

VIEW

Vermont Information Exchange for Women Newsletter



April 22nd, 2021

News & Resources

Mayor Weinberger Appoints VCW Commissioner Kerin Durfee as New Director of City Human Resources Department

[Mayor Miro Weinberger announced the appointment of Kerin Durfee](#) as the new Director of the City Human Resources Department (HR). Kerin brings over 20 years of management and recruitment experience, as well as extensive organizational development expertise to the role. Kerin currently serves as Director of Earned Revenues at ECHO Leahy Center for Lake Champlain. Previously, she worked as Front End Manager at City Market and as a Recruitment Specialist for the Human Resources Department at Price Chopper/Golub Corporation. "I am excited to be appointing Kerin as the City's next HR Director," said Mayor Miro Weinberger. "Kerin is dedicated Burlington resident and a talented leader with long and varied management experience at several excellent Burlington organizations. I am grateful for her willingness to serve in this critical role for the City of Burlington and its employees at a time prioritized improving workplace inclusion and belonging."

VCW (Un)Equal Pay Day Video Podcasts

With our new video podcast series, VCW hopes to raise awareness about pay equity, and the ways racism, sexism, homophobia, and ableism intersect, creating much larger wage gaps for women of color, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and women living with disabilities.

The first premiered on [Asian American and Pacific Islander women's \(un\) equal pay day, March 9th](#), and featured a conversation with Bor Yang, director of the Vermont Human Rights Commission, Senator Kesha Ram, and VCW Chair Lisa Senecal.

The next conversation launched on [all women's \(un\)equal pay day March 24th](#) and focused on the ways COVID-19 impacts decisions that women and their families are making. Guests included Lara Scott, the director of Mobilization of Volunteer Efforts at Saint Michael's College, and Sarah MacDonald, assistant director and classroom educator at the Early Learning Center in Colchester. VCW Commissioner Kellie Campbell moderates.

Stay tuned for the next in the series, coming out on Mom's (un) equal pay day, June 4th.

Menstrual equity bills are moving

The House passed [S.53, which would eliminate the sales tax on mensutral supplies](#). The House added unrelated language to this bill, and we're watching to see what approach the Senate will take. Learn more about this from a [recent VTDigger article](#).

[S.115, a miscellaneous education bill](#), includes a provision to require schools serving grades 5-12 to provide menstrual supplies in restrooms. The bill has been passed by the Senate and is now being considered in the House. [Let your representatives know if you support this proposal](#).

Senate passes ban on LGBTQ+ 'panic' defense

Today, the Senate gave it's final approval to [H.128 limiting criminal defenses based on victim identity](#), banning the use of evidence of the defendant's discovery, knowledge, perception, or belief about a crime victim's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

Senate approves state constitutional amendments on slavery, abortion rights - VTDigger

"Two proposed amendments to the Vermont Constitution were approved Friday by the state Senate: one to protect abortion rights, and the other to clarify that slavery and indentured servitude are prohibited 'in any form.' The proposals were approved by the House and Senate in 2019. Constitutional amendments need to be approved by two separately elected Legislatures before they can be placed on the ballot for voters to decide." – [Xander Landen for VTDigger](#)

Madeleine Kunin: Finally, a big step forward on financing child care

“[The Vermont Legislature] recently approved a bill, [H.171](#), that states no family receiving subsidized child care would have to spend more than 10 percent of their gross annual income on child care. The price tag was \$12.4 million in state and proposed federal funds. The vote was an astounding 146 to 1. The bill flew by because legislators had learned that women who could not find child care had to stay home to care for their kids. A nice luxury for some, poverty for most. Those so-called ‘women’s issues’ are now essential economic issues that have gained wide support. Access to child care can make the difference for a family, whether it slips into poverty, or holds on to the middle class.” - [Madeleine Kunin via VTDigger](#)

Green: Interstate Nurse Licensure Compact offers flexibility | VTBusiness Magazine

“Last week, the House Government Operations Committee took testimony on S.48. The Interstate Nurse Licensure Compact is an important health care workforce initiative and a key recommendation from the Rural Health Services Task Force 2020 Report. Under the compact, nurses can apply for a license in one compact state and have access to all the other compact states without applying for separate licenses, which is an appealing option for new graduates. Maine and New Hampshire are currently compact states and New York and Massachusetts have bills pending in the legislature. In addition to VAHHS, other supporters of the bill include the Office of Professional Regulation, Board of Nursing, American Nurses Association-VT Chapter, Organization of Nurse Leaders, and a coalition of health care provider organizations including the long-term care facilities, home health and hospice agencies, federally qualified health centers (FQHC) and others.” - [Devon Green via Vermont Business Magazine](#)

Catch up with Vermont Works for Women

Catch up with the latest programming news, updates, and events from our Change The Story partner, Vermont Works for Women, by [reading the latest edition of their Riveter newsletter](#).

