mission in motion
From Our Leaders

Author, poet, and activist Maya Angelou was once quoted as saying, “I can be changed by what happens in the world; but I refuse to be reduced by it.” These were words we lived by in 2010 at the Houston Area Women’s Center. The dismal economy, the challenging fundraising climate, and the nation’s budgetary woes changed the landscape for many Americans. The last three years have been difficult and challenging for families and communities alike. Like everyone, we were irreversibly changed — from the way we do business to the way we help our clients. However, like Maya Angelou, we accepted that change was inevitable and was necessary for our survival. We simply could not falter. There was no question we had to carry on. If we failed, we could not continue providing vital services like crisis intervention, shelter, counseling, career development, hospital accompaniment and other support services that our clients desperately needed from us. So, even though changes had to be made, we refused to be reduced by them.

Oftentimes, we ask our clients to dream of what it would be like to have a life free from the effects of domestic and sexual violence. We challenge them to imagine a new beginning, to envision a fresh start. Starting over is a difficult journey. However, we know from the client successes we have seen over the years, starting over may be difficult, but it is not impossible.

Like our clients, we too had to dream of a new beginning. What types of things would we do if we were not limited by the effects of a bad economy? With fresh eyes, we looked at all of our programs, we examined all of our projects, and we assessed all of our efforts. Where could we make changes? Where could we gain more impact from our investments? What programs or projects could we re-envision for maximum results? Where could we better apply our in-house talent, leverage our supporters, or utilize our community partnerships to deliver even greater results for our clients?

We were thrilled to discover that, in spite of the economy, we still had a wealth of untapped resources we could use to propel our agency to new heights. It was simply a matter of changing our perspective. By making changes to endure the bad economy, yet refusing to be reduced by it, we actually were able to strengthen and expand existing programs and implement several new and innovative projects.

The Houston Area Women’s Center is continually evolving. We are a mission in motion — finding ways to become even stronger and more efficient to better serve our clients and our community.

Our Mission

The Houston Area Women’s Center helps individuals affected by domestic and sexual violence in their efforts to move their lives forward. We provide shelter, counseling and advocacy to support them in building lives free from the effects of violence. We seek social change to end domestic and sexual violence through community awareness and education. Our services are confidential and available to everyone.
14 year-old Lisa was sexually assaulted by a 30 year-old man whom she met online in a teen chat room. He said his name was "Max," and that he was 16. Max sounded cute to Lisa, and they chatted online for a couple of months. One morning, Lisa told her mom she had to stay after school, but arranged to meet Max instead. When he picked her up, Lisa was surprised by his older appearance, but she didn’t say anything. However, when Max pulled into a motel parking lot, she started to panic. Lisa told Max she wanted to go back to the school, but he forced her into a motel room where he sexually assaulted her and then left her on the bed. Lisa called her mom, who immediately contacted the police and then took Lisa to the hospital to be examined. The police investigation took time, but forensic investigators were able to identify the offender from his online chats. Max was arrested in Michigan and delivered to Houston to face charges.

Lisa and her mom were referred to Children’s Court Services. A court advocate worked with Lisa to help her prepare to testify in court and helped the family navigate the criminal justice system. Lisa was embarrassed to give all of the details of her sexual assault in open court, but her court advocate counseled her and explained why the information was necessary to hold the offender accountable. She reassured Lisa that what happened to her was not her fault - it didn’t matter if she had agreed to meet him - she did not deserve to be assaulted. After a home visit, several meetings with the prosecutor and a tour of the courtroom, Lisa felt ready. On the day trial was set to begin, the offender changed his plea to guilty in return for a 10 year prison sentence. While Lisa did not have to testify, she did stand before the court to give a Victim Impact Statement. In it, she thanked her court advocate for believing in her, especially when she did not always believe in herself. She did not address the offender, but instead focused on how she planned to move on with her life.
FACING NEW CHALLENGES
To prepare the Crisis Intervention Team for responding to emerging issues in the community, Hotline Services offered two successful continuing education events for hotline volunteers and staff. These informative events gave volunteers and staff the opportunity to enhance existing skills while gaining new knowledge in areas such as Human Trafficking, Stalking, Sexting and Law Enforcement Protocols when working with survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

WOMEN’S CENTER
CRISIS HOTLINE
ADVOCATES ARE
DEDICATED TO
PROVIDING
CONFIDENTIAL
ASSISTANCE TO
INDIVIDUALS
AFFECTED BY
DOMESTIC AND
SEXUAL VIOLENCE
TWENTY-FOUR
HOURS A DAY, SEVEN
DAYS A WEEK. IN
2010, WE RECEIVED
41,375 CALLS ON
THE DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE HOTLINE
AND 2,706 CALLS
ON THE SEXUAL
ASSAULT HOTLINE.

HUMAN RESOURCES
The Human Resources team initiated a new Leadership Certification curriculum to develop and enhance the leadership skills of our managing staff. This curriculum was designed to assist senior staff in excelling in their current roles, while preparing them for future leadership roles and opportunities. Facilitated by the executive leaders of the organization, this program produced 27 leadership graduates at the conclusion of its inaugural year.

