



## Extraordinary Woman!

Victoria FittsMilgrim thanks the audience at the inaugural "Girls Night Out" event for her designation as the Extraordinary Business Woman award-winner. FittsMilgrim, a certified coach and retreat leader and director of True Life Coaching & Retreats, was elected to the WRC board in January 2010. The Girls Night Out event raised nearly \$20,000 and drew more than 200 women to celebrate the Extraordinary Women in our lives. Former WRC executive director Susan Lander was named the Extraordinary Woman Leader. Lander is now executive director of Music in the Mountains.

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[www.wrcludurango.org](http://www.wrcludurango.org)

### 2009 Board of Directors

Lori Moore, Chair • E. Michelle Rabouin, Vice Chair  
 Melanie McLean, Treasurer • Mindy Stern, Secretary  
 John Heavenrich • Amber Johnson • Richard Mason  
 Kelsey McCarthy • Judi Mora • Nancy Vanderwal

### 2009 Staff

Karen Ely, Executive Director, January to June  
 Liz Mora, Executive Director July to Present  
 Deborah Uroda, Marketing and Fund Development  
 Diana Serpe, Programs • Carol Freitas, Office Manager  
 Eve Presler, Director, Advocacy for La Plata  
 Erin Maldegen, Advocate, Advocacy for La Plata  
 Kate Jones, Coordinator, Promoting Responsible Fatherhood  
 Jason Spoo, Facilitator, Promoting Responsible Fatherhood



WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER

# Annual Report 2009

## A year that began with challenges ended in success and hope

The Women's Resource Center experienced a lot of change in 2009 – and out of change comes challenge and hope. During the first six months of the year, leadership changes challenged the staff to perform, and they did. Our dedicated staff proved to the community that they work for the organization and are here to serve women and girls in La Plata County. Together, we served more women, girls, and families than ever before and experienced two of the most successful fundraisers WRC has ever seen!

In July of 2009, I realized a personal goal when I became WRC's new Executive Director after only 2-½ years with the organization. I am ready for the challenge and am committed to leading WRC for many years.

2009 provided WRC with some new additions to our family as well. Carol Freitas was hired in April and provided much needed office support during 9th Annual Girls to Women, Women to Girls conference. Kate Jones came on as the new Fatherhood Advocate, also in April, after completing her internship with Advocacy for La Plata. Deborah Uroda joined the family in July as Marketing and Fund Development Director and assisted in the success of the inaugural Girls Night Out event in September and the annual campaign in November and December.

As 2009 came to a close, WRC staff and board felt the calm and the excitement of a new year to come that is filled with new challenges and a lot of excitement and possibility. The options seem endless with the talent we have on board, our faithful volunteers and our much-appreciated membership! Thanks to all of you for your support in 2009. We look forward to an even better year in 2010!

– Liz Mora, Executive Director

### Our Mission:

*The Women's Resource Center advocates for the personal empowerment and economic self-sufficiency of women and girls in La Plata County.*

# Resource and Referral: The Foundation of Our Work

## Number of referrals remains consistent; emergency aid, legal help top needs

The Resource and Referral Program, the foundation of the Women's Resource Center's work in the community, served 779 individuals during 2009. We believe that women

**2009 Client Tally for  
Resource and Referral**

Service	Yearly Total
Client Tally	772
Clothing Vouchers	110
Domestic Violence	57
Donations (misc)	49
Educational Assistance	25
Emergency Money	220
Emergency Shelter	28
Family/Child Services	128
Food Assistance	99
Health Care	122
Housing Assistance	77
Job Search Assistance	55
Legal Services Total	337
General	40
Attorney Referral	65
CO Legal Services	50
Divorce/Custody	28
Pro Se Paperwork	69
Pro Se Clinic	45
Sexual Assault	5
Small Business Assist.	103*
Transportation	17

\* Includes Business Women's Network meetings

in emotional or economic crisis rarely need just one resource to solve their complex problems. Yet, they often do not know about the many community services available to them. If women can obtain the resources they need in a timely manner, the Women's Resource Center believes they can avoid more costly interventions later on.

The goal of the Women's Resource Center's Resource and Referral Program is to provide each woman who seeks our assistance with accurate information about three or more community resources to address her immediate needs, and where appropriate, assist her with a plan to address deeper personal/family issues that may be getting in the way of her success.

By providing a holistic approach to resource, referral and problem-solving, we reduce the amount of time and frustration a woman may spend seeking help on her own, and in so doing, empower her to address her needs and those of her family to attain emotional and economic self-sufficiency. As a result of our assistance, clients:

- Feed, clothe and shelter themselves and their families.
- Develop job-search skills, including résumé writing and interview skills.
- Attain access to job training or con-

tinuing education, including completion of a GED or post-secondary education.

- Negotiate the maze of child-custody and divorce laws or acquire other legal services.
- Access health care for their families.
- Obtain support for sexual assault or domestic violence.
- Learn about opportunities to volunteer for other agencies to fulfill community service requirements.
- Find resources to start their own businesses, including consultations with the Small Business Development Center at Fort Lewis College or microloans through Region 9 Economic Development District.
- Or access the many, many other community services that they might require to become economically self-sufficient.

