

Court to rule on Jaycees women

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court said Monday it will decide whether states may force the Jaycees, a national organization dedicated to developing America's future leaders, to admit women as full members.

The justices agreed to hear an appeal by Minnesota officials, who want to apply the state's law barring discrimination in public accommodations to the Jaycees' membership policy.

The court's decision could lead to the sexual integration of other men-only groups be-

sides the Jaycees, and might affect groups whose memberships are based on religious belief or national origin.

Minnesota's appeal was backed by the National Organization for Women and other feminist groups who say the Jaycees are depriving women "of the advantages provided by the traditional avenues of . . . economic and political opportunity."

Jaycees lawyers said the "alarming" legal power sought by Minnesota threatens the membership policies of "hundreds of organizations" such as the Knights of

Columbus, the Polish Women's Alliance, the Sons of Norway and B'nai B'rith.

The Minnesota law at issue makes it illegal "to deny any person the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages and accommodations of a place of public accommodation because of race, color, creed, religion, disability, national origin or sex."

The United States Jaycees, founded as the U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce in 1920, has 7,000 chapters across the country.

Court: Jaycees don't have to admit women

From staff and wire reports

The Alaska Supreme Court said Friday that the Jaycees do not have to admit women.

In a unanimous 19-page opinion, the court ruled that the Jaycees' male-only membership rule does not violate the state or federal constitutions.

There is not enough of a connection between the Jaycees' activities and the government to justify the application of the constitutional ban on discrimination,

the court held.

It also reversed a Superior Court ruling that the limited membership requirement violates Alaska's public accommodations statute.

The opinion, written by Justice Jay Rabinowitz, said the public accommodations law pertains to a "place" and that a service organization like the Jaycees lacks a fixed geographical location of the kind addressed by the law.

The court relied on several rulings in

federal courts to determine that the U.S. Constitution had not been violated.

"Although (Lillian) Richardet is correct in observing that this court has traditionally construed Alaska's constitutional provisions independently of analogous federal constitutional clauses, we are not persuaded that it would be desirable to depart from federal standards in this case," Rabinowitz wrote.

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Alaska Jaycees don't have to admit women, high court rules

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Another complainant in the case, Julie Ann Latuska, described the decision as "a devastating blow for the Alaska Jaycees." She said the state organization had voted to allow women as full members, despite the national organization's guidelines.

Mike Flanigan, an attorney who represented the five

women who filed the suit in 1978, said a request for a rehearing will be filed.

"The court created a loophole in the state's anti-discrimination laws that we think invites future discrimination," Flanigan said. "Just because the organization isn't in one location? Could that mean that the corner hot dog stand could move around and be able to discriminate?"

Latuska said she and others will fight the court's ruling. "We already have women as chapter presidents and in many other leadership positions" in the Alaska Jaycees, she said. "This might be a setback, but these women aren't about to give up."

"Our holding does not constitute an endorsement of the substantive wisdom of the Jaycees' policy of excluding

women from full membership in the organization," the Supreme Court said in a footnote to its opinion.

The Jaycees restricts its membership to men between the ages of 18 and 35. Women can become associate members, but are not allowed to hold office in the organization, cast votes or receive achievement awards.

Jaycees vote allows women members

Staff and wire reports

Alaska chapters of the Jaycees will experience "phenomenal growth" thanks to a decision by the U.S. Jaycees today allowing women full membership in the all-male organization, an Anchorage representative of the group predicted today.

Charlotte Dennis, state director of the International Jaycees in Anchorage, said the decision "swings the door wide open" for women to join.

The vote by delegates at a special Jaycees national meeting in Tulsa, Okla., was 5,372 to 386 to admit women, with 77 absten-

tions.

The decision came after a 12-year, \$1 million legal fight to bar women from full membership in the civic association.

The Alaska chapters of the organization were the first to institute legal action against their na-

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Women Jaycees

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tional directors to allow women to be full members.

Dennis said the local chapters will grow substantially now that women will be able to vote and hold office in local Jaycee chapters.

She said there already are women officers in Alaska but now "they'll just come out of hiding."

Dennis said 15 state chapters have folded in recent years, mainly due to the no-women rule. She said both men and women left because of the policy.

She said Alaska has been waging guerrilla warfare against the national organization. Jaycees here wanted to try to change the organization from within, but when they were unsuccessful they turned to the courts and in 1978 filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Jaycees. The Alaska chapters lost that court battle.

Spurred by a unanimous U.S. Supreme Court decision in a Minnesota case, the Jaycees' executive committee voted in July to recommend that the bylaws be changed to admit women. Until now, membership has been limited to men between the ages of 18 and 36.

For the 64-year-old organization's bylaws to be changed, the proposal had to be approved by representatives of two-thirds of the Jaycees across the country.

The issue was the main item on the agenda at the meeting, the second special gathering of the 270,000-member organization in its history. The first, held during World War II, concerned ways Jaycees could aid the war effort.

A group of Anchorage Jaycees

testified Saturday via telephone in favor of allowing women full membership. Previously, women could only be members of Jaycees women's groups.

