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THE WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER UNVEILS NEW ORGANIZATION LOGO, AGENCY NAME, PROGRAMS, AND KICKS OFF 30-YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
THE ANNOUNCEMENT COMES ON THE HEELS OF A TWO-YEAR STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

FORT COLLINS, CO – FEBRUARY 8, 2005 – At a press conference today, the Women's Resource Center (formerly The Women's Center of Larimer County), officially unveiled the organization's new name, logo, mission and programs and kicked off a 30-Year Anniversary celebration to last throughout 2005. The announcement comes on the heels of the completion of a two-year strategic planning process, a collective effort by the organizations' staff and board of directors.

Melissa Selby, Executive Director for the Women's Resource Center was joined by Brittany Conant, President, Board of Directors for WRC and Patricia Woodward, founding Executive Director for WRC in 1975 and a 30-year veteran at Poudre School District. Together, they made the announcements and unveiled the organization's new logo before an audience of community leaders and current and past organization staff and board members, including Gordon Thibedeau, Executive Director for the United Ways of Larimer County; Darcy McClure, CDBG/Human Services Administrator for the City of Loveland and former WRC staff member; and Betty Moseley, a member of the American Association of University Women, the organization that provided WRC with its first \$300 grant.

Selby joined WRC in September of 2002 at a time when the agency was beginning to feel the pain from funding losses caused by a sharp downturn in the economy. The economic downturn combined with new staff, and shifts in community services forced WRC to tighten its belt and re-evaluate current organizational goals, development strategies, programs, services and target audiences.

"Over the last two years, our staff and board met these challenges head on," said Conant. "The result has been a collective decision to narrow the organization's focus, re-name name the organization, create a new logo, refine the mission and expand our target population with programs focused specifically on women's health and dental needs."

The organization's mission has long been to respond to gaps in community services while advancing the status and welfare of women in Colorado. As shifts in community resources were occurring on a state and local level, the Women's Resource Center launched an intensive strategic planning process. As a result, the organization identified the need to focus programming to enhance the agency's effectiveness and fiscal viability, to build new partnerships and strengthen existing partnerships, and seek new funding opportunities.

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Last year, WRC transitioned its Child Care Resource and Referral Program with the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County (ECCLC), a merger that came after months of dialogue between the two agencies, and a decision that was agreed to be the best way to strengthen early childhood services in the county as well as strengthen the core programs of WRC. In addition, the agency responded to the elimination of well-woman outreach, education and care previously provided through the Health District of Northern Larimer County, and the Health Department's Reproductive Clinic, two programs that WRC partnered with in the past, and which left gaps in services, impacting low-income women's access to healthcare. Internal discussions and input from the broader community lead WRC to expand its health and dental care programs, increasing outreach, education and advocacy efforts to support access to health services for medically underserved women in the county with barriers to care. WRC is now the only organization providing community-based outreach and education services to all medically underserved women throughout Larimer County.

Women's Resource Center Programs

WRC's mission is to increase access to health and dental care for medically underserved women in Larimer County. WRC programs include: the **Dental Care Assistance Program (DCAP)**, **Health Care Assistance Program (HCAP)** and the **Community Access Program (CAP)**, which provide information and access to resources for preventive and diagnostic dental and health care, as well as community resources for women with needs beyond health and dental care.

Health care issues focus on the early detection of breast and cervical cancer, HIV/AIDS and STD prevention, and dental care. Program services are designed to cover a continuum of care, including:

- **Outreach** to medically underserved women in Larimer County with identified barriers to accessing health care, including: financial, language, rural residency, and psychosocial barriers.
- **Education** (in-home group and one-on-one) to women about the importance of the early detection of breast and cervical cancer, HIV/AIDS and STD prevention and preventive dental care.
- **Connection to Care** by providing one-on-one case management services and patient navigation in Spanish and English, which connect clients to providers for screenings, diagnostic tests and treatment.
- **Advocacy** for eliminating barriers to care for medically underserved women in Larimer County through collaborative partnerships at the local, state and national levels.

During the conference, Selby stressed the life-saving value of the prevention and early detection education workshops provided by the agency by sharing several health and dental care statistics affecting women, including:

- Cervical cancer is the 10th most common cancer among women and is almost 100% treatable with early detection
- Women with no insurance are 2.3 times more likely to die of breast cancer than women with private insurance
- Sixty-seven percent of adults in the Health District delayed needed dental care due to cost
- Approximately 90% of WRC clients seeking acute dental care must be treated for infection prior to care
- The fastest growing rate of HIV is among young women ages 13-24 years old

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“Often when a client comes to us with one health concern, they typically have other issues health or otherwise,” said Selby. “Had they had education and access to appropriate care many complications caused by late stage diagnosis could very possibly have been avoided or greatly decreased.”

To meet the complete health needs of its clients, women are referred between the Health and Dental Care Assistance programs regularly. Program staff are bilingual and can provide patient accompaniment to appointments and other support services for clients in need of interpretation and/or emotional support. The agency operates offices in Loveland and Fort Collins, increasing accessibility for clients. Client Assistance Funds are available to help income-eligible clients avoid financial hardships while undergoing treatment, and are typically used to supplement the cost of rent, utilities and other basic needs, including funds for transportation to access local or specialist care in Denver and surrounding areas.

30 Years of Service

As WRC announced the results of its strategic planning process, the agency also kicked off a 30-Year Anniversary, celebrating three decades of service in the community. Throughout 2005, the agency will celebrate in a number of ways, including the organization’s annual *Women Rock* benefit concerts in Loveland and Fort Collins; a special 30-Year Founding Mothers’ Event to celebrate the organization’s 30 years of history, staff, board members and supporters; and a 30-Year Photo Exhibit to travel the county this summer and fall. In addition, the organization will continue to participate in myriad community activities throughout the year to highlight its anniversary while reaching out to the community to promote its mission and program services to its target population.

“We have worked hard the past two years to move the Women’s Resource Center in the right direction based on shifts in community services and the greatest needs of our clients, and we have accomplished that goal,” said Selby. “During this 30-Year Celebration, we challenge the community to help us meet another goal -- to raise the funds necessary to support our expanded outreach efforts and client population... if 30,000 people in the community gave just \$1 that would mean \$30,000 for our programs, and we think that is a great fundraising goal for a 30-year anniversary.”

At the press conference, Selby stressed the need for the community to get involved and support the agency and its efforts to help medically underserved women access health and dental care, and outlined many ways individuals and local businesses could support WRC, including the need for short and long-term volunteers to help with special events and provide clerical support in the office; corporate sponsors to help underwrite the cost of fundraising events; and the need for additional health and dental care service providers willing to offer free or reduced-cost care to the agency’s clients.

“We have much to be proud of and we encourage the community to help us celebrate this great milestone in the county’s history as well as support our efforts to provide much needed program services to medically underserved women throughout our community,” said Selby.

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Downloadable photographs from the press conference and the new agency logo are available on the web site at www.womens-resource.org click on “Press Room”. In addition to the images, there is also a copy of the power point presentation from the announcement.