



FEW

WORKING FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF WOMEN IN THE GOVERNMENT

NEWS & VIEWS

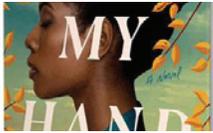
JULY/AUGUST 2022



Diversity in Literature



Transform Mental Health



Diversity in Literature

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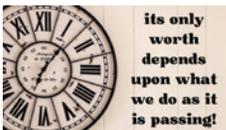
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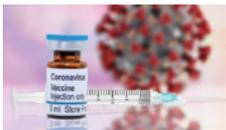
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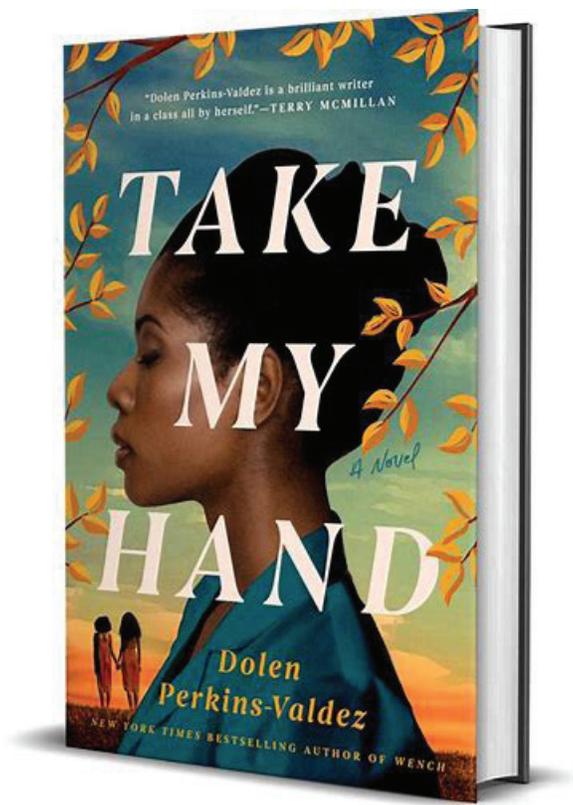
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Diversity in Literature Book Discussion

with the Federally Employed Women's Federal Triangle Chapter and the U.S. Government Accountability Office's Women's Liaison Group in Recognition of Women's Equality Day

Thursday, Sept. 1, 2022, 3-4 p.m. EST

Please join us for a discussion of Dolen Perkins-Valdez's historical novel, *Take My Hand* (2022). Perkins-Valdez's novel is set in the 1970s in Montgomery, Alabama, and told from the perspective of a Black nurse who is just out of nursing school. When Civil Townsend begins working at the Montgomery Family Planning Clinic, she intends to help women in her community make their own choices for their lives and bodies.

But when her first week on the job takes her down a

dusty country road to a worn-down one-room cabin, she's shocked to learn that her new patients, Erica and India, are children—just 11 and 13 years old. Inspired by a real historical case, Perkins-Valdez's novel approaches reproductive rights from a time and place where birth control and sterilization are forced upon teenagers and pre-teens. The novel highlights the history of state-sanctioned abuses to the health and reproductive rights of Black Americans and other people of color—a legacy that continues, legally, today.

