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## Women Hold Few Top Jobs at N.Y. Firms

By SOPHIA HOLLANDER

Women have achieved scant gains in top leadership positions at New York state's largest corporations since 2006, according to a new study set to be released next week.

The report, conducted by Columbia Business School and the Women's Executive Circle of New York, is the third in a series of biannual surveys tracking the number of women executives and board members at the state's largest 100 publicly traded companies.

Overall, women held 15.9% of high-level leadership positions in 2010, up from 14.7% in 2006.

"I'm a little disappointed," said Columbia Business School professor Ann Bartel, who led the study, which will be unveiled during a breakfast and panel discussion hosted by the Women's Executive Circle of New York next Thursday. "Sometimes when you see these numbers, it can be very eye-opening."

Of the 100 companies surveyed, 69 didn't have any women in their top six leadership positions, defined as chief executive officer, chief financial officer, chief operating officer, chief information officer, chief investment officer and general counsel.

"I think that will be a surprise to the largest companies here," said Candace Quinn, co-president of the Women's Executive Circle of New York. "I think there's attention in general to the issue, but there's no specific facts. That's what we have here. Facts."

Overall, women held 11.7% of executive positions in 2010, which was 0.2 percentage point lower than in 2006.

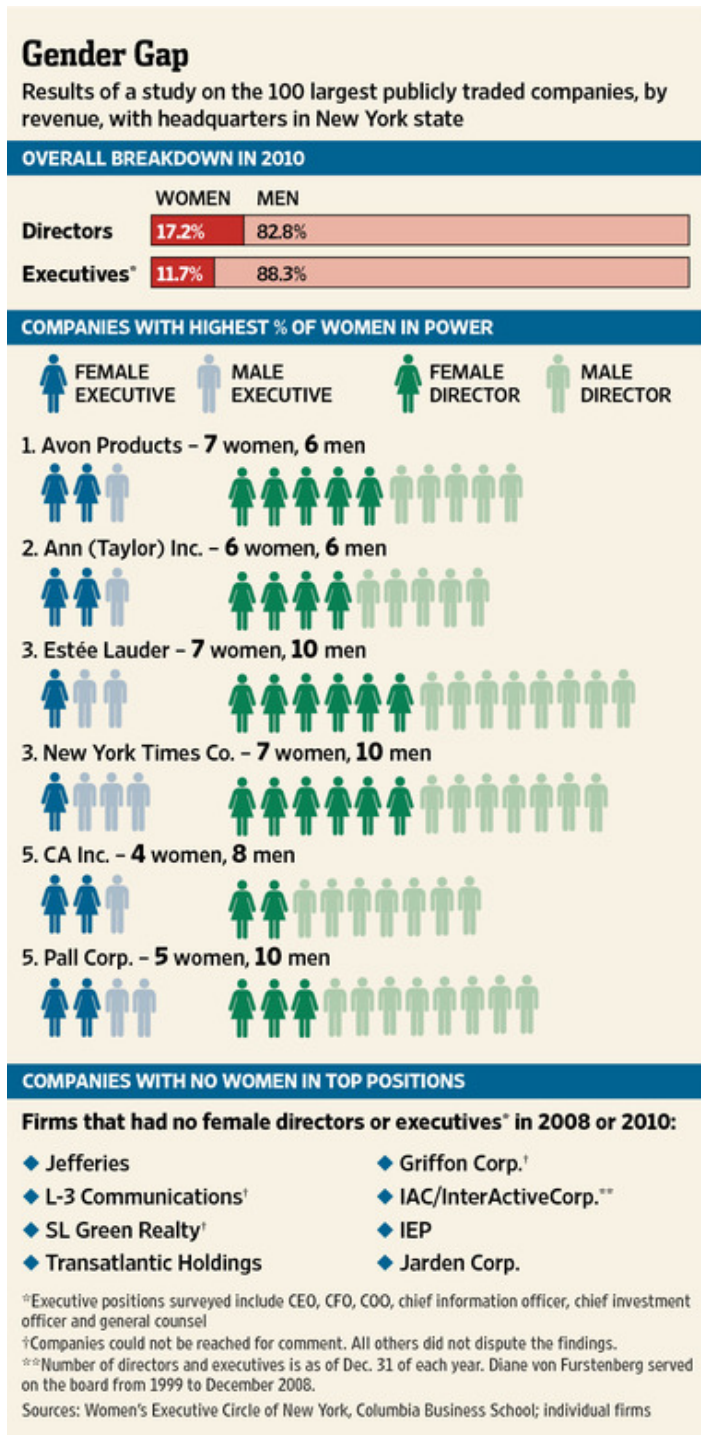
This stagnation mirrored a national trend, experts said.

"It's been stuck," said [Ilene Lang](#), the president and CEO of Catalyst, a nonprofit organization that promotes women in business. "So it's not surprising to me that the 100 largest companies in New York have a similar story."

The situation remains frustrating, she said. "Women have been very well-educated for a very long time, women have been in the work force for decades, there are multiple generations of women who have been really committed to careers. So why is that not changing?" she said. "It should have been changing, and it's very disappointing that it hasn't."

There were 15 companies that didn't have a female board member or top executive in 2010.

"Investment banks need to do more to attract women into the industry," said Richard Khaleel, a spokesman for



Jefferies, the lone finance and banking company big enough to qualify for all three surveys but not to have included a woman among its leadership positions in any of them. Last year, the firm launched an initiative to "bring more women into the business," he said in a statement. "Over time we expect to see more women represented at the highest levels of company leadership, both at Jefferies and across the industry."

Nearly half the 25 companies boasting the highest representation of women were concentrated in female-centered industries, including cosmetics, clothing, dieting and fragrances.

"The work-family balance is still challenging," Ms. Bartel said. "I don't think we have solved that problem."

And indeed, there is a complicated interplay. This summer, a court dismissed a case against Bloomberg L.P. claiming the company had discriminated against mothers and pregnant employees. "The law does not mandate 'work-life balance,'" Judge Loretta Preska wrote in her decision. "Making a decision that preferences family over work comes with consequences."

Still, Ms. Bartel said she was puzzled by the lack of progress; the 2012 graduating class at Columbia Business School will be 38% women.

"I don't know why it's been flat-lining," Ms. Bartel said, adding that she hopes companies begin asking themselves about where they sit in the rankings: "'How come I'm 40 [on the list] and not 15?' That's really what we hope will come out of this."

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