



PROGRAMMING GUIDE

In an effort to aid the regions and chapters in coming up with creative and new meeting ideas, below is a breakdown of the months and potential meeting ideas. Please share this information with the chapters in your area, and let me know if there are any questions or suggestions. Again, these are only ideas and can be expanded, modified and tailored to each specific region.

OVERALL PROGRAMMING TIPS

1. When planning meetings, consider whether there are other groups that could be partnered with to increase attendance and visibility at your meeting.
2. Post your meetings on the New York State Women, Inc. web site.
3. Update your chapter page on the New York State Women, Inc. web site to make sure that your officer details and meeting information are current and correct.
4. Think about what women in your area need and/or want, and seek to fill that need with the programming at your monthly meetings.
5. Advertise your meetings with press releases and on local news web site. Most areas now have on-line community boards through their local newspapers and news stations that allow you to post your meeting free of charge.
6. Visit the New York State Women, Inc. web site to view a list of speakers that have volunteered their services to regions and chapters.
7. Ask your members what programming they would like to see.

AUGUST

1. Many chapters do not have meetings in August. Other chapters have found that August is a good month for a casual meeting that can serve as a membership drive. This can be a happy hour instead of a regular dinner meeting and can be hosted at a local restaurant or even a member's house if someone is willing to volunteer.
2. Take time this month to see about becoming a group known for providing professional development opportunities and reach out to local colleges, high schools, other women's organizations, companies, etc. and see what partnership opportunities are available in your community.

SEPTEMBER

1. The primary elections are on September 13, 2012 this year. You can have an election update at your meeting. You can contact your local board of elections at this link <http://www.elections.ny.gov/CountyBoards.html> and contact them for area information, voter registration cards, etc. You can also see if someone from the local board may be willing to come speak at a local meeting. They can talk about the new voting machines that are in use now as well. If you can't get a local board official come speak, you can show this video <http://www.albanycounty.com/departments/elections/voting-machine-video.asp> at a local meeting so your members understand the new voting machines.

2. September is Leukemia and Lymphoma Awareness Month. You can visit <http://www.lls.org/> to find your local chapter and see if they have someone who would volunteer to come and speak.

OCTOBER

1. October is NYS Women, Inc. Women in Business Month. It is an opportunity to honor the contributions of New York's women in business, employers supporting their achievements and all working women. Use this month to have a "Women of the Year" event or even a "Celebration of Working Women," which would honor multiple women. You can find more information by the New York State Women, Inc. website, which has all the information on this month.
2. October is also Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Breast Cancer Awareness Month. You can visit <http://www.opdv.ny.gov/>, the Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence for information and local area providers, and you can visit <http://www.bcrfcure.org/>, the Breast Cancer Research Foundation for information and to find local events.

NOVEMBER

1. Please see the information in September for how election ideas.
2. Veteran's Day. This is a great time to hold an Athena Society event, which would honor women in the military. For more information, please see <http://nyswomeninc.org/Programs.aspx>. You can also contact your local VFW or your local Veteran Services Department.
3. November is also Diabetes Awareness Month and National Epilepsy Awareness Month. More information can be found at <http://www.ndep.nih.gov/partners-community-organization/national-diabetes-month/index.aspx?redirect=true> and <http://www.epilepsyfoundation.org/>.

DECEMBER

1. December is a great month for a holiday party and a more informal gathering of members to allow for networking and a more casual meeting. This is another great way to draw in new members and let them meet the current members and learn more about New York State Women, Inc.
2. December is also a great month to find a local charity or cause and organize a fundraiser for them. It is also a great month to honor women in your local community who are involved in community service and consider having a fundraiser for their cause at your holiday party.

JANUARY

1. Many of our members are concerned about finances and financial and long term planning. The first of the year is a good time to look at having a speaker come and talk about tax planning, estate planning, etc. You will find that attorneys in your area would be more than willing to come and talk on these topics. You may also be able to talk to a local accountant who can come and talk on this topic.

2. January is also Cervical Cancer Awareness Month. You can visit <http://www.nccc-online.org/> for more information. You can also check with your local hospital or an oncologist in your area to see if they know of a potential speaker.

FEBRUARY

1. February is a great month to focus on diversity in your area. February is African American History Month and a great way to expand the diversity of your region and chapter. Look at bringing in a speaker to talk about all areas of diversity, whether it is race, gender, sexual orientation, etc. Resources can be found at <http://www.africanamericanhistorymonth.gov/>. You can also reach out to local resources such as the local NAACP chapter, local government resources or the local Historical Society to give a presentation.
2. February is also Heart Disease Awareness Month. This is the #1 killer of women today, so it is a great topic to focus on. You can find more information from the American Heart Association at www.heart.org. There are local chapters of the AHA across the State. This is another topic where you could reach out to your local hospital for more information and a suggestion for a potential speaker.

MARCH

1. March is Women's History Month. There are many programs that can be planned and organized to celebrate women. You can focus on the history of women or even focus on a woman in your area that is making exceptional contributions to your community. You will see lots of information and ideas from the Women's History Month chair, which will be posted on the New York State Women, Inc. web site. You can also contact your local Historical Society or a local college to look for a speaker to discuss women's history.
2. March is also a great month to focus on Career Recognition, New Careerist and the Personal and Professional Development Program. We are hoping to have a record number of participants in these programs this year. For more information visit the website at <http://nyswomeninc.org/Programs.aspx>.

APRIL

1. Many people are starting to think about summer and looking to get healthy and into better shape for summer. This is a good month to look at meetings focused on getting healthy. You could have a trainer or nutritionist come speak and talk about healthy living and healthy eating.
2. April is also Sexual Assault Awareness Month. You can find additional information at <http://www.nsvrc.org/saam>.

MAY

1. May should be the month in which you are electing your new officers. This is another good time to invite new members and let them learn about New York State Women, Inc. and see the importance of the officers and their election.
2. May is the start of summer and many summer activities. May is a good month to look at having a speaker that can talk about managing a busy schedule. You could have someone come in and talk about time management, stress management and how to balance work and life.

JUNE

1. New York State Women, Inc. is always focused on personal and professional development. This is a great month to have a speaker who will talk to the members about their own personal development. Topic ideas could include “Your Elevator Speech: How to Introduce Yourself in 10 Seconds or Less,” “Negotiation 101: How to Become a Better Negotiator,” “How to Make Your Website Your Best Employee,” etc. The potential speakers in this area are limitless. This is a good time to look at your members and see if any of them would make a great speaker.
2. June is also a great meeting to think about holding an educational event at your local library for women who want to learn about opening their own business. You can invite the Small Business Administration, or other similar business organizations to help. The SBA can be found at www.sba.gov.

There are literally limitless meeting topics that could work for your chapter. This list of ideas is just a starting point. Don't forget that any time is a great time to do a meeting focused on:

1. The benefits of being a member of New York State Women, Inc.
2. A new member drive
3. The New York State Women, Inc. legislative platform
4. The Personal and Professional Development Programs
5. The Reality Store – Information can be found in the members section of the web site under State Info.
6. Updates on what happened at the most recent State meeting.

Good luck!