Employ, Empower and Educate

Learn how women are doing what it takes to achieve financial stability for their families through WRC.
Thank you to everyone who joined us for Wine, Women & Chocolate in October. The evening was a big success! We had a sellout crowd and we raised over $65,000. Once again, Cascade Hills Country Club provided a beautiful backdrop for the event. Special thanks to our fabulous tasting vendors: Brewery Vivant, Cakabakery, Chocolates by Grimaldi, Crushed Grape, Fenn Valley Vineyards, Furniture City Creamery, Kilwins, and Lemon Creek Winery. We are also grateful to our participant Denise for sharing her story of how WRC has been a valuable resource for her through the years.

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A huge thank you to Carnevale Interactive for donating their creative talents and investing countless hours in making this new website happen. We are so grateful for your partnership!
Dear WRC friends and partners,

Working women have made immense strides since Women’s Resource Center began its work over four decades ago. But this year it became clearer than ever that the fight for equity in the workplace is not over. We also know that working women disproportionately suffer the economic consequences when life takes an unexpected turn. Our dedicated team, mentors, and board work hard to stay attuned to the issues working women face and provide responsive programming to help women develop skills that will lead to professional success and financial stability.

Recently, WRC completed its strategic planning process and we are pleased to announce a new plan to guide our organization over the next three years. This strategic plan builds upon our past successes and positions us to increase capacity over the next several years. It is our hope that this new plan will enhance our effectiveness and allow us to have a greater impact on the lives of women seeking hope, confidence, and financial stability in the workplace.

We are so grateful for all of our partners that support the mission and vision to help women in our community. Know that your continued support allows WRC to develop the innovative strategies that help ensure that ALL women in our community can achieve financial security for themselves and their families.

Sandra Gaddy
Women’s Resource Center CEO

INVEST IN THE FUTURE

Will you consider making an investment in the future of Women’s Resource Center? You can make a planned gift through your estate. This can include one or more of the following:

- Make a bequest through a will or living trust.
- Establish a gift that provides income payment to you for life such as a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust.
- Name Women’s Resource Center as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy or retirement plan.
- Confirm a charitable commitment with gift of real estate or appreciated securities.
As soon as you meet Brenda, you can’t help but be drawn in by her warm smile, kind eyes, and quiet confidence. She is passionate about helping others and making a difference in her community. Everything that Brenda has conquered in her past helped mold her into the woman she is today.

People are often surprised to learn about the struggles Brenda has overcome in her life. She explains, “People need to know that there is life after circumstances.” Over 20 years ago, Brenda found herself in a position she never wanted to be in. She had just escaped an emotionally abusive marriage and returned to Grand Rapids with her two daughters after living overseas. Brenda found a small place for them to live and reluctantly went on state assistance to support herself and her young girls.

As a military officer’s wife, Brenda had not previously worked outside of the home. As a single mother who lacked work experience, finances were tight. She didn’t have a car, so Brenda and her girls walked everywhere. Things took a turn when they walked by the Women’s Resource Center on State Street. Brenda immediately went inside.

It was life-changing. Brenda says WRC was such a wonderful resource for her. “I remember going because it was a good support system.” WRC helped Brenda build a résumé from her life experiences and volunteer roles. Her confidence grew as she acquired professional clothing from the clothes closet.

Later, when her daughter was struggling emotionally, Brenda turned to WRC. They were connected to an agency that could help address the psychological challenges they were facing. “They were nurturing on a whole other level,” said Brenda.

It wasn’t long before Brenda found employment at the Department of Human Services. Before long, Brenda no longer needed state assistance and began a long career in human services.

Brenda says WRC played an instrumental role in changing her life. “I remember how WRC helped me to get through that part of my life and that is a chapter that I’ll never forget. I will always be indebted to WRC.”

Today, Brenda is Program Manager of the Kent County Tax Credit Coalition. She is helping low- and moderate-income families take full advantage of tax credits so they can find more financial stability.

“‘They were nurturing on a whole other level.’”

One of the most profound benefits that emerged from this experience was Brenda’s ability to set a positive example for her daughters. She taught them to believe that even in the worst of circumstances, anything is possible with determination and tenacity. Now, her daughters are following their mother’s example and making a difference through careers in social work.

Donor support more than two decades ago assured that WRC was literally in Brenda’s path when she most needed assistance. That engagement not only changed the path for Brenda, but for her daughters as well.
Empower

BONNIE’S STORY

“I love to see women succeed... and that’s why I support Women’s Resource Center.”

It is my pleasure to be able to support the work of Women’s Resource Center.

As women, we have all been confronted with changes and challenges which may have seemed insurmountable, but with a little bit of encouragement we manage to find solutions. Women’s Resource Center helps women overcome barriers to success!

I love to see women succeed... and that’s why I support Women’s Resource Center.

Bonnie K. Miller

Educate

KRISTY’S STORY

Kristy felt stuck. She was working as a healthcare aid but was not making enough money to support herself and her family. She also did not see any room to advance with her employer. She knew she needed to do better.

Kristy returned to Women’s Resource Center. She had been there a few years before and knew she could find the support and encouragement to help her move forward. Kristy says, “I needed someone to give me that push to do better.” She found that “push” with Career Coach Niesa. “She gave me confidence to do more,” said Kristy.

Working with Niesa, Kristy realized she enjoyed working in the healthcare field, but needed more education to find a better paying job with advancement opportunities. Niesa connected Kristy with Grand Rapids Community College and the Medical Assistant Apprenticeship program through Mercy Health.

Kristy says it’s been challenging, but she is excited to be graduating from the program in December. She knows all the hard work is worth it because her children “see me trying hard to do more, to have a career, not just a job.” She has even begun interviewing for a permanent position.

Kristy is optimistic about the future for her and her family. She added, “Without WRC, many women would not have access to what they need.” This makes us so grateful for people like you that provide 100% of the funds for the Career Coach program.

“[Career Coach] Niesa gave me confidence to do more.”
Meet Denise

Denise had a job she didn’t enjoy and it wasn’t covering the bills. So she came to Women’s Resource Center. The result?

• Her longtime volunteer mentor helped Denise create a plan to overcome barriers
• Workshops improved her job-seeking skills
• A Career Coach and other volunteers helped with her résumé and interviewing

With your investment, Women’s Resource Center gave Denise the support she needed to achieve both her professional and personal goals.

Will you donate to Women’s Resource Center to empower more local women to change things for the better – for their families and their communities? Visit grwrc.org to learn how to donate.