

## **Press Release – Equal Pay Day Chicago 2018**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Come to Equal Pay Day Chicago 2018 from 12 noon to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, April 10 at Daley Plaza, 50 Washington Street, Chicago, IL 60602**

Chicago, IL (April 4, 2018) - Equal Pay Day, observed every year by elected officials, government agencies, private organizations and citizens, is a symbolic day that illustrates how far into the year a woman must work to earn the same amount made by a man in the previous year. For the past eight years, Chicago has been raising awareness of this important issue with a noon gathering in Daley Plaza, attended by women and men from all over Chicagoland. It serves as a public awareness event to show how the gap between men's and women's wages requires women to work longer to earn the same amount as men.

#### **Equal pay was one of the major reasons women marched in 2017 and 2018.**

Although the struggle to guarantee equal pay for women has been ongoing for almost a century, it has been reenergized not only by savvy politicians seeking the women's vote, but women activists from all political parties and walks of life determined to make their voices heard. Equal Pay Day Chicago 2018 seeks to bring greater awareness to this issue and encourage women and men to support legislation that will make real change possible.

#### **The Equal Pay Day Chicago event was initiated in 2010.**

It was founded by Barbara Yong, a partner at the law firm of Golan Christie Taglia LLP and leading advocate for women's rights. "As a member of the Illinois Federation of Business Women's Clubs, equal pay for women has always been important to me," said Yong. "I knew it was equally important to the leadership of many other organizations and thought it made sense for all these groups to collaborate on planning an event that would raise awareness of the issue among our members and the general public statewide."

#### **Equal pay for women affects more than just the earnings of individual workers.**

"Typically, women earn about 80 cents for every dollar a man earns doing the same job," explains Dorri McWhorter, CEO of the YWCA Metropolitan Chicago and one of the organizers of the event. "The gap is even greater for African American and Hispanic women. This difference has a significant impact not only on the family income of these

women, but also on our economy as a whole. Concern about this issue can be effectively expressed by supporting companies that empower women and pay them a salary equal to their male counterparts.”

### **Every year more and more organizations sign on to support Equal Pay Day.**

This year, Yong declared proudly, “representatives from over 60 different organizations have volunteered to support this effort.” Five groups – the American Association of University Women of Illinois, Illinois Federation of Business Women’s Clubs, the Professional Women’s Club of Chicago, the Wood Law Office, LLC, and the Professional Women’s Networking Group are official sponsors and have contributed financially to the event. A marketing class from Columbia College Chicago developed ads, blogs and social media campaigns to publicize the event.

### **Alpana Singh, celebrity sommelier and restaurateur, one of the event’s speakers.**

Singh is mostly widely known as the popular former hostess of PBS’s Emmy-winning show, *Check Please*. As the owner and operator of several restaurants in Chicagoland, she is an excellent representative of today’s successful multi-talented female entrepreneurs. Other speakers for the event currently scheduled are Dori McWhorter, CEO of the YWCA; Iliana Mora, the President and CEO of Women Employed; Mona Noriega, Commissioner with the Chicago Commission of Human Relations and Carolyn Leonard, founder and CEO of DyMynd, a financial empowerment firm dedicated to helping women realize their potential thru DyMyd Angels, which helps fund female-led start-ups. Sheerine Alemzadeh, an attorney with Healing to Action, a non-profit organization whose mission is to build a worker-led movement to end gender-based violence, will tie #MeToo to equal pay for blue collar (salaried) women.

### **A huge turnout is expected this year given #MeToo, #TimesUp and the Women’s March**

“The younger generation is beginning to understand that the income women are denied impacts all of us,” Yong explained. “Women, even more than men, spend their earnings on household goods and other items for the family. Forty-one percent of women are their families’ sole source of income and women contribute 83% of the gross national product. All the data indicates that the impact of a woman’s paycheck on her family will be even greater in the future. That’s why equal pay for women isn’t just about women. It’s also about families, and the health of our whole society – today and tomorrow.”

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