

1<sup>st</sup> ELCA Women's Leadership  
Roundtable  
Evaluation

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1st ELCA Women's Leadership Roundtable  
**Lift Our Voice**

## Introduction

The Department for Research and Evaluation, in consultation with the Commission for Women (CW), has conducted two of the three components for the Women’s Leadership Roundtable Evaluation. The first component took place over the summer of 2001, prior to the Roundtable. Data were collected from fifty women prior to the Roundtable via telephone interview. The interviewees were selected by using a stratified random sampling method.

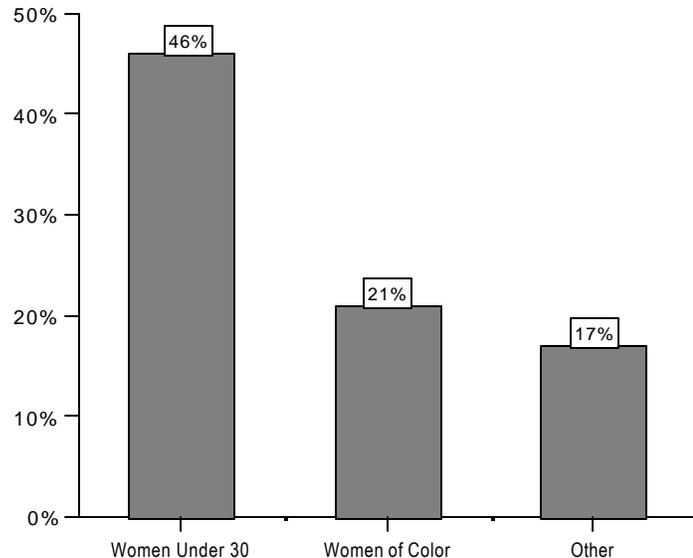
The second component of the evaluation is based on a questionnaire that was distributed to all participants at the Roundtable.<sup>1</sup> Roundtable participants were encouraged to complete the questionnaire at the event.

The third component of the evaluation will occur in February/March of 2002 based on a second questionnaire designed to measure the long-term impact of the Roundtable.

## Response Rates and Method

Two hundred and ninety-three questionnaires were returned. Five hundred and sixty-five participants attended the event, for a response rate of 52 percent. Twenty-one percent of the respondents were women under 30 years of age (“women under 30”.) Twenty-eight percent of the respondents were women of color (“women of color”), and 55 percent of the respondents were neither under thirty nor women of color (“other”).<sup>2</sup> Seven respondents indicated that they were both women under 30, and women of color. For analytical purposes, these respondents were randomly assigned to one or the other of these two groups.

**Figure 1: Helpfulness of Translated Materials**



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<sup>1</sup> Questionnaires were available in both English and Spanish. See Appendix A for the actual frequencies. Seven surveys were completed in Spanish.

<sup>2</sup> The majority of these respondents in the “Other” group were women, but the group may also include responses from 20 of the men that were registered for the event. Of the 20 men registered for the event, 19 were white and one was a person of color.

## Pre-Roundtable

Forty-eight percent of the respondents contacted the churchwide office prior to the event for information regarding the Roundtable. On a five-point scale with “1” being “very poor” and “5” being “very well” 90 percent of respondents indicated that their questions were answered well (4 or 5 on the scale).

