

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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No. of pages (including cover):

Comments: F Y I

Cheers, Bobbie

Women's Health Advocate Moves to White House

Advocates for women's health research got a new, but not entirely welcome, champion in the White House last week: psychiatrist Susan Blumenthal, the controversial director of the Office for Women's Health at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Blumenthal has had a running battle with breast cancer advocates and this fall has caused a stir among a broader community of women's health researchers.

White House jobs are hard to come by these days, but the post for Blumenthal, who is the wife of Representative Edward Markey (D-MA) and a friend of the

Clintons, appears to have been created 2 weeks ago. Starting on 1 November, the White House says she will "contribute her medical expertise to the development of medical, scientific, and health initiatives and policy relating to women's health" as senior adviser to the president. It is not clear how her job relates to that of Audrey Tayse Haynes, who only 5 weeks ago was named head of the White House Office for Women's Initiatives and Outreach.

Blumenthal's appointment took many by surprise. "We certainly weren't consulted," says Fran Visco, president of the National Breast Cancer Coalition,

an influential lobby. In fact, she says, "the people we normally talk to in the White House didn't know this was coming." And Visco's organization, which has claimed Blumenthal has been trying to build up her own office's functions at the expense of basic research, isn't happy. "I have expressed our outrage to the White House" over the appointment, she says.

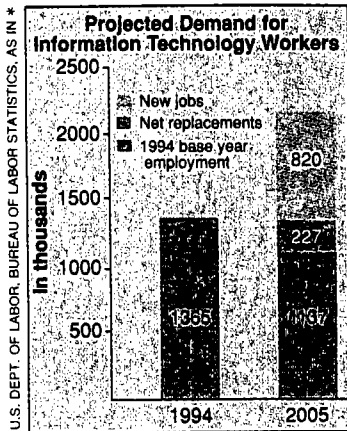
Blumenthal, who could not be reached for comment, has long been rumored to be heading out of HHS. The most recent flap involves a request for proposals



Kicked upstairs?
Susan Blumenthal.

she wrote this summer, describing contracts to be awarded to "centers of excellence" in women's health. Some applicants balked at language implying that Blumenthal would co-author five papers that each center would have to submit for publication. "The

language seemed to be saying that we would be blocked from publishing the results of our work in scientific journals" as original work, says one applicant who protested to HHS. An HHS spokesperson says "we're looking into it."



IT "Deficit"

Government, industry, and academia are teaming up to probe what they call "America's new deficit"—namely, information technology (IT) workers. At a press conference held last week in Washington, D.C., Education Secretary Richard W. Riley warned that the U.S. could "lose that [technological] edge" if it doesn't turn out more people with computer expertise. Senator John Warner (R-VA) is also worried: "I get up every morning and begin to think, 'What has the other half of the world achieved

while we've been asleep?'"

Speakers cited a new report by the U.S. Department of Commerce,* which claims that 190,000 jobs in computer science and engineering, computer programming, and systems analysis are going begging in the U.S., and that the number of positions will nearly double between 1994 and 2005. The report calls "upward pressure on salaries" evidence for a shortage—one survey showed systems analysts' wages going up 15% from 1996 to 1997. The report says the future doesn't look any better in view of a 40% decline in the number of bachelor's degrees awarded in computer science between 1986 and 1994.

However, not everyone agrees that the picture is this dire. "No, I don't think there's a shortage," says Norman Matloff, a professor of computer science at the University of California, Davis. He points to data from an annual survey by the Computing Research Association showing that enrollments in computer science rose 40% last year.

The new partnership, which includes AT&T and the University of California, Berkeley, is being organized by a trade group, the Information Technology As-

sociation of America, which issued its own report on "the IT workforce gap" last March.

Indian Rocket Falls Short

India's space triumph last week—launching a 1200-kilogram satellite with its own Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle—quickly lost some luster when scientists discovered the next day that a fuel leak had occurred in the rocket, leaving it with only enough thrust to place the satellite, a remote-sensing instrument called IRS 1D, in an elliptical orbit ranging from 300 to 820 kilometers above Earth.

Boosting it into its designated circular orbit of 817 km would take so much of the satellite's own fuel that it could drastically shorten its planned 3-year lifespan. So instead, the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) plans to maneuver the satellite into a lower orbit of 550 km. "Under no circumstances will the life of the satellite be compromised," says a spokesperson for ISRO.

India had hoped that the launch would propel it into the ranks of countries with the ability to hoist large satellites into a polar, sun-synchronous orbit, a

necessary step toward achieving the geosynchronous orbits used by commercial telecommunications satellites. But official preening after the 29 September launch from the Bay of Bengal quickly turned to chagrin with news of the faulty orbit.

Space scientists still expect some benefits from the satellite, whose cameras have a resolution of 5.8 meters, the finest of any civilian satellite now in orbit, which will be used for mapping and monitoring the environment. Indian space officials are also still hoping that the rocket, which cost \$13 million, will make ISRO an attractive option to ferry low-Earth orbit satellites in the ever more lucrative commercial space market.

