

# WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY 2018

## ERA: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

This year, the Women's Equality Day Program will feature a discussion in which four panelists take an in-depth look at issues around the Equal Rights Amendment including the status of the ERA in 2018, what would be different for women if we had an ERA, and where we go from here.

The four panelists represent a diverse spectrum of ages, experiences, and demographics offering unique perspectives on the Equal Rights Amendment. Their biographies follow:

**Mary Ann Rossi** was a local leader and activist in the second wave of the women's rights movement. She worked extensively for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, both as a co-founder of the Appleton chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and as a member of the Executive Board of the National Association of Commissions for Women.

Rossi's work for women's equality led to her inclusion in the book, *Feminists Who Changed America*. In 1976, Wisconsin Governor Patrick Lucey appointed Mary Ann to the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women where, as Legislative Coordinator, she chaired a task force on battered women.

In 1992, Rossi was interviewed by Newsweek in a profile of Appleton twenty years after the beginning of the second women's movement in 1972.

Rossi has taught at Lawrence University, UW-Green Bay, Ball State University, and the City Literary Institute of London, England. She holds a B.A. Degree in Classics from Connecticut College for Women, an M.A. Degree in Classics from Brown University, and a Ph.D. in Classics from Birkbeck College, University of London. She also has received multiple grants to conduct extensive research on women in ancient religion and society at numerous academic institutions. More information on [Mary Ann Rossi](#):

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**Druscilla Scribner** is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.

Her research examines women's equal rights around the world and the impact of constitutional "equal rights" provisions for women's social, political and economic status, legislative change, and advocacy efforts. Scribner has conducted research on this topic in Africa and Latin America. She teaches globally-focused courses on women and politics, gender and law, and comparative law.

Scribner holds a Ph.D. from the University of California San Diego and a Master of Science from the London School of Economics.

Scribner moved to Neenah with her husband, a family practice physician, and two sons in 2005 to join the faculty at UW Oshkosh.

**Lisa King Gehrke** is a graduate of UW-Madison in chemical engineering. She worked for Presto Products and Pechiney (now Bemis) in roles including Research and Development, Product Development, Scientist and Manager, and National Account Manager.

After 11 years in the corporate world, Gehrke took a sabbatical to pursue other interests. She became a STEM tutor, was a member of the founding board of Neenah's only charter school, and she started and ran an independent piano studio of 22 students. She was an officer of the Fox Valley Music Teachers Association and, in 2008, was named Member of the Year.

After seven years, Gehrke returned to the business world only this time with her own business, which is helping converting business customers find solutions to their packaging needs.

Gehrke is now selling her business and doing a "step-down" retirement phase, enjoying volunteering with the Winnebago County Literacy Council and Mid-Day Women's Alliance, as co-chair of the Legislative Committee, where she is focused on advocacy for women's rights.

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**Rachel Raasch** graduated from UW-Oshkosh in 2012 with a degree in history. Over the course of her undergraduate degree, she was involved with the Women's Advocacy Council and helped plan interactive events such as Day Without Feminism. She also published a paper titled "The Feminist Movement and the Harbor House" which connected the influence of feminist momentum to the creation of Appleton's first domestic abuse shelter. Rachel became the newest member of Appleton's City Council this past April and serves as the chair of the Historic Preservation Commission. Rachel is currently working in the IT world and pursuing a second degree as a software developer. She hopes to use her work both in technology and in local government to fight for equality and justice for all.