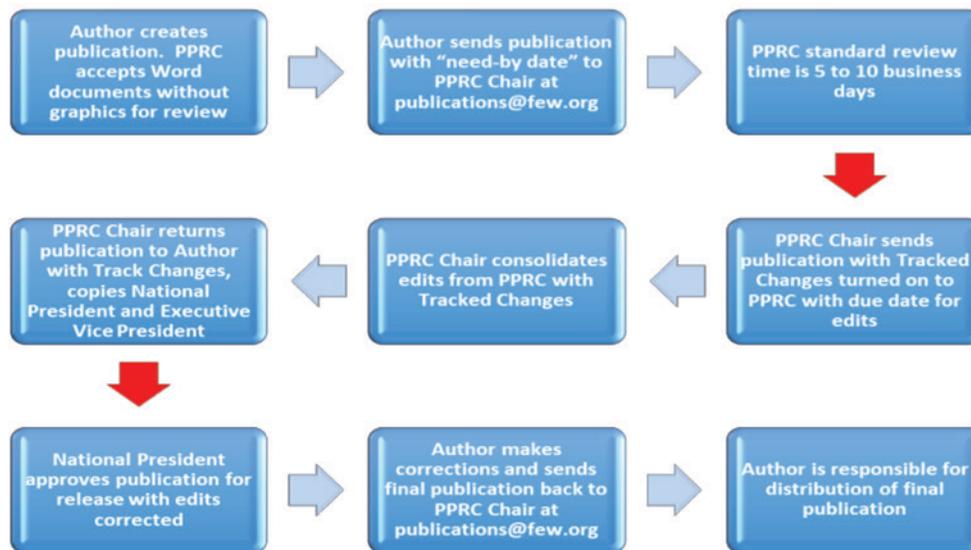
Zoom Link: <https://gao.zoomgov.com/j/1606660288?pwd=ZTdBeWFUeXd5cDg1Wko5MTFzcU9YZz09>

Meeting ID: 160 666 0288

Passcode: rbXyM?34

Join by Phone: 669-254-5252

Passcode: 79655398



Use Time Management to Nurture Healthy Publication Habits

By: Judy Rush, Chair, Publications & Policy Review Committee

Congratulations and welcome to all the newly elected and returning officers of Federally Employed Women!

All officers must send publications (articles, event flyers, National, Chapter and Regional Newsletters, etc.). Send your request permission to use the FEW Logo for fundraising items or other items to publications@few.org prior to publication or advertisement. Submit your publication or logo request at least two weeks prior to the event or newsletter distribution or publishing the fundraiser item.

All publications must contain FEW's approved logo with the registered trademark and the phrase: Working for the Advancement of Women in the Government. The guidelines for logo usage are in the FEW website Members Only section. All publications must also contain the National President's theme and logo as well.

All publications must be reviewed by the PPRC and receive the National President's final approval before publication or logo items are released. By following the PPRC procedure, you are providing consistency in FEW publications and furthering FEW brands.

Time management and other publication tips:

1. Allow **five business days** for submission review that are **one to five pages** long.
2. Allow **ten business days** for submission review that are **six pages and more**.

3. Please add the date required to your email request if you need the publication sooner.
4. Place a period after each time designation (e.g., **9 a.m. or 7 p.m.**).
5. Dates are stated as the Month, Day and Year.
6. When using bulleted lists, indent the second line underneath the first line to maintain a clean and crisp look.
7. When using bulleted lists, do not end the bulleted item with a period, semi-colon or other punctuation.
8. When using acronyms, spell it out the first time, followed by the acronym. Example: Federally Employed Women (FEW). Use the acronym in the remainder of the publication.
9. Ensure all names are spelled correctly.
10. Run the spelling and grammar check before you send the publication to publications@few.org.
11. Make all necessary identified corrections and return the final version to publications@few.org for the National Archives.

PPRC procedures are in the National Policy and Procedures Manual, Section V., Program Policies and Procedures. If you have any questions, please send me an email at publications@few.org. Thank you for Leveling UP For Success!

Four Priorities to Transform Mental Health Care



Mental health struggles are an increasingly prevalent part of American life. This year, nearly **1 in 5 adults** will deal with mental health conditions, and half will suffer in silence without treatment. BCBS companies are committed to changing this.

Our data and experience insuring 1 in 3 Americans have informed our **four priorities about transforming mental health care**:

1. First, we must address the mental health crisis among youth.

Two years of isolation, uncertainty, and other societal stressors have levied a heavy toll. Last year, more than half of 18-21-year-olds reported symptoms of anxiety or depression. We must work from all angles to better screen, diagnose, and support young people inside and outside the traditional realms of health care. BCBS of Alabama evaluates mental health services in educational settings, pilots a classroom-based needs assessment tool, and delivers de-escalation training to enhance schools' response to students in crisis.

