



Join the Women's Fund in Leading the Way for Change

The Women's Fund of Greater Omaha has a reputation for identifying community needs and then coming up with an action plan. In the past few weeks, major publications have credited the Women's Fund with uncovering needs that are now being addressed on a much larger scale.

In its 2008 report, Our Healthy Community Partnership credited the Women's Fund with providing research that led to formation of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council and with funding STD awareness initiatives. The *Omaha World-Herald*, in an Oct. 22 article on the health report, noted that the Women's Fund has devoted more than \$450,000 in grants and private donations to raising awareness about sexually transmitted diseases and testing sites.

An Oct. 23 *World-Herald* article on the College of St. Mary's study on networking reported that the Women's Fund commissioned the study and ranks "social capital" as one of the biggest obstacles facing women as they try to move up in the workplace.

Again on Nov. 4, the Women's Fund was mentioned in the *World-Herald*. This time, the article focused on agencies' efforts to help teens prevent pregnancies, such as Camp Fire USA's Wait Training program. It credited the G.I.R.L. report as being the community's first comprehensive assessment of the status of girls in the area and noted six agencies worked collaboratively under the direction of the Women's Fund, which funded the study.

The Women's Fund is committed to researching the issues, identifying the most pressing needs, and then funding solutions. In many cases, that means awarding grants to

other nonprofit agencies that have developed innovative programs to address these issues. Other times, it means coming up with programs. Recent Women's Fund efforts have focused on improving leadership opportunities through the Ready to Run program for women considering running for public office and the new Ready to Serve program that will help prepare participants for nonprofit board service.

We couldn't accomplish all that we do without the support of our generous donors. While we can look back with pride on our past accomplishments, there is much more to do. Please help by making a donation to our annual fund drive. Simply return the enclosed envelope with your check or credit card information, or go online at www.omahawomensfund.org. Our online donation process even makes it easy to set up monthly donations.

Help a Woman. Save a Family.

Women are the glue that holds families together. Families are the fabric of our society.

In tough economic times, women often feel stress first and suffer most.

The Women's Fund provides women in our community with the knowledge, skills, opportunities and protections they need to survive and thrive.

Please help us help them. If you can afford to share even a small amount this year, we promise to use it for maximum impact.

Send your donation in the enclosed envelope or go online:

www.omahawomensfund.org

Excellence Grants Recognize Programs for Women and Girls

Two organizations recently received Women's Fund merit grants acknowledging their work in effectively serving the community. A \$25,000 grant for excellence in programming for women was presented to Interfaith Health Service for its Latinas in Action program. Girls Inc. received a \$20,000 grant for excellence in serving girls for its Success Prep program.

Continued on page 5

WOMEN'S FUND OF GREATER OMAHA

Our Mission

The Women's Fund of Greater Omaha's mission is to improve the lives of women and girls in the Omaha area by identifying, communicating and funding issues affecting them.

What's Inside

- More than 700 Attend Women's Fund Fall Luncheon
- College of Saint Mary Study Focuses on Importance of Social Capital
- Register for Ready To Serve Workshop



Message from the Director - Ellie Archer



Impact. Sometimes it's an elusive thing to try to quantify the positive change that has occurred as a result of your work. This is especially true when attempting to measure shifts in people's attitudes.

However, since the release of the Women's Fund research on the status of women's leadership in Omaha, more than a few folks have spent time reflecting upon conclusions and recommendations from the study.

By shining a spotlight on the need for more women in positions of influence in our community and actively working for change, we know we have inspired a number of initiatives by others to advance women. Here are just a few examples that have been reported to us:

1. Mayor Fahey has appointed more than a dozen women to boards and commissions this past year.
2. The Chamber of Commerce has changed its annual networking event for business leaders and elected officials from the traditional golf outing to a dinner in an attempt to include more women.
3. Creighton University held a forum on "Women Who Lead," and the Creighton College of Business just hosted a women's leadership event with Marta Fox, the former first lady of Mexico.
4. The Junior League has enhanced its Leadership Academy to encourage members to get out of their comfort zones and get exposed to leadership opportunities.
5. Companies such as Cox, Union Pacific and Woodmen of the World held briefings on the research for their employees and encouraged frank discussion about barriers to leadership for women. Leo A. Daley and Baird Holm, among many others, have started training and networking initiatives to advance female staff.
6. The Chancellor of UNO appointed a special task force to address issues raised in the report, resulting in, among other things, a new minor course of study in leadership.
7. Sixteen women who have attended Ready to Run workshops have been candidates for office.

