunity, and safety for women. Her perspectives and writing appear in a range of media, from NPR's Morning Edition and PBS News Hour, to The Daily Beast, the New York Daily News, and USA Today; she also writes a monthly column for her local newspaper, The Stowe Reporter. In addition to serving as Chair of VCW, she is on the Board of Trustees for the Stowe Education Fund and The Clarina Howard Nichols Center.

Reflecting on her new leadership role, Ms. Senecal said, "The honor of being appointed to the VCW by Governor Scott might only be surpassed by being elected Chair of the Commission by my fellow commissioners. Their faith in me is greatly appreciated. I'm looking forward to working closely with the outstanding staff of the Commission and my fellow commissioners to advance the rights and opportunities of women and girls in Vermont - which happens to be what's best for

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our overall economy and Vermonters of all genders."

## **Legislative Updates:**

- [VT Network | Legislative Wrap-Up by Jessica Barquist](#)
- [VT Digger's Guide to the Most Important Bills of 2019](#)
- [Let's Grow Kids' Statement on 2020 Child Care Investments](#)

## **Nina LeMieux: The Child Care Chain Reaction**

"Two months ago, I told Vermont legislators the story of how I lost my job, my life savings and my apartment after I lost access to child care." [Read more.](#)

## **Burlington Middle School Students Build Support For Tax-Exempt Feminine Hygiene Products | Burlington Free Press**

Classmates and friends Alivia Roth, 14, and Lydia Sheeser, 14, teamed up to challenge what's known as the "pink tax" in Vermont. The two classmates hope to bring the issue to the attention of legislators again and amass support for tax-free feminine hygiene products in time for the next legislative session in January 2020. A petition Sheeser and Roth published on Change.org on May 29 has garnered over 1,000 signatures so far, reaching more than half of their goal of 1,500. [Read more.](#)

## **2019 KIDS COUNT Data Book**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation released its first *KIDS COUNT® Data Book* in 1990 and its 30th edition this month. Considered together, these two publications tell a story of remarkable change — and growth. America's child population has increased in size (from 64.2 million in 1990 to 73.7 million kids in 2017) and diversity (with kids of color jumping from 31% to 47% of all kids). In 38 states,

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the percentage of children in immigrant families at least doubled; in 20 states it at least tripled; and in 12 states it at least quadrupled. Kids today are also twice as likely to have at least one immigrant parent (13% fit this statistic in 1990 versus 26% in 2017). [Read the report here.](#)

## **Umbrella NEK Presents Thrive: A Support and Empowerment group for Teen Girls**

For teen girls age 14 – 18, with sessions lasting one hour, once per week for 8 weeks, beginning in July. Includes food, discussion, and activities. Contact Laura Young for more information.

## **Safeline Announces New Website**

Safeline, Inc. announces its new website; find it at [www.safelinevt.org](http://www.safelinevt.org). Safeline works to end physical, emotional, and sexual violence against women and children through direct service, education, advocacy, and social change in Orange and northern Windsor counties.

## **Vermont Suffrage Centennial Alliance (VSCA)**

Led by the League of Women Voters of Vermont, the Vermont Suffrage Centennial Alliance is a growing statewide group of volunteers, both individuals and organizations, committed to informing Vermonters of the history and outcomes of women's suffrage and engaging them in the ongoing quest for equal rights and citizenship. In 2020, VSCA will commemorate 100 years of women voting in the United States by hosting their own events and by promoting other Centennial-themed events around the state. More at <https://www.facebook.com/VTSuffrage2020/>.

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## **Brattleboro based LGBTQ organization f/k/a *Green Mountain Crossroads* is now *Out in the Open!***

Out in the Open connects rural LGBTQ people to build community, visibility, knowledge, and power. They believe the liberation of rural LGBTQ people is a key step toward the collective liberation of all people. More at <https://www.weareoutintheopen.org>.

## **VT DMV Rolls Out Driver's Licenses with Third Gender, Enhanced Security | VTDigger**

In addition to their enhanced security, the new licenses will make Vermont the 12th U.S. jurisdiction to offer a third gender label. Those who select the "other" option will have an X marked on their license — the character preferred by the LGBTQIA Alliance of Vermont. [Read more.](#)

## **Translating Identity Conference | Save the Date & Call for Proposals**

Save the date for the 17<sup>th</sup> annual [Translating Identity Conference](#) in Burlington. Want to share your work on a national stage? TIC is a community-driven endeavor that relies on the wisdom and knowledge of trans folks and our allies to make it happen. [Click here to submit a proposal](#) - proposals are due August 1.

