2013
YEAR IN REVIEW
Shaping the Conversation on Key Issues, Expanding Our Network and Impact
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Introduction by Sabrina

In 2013, thanks to the support of many generous supporters like you, the Independent Women’s Forum greatly expanded our reach and effectiveness. IWF spokeswomen have been pivotal in pushing back on the liberal media, Democrats, and feminists on all economic issues concerning women. Our organization has become a leading voice on debunking the liberal catchphrase “War on Women” and the so-called wage gap. Highlights for the year include:

- Creating and distributing a unique educational video on a key pillar of the War on Women helping change the conversation about the wage gap;
- Holding events to broaden the discussion of how women are affected by public policy and the workplace;
- Expanding our social media network and use of infographics to bring issues alive;
- Augmenting our earned media presence, particularly on television.

- Releasing a book on the Culture of Alarmism and highlighting how that culture extends to other policy areas, such as energy and environmentalism; and,

Thank you for your support. As a 501c3 organization, which relies on private support, we couldn’t do it without you!

Sabrina Schaeffer
Executive Director

Sabrina Schaeffer, executive director of the conservative Independent Women’s Forum, said that feminism is a “loaded” word for fiscal and social conservatives because they associate it with a progressive agenda. Still, she said, she tells women not to run away from its “good message and important history.”—The Washington Post
In April, IWF’s newly launched Women at Work Project released its first educational video on the wage gap. Using a measured tone, the video walks viewers through the facts about what causes the so-called wage gap and why it is important and empowering for women to understand how the choices they make will be the key factors in determining how much they earn.

The video has been viewed more than 30,000 times, and the New York Post cited the video as the go-to place to understand this issue.

For the 50th anniversary of the passage of The Equal Pay Act, the American Association of University Women sent an email describing an appalling conversation between a mother and her seven-year-old daughter in which the mother explains that women...
are regularly paid just 77 cents on the dollar for performing the same work. Never mind that the AAUW's own analysis of the wage gap confirmed that most of the difference is explained by choices women make—not discrimination—they want little girls to think that America is ripe with sexism and that their only hope is for Uncle Sam to micromanage every aspect of the economy so that women get a fair shake.

IWF responded with our own letter to our daughters offering a positive vision and empowerment, while debunking AAUW's wage gap lie. Our simple message: The world is what you make of it and don't believe those who try to convince you that you are doomed to be a victim of sexism. You can read our letter here.

IWF staffers and volunteers went to Capitol Hill and distributed this letter, a fact sheet that also explains the adverse consequences of passing legislation like the Paycheck Fairness Act, and some tasty treats to mark the Equal Pay Act anniversary and celebrate the opportunities that women have in our great country.

We believe our work and consistent debunking of the wage gap has contributed to this change in the discussion. IWF will use similar efforts to address other key issues where the left pits women as victims in need of government help — such as healthcare, workplace regulations, and education — and will provide a practical and realistic conversation to frame the conversation.

In an update of Team Obama’s “Life of Julia” cartoon, the Independent Women’s Voice and Independent Women’s Forum just launched “The Real Life of Julia’s Policy” (Julia’s health-insurance policy, that is). In it, Julia—now 26—owns her own Web-design business and thus must buy her insurance directly. Sadly, the ordeal she encounters reflects what many Americans face today under the Affordable Care Act. —New York Post Editorial Board
High-Impact Events Steer Conversation on Key Issues

Events can help inform key opinion leaders about an issue, and in doing so steer the conversation about those topics in a way that incorporates and carries our message. That's why when Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg's new book, *Lean In*, grabbed the public's attention, IWF hosted an event on this topic to build a greater appreciation for the factors that women consider when trying to balance work and family and the limits of public policy to solve women's challenges.

The event featured an all-star panel including Sally Quinn of the *Washington Post*, Hanna Rosin of Slate and The Atlantic, Christine Rosen of The New Atlantis, and IWF's Sabrina Schaeffer and was moderated by Fox Business Network's Elizabeth MacDonald. The response was so overwhelming that IWF had to change venues to accommodate the crowd. In total, more than 230 people (largely young, female professionals from industry, the Hill, media, and public policy) joined us at the Decatur House in Washington, DC for a thoughtful conversation. Stories about this event appeared in *The Washington Examiner*, Red Alert Politics, The American, Scripps Howard Foundation Wire, McClatchy-Tribune newspapers and Getty Images attended to snap photos of the discussion.

