



# ICSEW MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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## MISSION

*To improve the lives of state employees by advising the Governor and agencies on policies that affect state-employed women.*

## VALUES

*Leadership  
Integrity  
Fostering Growth  
Empowerment  
Well-Being  
Advocacy*

## VISION

*Enriching lives through advocacy, outreach and opportunity.*



## A WORD FROM YOUR CHAIR



January is indeed the ideal time to reflect and plan ahead! Updating policies and setting new goals are crucial for the continuous improvement and growth of ICSEW. This shows leadership's commitment to adapting and evolving, especially in our current virtual setting. As we step into 2025, I'm excited to share some of our goals that the executive leadership has for this committee. Many of you have seen that we are updating our policies and procedures. As we review and implement these updates, we kindly seek your approval on the changes we've made. Our policies have not been updated since 2017 and we feel it is timely to do so, especially in this post-Covid era, and predominantly virtual setting. Over the past two years, ICSEW has undergone significant changes, making membership more accessible, introducing new sub-committees, and adopting a fresh approach to short-term tasks through our Special Projects Ad Hoc Sub-Committee. These policy and procedure updates reflect all these changes. The next step will be to update our bylaws to align with new policies, and finally, we will clarify the roles and responsibilities of our board positions.

This is an exciting time to get more involved with us, so please reach out if you are interested.

Sincerely,

*Janet McIntosh*  
ICSEW Chair

## RECENT HAPPENINGS

### Meeting Summary - January 2025

**Joslyn Nelson** from the Administrative Office of the Courts explored the definition of "disability." She highlighted the systemic inequities and challenges that individuals with disabilities face, including barriers in education, job opportunities and pay. Additionally, she pointed out that persons with disabilities are more likely to become victims of violent crimes. The issue of poverty disproportionately affects individuals with disabilities who are part of other marginalized populations. Consequently, they often struggled to access the proper healthcare to properly diagnose and successfully manage their disabilities.

Ms. Nelson provided an overview of the evolution of laws related to the treatment of individuals with disabilities, highlighting the journey from denying basic rights to progressing toward disability justice. Nevertheless, systemic barriers such as ableism and insufficient legal frameworks continue to marginalize disabled individuals. Disability justice provides a framework to address these challenges. Joslyn urged everyone to action, advocating for policies and practices that embody disability justice principles and promoting collaboration to create inclusive space.

**Rozella Kennedy**, author of "Our Brave Foremothers: Celebrating 100 Black, Brown, Asian, and Indigenous Women Who Changed the Course of History" recanted the stories of three women who inserted themselves in history.

**Ada Blackjack**, an Alaskan native found herself abandoned by her husband and faced a difficult decision. She was forced to place her son in an

orphanage and join an arctic expedition to Wrangel Island as a cook. The lone survivor of the expedition, she demonstrated incredible perseverance until her rescue. Her version of the events were refuted, and she did not receive the pay she was promised, but she managed to reunite with her son and secure treatment for his tuberculosis.

**Florence Ebersole-Finch** served as an agent in the Filipino militia during World War II, playing a crucial role in aiding American prisoners of war by diverting fuel, food, medicine and supplies to them. Despite being captured by the Japanese and imprisoned in Manila, she never revealed the names of her fellow resisters. After her release, Florence left the Philippines, enlisted in the United States Coast Guard (USCG) Women's Reserve and received the Asian-Pacific Campaign Medal and ultimately the Medal of Freedom. Florence passed away in 2024, at 101 years old, and her legacy is honored at the USCG Honolulu headquarters, which bears her name.

**Martha Louise Morrow Foxx** lost most of her vision during infancy. She enrolled in Temple University, eventually being offered a role as a teacher and principal at the new Piney Woods School for Blind Negroes in rural Mississippi. Martha dedicated herself to the intellectual, moral and spiritual needs of her students. Martha was awarded the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Drama Award and the Mississippi Teacher Award for Teacher of the Year. The Piney Woods School is the largest African American boarding school today.

## SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE

TJ Canfield, Chair of the Communications Subcommittee, provided an update on the subcommittee. The main responsibilities of the Communications Subcommittee are as follows:

- ◆ Maintain – update and maintain ICSEW website
- ◆ Publish – announcements, meeting summaries, and event registrations
- ◆ Social media – maintain active presence on LinkedIn, Facebook, X, Instagram
- ◆ Support – annual conference announcements
- ◆ Oversee – blog submissions

If you are interested in joining this subcommittee, please contact TJ Canfield, PHR, at [tj.canfield@utc.wa.gov](mailto:tj.canfield@utc.wa.gov).