## **Updated Medicaid Rule May Allow Youth Under 21 to Receive Gender-Affirming Surgery | VTDigger**

Proposed updates to Vermont's Health Care Administrative Rules (HCAR) will allow transgender youth under age 21 to undergo gender-affirming surgery, a shift that

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advocates say more completely aligns with medical best practices. [Read more.](#)

## **Early Childhood Educator's Summer Institute – Registration is Open!**

The Institute takes place at Castleton University from Monday, July 22 through Thursday, July 25 from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm each day. The Institute consists of fourteen sessions. For those who wish to attend the institute only, you will receive a certificate of completion for 32 professional development hours. For those who wish to extend their learning, there are thirteen hybrid courses aligned with those sessions. [Learn more.](#)

## **For Maple Farmers Considering Agritourism, State Resources Abound | Common News**

Lisa Chase, a natural resources specialist at the University of Vermont Extension, helps agricultural businesses market themselves to the public. [Read more.](#)

## **Do North Co.Starters Program - Registration is Open!**

Registration is open through July 8th for Do North Coworking's new Co.Starters initiative, a national program to help entrepreneurs explore and test their ideas to build profitable businesses. [Learn more.](#)

## **LaunchVT Startups Selected**

Three female-founded startups were selected to receive cash awards totaling \$35,000 at the seventh annual LaunchVT Demo Night. All eight startups in the 2019 cohort have been partnered with local businesses and will receive professional services worth over \$100,000. [Learn more.](#)

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## **Xusana Davis appointed Vermont's First Director of Racial Equity**

Gov. Phil Scott has appointed Xusana Davis, who currently serves as a top official in the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, to be Vermont's first executive director of racial equity. [Read more.](#)

## **VT Department of Financial Regulation Clarifies Healthcare Rights for Transgender Youth**

The Department of Financial Regulation recently clarified that Vermont insurers are prohibited from making coverage determinations for medically necessary gender-affirming care based solely on age. [Read more.](#)

## **What Sex Ed Looks Like in Vermont Today | VPR**

Amid nationwide debate over topics like abortion policy, curricula for sex education classes vary widely state by state. VPR's talking about what sex ed looks like here in Vermont, how health teachers think about that part of their job, and how new education requirements like proficiency-based learning intersect with teaching kids about sexual health. [Listen here.](#)

## **Med Students Are Doing Vaginal Exams on Unconscious, Non-Consenting Patients | Vice**

The practice is still legal in 42 states despite decades-long ethical concerns. In the #MeToo era, things are starting to change. [Read more.](#)

- Slate: [Why Are Pelvic Exams on Unconscious, Unconsenting Women Still Part of Medical Training?](#)
  - Bioethics: [Educational pelvic exams on anesthetized women: Why consent matters](#)
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## **One Fair Wage: Women Fare Better in States with Equal Treatment for Tipped Workers | National Women's Law Center**

A fair minimum wage ensures that working people can support themselves and their families, no matter who they are or what job they hold. But today, the federal minimum wage is just \$7.25 per hour—and for tipped workers, the federal minimum cash wage has been frozen at \$2.13 per hour for nearly three decades. Women, who represent over two-thirds of tipped workers nationally, are hit especially hard by this poverty-level wage. [Read more.](#)

## **The U.S. Legal System is Failing FGM Survivors | Ms. Magazine**

Half a million. That is how many women and girls across the U.S. are currently at risk of or have been subjected to female genital mutilation (FGM), according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It's a number that surprises many—and so should the fact that just 28 states have enacted laws to provide protection against this form of violence and control over female bodies and sexuality. [Read more.](#)

## **Study Shows Women and Minorities Are Punished for Speaking Up About Workplace Diversity | Jezebel**

A new study finds that people love to hear about workplace diversity—just as long as it's not coming from minorities or women. In fact, if you're not a white male, you're more likely to be punished for speaking up. An *Academy of Management Journal* [study](#) entitled "Does diversity-valuing behavior result in diminished performance ratings for nonwhite and female leaders?" explored who *really* gets to champion diversity without consequences. [Read more.](#)

## **Vermont Daytripper 2019 | VTkids**

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Family Summer Guide with Nine Ways to Explore Vermont: Family Hikes, Swimming Spots, Science & Nature Centers, Casual Eats & Sweet Treats, Classic & Quirky Destinations [and more...](#)

## **Disability group sues Vermont's juvenile prison over 'dangerous conditions' | VT Digger**

A lawsuit filed in federal court last week alleges that youth at Vermont's Woodside Juvenile Detention Facility are held in "dangerous conditions," subjected to "excessive" physical restraints, and in some cases, do not receive adequate mental health treatment. [Read more.](#)

