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**Center for Health and Gender Equity President to Preside Over Women Leadership Panel
at 700-person *Diversity Woman* Conference**

WASHINGTON, October 10, 2011—Today, Serra Sippel, president of The Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), will moderate the opening panel discussion at the 6th annual 2011 Diversity Women’s Business Leadership Conference, a 700-person conference sponsored by *Diversity Woman* magazine that seeks to build the leadership and executive potential of women of all races, cultures, and backgrounds.

The panel is particularly relevant in light of the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to three women from the North Africa and Arab regions, Sippel noted.

“Women leaders of today, from Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to First Lady Michelle Obama and Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor are currently making critical, indispensable contributions to our world, yet there are still few women leaders,” Sippel said. “As women leading in the corporate, nonprofit, policy, and advocacy fields, we must address the structural, cultural, and policy barriers that obstruct women’s paths to leadership and help create new spaces for women as leaders. The world is definitely at a loss the longer we wait to expand women’s leadership.”

The panel features Kierra Johnson, executive director of Choice USA; Dr. Shireen K. Lewis, executive director of EduSeed and SisterMentors; Maria Tildon, senior vice president of public policy and community affairs, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield; Sara Manzano-Diaz, director of Women's Bureau, United States Department of Labor; and Miriam W. Yeung, executive director, National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (NAPAWF). The diversity of the panelists reflects the original vision of the conference, said Sheila Robinson, founder and publisher of *Diversity Woman* magazine and the conference.

“I launched this event so that women from all cultures and all races and backgrounds coming up in the business world would have a tool to support their leadership and development that I wish I had when I was starting out in corporate America,” she said. “I wanted young women to have access to something that was positive, solution-based, and would empower them to succeed.”

The panel, called “Leadership 2020: Creating Pathways to Leadership for Women,” will be held from 10 a.m. to 11:15 a.m., today at The Gaylord Resort, 201 Waterfront Street, National Harbour, Maryland.

About the Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE)

The Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE) is a U.S.-based non-governmental organization that seeks to ensure that U.S. foreign policies and programs promote sexual and reproductive health and rights through effective, evidence-based approaches to prevention and treatment of critical reproductive and sexual health concerns, and through increased funding for critical international programs and institutions. www.genderhealth.org