2. Next, we need to increase access to equitable mental health care.

Research shows that 77 percent of counties don't have sufficient access to mental health services and qualified professionals. We must ensure all patients get access to necessary care, no matter their geography, racial, ethnic, or linguistic background. We must expand telehealth services access and leverage peer support specialists to close these gaps. BCBS of Massachusetts and California are funding Brightline, which provides virtual behavioral health care to more than 24 million health plan lives.

3. Third, we need better integration of care. Data show conditions are undiagnosed and not treated when health care is fragmented. A team-based approach will reduce healthcare burdens, reduce costs and improve outcomes. Arkansas BCBS is funding Masters of Social Work programs at three universities and the HealthySteps program to increase mental health providers working in pediatric care facilities.

4. Finally, we must confront mental health inequities among marginalized communities. We will soon publish research showing Black and Hispanic Americans have 31 percent and 39 percent lower depression diagnosis rates than white Americans, indicating significant under-diagnosis. I am optimistic about our ability to provide relief, but we cannot heal the unidentified. Horizon BCBS of New Jersey has partnered with Medicaid to improve postpartum depression evaluations of Black women, understand the root causes behind diagnosis rate disparities, and outline best interventions.

Considering the complexity of these challenges, transforming mental health must be a collective effort. It will require business leaders, policymakers, researchers, and community leaders to act with a sense of urgency while prioritizing areas that will have the most significant impact: youth healthcare, access, care integration, and equity.

If we collaborate to solve the most challenging problems, I believe we can meaningfully improve outcomes and reverse the mental health crisis.

To read more, [click here](#).



SAVE THESE DATES!

**Federally Employed Women
Pacific Northwest Regional Training Program**

**Empowering Women for Success:
*Reach for a Fulfilling Future!***

September 29 – 30, 2022

You will participate in discussions and presentations on helping women advance in their careers and plan for their futures. Women are rising as stronger leaders and taking on the extra work that comes with achievements. In addition, women are doing more to support their teams and to advance justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts.

Join us for a program full of learning and inspiration so you, too, can *Reach for a Fulfilling Future!*

You do not want to miss this outstanding training!



Working for the Advancement of Women in the Government – www.few.org

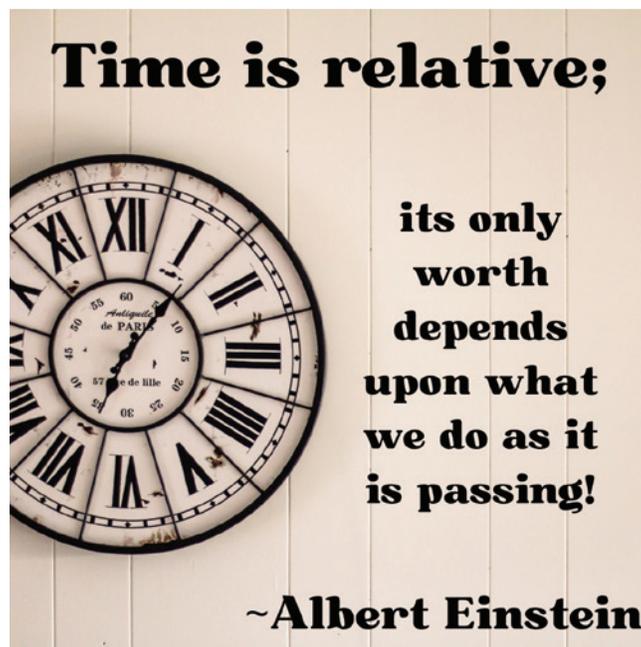
The Southeast is Making Time for Membership Enhancement



Southeast Strong (SES) Sessions are designed to enhance the FEW members' knowledge and awareness on leading change, leading people, driving results, business acumen, and building coalitions. Please mark your calendars for our next SES session, which will be via Zoom. The speaker will be Ms. Donna M. Daily, a Senior Executive Service at the U.S. Census Bureau. Ms. Daily is Chief of the American Services Survey Office.

