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NAPFA 2007 National Conference

Women advisers deal with unique issues

By **Jeff Benjamin**

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Female financial advisers tend to face issues that are different from those of their male colleagues, according to a gathering of women advisers in Chicago on Saturday.

The meeting was part of the annual conference for the National Association of Personal Financial Advisors.

During the open forum, some female advisers got figuratively “naked,” as they revealed their concerns, according to industry veteran Mary Malgoire, president of The Family Firm Inc. in Bethesda, Md. For instance, Ms. Malgoire admitted that “in my practice I have shied away from people who are intimidating such as business owners.”

When asked to discuss the balance of work and family, many of the female advisers acknowledged they often manage their schedules around family commitments.

“I go into the office a lot on Saturdays and I sometimes bring my kids with me,” said Cheryl Costa, an adviser with Family Financial Architects Inc. in Natick, Mass.

The session helped advisers like Jennifer Murray to realize they are not alone in dealing with some of these issues.

“It’s easy to think your situation is unique, but it’s good to know there are others in the same boat,” said Ms. Murray, owner of Stonebridge Financial Advisors LLC in Morristown, N.J., a firm that caters primarily to women who are widows or divorced.

The session, geared specifically toward female advisers, was the first of its kind at a national NAPFA conference.