

## Save the Dates

### IMAGINE the possibilities

#### The Fourteenth Annual Bellevue Spring Benefit Luncheon

Thursday, April 26th, 2007 at The Meydenbauer Center  
Claudia Marks Larkin, Event Chair

#### The Eighth Annual Seattle Spring Benefit Luncheon

Thursday, March 22nd, 2007 at The Westin Seattle  
Melissa Byrkit, Event Chair

## YOU ARE THE KEY

These luncheons are the major source of funds to support the education and healthcare programs of WWIN. Please consider joining the over 1,600 men and women who gather each year to build a bridge to a brighter future for low income women – one woman at a time!

If you would like to get involved, volunteer, captain a table or attend, please call 425-451-8838 x20 or email [wwinfund@wawomeninneed.org](mailto:wwinfund@wawomeninneed.org)

## Angels Among Us on the Eastside

It started at the WWIN Spring Luncheons when local Eastside women heard the moving and inspirational story of Rhonda Gardiner, a former WWIN client. They realized that with the help of WWIN the lives of Rhonda and her children had gone from despair to promise. They also know in their hearts if things were a bit different they – or any of their friends – could be in a difficult situation and needing help just like Rhonda.



Not only were these young women moved by Rhonda's story, they were also impressed that all of the money raised by WWIN goes directly to support WWIN programs. All Henning and her friends, Lori Chisman, Deena Eastern, Laurie Eide, Jennifer Landes, Tiffany Locken, Lisa Mylroie, Laurie Sergeeff and Betsy Thomson formed the Eastside Angels three years ago to do wonderful things. (Although it is rumored that the Angels love to have fun as well.) The Eastside Angels, all close friends, realized their good fortune in the beauty of their families, the success of their careers and the strength of their community. They wanted to give back.

They believed that the Eastside Angels could make a significant impact with their gifts to WWIN. As wives, mothers, daughters and sisters, the Angels felt a connection to the WWIN mission. It was not a difficult decision for them to make WWIN a new beneficiary of their fundraising this year at their Eastside Angels Third Annual Golf Tournament.

*The Eastside Angels raised over \$14,000 for Washington Women In Need at their Third Annual Golf Tournament, held on September 16, 2006.*

These women are the embodiment of the Margaret Mead quote: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing which ever has."

And that's not the end of the story. The Angels have enjoyed working with the incredible staff at WWIN and with the generous WWIN supporters. Who knows what these amazing young women have in store? Who wants to golf with them in 2007? Learn more about the Eastside Angels at [www.theeastsideangels.com](http://www.theeastsideangels.com).

And the moral of this story? Never doubt the power of the woman sitting next to you at lunch to begin a ripple strong enough to make some pretty big waves in the pond.

2005-2006 Board President,  
Robin Carey



As I sit quietly and reflect on these past few months and what to share with you, the words "abundance" and "gratitude" spring to the top of my mind. Allow me to share a few things that have been happening, and I think you'll see why.

First and foremost, we were so pleased in August to welcome our new Executive Director, Deborah Cushing. Deborah brings to WWIN a wealth of non-profit experience.

Her previous experiences include Executive Director for the Pioneer Square Community Development Organization, service on numerous non-profit Boards, a BA Degree from Wellesley College, a Master's Degree from Seattle University in Nonprofit Leadership, and a successful career as an attorney, including work at the Seattle firm of Perkins Coie. We are excited about having Deborah lead our efforts at WWIN. She truly shares our passion to help low income women.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those who assisted in so many ways during our search process. Board members Shawn McCord, Melissa Brykit, Marilyn Enright, Donna Linn, & Rosalind Schoof all gave of their time and talent, as did Colleen Crowley and Pat McDonald. Thanks to all of you! And a big WWIN round of applause and appreciation goes to Pat McDonald who stepped into the gap and served as our interim Executive Director prior to Deborah's arrival.

The WWIN Board held our annual retreat and we had a meaningful time together. I wish you could have heard each Board member share why they are personally involved with the mission of WWIN. You would have come away with a sense of pride at the level of commitment from our volunteer leaders here at WWIN. We spent time reviewing with the staff the highlights of this past year, and they were many. For example, our stellar success at fundraising, disbursing over 99% of the allocated funds for health care and education programs for our low income women, exceeding our strategic plan benchmarks, and executing the executive director transition with grace. We also identified strategies to meet our goals for the year ahead.

One theme of the retreat was how we are going to lead and manage the growth at WWIN that springs from the generosity of our donors. What a great "problem" to have! As you know, all operating expenses are generously paid by our founder, Julia Pritt. We manage those expenses closely and we have always run WWIN with a lean staff. As more people understand our mission and contribute to WWIN, we are blessed with more money to help more women. We are carefully addressing this challenge of adding staff to better serve our constituents.