CROSSING THE FINISH LINE
On March 6, 2010, more than 1,350 participants took an important step towards stopping domestic and sexual violence in our community. In 2010, our Race Against Violence gained new ground as our new course routed participants right in front of our Counseling and Education Building on Waugh Drive. This event raised more than $150,000, the highest total in our Race history, which goes a long way towards helping us continue supporting the tens of thousands of women, men and children seeking services from the Women’s Center each year.

PUTTING THE “FUN” IN FUNDRAISING
It was all grins and guffaws as multi-talented comedienne Lily Tomlin took center stage at the 2010 LOL w/ Lily gala. Co-Chaired by Alie & David Pruner and Rachel & Scott Clingman, this sold-out event marked the most money ever raised for a Women’s Center Spring Gala. While “Laughing Out Loud” with Ms. Tomlin was the primary focus of the evening, the Women’s Center also honored longtime supporters Sherry M. Merfish and CenterPoint Energy. At the end of the night, this event netted $595,000 to support agency services and operations, the most ever from a single event.

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GOING WHERE OUR CLIENTS NEED US
Dedicated Women’s Center staff will go to great lengths to reach clients in need — even if those clients are in jail. Many imprisoned women and men have experienced domestic and/or sexual violence in their lifetimes, and our community counselors eliminated barriers that were preventing this underserved population from accessing services. As a result of the creative outreach program initiated in 2010 by our community-based counselors, over 3,000 incarcerated women and men received counseling services while serving out their sentences.

WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT AND SERVE OUR CLIENTS
The Women’s Center strives to eliminate barriers that prevent domestic and sexual violence survivors from seeking help. Our convenient location on the Metro bus route, our 24-hour crisis hotlines, our evening and weekend counseling appointments, and our community-based outreach programs are all designed to provide convenient, accessible and safe locations to connect with our services. When our clients expressed concerns about contacting the police and fear about filing police reports, the Women’s Center implemented a unique partnership with the Houston Police Department to have an on-site officer available during our open intake and new client registration. Each week, an officer is available to speak with our clients about reporting violence and receiving protection from future violent attacks. Many women who were previously hesitant to reach out to the police have found that having a friendly, understanding officer accessible in the safe and confidential environment provided by the Women’s Center has helped ease their fear of reporting.

WITH ITS 120-BED FACILITY, THE WOMEN’S CENTER OPERATES ONE OF THE LARGEST EMERGENCY SHELTERS WITHIN THE CITY OF HOUSTON. OUR SHELTER IS AVAILABLE, FREE OF CHARGE, TO WOMEN AND CHILDREN FleeING DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE. THROUGHOUT 2010, 1,341 ADULTS AND 953 CHILDREN WERE SAFE FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WHILE LIVING AT OUR SHELTER. THE SHELTER PROVIDES A HOST OF SERVICES IN ADDITION TO EMERGENCY SHELTER, INCLUDING: ON-SITE COUNSELING, DAYCARE, AN HISD SCHOOL FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS LIVING AT THE SHELTER AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT.

FOR DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE SURVIVORS, COUNSELING SERVES AS A VITAL TOOL IN HELPING OUR CLIENTS MOVE THEIR LIVES FORWARD. LAST YEAR, OUR AGENCY SERVED 5,324 NEW CLIENTS AND 4,465 RETURNING CLIENTS IN INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP COUNSELING SESSIONS.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO CLIENTS IN NEED OF HELP TRANSITIONING TO SAFETY AND INDEPENDENCE. IN 2010, 985 CLIENTS RECEIVED RENTAL ASSISTANCE AND OR REFERRALS TO ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES.

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INDIVIDUALIZED COUNSELING AND SUPPORT

HELPING TO BUILD SOLID FAMILIES
Our emergency shelter is much more than a temporary home for women and their children fleeing abusive and life-threatening situations. We offer a variety of services at our residential facility to support clients in building lives free from the effects of violence. Recognizing a need to address the effects domestic violence has on children, as well as on parenting behaviors, our staff developed a parenting curriculum specifically designed to address issues faced by survivors. Participants are educated on the effects violence has had on their children, and on the parent-child relationship. We teach age-appropriate methods to improve communication with each child and help parents develop skills and encourage behaviors intended to break the cycle of violence.
WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK EXXONMOBIL, DAVID WEEKLEY HOMES, ANDREWS KURTH LLP AND CHEVRON. DURING 2010, THESE COMPANIES DONATED THEIR TIME, TOIL AND TALENTS TO HELP US BEAUTIFY OUR SHELTER AND MAKE IT MORE WELCOMING AND COMFORTABLE FOR THE RESIDENTS LIVING THERE.

SAFETY FIRST
Safety is always the first priority for our clients. When the Operations department wanted to find a way to promote safety as a priority for employees too, it created and instituted a 360-degree safety program to educate employees on everything from fire prevention and building safety procedures to preventing identity theft. In partnership with the Red Cross, we initiated first aid and CPR training for staff and also trained our staff to offer training to our clients.