## BUSINESS RESOURCE GROUP

Linda Hale provided an overview of Black United in Leadership and Diversity (BUILD) BRG, highlighting ICSEW's strong allyship with all eight BRGs.

Launched in October 2019, BUILD currently has 500 active members out of a total membership of 2,000. Its mission is to raise awareness about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), foster and participate in conversations on these topics, model inclusion, and advocate for policies and practices that promote racial equity. BUILD supports efforts to:

- Provide input on policies to make outcomes equitable for the Black Community.
- Share Black culture and history.
- Share job opportunities for more diverse candidate pool.
- Provide professional development opportunities.
- Provide community for staff.



Help  
Wanted

ICSEW is seeking to fill multiple co-chair positions. Along with attending board meetings, the roles and primary responsibilities include:

### COMMUNICATIONS CO-CHAIR:

Highlights ICSEW events and initiatives; distributes information on BRG events and meetings.

Ensures the ICSEW's website is updated with fresh content, shares articles on the ICSEW blog, and across social media platforms (Facebook, X, Instagram, LinkedIn) and distributes bulletins to GovDelivery subscribers.

### CONFERENCE/MEETING PLANNING CO-CHAIR(S):

Leads the planning process for the annual ICSEW Professional Development Conference, encompassing:

- Collaborating with the Communications Subcommittee to promote the annual conference.
- Securing and contracting with speakers and musicians.
- Coordinating agency sponsorship.
- Hosting and facilitating the conference.
- Planning in-person networking event.

### TREASURER CO-CHAIR:

Works with the ICSEW Chair, Vice Chair, and other executive board members to develop the annual budget, and track expenses and revenues throughout the fiscal year.

Reconciles the tracking spreadsheet to the monthly OFM Expenditures and Revenues Report.

### Skills gained from being in this role:

- Balancing a simple budget. ICSEW does not request funds from the state, which makes the Treasurer role a great opportunity to learn about budget work.
- Participation at board meetings and discussions, providing regular budget updates, and learning about the great work that ICSEW is doing.

If you are interested in joining an exceptional group of individuals, please contact us at [icsew@ofm.wa.gov](mailto:icsew@ofm.wa.gov).

We look forward to hearing from you to discuss these amazing opportunities!



WE WANT YOU




UPCOMING  
EVENTS

### Black History Month:

February 2025.  
Look for events near you.

### BRG Happenings:

BUILD - third Thursday of each month, 9am to 11am

*"Black History Month: African Americans and Labor" at Evergreen State College, Tacoma Campus, February 20, 2025, 12pm to 3pm. Please visit [build.wa.org](http://build.wa.org) for more information or click [here](#) to register.*

### Disability Inclusion Network (DIN) - second

Thursday of each odd numbered month, 9am to 11am

*DIN is seeking participation across the state enterprise on the "Digital Accessibility in Government" project. If you are interested in being a part of the project or know someone who would be a good fit, please complete this [Volunteer Form](#) or email [din@ofm.wa.gov](mailto:din@ofm.wa.gov) by February 7, 2025.*

### Hawaiians, Asians and Pacific Islanders Promoting Empowerment Network (HAPPEN) - second

Wednesday of each month, 1pm.

### Leadership Development Program, third

Wednesday of each month (January – June), 1pm to 2pm.

### Latino Leadership Network (LLN) - second

Tuesday of each month, 3pm to 5pm.

### Rainbow Alliance and Inclusion Network (RAIN) -

third Thursday of each month, 2pm to 4pm.

### Supporting our Voices, Empowering Rights and Indigenous Governance (SOVEREIGN) - next general membership meeting February 19,

10am to 12pm.

### Veterans' Employee Resource Group (VERG) -

fourth Thursday of each month, 11am.

### Washington Immigrant Network (WIN) - first

Tuesday of each month, 12pm to 1pm.



ICSEW's next general membership meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 18, 2025, 8:30am.**

*We will hear from Lamarr Lewis on Creating Workplace Cultures of Safety and Support. The Washington Women's Commission will share an update on the [Activate 3.8](#) statewide campaign.*

[Register for the general membership meeting here.](#)