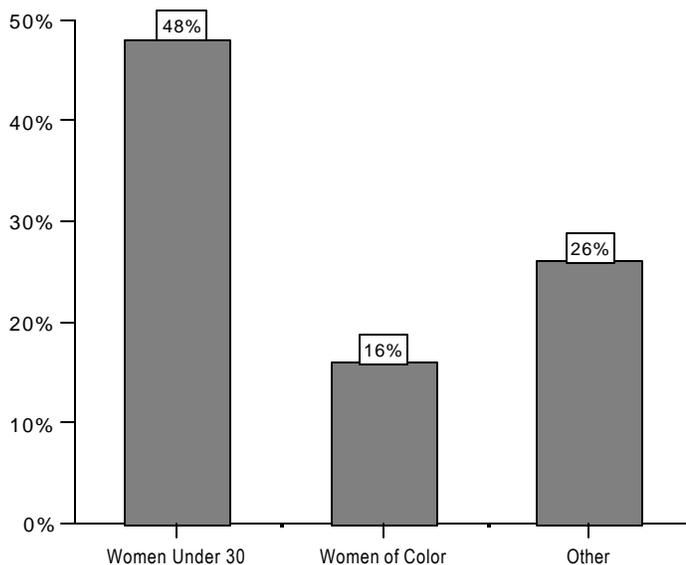
Forty-two percent of respondents visited the CW web-site for information about the Roundtable prior to the event. Seventy-one percent indicated that the web-site was helpful. There were no significant differences between the three groups regarding use of the web-site.

Twenty-five percent of the respondents found that the materials translated into Spanish were helpful. Women under the age of 30 were more likely to indicate that the Spanish translated materials were helpful.<sup>3</sup> (See Figure 1.)

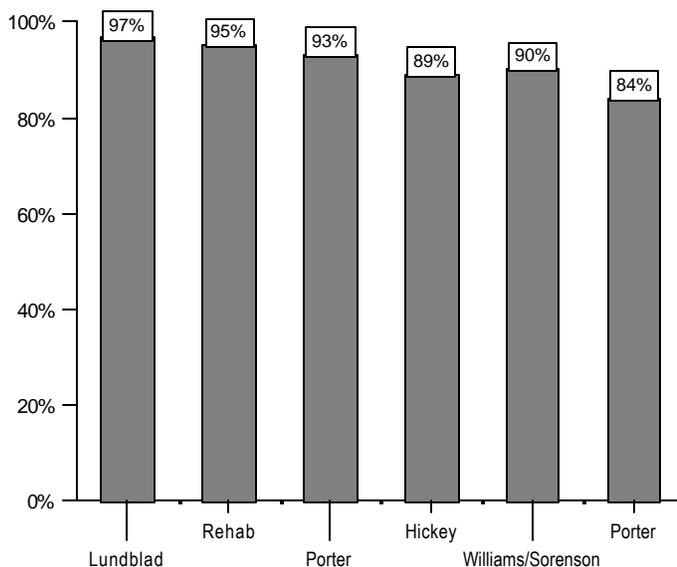
Sixty-four percent of respondents indicated that the information they received prior to attending the Roundtable was excellent. Women under 30 were more likely to rate the material as excellent when compared to the other two groups. (See Figure 2.)

Figure 3 shows attendance at the Roundtable sessions. All of the sessions were well attended. (See Figure 3.)

**Figure 2: Information About the Roundtable**



**Figure 3: Participation at the Sessions**



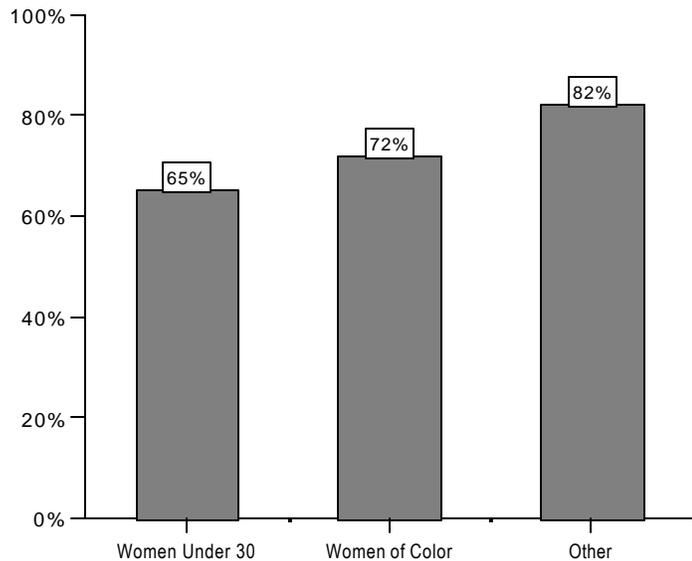
<sup>3</sup> All reported differences are significant at the .05 level.