Join us on Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2022, at 6 p.m. CST/7:00 p.m. EST.

The flyer with additional information is located on the FEW website under the Southeast Region. In keeping with the protocol chain, we will provide a Zoom link to attend the upcoming session.



Tick Tock...

What's a Minute Really Worth?

By: Kim Smith

Imagine a seemingly mundane Thursday night and your lottery ticket wins \$40,471,200. Choosing to give away some, waste some, or be less mindful of how you use your winnings would not be of much concern. We are conditioned from an early age to focus on money, understand the power of having it, and base much of our goals and desires around it. Therefore, we must be intentional about breaking these unhealthy habits. The proper basis for our currency should not be dollars but time! Money can consistently be earned, spent, and wasted, but time cannot. 40,471,200 is actually the finite number of minutes the average American has from birth to death. Knowing this, would you still waste some? Maybe? Consider the average American spends almost half of their minutes in school, at work, or asleep. Now, if you are reading this, the odds are you have already spent at least 20,000,000 minutes. Given that perspective, are you more concerned with how you will spend the remainder of your time? Does this perspective make the value of some things increase, and others diminish?

Here are four steps to realigning your valuation system.

Start with self-reflection! Take the time to acknowledge your priorities and, most importantly, your passions. These should be at the core of time management decision-making. Be honest, don't prioritize what others

expect, and don't be afraid to admit your passions even if they are socially unusual! These are your values.

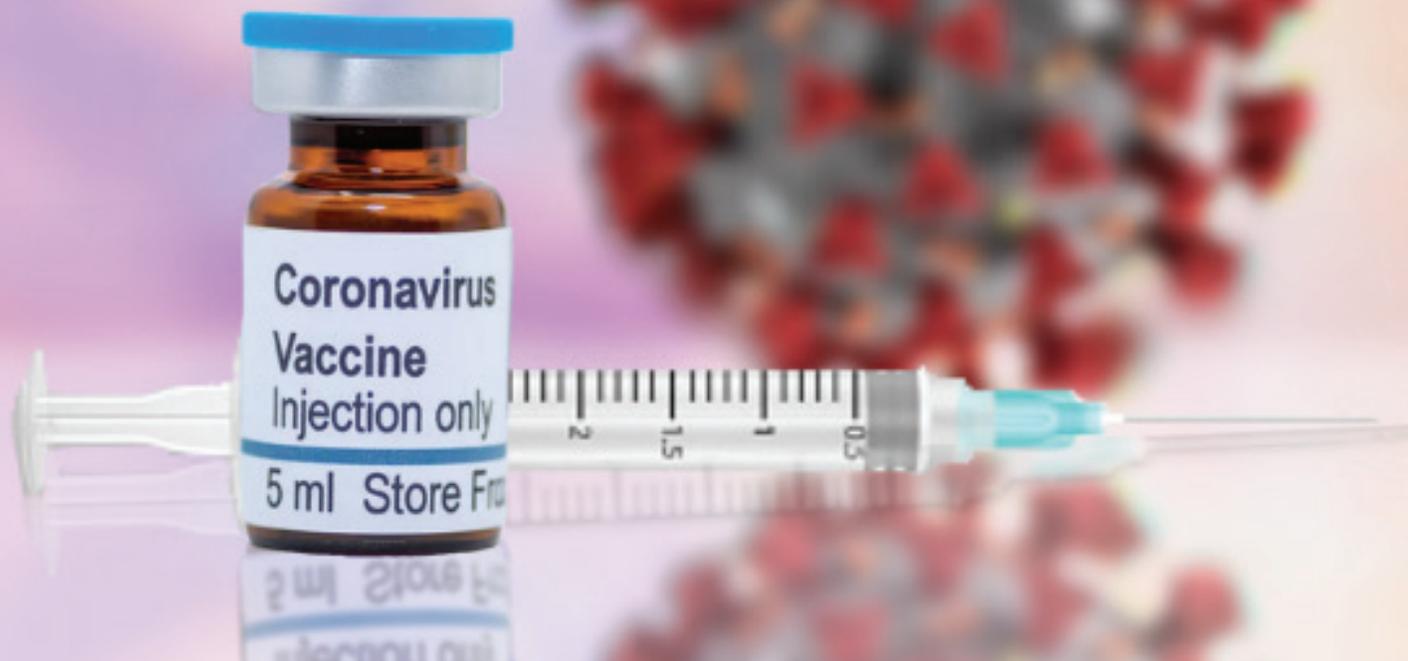
Proclaim your values! Keeping them within doesn't cement them into your life. Words have power, so write your values down and say them out loud. The brain is a fascinating thing. It goes through at least four processing stages for each audio or visual stimulus. Associate a positive emotion to the stimulus, and multiple portions of the brain become engaged. Repeat the stimulation, and the brain starts to rewire its processing.