I'm sure by now you can see why "abundance" and "gratitude" came to mind. WWIN is blessed with an abundance of volunteers and staff that are all committed to one thing...helping advance our mission to assist low income women in the State of Washington. On behalf of our Board, I'd like to express our gratitude to you, our WWIN supporters for continuing to stand in the gap and give generously. Together, we will continue to invest in our community.....one woman at a time.



FALL 2006

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Autumn is traditionally a time of harvest and thanksgiving. As the new executive director of Washington Women in Need I've had an exciting month participating in daily activities and special events that have all the hallmarks of a successful harvest season; a season that is the product of the careful and thoughtful planning, planting and nurturing that Washington Women in Need does so well.

What a September it was! Having had the opportunity to meet many of the talented board and emeritus council members as well as the able staff during the search process, I arrived at WWIN eager and enthusiastic to work with this team and our many supporters and volunteers to build upon a legacy of achievement. On a daily basis and with each encounter I have been further impressed with the depth and breadth of passion and commitment for WWIN. There were three special events hosted by WWIN in September that highlight how WWIN's spirit and energy keep growing and how, even as we celebrate our bounty, we anticipate and plan for fruitful times ahead.

Our first event was the kickoff for the 2007 luncheons. The event attracted long time supporters and new members to the cadre of volunteers that make the Spring luncheon events so memorable. The team's new ideas to inspire and support volunteers to build upon the success of 2006 were enthusiastically received. Please be sure to look at the section "Imagine the Possibilities" to find ways that you might join in this effort.

Robin Carey, WWIN's extraordinary board president, describes in her letter the warm tone of the annual all-day board retreat



of the following week. For me it was a great opportunity to learn more about each board member and what fuels their passion for WWIN. It was an intense and fruitful day and we left energized and armed with our goals and tasks for 2006-2007. And then I had a chance encounter that further buoyed my spirits. An attractive and self-possessed woman approached me at the end of the day with the following greeting: "Are you the people from WWIN? I'm one of your success stories!" She later proceeded to tell me that an educational grant from WWIN turned her life around at a time when she was feeling despair due to a divorce that left her with young children, little money, and no career. With WWIN's help she graduated from Trinity Lutheran College with a degree in theology and counseling. She credits WWIN with giving her the tools to have a career to help others and the ability to say "I've been in tough discouraging times too; I know how you feel, but you CAN have a better life".

Where would WWIN be without its volunteers? In recognition of their invaluable service, Julia Pritt, WWIN's founder, hosted a festive and heart warming volunteer recognition event at the Westin on September 28. Laughter and tears accompanied the individual tributes to each volunteer. That event, just like all the others, reconnected us to each other and to our personal passion for WWIN's mission.

WWIN has provided grants for health care and education to over 3500 women since its founding, but WWIN has an ambitious goal to increase its programs for low income women by 15% per year. (cont'd pg 2)

### OUR MISSION

*To provide financial assistance to low income women in the state of Washington for health care and education. Our goal is to improve the quality of life for low income women.*

#### OFFICERS

Robin Carey  
*President*  
Melissa Byrkit  
*Vice President*  
Shawn McCord  
*Treasurer*  
Marilyn Enright  
*Secretary*

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Michelle Deacon  
Patricia Dye  
Liz Feucht  
Linda Jackman  
Donna Linn  
Kazumi Mechling  
Kathleen Miller  
Malia Radford  
Rosalind Schoof  
Susan Stead  
Helena Stephens  
Nadia Tucker  
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Leslie Savina  
Kristen Marie Schuerlein  
Peggy Swayne  
Pamela Tamplain  
Libby Walgamott  
Sarah Weaver  
Jeff Werthan

#### STAFF

Deborah Cushing  
*Executive Director*  
Kathy Young, MA  
*Program Manager*  
Donna Batter  
*Fund Development Director*  
Paula Dickason  
*Office Administrator*

(Message cont'd from pg.1)

Why is that? While the fall has been a time ripe with achievement and hope at WWIN, it also is time in which two news articles underscored the continuing challenges that face low income women in our state: a recent article stated that the average income in the Seattle metro area was almost \$42,000. Contrast that figure with the \$10,000 average income for our clients in 2005-2006. Imagine the difficult choices around food, housing, and transportation that occur daily for someone in that income bracket. And another article warned that as baby boomers age, the number of poor older women will dramatically increase. Women not only still earn less than men, but they often drop out of the work force to care for children or parents or take flexible jobs that pay less and often do not come with benefits. This often leaves them in a precarious financial predicament, especially in their later years. This is why your support will continue to be critical.

