

TELL ME AGAIN, HOW IS MY MEMBERSHIP PLEDGE TO UNITED WAY WOMEN IN ACTION DIFFERENT THAN MY UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN PLEDGE?

The United Way board approved the establishment of Women in Action in 2007 as a way to engage women donors in our community, providing a unique opportunity to pool time, talent and treasure for the betterment of low-income women. The start-up administrative costs of our efforts are funded by an endowment of the Caroline S. Marks Foundation. The United Way provides a home for our funds, tax deductions for our donors' gifts, and other services that support our mission.

Your pledge is not part of the United Way Campaign and therefore is not part of the funding process. Our members still give to the United Way campaign and give an additional pledge to Women in Action.

Members determine annual goals and where the money will be spent. Members have agreed that from 2008-2011, our target population is women in poverty and major project is Project Step Up. Additional programs will be supported as agreed upon by members.

THANK YOU!

The following great organizations support United Way Women in Action:

EO Johnson Company
Runkel Abstract and Title Company
State College of Beauty Culture
Evolutions in Design
Ghidorzi Companies
Liberty Mutual Insurance
Ministry Health Care
Peoples State Bank
River Valley State Bank
UMR
Wausau Head Start



October Sisterhood Supper

UPCOMING EVENTS

- MARCH 12TH**
UNITED WAY WOMEN IN ACTION FIRST ANNIVERSARY PARTY
Café LeGrand, Wausau
An event to recognize Charter Members. Celebrate the accomplishments of 2008 and build excitement about the opportunities in 2009.
- April 28th**
Evening Out with United Way Women in Action
Center for Visual Arts, Wausau
A special evening for friends of Women in Action interested in learning more about our unique circle of women and our grassroots efforts aimed at lifting motivated women out of poverty. This is our Membership Drive to increasing our powerful circle of women to 200 members by 2009.
- May 18th**
Power of the Purse
Back When Café, Wausau
A unique and fun fundraising event with all the things women love-purses, accessories, spa packages, weekend get-aways and more. All proceeds will fund the Project Step Up incentive program and Sisterhood Suppers.

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 660
Wausau, WI 54403



137 River Drive
Wausau, WI 54403

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



United Way Women in Action

experience the collective power of women

Winter/Spring 2009

WE HAVE LIFT OFF!

As we close in on the end of our first year, we'd like to share with you the many ways our charter members commitment and support have made Women in Action more than an idea in our community. What Women in Action members have given through their involvement gives hope and opportunity to many. Our membership has grown to 61 so far this year. Each new member equates to a tangible impact on a woman's ability to break the cycle of poverty for herself and her family.



Launching any new initiative is not for the faint of heart. Our council members and committee members are to be graciously "hugged" for their belief in our mission and willingness to make WIA meetings, emails, events and volunteer service a part of their routine. Our "launch" would have failed without them!

We started out 2008 having strategic meetings that would make any balanced scorecard using, Six Sigma loving CEO proud, where we put our ambitious first year goals down in ink. Here we are only 3 months away from June 2009, the official end of our first year. We have a track record of getting things done, meeting new people and developing friendships.

We had a total of fourteen networking, educational and volunteer events in 2008 where we:

- Learned techniques to ensure our financial stability in unprecedented economic times
- Became more knowledgeable about the face of poverty in our community
- Enjoyed "camaraderie in the kitchen" as we prepared meals for our sisterhood suppers
- Gathered on a wintery afternoon at Evolutions in Design to assemble gift bags for Head Start Mommies, then headed out the next day to deliver the gifts during the snowstorm. Wisconsin weather adds an element of drama to the execution of our plans.

As we look forward to the balance of 2009, we take on a leadership role as sponsor of Project Step Up, along with the United Way.

We will send out a newsletter in the Spring and Fall to recognize member efforts, spread the word about WIA to our friends and report on our goals and successes to our generous donors and sponsors. In this issue, we include a recap of Christmas for Mommies and introduce Project Step Up, two grassroots projects that appreciate, motivate, and reward hard working mothers in our community.

This is a time of need and you each affect outcomes in our community. We encourage you to continue your involvement and invite your peers to join you. Thank you for putting meaning behind our tagline "Experience the Collective Power of Women".

Donna Staples
Chair

Ann Lucas
Co-Chair

2008-2010 LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Donna Staples - Chair
Ann Lucas - Co-Chair

Julie Bliss
Susan Ford Hoffert
Mona Fox
Margaret Ghidorzi
Sarah Hull
Mary Jo Johnson
Joanne Kelly
Melissa Langbehn
Carrie Madson
Cindy Mueller
Debra Pagel
Rebecca Pilgrim Tylnski
Diane Postler-Slatery
Donna Seidel
Terri Smith
Tammy Stezenski

Please note: This is a list of WIA Leadership Council Members, not a complete list of individuals who have made donations

Jenn Golbach - Program Director

715-848-2927

jgolbach@unitedwaymc.org

<http://www.unitedwaymc.org/womeninaction.htm>

WIA IS AN INDEPENDENT
PROJECT OF UNITED WAY OF
MARATHON COUNTY



United Way
of Marathon County

Progress towards First Year Goals

- Goal:** Raise \$50,000
- Result:** Charter Member Pledges \$15,600
Project/Event Specific Corporate Gifts \$3078,
Project Specific Member Cash Donations \$1500
Total amount raised \$20,178
- Goal:** 200 WIA Members
- Result:** 61 Members as of March 2009
- Goal:** Minimum of Three Networking/Educational/
Development Opportunities for WIA Members
- Result:** Two Night Out with WIA Recruitment Events
Three Informational Member Luncheons
Two Educational Events Focused on Increasing
Awareness of Barriers Faced by the Working Poor
- Goal:** 12 Women impacted, resulting in measurable
progress toward or attainment of financial security
- Result:** Sponsor of Project Step Up, launching in late summer
2009.
WIA will fully fund the incentive program and provide
mentor support and a ready volunteer force.