### Session I

The session by Barbara Lundblad was rated as very good to excellent by 96 percent of the respondents (4 or 5 on the scale). The “other” group was more likely to rate this session as excellent. (See Figure 4.)

Fifty-one percent of the respondents chose to comment on this session. Thirty-one percent made a positive comment about the speaker, and 10 percent made positive comments on the illustrations the speaker used in the session.

**Figure 4: Excellent Rating of Session I**



### Session II

The session by Viola Rehab was rated as very good to excellent by 96 percent of the respondents (4 or 5 on the scale). There were no significant differences between the three groups regarding the session.

Fifty-five percent of respondents commented. Seventeen percent made positive comments about the speaker and an additional 16 percent said they felt inspired by hearing the speaker’s personal story. Twelve percent also reported that this session helped them broaden their understanding of the world.

### Session III

Ninety-five percent of the respondents indicated the session by Jeanne Porter was excellent (4 or 5 on the scale.). Women under 30 were more likely to rate the session as excellent. (See Figure 5.)

Fifty-four percent of the respondents chose to comment on the session. Thirty-two percent made positive comments about the speaker, and an additional sixteen percent said that the discussion offered an excellent Biblical model for women’s leadership.

### Session IV

Ninety-four percent of the respondents indicated the interactive session with Patricia Hickey was excellent. There were no differences between the three groups.

Fifty-six percent of the respondents chose to comment. Forty-seven percent of the comments were positive feedback on the session. Many indicated that this was “fun” or “energizing.”

### Session V

Fifty-two percent indicated that the mentoring session facilitated by Charlotte Williams and Katie Sorensen was excellent. Women under 30 were much more likely to rate this session as excellent when compared to the other two groups. (See Figure 6.)

Fifty-two percent of respondents reported comments on this session. Six percent made a positive comment about the session, while eight percent felt that the skits were ineffective.

### Session VI

Ninety-six percent of the respondents indicated the second session given by Jeanne Porter was excellent. Again, women under 30 were more likely to rate this session as excellent when compared to the other two groups. (See Figure 7.)

Thirty-six percent commented on the session. Twenty-six percent made a positive comment about the speaker.

### Weavers

Eighty-one percent of the respondents indicated that the work of Christine Grumm and Amy Grumm Friedrich helped tie the activities of the Roundtable together.

Figure 5: Excellent Rating of Session V

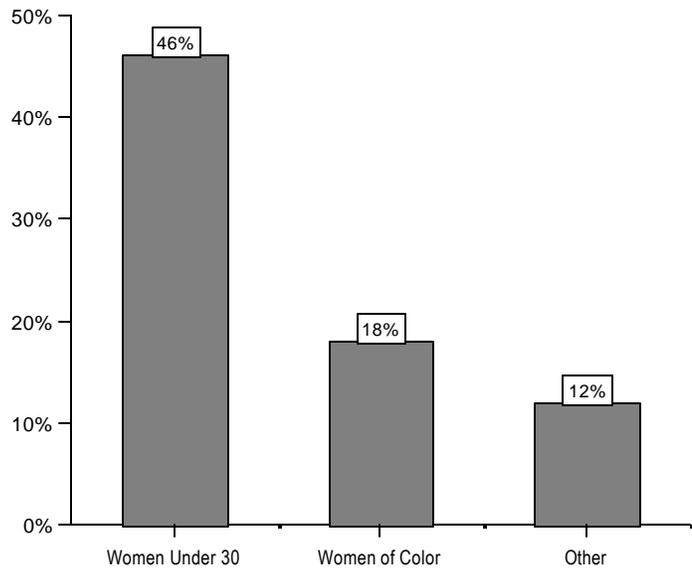
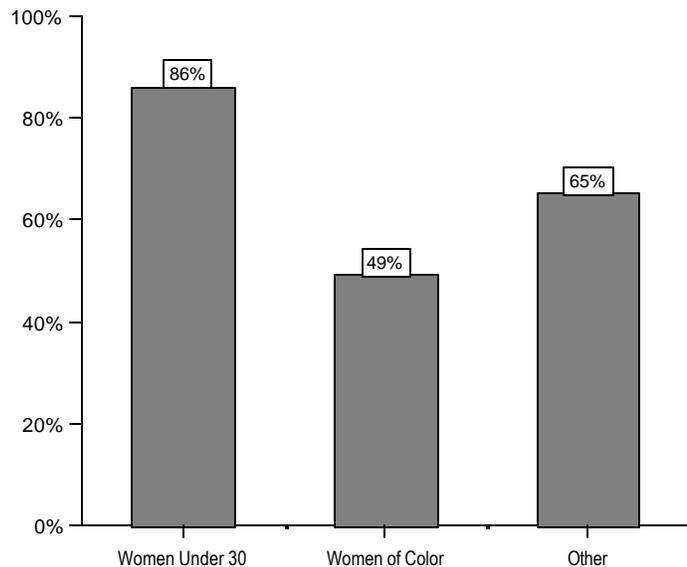


