

Narrative for Bridge to Hope's Proposal, "Girl, Get Your Money Straight!"

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Bridge to Hope requests funds for a series of events including an open lecture for the general public and hands-on workshops addressing economic literacy for women ("Girl, Get Your Money Straight!") and families ("Money Matters for Families").

These events target a particularly under-represented student demographic; low-income students with children, in addition to the general female student population with an important message delivered by a vibrant and engaging speaker.

In the midst of the sub-prime mortgage crisis, before the Wall St. bail-out, Bridge to Hope Coordinator met Ms. Gail Perry Mason at an Economic Justice for Women summit. Ms. Perry Mason was convinced to share her compelling personal story (single mother hired as receptionist is now a VP for Oppenheimer Funds) of gaining economic literacy the "hard way" and her personal mission to teach women and teens "financial life skills." Gail Perry-Mason is the founder of two financial programs for youth: Money Matters Financial Summer Camps and the financial literacy after-school programs in Detroit Public Schools.

Ms. Perry Mason's message is important and she delivers in a style that is educational, inspiring and age-appropriate. She is well versed in financial literacy for low-income and unemployed families. She has authored "Money Matters for Families" and co-authored the best-selling book "Girl, Make Your Money Grow! A Sister's Guide to Protecting Your Future and Enriching Your Life." A much sought-after speaker, UH Bridge to Hope is excited that Ms. Gail Perry Mason has agreed to travel to Honolulu to share her work.

Event 1 Public Lecture: "Girl, Get Your Money Straight!"
Event 2 Workshop: "Getting Your Money Straight"
Event 3 Workshop: "Money Matters for Families"

GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

This series of events will provide both inspiring public lectures and hands-on workshops providing women a set of "financial life skills" developing economic literacy involving credit, budgeting and financial planning.

1. Women of all ages, but particularly college women will be inspired to engage with rather than avoid financial issues and planning.
2. Low-income student parents will gain both inspiration and financial life skills addressing their particular economic status and economic literacy needs.
3. Student parents will have the opportunity to gain skills to implement a realistic financial plan for their families by attending a Hands-on workshop addressing "Money Matters for Families."

Gail Perry-Mason - Building a Financial Future



Author and Financial Wizard

Growing up, the only financial advice Gail Perry-Mason received at home was to "have a joint account with Jesus." Perhaps this helps to explain why seventy percent of Americans live from paycheck to paycheck.

"Even though we're making more money, we're still spending just as much as we make. It's not how much you make," explains Perry-Mason. "It's how much you make, grow and keep."

Gail Perry-Mason is vice president of investments at Oppenheimer & Co. and co-author of the Oprah-endorsed best-seller, *Girl, Make Your Money Grow!* Perry-Mason hasn't always been a financial wizard. By the time she was 22, she was a divorcée with a baby and was working as a receptionist in a securities firm. By nothing short of sheer tenacity, she climbed the rungs of this male-dominated industry and became one of Michigan's top businesswomen.

Now, she is on a mission to equip the masses with the tools required to become financially sound.

"In Michigan, everybody's getting laid off," explains Perry-Mason. "People need to make some layoffs in their house and start running their household like a for-profit instead of a nonprofit. Teach your kids to become owners instead of consumers. Kids are like programs. They only need exposure and development."

Between founding camps to expose youths to the financial world and serving on various boards, Perry-Mason is authoring a new book.

"I'm losing 50 pounds and saving 50 thousand [dollars] in 50 weeks," explains Perry-Mason. "My next book is entitled *From A Full-Figured Woman to a Seven-Figure Woman*. I'm halfway through the year and almost there!" -[adam jones](#)

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

- ❖ Number of Students, staff and community members attending target presentations
- ❖ Qualitative Evaluation of each presentation by attendees

MEETING UH DIVERSITY GOALS:

Sixty-five percent (65%) of low-income adult students are women. Program activities in this proposal “Girl, Get Your Money Straight!” directly address the gender gap and importance of financial and economic literacy for young women and their families. Ms. Gail Perry Mason’s message is important to the general public, but she delivers with particular attention to the needs of women and students with children.

Supporting students with children enhances the University’s diversity in terms of socio-economic status. These students bring diverse experiences to their class work, enlarging their classmates’ faculty and staff experiences as well.

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR’S QUALIFICATIONS:

Ms. Catherine Wehrman, director of Kapiolani CC’s “Single Parent & Displaced Homemaker Program,” has agreed to co-sponsor events at KCC.

Ms. Teresa Bill coordinates programs for low-income student parents at UHMānoa and is also the UH System-wide Coordinator for the “Bridge to Hope” program serving welfare participant students. Bridge to Hope is a UH System-wide program with faculty and students on all 10 campuses who will be encouraged to participate in these workshops.