## **Rising Star Nominations Open July 1<sup>st</sup> | VT Business Magazine**

The list is comprised of 40 winners under the age of 40. Award recipients were selected by a panel of judges for their commitment to business growth, professional excellence, and involvement in their communities. [Learn more.](#)

## **Main Street Alliance of Vermont Presents Rep. Scheu with 2019 Legislator of the Year Award | VT Business Magazine**

"We are thrilled to recognize Representative Robin Scheu for her work this past legislative session to advance the family and medical leave insurance bill. " said Ashley Moore, State Director. "Representative Scheu was the lead sponsor of the bill and worked tirelessly throughout this past legislative session to move a strong version forward in the House. We know she will carry that commitment into the 2020 session." [Read more.](#)

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### **Special thanks to Recent [Vermont Equal Pay Compact](#) Signers:**

- [Davis & Hodgdon Associates CPAs,](#)
  - [Vermont Teddy Bear Company,](#) and
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- [Copper Leaf Financial Services!](#)

Has your business signed on to the [Vermont Equal Pay Compact?](#)

The Compact is a **voluntary online pledge** that enables Vermont employers to learn about and indicate their commitment to closing the wage gap.

We offer a [list of strategies](#) to consider and resources to inform employers.



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## Funding Opportunities

[Vermont Mentoring Grants](#)

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VT Mentoring Grants support new and existing youth mentoring programs in Vermont that match adult volunteers as mentors for youth mentees (ages 5-22) in long-term, one-to-one, quality-based mentoring relationships. Applications are due by August 9<sup>th</sup>. [Learn more.](#)

### **Joy in Childhood Grants**

For programs that bring the simple joys of childhood to kids battling hunger or illness. Applications are due August 9<sup>th</sup>. [Learn more.](#)

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## **Upcoming Events**

### **Women at the Grill | Howling Wolf Farm**

[\*Saturday, June 29 from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Howling Wolf Farm, Randolph\*](#)

### **Monthly Poetry of Nature Walk for Kids | Poartry Project**

[\*Sunday, June 30 from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., Ethan Allen Homestead, Burlington\*](#)

### **Women's Game Night | Pride Center VT**

[\*Monday, July 1 from 5:45 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., Pride Center VT, Burlington\*](#)

### **Nonprofit Summer Camp | Marlboro College Center for New Leadership**

[\*Wednesday, July 17 from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Vermont Tech, Randolph\*](#)

### **Women in Wind Summer Soiree | Greater Burlington Women's Forum**

[\*Thursday, July 18 from 5:15 – 7:30 p.m., Community Sailing Center, Burlington\*](#)

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**Youth Mental Health First Aid Training | Washington County  
Mental Health Services**

*Friday, July 19 from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Montpelier, Vermont*

**Reclaiming Wholeness: A workshop to heal the wounds of  
assault | pro bono by Thrive with Morella**

*Saturday & Sunday, July 20-21, Burlington*

**LGBTQ Women's Community Yoga | Pride Center of Vermont**

*Sunday, July 21 from 9:00 – 10:15 a.m., Red Door Yoga, Burlington*

**Paws 4 a Cause | Safeline, Inc.**

*Sunday, July 21 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Tunbridge World's Fairgrounds*

**Yogirls and Sailing Camp | Community Sailing Center**

*Monday, July 22 – Friday, July 26 from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Community Sailing  
Center, Burlington*

**Women in Wind Keelboat Sailing Basics | Community Sailing  
Center**

*Monday, July 29 – Friday, August 2 from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m., Community Sailing  
Center, Burlington*

**Girls Rock the Boat Camp | Petra Cliffs & Community Sailing  
Center**

*Monday, August 5 – Friday, August 9 from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Petra Cliffs,  
Burlington*

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## 2nd Annual Vermont Community Leadership Summit | Vermont Rural Development Council

[Monday, August 12 at Vermont Tech, Randolph](#)

## **SAVE THE DATE: Resilience: Overcoming Doubt, Braving Your Business Fall Conference | Women Business Owners Network (WBON) VT**

*Tuesday, October 8 from 12:00 – 6:00 p.m., Hotel Vermont, Burlington*

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We choose events for VIEW from our [statewide events calendar](#) for women and girls. **If you'd like your event featured in the VIEW, make sure you [add it](#).**

**Looking for more?** You'll find many more events for women & girls in Vermont on the calendar.



The Vermont Commission on Women (VCW) is a non-partisan state agency advancing rights and opportunities for women and girls. Sixteen volunteer commissioners, along with representatives from organizations concerned with women's issues, guide VCW's public education, coalition building, and advocacy efforts. For more information, please visit us at <http://women.vermont.gov>.

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