Figure 6: Excellent Rating of Session III



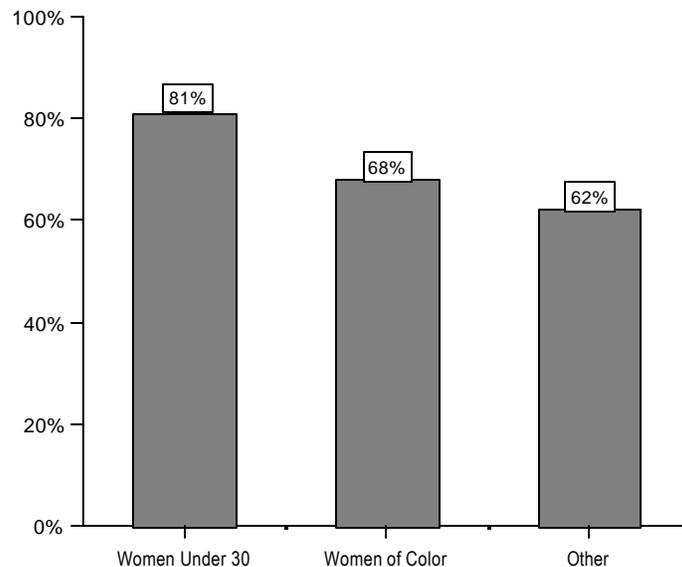
## Worship

Seventy-nine percent of the respondents indicated that the worship services impacted them to a high degree (4 or 5 on the scale.) When asked to comment on what they appreciated about the worship service, 44 percent of all the respondents wrote that they appreciated the music and dancing. When asked to comment on what they *did not* appreciate about the worship services, 25 percent offered comments, but there were no consistent categories.

## Roundtable Expectations

Ninety-three percent of the respondents indicated that the Roundtable met their expectations. There were no significant differences by group. When given the opportunity to comment on their expectations, 25 percent indicated that the Roundtable *exceeded* their expectations. Nine percent indicated that the Roundtable was a positive experience particularly with regard to meeting new women and having the opportunity to share new ideas.

**Figure 7: Excellent Rating of Session VI**



## What Was Learned?

Ninety-nine percent of the respondents indicated that they learned something from the Roundtable and that they planned to use that learning in the future. When asked to report what they learned, nine percent reported that they would be more deliberate in mentoring and another nine percent reported that they learned new techniques for Bible studies. When asked to report how they planned to use what they learned at the Roundtable, 11 percent reported that they would share what they learned with others and another nine percent reported that they plan to start a mentoring relationship or program.

Ninety-seven percent of the respondents indicated that the Roundtable’s goal of having 30 percent women under 30 and 30 percent women of color provided a distinctive atmosphere at the Roundtable. Eighty percent of the respondents indicated that they met individuals with whom they intend to stay in touch.