New Reach Up rental assistance program to launch in April | VT Business Magazine

A new Reach Up Emergency Rental Assistance (RUERA) program assists families with back and future rent for up to 15 countable months. This program is launching in early April for families enrolled in any Reach Up program with at least one parent who receives Social Security Income (SSI). Reach Up programs include traditional Reach Up, Reach First, Reach Ahead, Reach Up’s Post-Secondary Education program (PSE), and Reach Up Child-Only households. RUERA has been made possible through federal funding. [To apply for the program, a Reach Up enrolled family can access the application online](#).

Prison proposals would close women's facility, but expand corrections capacity | VTDigger

"A consulting firm hired to examine Vermont's corrections system has proposed five plans for redesigning it in the coming years — all of which involve closing the state's only prison for women. The proposals, presented to legislators Tuesday, would increase the number of beds in the state's prison system to more than 2,000. It now has just under 1,800 beds, though the use of about 400 is restricted. The contractor, HOK Group, recommended shutting down the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility and replacing it with a new women's prison. The aging complex is deteriorating and has been criticized for unsanitary conditions. Lawmakers have already started planning to replace the South Burlington facility...

In a statement issued Wednesday, the ACLU of Vermont said that HOK's proposals disregarded 'years of hard work across our system that safely reduced the prison population by hundreds of people.' Falko Schilling, a lobbyist for the group, wrote, 'It is baffling that this proposal envisions locking up 500 more people without justification when all the trends are in the opposite direction and the evidence is clear that we can and should imprison fewer Vermonters.' [-Xander Landen for VTDigger](#)

No New Prisons Campaign & Educational Series | Women's Justice & Freedom Initiative

The Women's Justice & Freedom initiative launched their [No New Prisons campaign](#) to create safe & thriving communities. One component of the campaign is their [educational mini-series, available on YouTube](#). Two episodes have already been released; stay tuned for future episodes.

2021 Summer Workshop Series Proposals | Vermont Women in Higher Education

Vermont Women in Higher Education is currently seeking proposals from applicants to facilitate one-hour workshops relating to this year's conference theme Step Up, Rise Up. They welcome proposals from individuals of any gender identity who support VWHE's commitment to improving the general climate and professional environment for women in Vermont's higher education. Workshop proposals should address this year's theme, Step Up, Rise Up. New and experienced presenters are encouraged to apply. If you have any questions, please reach out to Shaylea Scribner, Past VWHE Chair and Board Member at sscribner@champlain.edu. Proposals are due by April 30, 2021. [Submit a Workshop Proposal](#).

Vermont Conversation: Journalist Eva McKend blazes trails from Vermont to D.C. | VTDigger

Journalist Eva McKend is a trailblazer. She was the only Black, female, on-air news anchor in Burlington when she worked at Vermont's CBS affiliate, WCAX, from 2015 to 2018. And she was

among a small number of journalists of color in the state. In 2018, McKend moved to Washington, D.C., to become an on-air congressional correspondent for Spectrum News, a cable news service. McKend, a graduate of Swarthmore College and the Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University, is a regular guest on the NPR program 1a, and her series of stories on Black hemp farmers in Kentucky has won several awards. [McKend spoke with David Goodman on the Vermont Conversation last week.](#)

Frustrated with one local newspaper, prominent Charlotte journalists help start another | VTDigger

“After residents cried foul over a local reporter’s resignation from Charlotte’s nonprofit newspaper last month, a group of nationally known journalists who live in town are starting a news outlet of their own. Chea Waters Evans, who quit as editor of The Charlotte News in March under mounting pressure from the paper’s publisher, will serve as editor-in-chief of the newly minted publication, The Charlotte Bridge. Its board of directors will include four prominent journalists who left the Charlotte News board in protest of Evans’ treatment there. The Bridge — a weekly, all-digital, nonprofit publication — promises ‘fact-checked, fearless, fair journalism’ for the town, according to its website.” – [James Finn for VTDigger](#)

New bill would create fund to help BIPOC Vermonters own land | VTDigger

“Throughout Vermont’s history, racist practices made it difficult or impossible for Black, Indigenous and other people of color to own homes and land. Today, 97.7% of Vermont farms are white-owned. White Vermonters have a home ownership rate of 72%, compared to 24% for Black Vermonters. And in Burlington, Black residents are four and a half times more likely to be denied a home loan than their white counterparts. Those statistics are a direct result of Vermont’s history of systemic racism in housing and land ownership, activists say. And now, they’re pushing legislation that would begin to combat those centuries-old disparities. H.273 would create the Vermont Land Access and Opportunity Fund to promote racial and social equity in land access and property ownership. It would do so through grant programs, financial education and other investments targeted to Vermonters who have historically been discriminated against.” – [Ellie French for VTDigger](#)

1st director of equity appointed in Winooski, Vermont’s most diverse city | VTDigger

