

## **The Need for Change: WCM - Catalyst Benchmarking 2005 Report**

By Michelle Miles

*True or False: women's participation levels in capital markets have improved since 2000*

If you said False, you were right.

On June 22, 2006, Bay Street's who's-who and several members of the business media gathered for a lunch presentation at the Rosewater Room to hear the results of Women in Capital Markets (WCM) and Catalyst's Benchmarking 2005 report.

The study, the third in a series, examined the representation levels of women in the investment dealer and retail private client lines of business of the Canadian capital markets industry. Originally commissioned by WCM in 2000, this report is a follow-up to two previous benchmarking reports, one done in 2000 and one in 2002. Canada's six largest financial institutions (BMO Financial Group, CIBC, National Bank of Canada, RBC Financial Group, Scotiabank and TD Bank Financial Group) sponsored and participated in the study.

*So how exactly did women progress?*

The findings show that many of the indicators of women's representation in the capital markets industry remain virtually unchanged. "While some gains within functional areas or levels are observed, the numbers clearly demonstrate a persistent lack of progress in women's representation since 2000," the report stated. Specific findings included:

- Men continued to outnumber women four to one across the industry
- Women continued to predominate staff positions, with the proportion of women in line positions virtually unchanged
- Despite absolute gains at the Vice President and Managing Director and above levels, the proportion of women at these levels remained virtually unchanged since 2002

Still, there were some encouraging findings:

- Women's representation at the Professional level increased to 23% from 20% in 2000
- Women held 26% of the all investment dealer positions, up from 23% in 2002
- Women held 17% of all retail private client positions (excluding staff positions), up from 16% in 2002
- Women held 12% of retail private client branch manager positions, up from 9% in 2000

In reaction to the findings, WCM President Jacqueline Szeto pulled no punches when speaking to the audience. "There is no doubt that for the last five years the stats have been staggering at the same level," she remarked. "Leaders in the financial community

now recognize the challenges women face ... however they are still struggling with how to address the issue.”

### **Initiatives for Supporting Organizational Diversity**

A new addition to the Benchmarking 2005 report was a summary of various firms' efforts to support organizational diversity.

Scotiabank has a specific “Advancement of Women” strategy that reflects the competitive landscape for both clients and top talent. TD Bank Financial Group's diversity strategy aims to create an accountability framework, build a fact base, obtain visible leadership commitment, and create a communication strategy that emphasizes the importance of gender diversity.

BMO Financial Group's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) has proven to be effective in reflecting the individual needs of BMO's diverse workforce and in its ability to compete for top talent. At CIBC, eight Affinity Groups focus on the intersections of gender, race, culture, ability, and also provide mentoring, career advancement and networking opportunities for employees.

RBC Financial Group's diversity strategy includes a business case that is tied to client markets, a metrics and accountability model with established goals, and an organizational culture that promotes inclusivity and respect.

### **Guest Speakers Discuss Benefits of Diversity**

The event's guest speakers conveyed messages of encouragement. Satish Rai, Vice Chair TD Securities and WCM board member talked about TD's top down commitment, which includes top level milestones and goals. He also acknowledged that the capital markets industry as a whole still has a long way to go.

Ilene Lang, President of Catalyst, reinforced the message that advancing diversity “... is both right, and smart.” She pointed out, as did all of the speakers, that drawing from the widest pool of talent is a basic best practice in business. “Sadly, right now, there are not enough women at the top of organizations.” she commented.

Colleen Moorehead, former President of ETrade Canada and current CEO and president of Nexient Learning Inc., presented a passionate message of hard work and hope. She too commented that the lack of progress shown in the study was disappointing, but that we in the business world have a clear financial argument for change. In observing that a work force without diversity “is both sub-optimal and boring,” Colleen encouraged women to blend life roles, to integrate work and home, but most of all to be optimistic about their careers.

The event closed with final remarks from Ann-Marie Cerio, Vice President of WCM, which underscored that the “numbers don’t lie”, and that more focus on change from the top level is needed. The results, such as they are, clearly gives our industry the message that although significant efforts are underway, more needs to be done to bring women’s representation to appropriate levels.