In addition, IWF held a panel entitled “Women in the Wilderness” in January to discuss how to better explain

“Everyone who has children knows that they’re all different, right? They learn differently,” observed Sabrina Schaeffer of the Independent Women’s Forum on my show. “In the workplace, we’re allowing people flexibility to telecommute, to have shared jobs. In entertainment, people buy and watch what they want, when they want.” Having one inflexible model for education “is so old-fashioned.”—John Stossel Op-Ed, Real Clear Politics
Sabrina Schaeffer, executive director of the Independent Women’s Forum, said in a statement that raising the minimum wage “could backfire on those workers by reducing employment opportunities. People often assume that employers have huge profit margins and could easily pay more but don’t because they are mean-spirited,” she said. “That’s just not the case. Most franchises operate on very small margins. That’s why we have recently seen fast-food restaurants react to new healthcare mandates by reducing their workforce and cutting back workers’ hours.” —Los Angeles Times

At the 2013 CPAC in March, IWF hosted a main-stage panel entitled “How I Learned to Stop Worrying & Love Plastic Water Bottles, Fracking, Genetically Modified Food & Big Gulp Sodas.” IWF Executive Director Sabrina Schaeffer moderated the panel, featuring IWF’s Culture of Alarmism Project Director Julie Gunlock, IWF’s senior fellow Angela Logomasini, the Franklin Center for Government & Public Integrity’s Jillian Kay Melchior, and National Center for Public Policy Research’s Jeff Stier. This was an important venue in helping conservatives see how a wide range of topics—from energy and agriculture policy to regulations of restaurants and our schools—fall into a similar trap: The Left uses fear, bad science, and alarmism to scare people, especially women and moms, into embracing greater government control of our lives. Through this venue, IWF encouraged others to build on our message, and expose how this alarmism is used and backfires on people.

Voting for Obama by a solid 11-point margin, women followed their faith in government security. How can we better explain that economic liberty and limited government benefit women? The Independent Women’s Forum hosted a panel to set a winning agenda for the next four years—and beyond. Winter 2013

How I Learned to Stop Worrying & Love Plastic Water Bottles, Fracking, Genetically Modified Food & Big Gulp Sodas. This event was moderated by AEI’s Christina Hoff Sommers and featured Mercatus Center’s Veronique de Rugy, AEI’s Karlyn Bowman, and Molly Hemingway, editor at Ricochet.com.
Julie Gunlock, of the pro-free-market think tank the Independent Women’s Forum, framed the [Monsanto] bill as good for “moms like me.”

“If we’re in a situation where farmers are forced to lose their crops, lose their entire harvests, that will raise prices. That ultimately harms me, the consumer, the mom,” Gunlock said. —ABC News

October 3rd we hosted IWF’s annual Barbara K. Olson Woman of Valor Gala to honor women who have inspired us through their courage and principled achievements. A Woman of Valor works tirelessly for limited government, free markets, and personal liberty. She is a woman of good sense and good will. A Woman of Valor accentuates the common good and always does the right thing for the right reason.

This year, we honored Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers of Washington state. Not only is she the 200th woman sworn into the U.S. House of Representatives, but also she is the ranking Republican woman and she is the only member of Congress to give birth three times while in office. We love her dedication to work/life balance!

Over 200 guests from the Hill, media, public policy arena, and IWF supporters gathered to hear the keynote from The Weekly Standard’s Bill Kristol and to honor Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers.

In addition to these and other IWF hosted events, IWF staff and fellows participated in dozens of events, in locations everywhere from Washington DC to New Jersey to Oklahoma City to Chicago to Seattle, and many stops in between.

Want an IWF spokeswoman to speak at an event? Please contact IWF’s Director of Communications Victoria Coley to discuss!

victoria.coley@iwf.org
Expanding Our Social Media Network: Using Infographics to Bring Issues Alive

IWF’s social media network on Facebook has continued to grow rapidly. Less than two years ago, we had a following of just 3,300. Today, we have nearly 60,000 Facebook friends on our flagship site, and more than 30,000 on our Women for Food Freedom site. Additionally, IWF has an active presence and increasing following on Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

At the same time, we have more than tripled the average number of users each month who engage with our material. These figures can lead to major impacts in terms of getting our message to people. For instance, a single post featuring IWF’s wage gap video reached 109.1K people. Active follower engagement is particularly important as research increasingly shows that people most trust information that is recommended to them by their friends.

IWF is working to provide our network with materials that are both engaging and informative. For example, IWF released a new joint effort with IWV, “The Real Life of Julia,” which takes the Obama campaign’s always-dependent “Julia” character and shows how Julia has been affected by ObamaCare, from her cancelled policy to her challenge in using the federal exchange website to her higher premium and reduced access to trusted doctors. This effort was the topic of a New York Post editorial and a piece on Politico, as well as featured on the popular websites Powerline, Instapundit, and The Weekly Standard, and on Fox News Channel Megyn Kelly and John Stossel shows.

We will be creating similar efforts in the future to bring the impact of other policies to life and encourage a wider audience to consider how big government backfires on those that the Left claims to want to help.

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Expanding the Culture of Alarmism Project

IWF’s Culture of Alarmism program has grown, and we are increasingly focusing on issues like energy and environmentalism, as well as food and product regulations, where misinformation skews conversations about policy options.

In late 2013, IWF published From Cupcakes to Chemicals: How the Culture of Alarmism is Makes Us Afraid of Everything and How We Can Fight Back by the Director of IWF’s Culture of Alarmism Project Julie Gunlock. This book solidifies IWF as the go-to source of information on this topic and helps define the many issues that the culture of alarmism effects. Fox Business’ Kennedy says “there is so much hype and hysteria nowadays, and Julie cuts through the nonsense with great information and a sense of humor. If you’re a rational parent, this book is a must read!”

