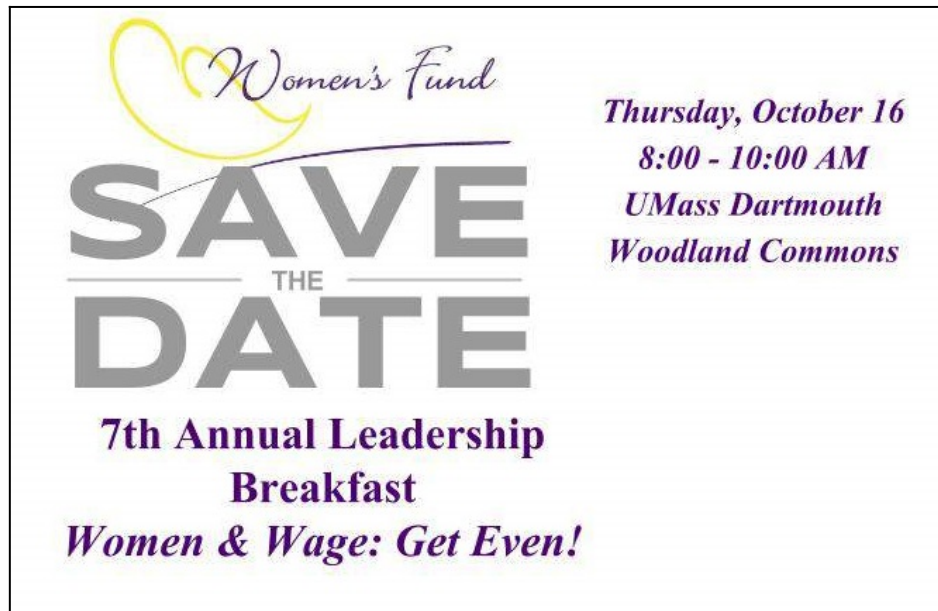


Gender Pay Gap Topic of Annual Women's Fund Leadership Breakfast



The event, titled "Women and Wages: Get Even" will be held at the Woodland Commons at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

The 7th annual Women's Fund of Southeastern Massachusetts Leadership Breakfast will be held October 16th from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, which is co-hosting the event. This year's focus is on the timely topic of the gender pay gap and how to close it, with a focus on low-income women.

The breakfast will feature a panel of area leaders with expertise in the area of education and training to discuss how greater New Bedford can expand pathways for women to a living wage. Panelists include Divina Grossman, Chancellor of University of Massachusetts Dartmouth; George Heme, CEO of the Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board; Linda Enos, Superintendent of Greater New Bedford Regional Technical Vocational High School, Theresa Romanovitch, Associate Vice

President, Workforce Education Institute, Bristol Community College and Colleen Dawicki, Program Manager of the UMass Urban Initiative.

The breakfast and registration open at 8:00 a.m. Parking and a shuttle are available at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth in Lot 7. Individual tickets are \$20, or \$5 with student id. Pre-registration and payment can be done online at www.cfsema.org/womensfundsema.

When asked about this year's topic, Women's Fund Executive Director Valerie Bassett stated, "Nine years after the publication of former Massachusetts Secretary of Environmental Affairs Evelyn Murphy's book *Getting Even: Why Women Don't Get Paid Like Men and What To Do About It*, the gender pay gap hasn't changed much. In Massachusetts, women overall earn 79 cents for every dollar earned by a man – while the gap is even greater for women of color. African-American women earn 66 cents on the dollar and Latina women earn only 54 cents. But this isn't solely a women's issue, and it's not just about equity. This is a community issue and an economic development issue. When more women earn a living wage, everyone wins: their children, the schools, employers, and the regional economy."

The median household income of \$36,789 for New Bedford is well below the income required to support a family of three, according to the Economic Independence Calculator developed by Crittenton Women's Union, a Massachusetts group dedicated to women's economic independence. Nearly half of New Bedford's children grow up in single female-headed households, and close to 40 percent live in poverty. The Women's Fund aims to invigorate community conversation and action so that more women and families can earn what they need.

The Women's Fund is a fundraising organization with a mission to advance the educational attainment and economic security of women and girls in Southeastern Massachusetts. For more

information, call (508)-717-0283, email
info@womensfundsema.org, or visit the website at:
www.womensfundsema.org