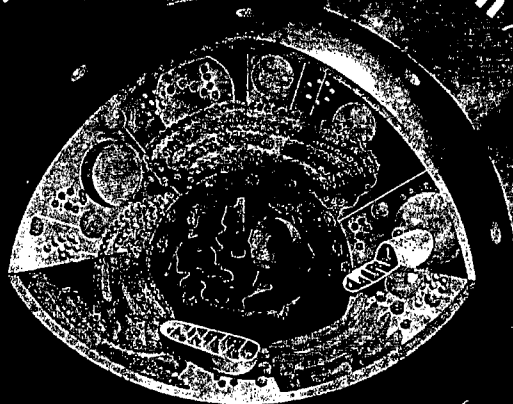
Rush to Excavate Montana Dino

When University of Notre Dame paleontologist Keith Rigby found what may be the remains of the largest meat-eating dinosaur ever in Montana in July, he hoped to keep it a secret until after he'd had time to do some excavation. But last month the cat got out of the bag when former landowners were caught poking around with a

*America's New Deficit: The Shortage of Information Technology Workers. To get a copy call 202-482-5687.

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Circle No. 39 on Readers' Service Card



Audrey T. Haynes

02/03/98 09:47:02 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Roberta W. Greene/WHO/EOP, Katharine Button/WHO/EOP
cc: Tania I. Lopez/WHO/EOP, Sondra L. Seba/WHO/EOP, Robin Leeds/WHO/EOP
Subject: Miscellaneous Items

FOR Melanne

Follow up to Women's Economic Summit - As I believe Linda Tarr Whelan has mentioned to you we would like to convene a follow up to last year's Economic Summit for women and present the recommendations to the President and First Lady. Due to Linda's Ambassador schedule, we are wanting to consider March 19 to 20 which is just before a Foreign Trip, but I've come to know there is no perfect time around here!! The audience would be legislators from around the country that have been involved with CPA, academic leaders, women's leaders, etc. Linda would like for us to consider an East Room Event..... another option is OEOB 450 event with reception in East Room?? But Linda's desire is the first. I foresee the event taking about 2 hours at most. Another item to think about around this, is it gives us an opportunity to tout our accomplishments once again and there is a possibility that DPC will have a substantive announcement on Equal Pay for us in a month or so and this event could be the venue for the announcement. If Ms Clinton is interested, I will talk with Linda and put forth a scheduling request that outlines the event more clearly and will also put forth the request to the President.

Women's Magazine Editors - We tried to schedule something before Ms. Gore left for the Olympics, but this just would not work out. So we'd like to have Ms. Clinton and Ms. Gore to host the editors for an afternoon in early March. We could choose about 6-8 subjects to highlight: child care, women and AIDS, Millennium & Women's History in that context, Pensions, Consumer Bill of Rights, Medicare, etc. We could invite them in March as part of our celebration of Women's History Month. If they came in March, then possibly we could get a story or two in some of their May publications(in time for the Primaries). If not, they would be good for July -- the 150th anniversary of Seneca Falls. We are open to a time, I am aware that Ms. Gore's office is wanting to do this as well, so the schedule coordination becomes really tough. If March is good, possibly Peg Cusack and Patti could give us a suggested time.

CEDAW - Robin and Teresa Loar have kept me informed since I've not been able to make the meetings. Therefore, when Bobbie and I were in the Women's History meeting on Tuesday and they were thinking of a kick-off event for late February or early March, I of course thought March 5 or 6 would be a great time to have an event with the President, and Ms. Clinton to focus on CEDAW since March 8th is International Women's History Day. We could also announce the formation of our Women's History Advisory Commission that Ann Lewis has been working on. The March 5/6 event could be a small event leading to the President and Ms. Clinton taping a joint radio address talking about women's contributions/women's history month. Ann thought the radio address was a good possibility. If you all have interest, let's discuss further. I think this could really be a great Women's History Event!

Congressional Women's Caucus - We have discussed having the Congressional Women's Caucus in sometime in early spring. Should the CEDAW/Women's History event be of interest, we should invite them to participate and have it on Thursday, March 5th. It would also be good for CEDAW.

NASA Event - They are to call us on Wednesday with suggested times.

Texas Women's History Museum - About 2 weeks ago, Sidney Blumenthal and I met with Jane Hickie and Cathy Conner of Dallas to discuss their project: The Women's Museum: An Institute for the Future slated to open in October 2000 in Dallas, TX. A \$10million challenge grant has been awarded from Southwestern Bell and a company representative came with them on January 15th. The project goal is \$23million. They want to bring together historic opportunities to honor the past and showcasing the future.

They met with representatives for the Smithsonian and are applying to be an official site via the Smithsonian. They would also like to be a Millennium Project.
They do not want \$\$just our blessing!

The project involves the restoration of an endangered historical 1910 landmark building listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Bottom line is: They want to dedicate a room/exhibit/? (some large aspect of the Museum) to Ms. Clinton. They would like for Ms. Clinton to join them in the official announcement of this Museum in March here in Washington. However, with a tentative trip to Dallas for late February planned, I would think this would be a great fit. (I was never clear as to why they wanted to announce in Washington, maybe they just thought they were more likely to get HRC here) You might want to get Sidney's prospective on this. He knows all these women as I'm sure Ms. Clinton does. Ann Lewis also met with them for lunch on the same day. Please advise.

I know this is a long note, but I've been saving up for you all and had alot to say!!!!
Of course, I'm happy to discuss at your convenience.