Mike Fernandes, director of public relations for the Jaycees, said before the vote that it would do nothing to affect the 59,000 women in 3,000 Jaycees Women chapters around the country unless the individuals choose to change their membership.

Fernandes said Wednesday approval would mean the Jaycees bylaws would be changed "to say young people and young persons instead of young men," Fernandes said.

Suzanne Stephens of Oklahoma City, president of Oklahoma Jaycee Women, says she has no intention of joining the previously all-male Jaycees, of which her husband is a member.

"I'm personally too conservative for that. I would stay with the women," she said. "It would be more progressive to keep two organizations because we are giving men the opportunity to do their thing and women to do their thing."

The Jaycees, in three previous votes of the membership, had rejected moves to allow women full membership.

Jaycees in Minnesota challenged the legality of the Jaycees' exclusion of women, contending that the bylaws violated Minnesota's laws prohibiting discrimination in places of public accommodation. Some 37 other states have similar laws.

On July 3, the high court agreed that the Minnesota law could be applied to the Jaycees. The Jaycees have complied in Minnesota.

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Court: club can stay men-only

Associated Press

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Jaycees lacks a fixed geographical location of the kind addressed by the law.

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"Although (Lillian) Richardet is correct in observing that this court has traditionally construed Alaska's constitutional provisions independently of analogous federal constitutional clauses, we are not persuaded that it would be desirable to depart from federal standards in this case," Rabinowitz wrote.

The case dates back to 1978 when Richardet and four other women filed a class action suit against the Jaycees following the organization's decision at a national convention not to admit women.

Alaska was one of four states where Jaycees admitted women on an experimental basis beginning in 1975. But after the convention vote, the national organization threatened local chapters with revocation of their charters if they did not comply with the male-only policy.

Superior Judge Milton Souter rejected the women's claims of constitutional rights to membership, but held that the state's public accommodations act had been violated. He ordered the Jaycees to admit women and ordered them to pay Richardet almost \$19,000 in legal fees.

"Our holding does not constitute an endorsement of the substantive wisdom of the Jaycees' policy of excluding women from full membership in the organization," the Supreme Court said in

a footnote to its opinion.

But, the court said, constitutional law does not prohibit discriminatory actions by private parties where there is no government involvement. It rejected Richardet's arguments that incidental items like the Jaycees' use of public facilities made the government a participant in the discrimination.

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Chief Justice Edmond Burke and Justice Warren Mathews did not participate in the case. Anchorage Superior Court Judge Victor Carlson joined the other three justices deciding the case.

Calista to appeal Lewis contract award

By **STEVE SEPLOCHA**
Daily News business editor

Calista Corp. officials said Monday they will appeal a decision by Commissioner of Community and Regional Affairs Mark Lewis to award a western Alaska regional planning contract to another company.

Calista president Alex Raider said the lead company in the winning proposal misrepresented itself and is not in a position to deliver promised services.

The appeal will be forwarded to Commissioner of

Administration Lisa Rudd, who has the power to reverse Lewis' decision.

The winning proposal was submitted by a consortium headed by the firm of Maynard & Partch. The \$395,000 contract was awarded last week.

Raider said Maynard & Partch indicated it had formed an association with Nunam Kitlutsisti, an environmental arm of the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), Calista's bidding partner.

No such association exists nor will it exist, according to

Raider and Gene Peltola, vice president of AVCP.

Jeff Smith, a division director in the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, said he had not seen the appeal, but the department stood by its decision.

Smith said the review committee that evaluated the proposals specifically addressed the point raised by Calista and was satisfied with the answers it received.

The contract has been the object of controversy within Community and Regional Affairs since last January.

Contractors competing for the award and a former Lewis employee have claimed actions by Lewis had the effect of steering the contract toward Calista and AVCP.

Addressing the controversy about the contract, Raider said his organization "at no time exerted pressure" to influence the outcome.

He also said the legislative appropriation, engineered by Sen. John Sackett, R-Ruby, was intended for Calista and AVCP, its non-profit arm, and should have been handled as a sole-source contract.

Jaycees' women members press court case

By **LARRY CAMPBELL**
Daily News reporter

Women members of the Alaska Jaycees want the state Supreme Court to reconsider a decision that effectively upheld a national Jaycees ban on full membership for women.

A petition for a rehearing filed June 1 comes after Alaska's highest court reversed a

lower court decision two weeks ago ordering state chapters of the national organization to grant women full membership rights.

The request is another step in the continuing struggle that has pitted Alaska Jaycee chapters against their national parent organization. The national Jaycees organization traditionally allows women

associate memberships only, barring them from holding high organization offices and becoming eligible for Jaycee awards.

That policy was upheld Tuesday in St. Paul, Minn., where the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that a Minnesota law banning discrimination in public accommodations does not require

the Jaycees to admit women. The court said enforcing the state law against the Jaycees would violate the group's First Amendment freedom of association.

Alaska chapters and their state executive board voted in 1977 to allow women full membership status in the state.