8. The College of St. Mary has launched the Institute for the Study of Women's Leadership.
9. A very successful Women of Color in Leadership summit was held, inspiring, encouraging, and mutually supporting local women to continue to provide positive role models for the community.
10. More women, such as Connie Spellman, who was named Midlander of the Year, are being recognized publicly for their leadership.

In February the Women's Fund will introduce a program to recruit and train more women for service on community boards. Look for more information on Ready To Serve in this newsletter. It's just another way we are providing an impetus for new opportunities for women in Omaha. By any measure, we think that's impact!

More than \$145,000 in Grants Also Awarded

Networking Expert Susan RoAne Provides Tips on Making Connections

By D. J. Jacobberger



Your mother was wrong, at least according to networking author and world-renowned speaker Susan RoAne, who addressed 740 people at the Women's Fund of Greater Omaha's annual fall luncheon Oct. 23. RoAne said that moms were incorrect when they warned, "don't talk to strangers." In fact, according to RoAne, talking with strangers at events and functions is the best way to develop a network of friends and associates.

More than 90 percent of Americans label themselves as shy, RoAne said. That's why she travels the country to give practical tips for becoming more adept at networking. She claims networking is an art and should be a lifestyle, not just a work style.

RoAne also says that self-introductions need to be practiced and perfected so that walking into a room full of strangers is not so intimidating. During the luncheon, she provided tips, then had guests get up from their tables and introduce themselves to three strangers. She says people should limit their introductions to nine seconds or less and make each one meaningful. For example, "rather than tell someone your title, tell them how you benefit your organization instead," she said.

The luncheon also recognized nonprofit organizations that are helping women and girls overcome challenges. Nine agencies received \$145,846 in Women's Fund grants this year.

Diane Duren of Union Pacific Railroad and Celann LaGreca of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska were honorary co-chairs.

Luncheon Committee Members

Sincere appreciation to Fall Luncheon committee members for their work in planning a very successful event:

Michele Feichtinger, chair
Barb Bauer, co-chair
Cynthia Buettner
Pat Carnie
Delores Jacobberger

Celann LaGreca
Ashley Liston
Sarah Lukas
Jackie Pueppke
Susan Schase

Stephanie Sharma
Sherry Thompson
Octavia White

Women's Fund Fall Luncheon

October 23, 2008



Clockwise from top: Keynote Speaker Susan RoAne signs a copy of her book for a luncheon participant; Emcees Gloria Goodwin and Carol Wang with Executive Director Ellie Archer, center; attendees network; grant recipients include, from left, John Parsons, Omaha Street School; Elisha Novak, Catholic Charities; Christy Nicolaisen, Justice for Our Neighbors; and Sr. Marilyn Ross, Holy Name Housing Corporation; and Barb Bauer, event co-chair; Susan RoAne; Ellie Archer and Michele Feichinger, chair.



Ready To Serve Workshops Feature Community Leaders



Ready To Serve committee members include, front row, from left, Jennifer Richardson, Kathe Oleson, Christine Johnson, Celann LaGreca, back row, Anne Branigan, Sara Masters, Ellie Archer and Kirsten Case-Penrod.

Participation on nonprofit boards is one of the best ways to build a network while also serving your community. However, knowing what's expected and how to get involved can be difficult.

That's why the Women's Fund has developed the Ready To Serve workshop that will provide participants with basic board training. The workshop, which will take place over two afternoons -

Feb. 3 and Feb. 10 -- is designed for women interested in serving on nonprofit community boards, as well as experienced board members who haven't had the opportunity to take part in formal training.

