

MONICA R. MARTINEZ
9th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



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Legislator Martinez Participates in “Equal Pay Day” Forum at Suffolk Community College

Suffolk County Legislator Monica R. Martinez participated in “*Equal Pay Day for Women in Nontraditional jobs*” forum at Suffolk Community College on April 8, 2014. She joined Enterprising and Professional Women of New York (EPW-NYS), HerStory Workshop and Suffolk County Office of Women’s Services in celebrating this historic day.

Moderating this great event was Suffolk County Women’s Business Enterprise Coalition, Lisa Albinowski. Among the panelists were Legislator Monica R. Martinez, Businesswoman Beverly Fortune, publisher of the Milieu Magazine; Audra Fordin, owner of Great Bear Auto and physicist Dr. Christina Swinson, Research Associate at Brookhaven National Laboratory.

According to the Census Bureau, women make up approximately 52% of Suffolk County’s population. Women who work full time earn on average 77 cents for each dollar earned by a male counterpart, performing comparable work under comparable conditions, including comparable educational background, expertise, and experience. The figures are even worse for women of color; African-American women earn only 64 cents and Latina women earn 55 cents for each dollar earned by a white male worker.

While speaking to a women’s group, Legislator Martinez stated, “Since 1848, at the Seneca Falls Convention in New York, women began their fight for equal rights. We are now in 2014, and we continue to fight for equality.” She added, “In 1963, The Equal Pay Act was passed in Congress which prohibited discrimination of wages based on sex of an individual, clearly that law is not being enforced and it is time to put a stop to this continued disparity of wages between men and women.”

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In order to raise awareness and eliminate this type of wage discrimination against women, Legislator Martinez submitted Resolution 261 titled, *Declaring April 8th, 2014 as "Equal Pay Day" for Women in Suffolk County* which was unanimously adopted by the entire Suffolk County Legislature at its March 18, 2014 general meeting in Hauppauge. "Today marks a momentous day here in Suffolk County as we are the only county in the State of New York, to pass this type of resolution." "Today we join President Barack Obama as he is also raising awareness nationwide on the same issue and proposing two executive orders expanding women's ability to recover lost wages due to discrimination."

"In 2014 when women are increasingly becoming the bread winners of their households, it is time for women to value themselves. "I hope that this Resolution will give women the confidence they need to become better advocates. Believing in "self" is a big part of the negotiation process. It is my aspiration to see the women of Suffolk County prosper in greater dimensions than ever before" stated Legislator Martinez.



Photo of Legislator Monica Martinez alongside Equal Pay Day Panelists at Suffolk County Community College