

Special Report

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As women we need to ask for more: Keys

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"He wanted more but he forgot that I, as a woman, was just so happy to have that job," she recalled.

"Should women clamour for more?" I asked.

Her response was: "I think as women, we need to know our work and ask for more. It's our right."

From talking to some women in Asia, Keys learned that Asian women tend to focus more on Sciences and Mathematics.

"In the US, we have a problem with young girls. When they get to High School, they don't become interested in Science. It's very common."

To tackle this issue, the Government introduced programmes that help girls feel excited about Science Studies.

"We tell them it's Okay to study hard and focus on Maths, so that's another initiative."

Born in Phoenix, Arizona, Keys grew up in Tacoma, Washington, where she studied theatre and communication arts and graduated from the Pacific Lutheran University in 1989. She became famous as an American Web TV show host, being the host, writer and producer of *WhitneyandWyatt.com*, a bi-monthly Internet television talk show for women.

After managing her family's *Keys Minus Contemporary Craft Gallery* until its closure in 1994, she joined Microsoft, where she helped create the company's first corporate social responsibility report. She also managed the launches of *Windows CE* and *Office 2000*, and led some of Microsoft's first online, viral and social marketing initiatives. As a corporate spokesperson, Keys travelled across the United States representing Microsoft, and worked directly with Bill Gates, helping him prepare for interviews and photo shoots with publications including *The Wall Street Journal*.

Keys has written two books - *Media Tips for Authors: How to Get Free Publicity for Your Book* and *Publicity Tips for Small Businesses: How to Get Publicity - For Free!*



Keys (seated at centre) with the organisers and participants. Flanking her are Paros Trust Executive Director, Anne Lasimbang (fifth from left) and President of Sabah Women Action-Resource Group (Sawo), Puan Winnie Yee.

US Papers in losing battle

Mary Chin

KEYES, who has a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree (majoring in Journalism and public relations), is amazed to see so many newspapers being published in Malaysia.

"I am glad to see so many newspapers in your country," she told this writer.

According to her, many of the newspaper publishing houses in the United States are closing down.

"Not very good," she lamented.

Keys has many friends who are journalists and losing their jobs.

"Some of them like you have taken their columns and they are selling their columns now back to the newspaper."

One point of observation is that many people in the United States want to appear in the newspaper by having a story written about them.

"But they don't subscribe the paper or buy an ad. In fact, you need to support the newspaper organisation. But some people just want the fame or the attention."

Why don't some people subscribe?

"If you talk to the media people, they will say, 'We don't make very much money by subscriptions. We make money with advertising. But the problem is that the quality of

the news is going down."

"They are losing money with advertising, so they can't have good news," Keys explained. And with the advent of social media in the United States, so much information is available for free.

"Thirdly, more people are becoming 'citizen journalists'. So they will rather read a story from a friend than an educated journalist. So there is a shift towards Twitter, Facebook and blogging," she pointed out.

Keys also raised concern over the exit of veteran journalists because of certain circumstances. One of her colleagues has been a journalist with a column for many years.

"However, in the United States now, things have changed. The Editor wants him to do a lot more things such as taking photographs and videos, apart from writing his column. Journalists like yourself are expected to do so much," she said.

"But they are leaving and so you only have the 21-year-old journalist who doesn't know how to really do investigation."

"Can the young journalists cope?" I wondered.

"No," she replied. "My friend is in his sixties and he is leaving. The good people are leaving, so the quality of news goes down. It's a hard problem."



Keys (seated third from right) listening to input from local women during a group discussion.