Created positive name recognition for WIA and Project Step Up with Head Start families, increasing the likelihood that these families will apply for the program.

- Volunteer service projects directly benefiting low income women
- Sisterhood Suppers for Wausau and Mosinee Head Start
 - Sisterhood Supper for G. D. Jones Elementary families
 - First annual Christmas for Mommies

- Volunteer service projects supporting our mission through partnerships
- 10th Annual Aspirus Women’s Event
 - 2nd Annual Money Conference
 - United Way Bundles of Joy



October Sisterhood Supper

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- **MAY 5TH**
CHECK YOUR SEAT AND EAT
Zion Lutheran Church
Women in Action will collaborate with Head Start and the Safe Kids Wausau Area Coalition to provide a fun family event around car seat safety checks. WIA will provide the meal, our Sisterhood Supper, for all participating families. Volunteers needed to grocery shop, prepare food, setup, serve and clean up.
Contact Tammy Stezenski at tammy@thecitypages.com for more information.
- **MAY 18TH**
POWER OF THE PURSE
Back When Cafe
Volunteers needed to assist with the details on the day of the event. Assist with setup, registration, raffles and auctions, photos, tear down, and more.
Contact Ann Lucas at lucas.ann@marshfieldclinic.org for more information.

- **FALL SISTERHOOD SUPPERS**
Sisterhood Suppers will be provided for all Project Step Up Families. Volunteers needed to grocery shop, prepare food, setup, serve and clean up, coordinate kid’s activities and infant care.
Contact Tammy Stezenski at tammy@thecitypages.com for more information.
- **DECEMBER**
2ND ANNUAL CHRISTMAS FOR MOMMIES
WIA will appreciate hard working, devoted Mommies by collecting, creating and delivering baskets full of items just for Mommy. Volunteers needed to solicit in-kind gifts, build baskets, and deliver to participating Mommies.
Contact Tammy Stezenski at tammy@thecitypages.com for more information.

Project Step Up is the signature project of Women in Action. We will dedicate a majority of our funds, volunteer service and support toward the success of the families enrolled in this life changing program. Through Project Step Up we have a chance to see the powerful impact of our time, talent and treasure. We will know these women, meet their children, build their confidence and reward their hard work in meaningful ways.

Project Step Up aims to provide individualized assistance and mentoring to help families set goals and look for short-term and long-term solutions to a stronger financial foundation. The goal is to get at the underlying cause of family circumstances to help them up the steps to success and financial stability. Often times, all a family needs is a different perspective, support of others and connections to community resources.

The clients will be families with children who have income under 200% of poverty. By targeting families with children, the next generation will also be impacted. The intent is

to start small with just 20 families in the first pilot year and develop and revise the program based on operating experience.

Families enrolled in the program will accomplish their goals toward self-sufficiency by:

- Women are more likely to be victims of poverty. In 2006, Marathon County had 37.9% female householders living below the poverty with children under age 5 line.
 - In 2006, there were 3,661 children or 11.9% under the age of 18 in Marathon County living in poverty. A 25% increase.
- (Source: FOCUS 2007-2009 -- LIFE in Marathon County: Local Indicators for Excellence)
- Developing a relationship with volunteers to help them improve problem-solving skills, meet their goals and identify and build upon existing strengths.
 - Connecting to community resources which address their varied service needs
 - Attending group meetings to learn new skills in a group setting, share their experiences and build relationships with other families.

United Way Women in Action is joined by the United Way as sponsors of this pilot project which is set to launch late summer 2009.

CHRISTMAS COMES EARLY FOR HARD WORKING MOMMIES



Our circle of women takes pride in our unique and direct approach towards making a difference in the lives we touch. Charities and gift giving programs for children are well established in our community, so we created United Way Women in Action’s Christmas for Mommies. Our members hand delivered a beautifully decorated bag, overflowing with special goodies including gloves, scarves, chocolates, lip balm, beauty gift packs, and a gift certificate for a beauty treatment of their choice intended to make Mommy feel appreciated and special.

Our recipients were hard working, low income mothers that are affiliated with Head Start of Wausau who have shown motivation to better the lives of their families. For many of these women this was the third “touch” Women in Action has had with their family. This project was a heart-warming success. Thank you to all of our members and sponsors that donated the funds and the hands on service that made this project come alive.

“Our only problem was choosing just 25. From all of our families, we chose mothers who are currently facing obstacles, but are also showing the most motivation to make improvements and change. Each of the 25 “Christmas Mommies” has their own special story, but they share one common theme: hard work, perseverance and motivation.”

I just wanted to write to give you a great big THANK YOU for the Christmas tote I received. I really appreciate the gift and it will come in very useful. I am especially grateful for the voucher to the Beauty College. Since I am a mother of 3, all their needs come before mine... including haircuts. It's going to be nice to finally be able to do something for me. Thank you for not forgetting about the Mothers of the community and have a Merry Christmas.

From a Head Start Mommy and Christmas for Mommies Gift Recipient

Aimee Jo Budleski-Behr
Family Case Manager
Marathon County
Child Development Agency
Head Start