Evaluate often! Does the way you spend time align with your passions and priorities? Again, BE HONEST! If they do, great. But suppose they don't find out why and change it.

Repeat! Are your passions and priorities still the same? Change is the essence of nature. Different seasons of life influence passions and priorities. Embrace your evolution. Invest some time into self-reflection and maintain alignment with your values.

"Time is relative; its only worth depends upon what we do as it is passing." If you accept the wisdom of Albert Einstein and make time your most worthy asset, you can truly Soar to New Heights and Level Up for Success.

Will Federal Agencies Reinforce the COVID-19 Federal Vaccine Mandate?



In early April, a panel of U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit judges ruled 2-1 against the nationwide injunction that paused the enforcement of the federal vaccine mandate. Even though the judgment overturned the decision of the lower court to halt the mandate, there is still a grace period until the decision takes effect.

This grace period prevented federal employees not in compliance with the federal mandate from being fired, suspended, or facing any other sort of punishment until May 31. However, a petition from those challenging the mandate has further pushed this date back, as the court has selected to hear the second appeal.

For the time being, the White House has directed agencies to maintain the status quo. According to an official from the Office of Management and Budget, the preliminary injunction is still in effect, and agencies, including the Safer Federal Workforce Taskforce, are not taking any actions to prepare for enforcement. Feds also cannot handle or decide petitions for religious or medical exemptions at the moment.

According to White House data, an estimated 98 percent of government employees were either in compliance with the vaccine mandate or had submitted for an exemption/reasonable accommodation before the original injunction. Nearly 40,000 employees and workers with rejected exemption

petitions may face suspension or termination if the mandate is reinstated.

Looking ahead, the longer the vaccine mandate sits in legal limbo, the more concerns around COVID-19 will continue to die down, which, if contained enough, could result in the vaccine mandate becoming something of a non-issue, not requiring reasonable accommodations/exemptions. However, with many federal employees' livelihoods at stake, it is reasonable to assume that more finalized directions will be given to agencies soon.

Tully Rinckey PLLC is one of the nation's largest federal sector labor and employment, security clearance, and military law firms, serving clients across the U.S. FEW and Tully Rinckey have a Memo of Understanding. With this agreement, FEW members are entitled to one free half-hour telephone consultation each year with one of Tully Rinckey's experienced attorneys concerning federal employment, military and security clearance matters including discrimination claims, adverse action appeals, and veterans' benefits, to name a few. In addition to the attorney consultations, members who pursue their legal claims with Tully Rinckey will be entitled to a 10 percent discount on legal fees. For more information or to schedule a consultation with a Tully Rinckey attorney, please call 888-529-4543, or visit www.tullylegal.com.