IWF will continue to use this issue as a conversation starter with women (and men) who tune out many policy or political topics but are concerned about the growing government intrusion in food and product regulation and in other areas of life.

“Women should not be used to justify this assault on individual liberty,” Hadley Heath, senior policy analyst at the Independent Women’s Forum in Washington, told Newsmax in a statement.—Newsmax
Other IWF Publications

IWF’s Policy Focuses and Fact Sheets help establish IWF as a reputable source for commenting on these issues and helped our allies articulate why women specifically should be for or against these issues. In 2013, we published on topics like the Debt Crisis, Fracking, the Common Core, and the Obamacare Cancellations.

We were also very proud that our Director of Cultural Programs Charlotte Hays published a book with Regnery publishing in the fall entitled “When did White Trash Become the New Normal: A Southern Lady Asks the Impertinent Question.” There are no easy solutions for how to create a healthier culture - we certainly don’t think the government has any of the answers—but recognizing that we have a problem and encouraging a conversation about respect for old virtues is certainly an important first step.
In 2013, IWF continued to increase its reach and visibility thanks in large part to IWF’s Communication Director (and Fox News PR alum) Victoria Coley. As a result of Victoria’s expertise and dedicated work, the volume of our unique messages continue to have a greater presence in the media. IWF has been successful at conveying clear, straightforward facts about how limited government and economic freedom benefits women and families through top media outlets. IWF spokeswomen have further developed IWF’s brand as the pivotal organization that successfully messages policy issues to women. And IWF has been able to drive our messages to leading women’s outlets.

By identifying potential communication challenges and opportunities to reach IWF’s target audience, our spokeswomen further propel IWF’s impact in the media and reinforce IWF’s brand and profile as the leading conservatives women’s organization that successfully messages complex policy and cultural issues as they pertain to women. We not only target leading news outlets, we air to drive our messages to outlets specifically targeted to women.

Hadley Heath, Senior Policy Analyst, addressed the crux of the problem when she wrote, “Advocates of expanding the welfare state equate bigger government with humanitarianism, or charity. But many programs do more harm than good by creating counter-productive incentives and reducing economic growth and opportunity, which sadly keeps today’s poor people poor.”—The New American
Whether or not she runs and wins, Clinton has “already changed the way we think about who should run for public office,” said Sabrina Schaeffer, the executive director of the fiscally conservative Independent Women’s Forum, in an interview with CBSNews.com. “It’s always helpful to have more female role models - to see they’re doing it. Hopefully that will get some of the conversation about pantsuits and fake eyelashes out of the way.”—CBS News
Sabrina Schaeffer, executive director of the conservative Independent Women’s Forum, said that feminism is a “loaded” word for fiscal and social conservatives because they associate it with a progressive agenda. Still, she said, she tells women not to run away from its “good message and important history.” And she has written articles urging conservatives to do the same — to take women’s issues seriously, instead of as “a distracting side show” for “the Ladies Auxiliary.” — The Washington Post

**IWF Financial Stewardship**

Thank you for your support of IWF. IWF is committed to using your funds wisely: *We keep overhead low so that we can maximize our impact by investing in talent, programs, and outreach.*

The effect of this low overhead can be seen in the chart below, which shows how IWF compares to other similar organizations, and demonstrates our good stewardship of charitable dollars.

Overall in 2013, our actual expenses exceeded our budget by 3%, but thanks to a surplus of dollars raised in 2012 we ended the year well in the black.

The chart to the right shows our income broken down by revenue source. We rely entirely on private contributions from generous supporters such as yourself. We aim to have a diversified base of support with about a third coming from foundations, a third from the corporate world, and a third from individuals.

Thank you once again for your investment in persuading American women that economic liberty is vital to their future and their families.

*Thank you.*

Whitney Garrison Athayde
Director of Development
Data was drawn from the most recently available 990s from public policy organizations on both the left and right. The numerator included office expenses and rent as indicated in Part IX #13 and #16 of the IRS Form 990. The denominator for each ratio was the value each organization listed for Part I #18.

“At one time, [Sandberg] would have been the paragon of the feminist ideal,” said panelist Sabrina Schaeffer, executive director of the Independent Women’s Forum, a conservative-libertarian, public policy organization in Washington. “Now there has been a shift in the paradigm of femininity. She’s the center of feminist frustration.”—McClatchy News
In 2014, we will build on these efforts and work to give our educational materials a wider audience through grassroots networks, such as 501c4’s partner organization’s new project, Independent Women’s Network, and develop more innovative videos and visuals on key issues such as health care and the economy.

None of our work would be possible without the support of people like you.

If you have any questions or would like more information about this report or our upcoming plans, please contact IWF’s Managing Director, Carrie Lukas (clukas@iwf.org, 202-631-6553) or IWF’s Development Director, Whitney Athayde (whitney.athayde@iwf.org 703-507-2282).

Thank you!

Looking Forward

Sincerely,
Sabrina, Amber, Whitney, Julie, Victoria, Charlotte, Carrie and Hadley