The Women's Resource Center recognizes the value that women entrepreneurs bring to the economy – and to their own lives – when they start and successfully operate their own businesses. Our small business programs include:

**Partnerships with Region 9 Economic Development District and the Small Business Development Center at Fort Lewis College** to provide women with advice and support to write a business plan and obtain funding. SBDC Director Joe Keck met with 30 women in 2009.

**A micro-loan program** for

women entrepreneurs to help them start or maintain their businesses. The 2009 economy, unfortunately, saw one default in the micro-loan program. No micro-loans were awarded last year.

**A "30-Minute Expert" program** that connects business women with business mentors. This program was dormant in 2009 with the transition in WRC leadership.

**Business Women's Networking meetings** to connect business owners and professionals with their peers and to learn from other businesswomen. About 90 women (and men) attended eight BWN events in 2009.

**www.wrcdurango.org**

## From homeless shelter to home

"E" once was a successful executive assistant who found herself, through a series of circumstances, living in the VOA Homeless Shelter in Durango. She had no family in the area nor any income. She came to the Women's Resource Center seeking help with housing and a job. We provided her with clothing vouchers, referrals to housing agencies in the area, and provided her with emergency financial assistance to cover living expenses. She used WRC office equipment to develop a résumé, made phone calls for interviews, and landed a job as a bookkeeper. She now rents a home and is on her way to self-sufficiency.

## Business Services

### Center continues collaboration with FLC Small Business Development Center

# Advocacy for La Plata

**Our largest program aims to keep families together, return adults to the workforce**

## Financial Report

Preliminary reports from our 2009 audit, conducted by Durango CPA Casey Lynch, indicate that we're in sound financial shape. A final report will be available later this year. Here are the final financial revenues and expenditures for 2009:

### Revenue

Grants	\$12,765
Fundraisers	\$56,195
Membership	\$23,624
Major Gifts	\$2,000
Annual Giving	\$17,642
Programs	\$193,181
Donations	\$10,436
Interest/Dividends	\$26,112
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$341,955</b>

### Expenses

Employees	\$245,008
Fundraising	\$20,402
Operations	\$54,352
Programs	\$36,464
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$356,226</b>

**Net Income \$14,271**

### Fund-Raising Events:

Men Who Grill	\$15,097
Girls Night Out	\$19,240
Annual Campaign*	\$15,632

\* Does not include contributions that were made after Jan. 1.

**'The test of a civilization is in the way that it cares for its helpless members.'**

**– Pearl S. Buck**  
Pulitzer and Nobel Prize  
Winning Author and Missionary

The number of individuals served by Advocacy for La Plata grew by nearly 20 percent in 2009 compared with the agency's 2008 caseload. Advocacy serves families in the following areas:

### ColoradoWorks:

Families with children who receive Temporary Aid for Need Families are referred to Advocacy for La Plata to develop a family strength-based case plan that identifies the steps parents will

take to seek and obtain work or work-force training. Advocates help families obtain housing, food stamps, and other resources they may need to overcome the barriers that prevent them for attaining self-sufficiency.

### Promoting Safe and Stable Families:

Advocacy for La Plata also works with families with children who are at risk of being placed out of their homes because of abuse, neglect, delinquency, or other issues. Advocates help families obtain resources to overcome substance abuse, control anger, learn healthy parenting practices, or obtain any other resources they may need to become healthier, stronger families.

### Responsible Fatherhood Program:

The Women's Resource Center and Advocacy for La Plata received a \$50,000 grant in 2009 to work with 78 fathers to improve their parenting skills. Of that number, 50 were incarcerated and participated in the program to learn how they could play a more positive role in their children's lives after they were released from jail. Another 28 fathers participated in the 16-week program. Responsible Fatherhood covers child development, the important role that fathers play in their children's lives, non-violent communication strategies, co-parenting strategies, and other aspects of good fathering. Advocates also work one-on-one with fathers to show them how to find affordable housing, education, vocational training, and job-search assistance. Because dads spend more time with their kids as a result of participating in this program, they're more likely to resume and maintain their child-support payments.

## Clients Served

**Families and Individuals Served in 2009:**

- **467 individuals total**
- **153 families**
- **169 adults**
- **298 children**
- **78 fathers**

## Major Grants 2009

Ballantine Family Fund	\$3,000	La Plata County	\$2,000
Colorado Works	\$70,590	La Plata Quilters Guild	\$2,000
Coutts and Clark	\$1,000	Promoting Safe & Stable Families	\$47,280
CSBG	\$3,163	Sam Bloom Foundation	\$2,000
Durango City Block Grant	\$2,500	State of Colorado Promoting Responsible Fatherhood	\$47,800
Enterprise	\$5,000	United Way	\$4,000
High Noon Rotary	\$500	Women's Foundation of CO	\$5,000
Johnson Foundation	\$10,000		
Kiwanis	\$500		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$206,333</b>

# Girls to Women Conference

## Majority of participants said they learned new skills

"Tween-aged" girls making the transition from middle to high school are taking their first tentative steps toward young adulthood. It's a time fraught with self-doubt, a need to belong, and wondering whether what they're feeling is "normal."