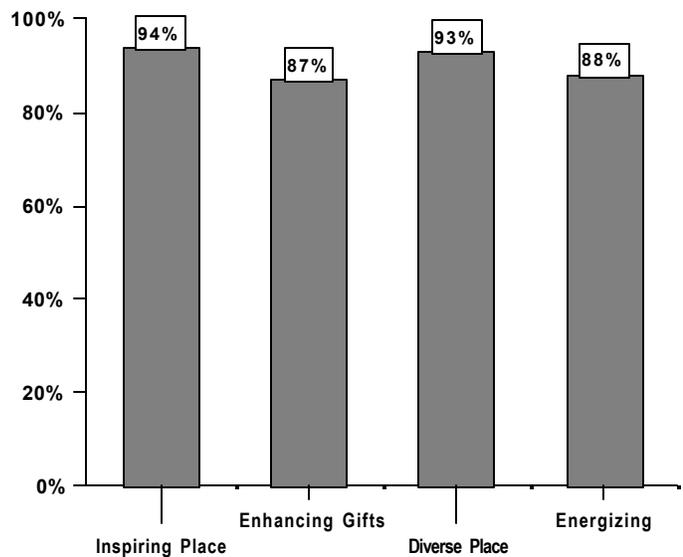
## Scholarships

Fifty-one percent of the respondents received a scholarship to attend the Roundtable. Seventy-six percent of the respondents under 30 reported receiving a scholarship, as did 78 percent of the respondents that are women of color and 30 percent of the “others.” Of the scholarship recipients, 83 percent said that they would have been unable to attend if they had not received a scholarship.

### Goals of the Roundtable

The vast majority of respondents indicated that the Roundtable achieved the goals it had set for itself including: 1) offering an inspiring place where all women can give thanks to God, 2) recognizing and enhancing gifts of all women in leadership, 3) enabling all women to enlighten and energize each other for faithful leadership in the church and society, and 4) gathering a diverse group of women to build relationships. (See Figure 8.) There were no differences between the three groups regarding their views of the extent to which the Roundtable achieved its goals.

**Figure 8: Excellent Ratings of Goals**



## Significant Experiences

When asked to report the most significant experience respondents had at the Roundtable, 88 percent of the respondents chose to comment. There was a total of 336 comments made. Twenty-seven percent of the comments reported that networking and sharing with other women was their most significant experience.

## Another Roundtable?

When asked to comment on the possibility of another Roundtable, 41 percent indicated that they thought there should be another while 39 percent said that they would attend.

When asked to comment on what they would like to see remain the same or what they would like to change, 14 percent said they would have appreciated more relaxation or break time and 12 percent noted that they would have liked group breakfasts.

When asked to make general comments, 38 percent made a positive comment or offered a “thank you” for having the event.

## Conclusions

Overall, respondents were extremely pleased with the Women’s Leadership Roundtable. The speakers, key leaders, and diversity of participants were well received. Although the majority of all respondents gave high ratings to the program and to the speakers, women under 30 were the *most likely* to give high ratings and positive feedback.

All of the sessions were well attended. Women under 30 were more likely to rate the Bible studies facilitated by Jeanne Porter higher than the other two groups. The vast majority of the participants enjoyed the creative boom-whacker session facilitated by Patricia Hickey. Likewise, the participants were moved by Viola Rehab’s stories from the Middle East.

Although the session devoted to mentoring received lower ratings than other sessions, nine percent of women reported that mentoring would become a priority within their own leadership context. It appears that the goal of introducing mentoring as a way of fostering and developing leadership was successful.

Ninety-seven percent indicated that the goal of having 30 percent women under 30 and 30 percent women of color attend the event provided a distinctive atmosphere. Slightly over half of the respondents received a scholarship to attend the Roundtable, many of whom were in one of these groups. Eighty-three percent of these women indicated that they would *not* have been able to attend without the scholarship.

In short, the Roundtable was inspiring and energizing. It was successful in gathering a diverse group of women and certainly relationships were built. Mentoring, as a leadership development technique, was

introduced and will now be considered by more persons as a part of their wider participation in the church. Finally, there is little doubt that many of the participants in the Roundtable became more hopeful about the future for women as leaders in the church.