"Community boards need people from all walks of life and with all types of expertise," said Celann LaGreca, Ready To Serve committee member and vice president of community investment at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska. "It's a great management and leadership experience, and it's a great opportunity to build your own social capital and network."

In addition, citizens can find out about board opportunities and indicate their interest in serving through the "Ready 2 Serve" Web site (www.Ready2ServeOmaha.org) developed by the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce's Young Professional's Council in collaboration with the Women's Fund.

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*Spend two afternoons in February with
The Women's Fund and become "Ready To Serve".*

"Ready To Serve" Board Training

February 3 and February 10, 2009* • 1-5 pm
Security National Bank • 101st and Pacific

Individual rate - \$125, includes both sessions
Corporate rate - \$500 for up to 5 people, includes both sessions

- "Ready To Serve" is for women and men considering serving on a non-profit board
- Learn about the role and functions of boards
- Become aware of the legal, ethical and fiduciary responsibilities of boards
- Learn about the key components of a strong organization
- Find out about the challenges and opportunities facing boards
- Increase your knowledge of Omaha-area boards, their needs, and how to get involved.



* Snow date February 17.



Register online at

www.omahawomensfund.org

or call 827-9280



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The Women's Fund thanks those who have given generously to honor or memorialize family and friends:

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Paula J. Mandell
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My Mother, Kate Greenwood
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How does

the Women's
Fund



bring
about
change?

Identifying and researching major issues impacting the lives of women and girls in the Omaha area.

Educating the public on these issues.

Funding initiatives that benefit the women and girls of our community.

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Excellence Grants Recognize Programs for Women and Girls

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Interfaith Health Services has an 11-year history of working with at-risk groups to better their lives. Its Latinas in Action program serves more than 1,000 families each month through exercise classes, health seminars and support services. It's designed and led by Latina women who are available at each class to assist with health screenings and educational presentations.

Girls Inc.'s Success Prep program helps teen girls become successful in the working world. Participants learn job prep skills and work ethics, and they have an opportunity to work on jobs within Girls Inc. centers or in other community agencies. As part of the financial planning component, each girl commits a percentage of her earnings to a savings account through Girls Inc. Approximately 65 girls participate in the program each year.

Bright Future

Make a Gift

Help us assure a bright future for all women and girls in the Omaha area by supporting our work with a donation.

Donations may be sent to the Women's Fund of Greater Omaha
7602 Pacific Street, Suite 300
Omaha, NE 68114
or donate online at
www.omahawomensfund.org

Today's Omaha Woman Magazine

Help support the Women's Fund mission by advertising in *Today's Omaha Woman*. The magazine's objective is to educate readers about issues the Women's Fund has found through its research to be important to area women.

For more information, please contact Carrie Kentch at 341-7323, ext. 118.



College of Saint Mary Study Focuses on Importance of Social Capital

A recent College of Saint Mary study looked at one of the recurrent themes in the Women's Fund's 2006 "Women and Leadership in Omaha" research study -- the importance of relationships in career development. Through focus groups, surveys and one-on-one interviews, researchers sought to find out how women in the Omaha area can use social capital to enhance their advancement opportunities in the professional setting.

"Social Capital and Women in Omaha: Barriers and Facilitators" identified four significant themes, and the study identifies facilitators and barriers for each:

- The Value of Purposeful Networking
- The Role of Courage, Bravery and Fear
- The Benefits of Common Associations and Affiliations
- The Similarities and Differences within Social Roles

The study also suggests eight strategies for women:

- Proactively seek out mentors, coaches and advocates;
- Get involved in community activities, such as board memberships;
- Invite yourself to social events - do not wait to be invited;
- Take initiative and full advantage of the same opportunities available to male counterparts;
- Educate male leaders on the benefits of allowing women "access;"
- Choose organizations which promote diversity and ask questions about the focus on diversity of leadership within the organization;
- Share familial responsibilities with partners to allow both individuals time to build their social capital;
- Know your own personality.

The study was funded by a Women's Fund grant and was conducted by graduate students in the Master in Organizational Leadership program under the supervision of Tammy Moerer, Ph.D. For more information or to download the report, visit www.csm.edu and go to the Institute for Women in Leadership section.

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