That's why the Women's Resource Center continues to offer its signature "Girls to Women, Women to Girls" Conference each year. The 9th-annual conference, held in April,



gave nearly 300 eighth-grade girls the opportunity to identify their unique gifts and talents, to learn boundary-setting skills, and to create and maintain healthy relationships. Here's what 2009 participants had to say about the conference:

- 70 percent of participants said they learned what healthy relationships looked like.
- 76 percent said they learned new skills to create or maintain healthy relationships.
- 75 percent said they learned boundary-setting skills.
- 74 percent said they learned new skills for protecting themselves more effectively.
- 88 percent said their interaction with older high school girls helped them better understand and prepare for their high school experiences.

## Men Who Grill Sponsors and Volunteers

### Sponsors

- Abbey Theatre
- Bank Of Colorado
- BP
- Directory Plus
- Coldwell Banker
- Bob's Johns
- Brookie Architects
- CityMarket
- Coldwell Banker
- Crossroads Durango
- Howard Wilson
- Nature's Oasis
- Pine Valley Rentals

- Ska Brewery
- Southwest Ice
- Sunnyside Farms
- The Durango Herald
- The Point
- Zuberfizz Durango Soda

### Volunteers

- Betsy Allen
- Cindy Brossman
- Marsha Coher
- Andrea Dalla
- Karen Ely

- Carol Freitas
- Sue Griffith
- Gail Harriss
- John Heavenrich
- Rose Hilgedick
- Jonathon Hunt
- Mary Jo Paxton
- Dick Mason
- Melanie McLean
- Ellen Melby
- Cynthia Miller
- Cherry Miloe
- Carolyn Moller
- Lori Moore
- Liz Mora
- Judi Mora
- Stew Mossberg
- Lyn Patrick
- Michelle Rabouin
- Tyler Rowe
- Diana Serpe
- Barbara & Stu Shore
- Mindy Stern
- Annie Sutherland
- Wendy Tossie
- Stacy Trainer
- Nancy Utter
- Nancy Vanderwal
- Julie Ward

## Congratulations to Carol Salomon, 2009 Volunteer of the Year

Long-time Women's Resource Center supporter and volunteer Carol Salomon



was named our 2009 Volunteer of the Year in November. She was the driving force

behind the success of the inaugural Girls Night Out fund-raising event held in September. More than 220 women attended and generated nearly \$20,000 in donations.

## Thank You to Our Sponsors and Volunteers

### OFFICE VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORT

- Judy Abercrombie
- Sue Griffith
- Suzy Lyons, Web site design and maintenance
- Carol Krueger
- Barbara Shore

### PROGRAM SUPPORT

#### Business Women's Network Hosts:

- Mark White, Southwest Colorado Mental Health Center
- Jen Hilburn, Rocky Mountain Hi-Tech Computer Training
- Janet Curry, Stillpoint Counseling

#### Writers' Groups Coordinators:

- Sue Mooney and Molly Childers

#### Womenade:

- Rochester Hotel for hosting potlucks
- Council members: B.J Boucher, Christina Knickerbocker, Rose Burek, Kay Rowe, Noel Tambre, and Diana Serpe.

### DONATIONS

#### Give-Back Program Businesses:

- Brainstorm Internet, City Market Cares Program, Desert Sun Coffee Roasters, Liberty Mutual Insurance Company.

## Girls Night Out Sponsors and Volunteers

- Blue Lake Ranch
- Erteszek Family Foundation
- Women's Foundation of Colorado
- Kyla Jackson Photography
- KSUT Public Radio
- Carol Solomon & Norman Broad
- Crane & Tejada PC
- JM Jones
- Coca Cola Bottling of Durango & Farmington
- The Leland House Bed & Breakfast and Rochester Hotel
- SW Women's Health Associates
- Deni Dorminy
- The Durango Sports Club
- The Spaah Shop
- Stilwell Foot and Ankle
- Elizabeth Kringel
- The Yellow Carrot
- Liquor World
- The Wine Merchant
- Star Liquors
- Bare Bones Burlesque & the Salt Fire Circus
- Lightning Communications
- Thrive: Creating Wellness
- Roberta Newman
- Crystal Andasola
- Crazy Horse Salon
- Justice Tower
- Lisa Skyhorse
- The Cosmopolitan
- Amaya Natural Therapeutic
- Fritz Geisler
- Barbara Mills
- Krista Harris
- YARN
- There's No Place Like Home
- Emily McCardle
- Lindsay Gates
- Sharon Hargett
- Roland Mora
- Edward Mora
- Ben Carlson
- Wendie Malick
- Beth Warren

### The Committee:

- Christina Ertesek
- Rose Hilgedick
- Kelsey McCarthy
- Mary Nowotny
- Carol Salomon
- Carol Treat
- Nancy Vanderwal
- Debbie Wright