1,000 LITTLE SMILES
The six to twelve year-olds living in our shelter now have a beautiful space where they can laugh and play, thanks to former board member Linda McCollum. Ms. McCollum and husband Howard donated a new garden and playground in honor of her mother, Annie Jewel Rice Arrendell. The grounds were completed and dedicated on May 7, 2010, just in time for some summer fun!

SAFETY FIRST

Operational Highlights

Community Affairs

CREATING FRIENDS AND FANS ALIKE
Who says you can’t have a thousand friends? With our compelling mission and help from Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and LinkedIn, we could potentially have a million friends! The Communications Team launched new social media endeavors through multiple channels in an effort to grow our agency’s communication outlets. We watched with excitement as we saw our messages about domestic and sexual violence being shared via Facebook and re-Tweeted throughout the Twitterverse. Social media garnered new virtual and actual supporters for our agency when our messages engaged individuals to help move our mission forward in the form of donations, supplies, partnerships and media requests.

STOPPING THE VIOLENCE BEFORE IT HITS HOME
The Training and Community Education department rolled out an innovative primary prevention curriculum to participants throughout the Houston community. This new prevention strategy, developed by the Centers for Disease Control, is designed to strengthen our community, individual by individual and neighborhood by neighborhood, until our society as a whole is working together to prevent violence. Primary prevention, at its core, aspires to a lofty goal — to stop violence before it occurs — and its implementation marks a historic shift in the way we engage the community regarding domestic and sexual violence.

IN 2010, THE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS TEAM EDUCATED A COMBINED 32,830 TEENS AND ADULTS AND TRAINED MORE THAN 3,000 PROFESSIONALS ABOUT THE EFFECTS AND PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT REACHED OVER 1,000 FACEBOOK FRIENDS AND RECEIVED COVERAGE ABOUT THE WOMEN’S CENTER AND OUR ISSUES THROUGH 271 TELEVISION, RADIO AND NEWSPAPER MEDIA PLACEMENTS AND 80 PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS.
Leadership Team

**BOARDS OF DIRECTORS**
- Shawn Raymond, Board Chair
- Mary E. Ainslie
- Sandra Ramirez Aultman
- Genora Kendrick Boykins
- Alan Brochstein
- Stephen K. Carroll
- Monjula Chidambaram
- Rachel Giesber Clingman
- Laurie Croxson
- Ann E. Deaton
- Michael A. Dirden
- Arvia Few
- Pam Gardner
- Melanie Gray
- Kay Henze
- Christine Holland
- Rebeca Aizpuru Huddle
- Diana M. Hudson
- Michael Johnston
- Rick Kaplan
- Lisa Malosky
- Nancy McGregor Manne
- Carrie G. Potter
- Jim Postl
- Shawn Raymond
- Elaine Makris Williams

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES**
- Genora Kendrick Boykins
- Alan Brochstein
- Christine Holland
- Rebeca Aizpuru Huddle
- Diana M. Hudson
- Nancy McGregor Manne
- Carrie G. Potter
- Jim Postl
- Shawn Raymond
- Elaine Makris Williams

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM
- Rebecca White, President and Chief Executive Officer: rwhite@hawc.org
- Sonia Corrales, Chief Program Officer: scorrales@hawc.org
- Anneliese Davis, Chief Development Officer: adavis@hawc.org
- Tawana Greene, Chief Financial Officer: tgreene@hawc.org
- Cassandra Thomas, Chief Compliance Officer: cthomas@hawc.org
- Yolanda Bevill, Vice President of Community Affairs: ybevill@hawc.org
- Caresse Young, Vice President of Human Resources & Volunteer Services: cyoung@hawc.org

**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES**
for the year ended December 31, 2010

**REVENUES**
- Operating Revenues
  - Fundraising: $1,914,029, $2,446,205
  - United Way: 765,619, 727,211
  - Government Funding: 2,764,039, 3,182,569
  - Other Income: 43,279, 49,590
- Total Operating Revenues: $5,486,966, $6,405,575
- Other Revenues
  - Investment Return/(Loss): 580,744, 419,087
- Total Revenues: $6,067,710, $6,824,662

**EXPENSES**
- Operating Expenses
  - Program Services
    - Direct client services: $4,185,291, $4,658,935
    - Education and outreach: 735,120, 600,973
  - Management and General: 656,844, 704,232
  - Fundraising: 343,279, 393,276
- Subtotal—Program Services: $4,920,411, $5,259,908
- Total Operating Expenses: $5,920,814, $6,357,616
- Other Expenses
  - Depreciation: 456,683, 403,338
- Total Expenses: $6,377,497, $6,760,954

**CHANGE IN NET ASSETS**
- $ (309,787), $ 63,708

* Service concluded in 2010.
** Immediate Past Chair.
+ Joined in 2011.
Thank you to the Houston Area Women’s Center supporters, volunteers and employees who are changing lives and making our community a safer place.