“The Winooski city government has hired its first director of equity. Yasamin Gordon will start her new job May 10, the city announced Thursday. Gordon previously worked for the Champlain Valley School District as a lead diversity, equity and inclusion coach, and for Shelburne Community School as the planning room director. Now, she’ll be reviewing local policies and connecting historically marginalized groups to resources and services in an effort to improve equity in Vermont’s most diverse city.” – [Seamus McAvoy for VTDigger](#)

Legislators want new data system to understand where racial disparities begin | VTDigger

“Dealing with systemic racial disparities is a major theme in the Legislature this year. However, despite multiple proposals, there’s one big problem: The state doesn’t have the data it needs to figure out where inequities begin. A new bill is trying to change that by establishing a Bureau of Racial Justice Statistics, with a related advisory panel, to find out where the racial disparities are in Vermont’s criminal justice system and how to address them. “Not having this information leads us to making wild speculations sometimes,” said Sen. Dick Sears, D-Bennington, chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee.” – [Ellie French for VTDigger](#)

Vermont National Guard severs ties with guardsman accused of sexual assault | VTDigger

“Daniel Blodgett is no longer a member of the Vermont National Guard nearly a month after Seven Days reported on his extensive criminal record and allegations of sexual assault and violence. At a meeting of the House Committee on General, Housing and Military Affairs on Thursday morning, Adjutant Gen. Greg Knight informed lawmakers of Blodgett’s status as Knight presented an annual report on sexual harassment and assault in the Guard.” – [Ellie French for VTDigger](#)

Elevate miniseries | Vermont Law School’s Hothouse Earth podcast

VLS’ Hothouse Earth podcast is releasing a [new miniseries, *Elevate*, which features interviews with women in environmental law and policy](#). In the first episode, hosts Jeannie Oliver LL.M.'14 and Veronica Ung-Kono JD'21/MERL'20 speak with attorney Karin Sheldon, a trailblazer in the field of public interest environmental advocacy.

Summer Camps 2021

For VT children who have been impacted by parental incarceration, [Camp Agape has space for about 40 campers ages 8-11 for a free week of overnight camp, August 8th-13th, this summer](#). Transportation and all supplies are provided.

Safe Art will offer [Youth Wellbeing Project: Mindfulness, Creativity, & Social Justice Camp](#) for ages 8-14.

Vermont Works for Women plans to host in-person, [half-day Rosie’s Girls camps, with one week each anticipated in Barre, Essex, and Winooski](#). In addition, VWW hopes to partner with middle schools and sites in other locations around Vermont to bring “Rosie’s Girls on the Road”.

The Community Sailing Center in Burlington will offer [YoGirls and Sailing day camp](#) for ages 8-10.

YMCA of Greater Burlington will host their [Camp IGNiTE for girls and non-binary youth](#) age 8-14 this summer.

[Girl Scouts of the White & Green Mountains](#) will be hosting camp this summer.

Events

TECHNICOOL: Keeping Kids Safe on the Internet | Prevent Child Abuse Vermont

[Tuesday, April 27, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.](#)

[Thursday, May 6, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.](#)

Know Your Rights Workshop | Rutland Area NAACP & Aspiring NAACP Chapter at Castleton

[Tuesday, April 27, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.](#)

Explore Safe & Effective Strategies to Help Survivors & Change Social Norms | Women's Freedom Center

[Tuesday & Thursday, April 27, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.](#)

Racial and Restorative Justice: Considerations for Circle Keepers in Schools: Responding to Events of Racism in School-Based Relationships | VT-HEC

[Wednesday, April 28, 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.](#)

This Way Up | Vermont Women's Fund

[Wednesday, April 28, 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.](#)

Nurturing Healthy Sexual Development | Prevent Child Abuse Vermont

Wednesday, April 28, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Everything Everyone Needs to Know to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse | Prevent Child Abuse Vermont

Thursday, April 29, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 5, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Overcoming Barriers to Protecting Children from Sexual Abuse | Prevent Child Abuse Vermont

Thursday, April 29, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Welcoming Spring with Dance | Brattleboro School of Dance

Saturday, May 1, 1:00 p.m., Centre Congregational Church, Brattleboro

Small Claims Court (Pro Se Litigation) | The People's Law School

Wednesday, May 5, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

NAACP in Vermont, Racism in America Forum Series | Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Wednesday, May 5, 7:00 p.m.

Why Not in Vermont? The Long Campaign for Women's Suffrage with Lyn Blackwell | Vermont Humanities Council

Wednesday, May 5, 7:00 p.m.

Residential Rental Agreements | The People's Law School

Wednesday, May 12, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Action for Safety | Girls Inc. & Dartmouth Hitchcock

Saturday, May 15, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Dartmouth Hitchcock Women’s Resource Center, Lebanon, NH

Understanding Benefits & Eligibility—SNAP, Medicaid, General Assistance | The People’s Law School

Wednesday, May 19, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.



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