

To: The Membership of the Women's Resource Center of Winona
December 10, 2013

It is a pleasure to present this annual report of the 2013 activities and accomplishments of the Women's Resource Center. This year has been one of success, stability and growth – financially and programmatically.

This year, it's all about partnerships! Our most significant accomplishments have been the result of our many partnerships with local, community, statewide and federal agencies and organizations; as well as our strong volunteer corps, our supportive membership and generous donors and sponsors. Notably:

The WRC is a core partner to the Winona County Safe Havens Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Program, funded by a federal grant through the Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women.

The Center also serves as victim advocacy consultant to the Mower County Michael Seibel Center for Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange, an Office of Violence Against Women grantee.

The WRC is the Community Advocacy Partner to the newly-funded Winona State University grant project to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence and Stalking on Campus, a comprehensive program to create gender-based violence prevention education, peer education and advocacy, best-practice policies, and a coordinated community response team including Winona law enforcement, judiciary, prosecution and other entities working to end gender-based violence.

The WRC and Seven Rivers LGBT Resource Center, headquartered in La Crosse, are partners in bringing the services of the 7 Rivers to Winona (right here at 77 East 5th), along with training and education for WRC advocates to better serve members of the LGBTQ community who have experienced sexual or domestic violence.

The WRC continues to serve on the Board of Directors of Beyond Tough Guise, an organization working toward men's leadership in preventing gender-based violence. The two organizations are partnering with the Winona County Primary Prevention Project (and funded by a grant from the State of Minnesota Office of Justice Programs) to achieve a community-wide, multi-pronged approach to preventing sexual and domestic violence. The WRC and Beyond Tough Guise have implemented the MENding Project, in which businesses and community leaders do their part through donating goods and services and publicly speaking out to mend the harm that men's violence has done to women and children.

The Center remains an integral partner to the Winona County Blueprint for Safety Task Force, which continues its strong, coordinated efforts to effectuate positive changes in the criminal justice system in response to domestic violence, keeping victims safe and holding offenders accountable for their actions. I commend and appreciate our justice system professionals for their outstanding work on our common goal of creating a safer community.

The WRC Executive Women's Advisory Council has completed its first year of meeting quarterly to lend expert advice and feedback to the Center on approaches to best reach the community to raise awareness of our services.

The Center continues to actively partner with and coordinate the Sexual Assault Interagency Council (SAIC), which has completed an update to its interagency protocol for systems' professionals and advocates to respond to incidences of sexual assault in Winona County.

The Second Annual Winona Walk a Mile in Her Shoes was hosted in partnership with WSU fraternities, feminist clubs, and other student organizations. The Walk was a great success, with over 200 participants and over \$3,000 raised in support of our services.

The WRC, again in partnership with WSU, trained 78 new advocates through the Women and Gender Studies course "Gender, Violence and Society." WSU and Saint Mary's University placed a dozen interns and field experience students at the WRC this year.

The WRC is now an active participant in the Blue Flag Project of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women (MCBW), which raises a flag in honor of each victim of domestic violence homicide in the state. Sadly, 2013 has seen 38 such homicides statewide.

The 2013 Gala was the most successful ever in the history of the event! We changed the venue to Riverport Inn and Suites, added catered food, enhanced our live and silent auction, and enticed a fantastic band to make its third annual appearance with us. All this is due solely to our group of tireless and dedicated, creative and tenacious volunteer Gala Committee.

The 2013 Tour of Gardens: Bursting With Blooms was incredibly successful, meeting a lofty fundraising goal of \$10,000 despite a chilly, rainy day. This was due in large part to the second annual, absolutely beautiful garden party and auction, hosted by Bonnie and Wayne Kelly. The lively, ingenious and ever-determined Garden Tour Committee of volunteers, led by our Board Member Taff Roberts, have indeed taken this event to the next level.

The most important success and essential partners of the WRC is the incredible performance of the staff – the backbone of this organization. Jaime Spilman is now in her 8th year as an advocate; Emily Dierling is in her 2nd year. We welcome Adrik Curtis, our new Systems Advocate, who also works with individual victims and survivors. We are pleased to have Princess Cramer-Drazkowski back with us as on-call crisis line staff backup to our volunteers. We are proud and thankful to have consulting relationships with Jamie Sanders, our support group facilitator and Jennifer Monsos, our accountant.

My most heartfelt and genuine thanks go to our Board of Directors, for their guidance and support – they connect the WRC with this community and are our greatest champions.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Miller, Executive Director