There are many rewarding moments to my days. It always starts from the joy of fulfilling the mission and manifests itself in so many ways: the time I spend with our board members, staff and volunteers as they work so energetically and happily on whatever project they have undertaken; the simple act of signing checks to provide the mental health counseling, dental or other medical care for our clients; seeing the hopeful face of a client arriving for an interview; or picking up one of the notes that frequently appear in my in box from a client thanking us not only for the grant that helped change her life, but also for the compassion and caring that are hallmarks of a relationship with WWIN.

You are the people who have nurtured WWIN through the years, who provide the elements to create a bountiful harvest that bring hope and happiness to women in Washington. Thank you for your time, energy, enthusiasm and support. I look forward to meeting you.

Feel free to call me (425.451.8838 ext 11), send me an e-mail (dcushing@wawomeninneed.org) or schedule a visit.

I'd love to see you.

Deborah B. Cushing

## A Promising Future

Damaris's enthusiasm was contagious and her smile lit up the WWIN office. What was she so excited about? A cow heart. Yes, that's right, a cow heart. Damaris, who is receiving an educational grant from WWIN, was bursting with details about her class the prior day in which she had had the opportunity to dissect a cow heart as part of her training to obtain her AA degree in medical assisting. And, although Damaris sees a bright future for herself with this educational grant from WWIN, the past few years have not been easy.

Every client is unique, but there are often common elements to their stories. Damaris, like many WWIN clients, had been moving along in life without too much turmoil. She had worked steadily for years and life seemed pretty good. But then an event intervenes that can turn life upside down. For Damaris it was separation from her husband along with a serious medical condition of her youngest child. Her financial situation became rocky and she was concerned about the well being of her kids and the strain on them of her estrangement from their dad. When she came into WWIN Damaris acknowledged that she couldn't quite believe that she found herself in the position of needing help.

Damaris was happy to make the almost 3 hour trip from her home to meet with Kathy at the WWIN office to finalize the details of her educational grant. Making that visit proved to be a great opportunity for Damaris to personally connect with the spirit of WWIN. Upon hearing the story of how WWIN was founded, Damaris shared that she recognized in Julia Pritt someone very much like her own grandmother, a woman Damaris admires for her accomplishments and character and her consistent desire to help others.

Still excited about the ability to share the gory details of the cow heart dissection (Damaris hadn't found too many willing listeners prior to arriving at WWIN) Damaris headed down the road to attend class. With this educational grant from WWIN she is on her way to meeting her goal of becoming an assistant in pediatric cardiology with the ultimate goal of completing a BA in registered nursing. And Damaris, who has an ebullient personality, has already thought about how she will connect with frightened kids in the doctors office, proudly displaying her Captain Hook pen that is part of her ever growing collection. Damaris sees a much improved life ahead for herself and her children.



### Key to WWIN Events at WWIN office:\*

Come spend 45 minutes with us that just may change your life to hear about our work and our clients.

Please register by calling 425-451-8838 x20 or email [wwinfund@wawomeninneed.org](mailto:wwinfund@wawomeninneed.org).

November 8th	11:30 a.m.
November 28th	5:30 p.m.
December 13th	11:30 a.m.
December 19th	5:30 p.m.
January 10th	11:30 a.m.
January 16th	5:30 p.m.
February 27th	11:30 a.m.
March 14th	11:30 a.m.

\*To RSVP, call 425-451-8838 x20.



#### Client Quote:

*"I cannot possibly express how grateful I am for everything that WWIN has done for me. It is so much more than dental work...it is about showing women like me that we are not alone and that someone cares and wants us to be healthy and happy"...*

~Michelle

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## *Girls Night Out*

The second annual National Girls Night Out 2006, generously hosted by Julie Robinson, Susie Hansen and Christi Clark of Bellevue was held at Newport Shores Yacht Club, Thursday, October 5th to benefit Washington Women In Need. And many friends came to have some fun, share time with their girlfriends and be part of the first national effort with parties going on across the nation. The concept of Girls Night Out is friends gathering at a girlfriend's house, having some fun with friends and donating to charity what they would have spent on a night out on the town. Instead, women come together – have fun – and make a huge difference!

The brand new waterfront Newport Shores Clubhouse was filled with over fifty-five best girlfriends – and their girlfriends - gathering for a great night of fun, giving and a chance to make new girlfriends. Party-goers brought warm coats and art and school supplies for the children of the neediest families in our community at Renton Evenstart. The band played into the night and there was wonderful food, many surprises, a silent auction with remarkable items for bidding and the unveiling of this year's signature drink – the Creamsicle! All participants left the party with a colorful "green" tote bag donated by Lululemon that was filled with other donated goodies.

KING 5 Television News covered this fabulous event and the National Girls Night Out raised over \$4,500! Every penny raised will go directly to support the education and healthcare programs of WWIN. Thank you Julie, Susie and Christie for such a wonderful fun event and for reaching out to low-income women who need a "hand up" to make a better life for themselves and their families.

*Thank You*

*A Benefit for* **WWIN**