



Houston Area Women's Center
Ending Domestic and Sexual Violence

Actions Speak.

2009 ANNUAL REPORT



“The Houston Area Women’s Center is a priceless gift to survivors.”

– The Honorable Mayor Annise D. Parker



Voices from our community speak volumes about the positive impact our actions have on everyone’s lives.

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.



“The Houston Police Department, as well as the community at-large, has benefited greatly from the relationship that exists between our two organizations. In addition to serving as a vital resource for referring women in need, the Women’s Center has assisted HPD in our public information and education campaigns regarding Dating Violence, Family Violence, Teen Domestic Violence and related programs.

– Houston Police Department
Chief of Police Charles A. McClelland, Jr.

A WORD FROM OUR LEADERS

As we looked back at 2009, we had many conversations about how to describe the year in the annual report. Last year, we talked mainly about change. How we had changes in our executive leadership team; changes to our Education and Counseling building; changes to our budget. Change was definitely the theme for 2008. But what was the theme for 2009? Of course, we could tell you that the dreary economy forced us to continuously be concerned about our financial future. We could tell you how we struggled to make the tough decisions within our agency so that we would have a viable future. We could discuss in depth how we stretched to meet our ever-increasing demand for services. We could talk about how we labored and strived to keep our services best-in-class and top-notch - in spite of the economy. And, while all of these things are true, and certainly worth discussing, the theme that continued to emerge was - “Resilience.”

Instead of bemoaning the obstacles that we faced, we decided that the more compelling story was how we managed to pull together, to stay the course and eventually win the race. We cannot tell you that it was an easy ride, but we can tell you that we are stronger, more empowered, and better for the journey.

Resilience is a story we know well. Indeed, we’ve seen it in our clients every day for the past 33 years. We often tell our clients that they will survive their situations. In fact, we never consider our clients “victims” of sexual assault or domestic violence. We always refer to them as “survivors.” In that same vein, we made a conscious decision here at the agency to think of ourselves not as victims of this economy, but as survivors of it. How did we survive? By doing exactly what we ask of our clients: envision a bright future; empower yourself to live that vision and implement your plan.

The first step was to envision a bright future for the Houston Area Women's Center.

But, before we could get to the future, we had to reflect on both the past and the present. Namely, where had the agency been, where was the agency now and where did we want the agency to go. As a result, we developed our 4-year strategic plan. Our strategic plan is our own internal, step-by-step guide of how we will achieve our mission going forward and it encompasses all parts of our organization. It represents the culmination of an inclusive process that generated information and inspiration from hundreds of stakeholders within the agency and our community.

Our staff was asked to construct processes for serving our clients most efficiently with high quality, high impact services. Our Human Resources Department was tasked with hiring and retaining the best staff. The Development Team was responsible for finding innovative ways to raise money while building a more solid infrastructure for our traditional fundraising outlets. Our Community Affairs Department was asked to forge new paths for communicating effectively with our many audiences. Finally, our Accounting team was charged with developing agency best practices so we would be better able to steward our resources. All of us committed to building and nurturing strong collaborative relationships with other organizations to assure that we offer clients access to the best and the most options possible.

Once the strategic vision for the agency was in place, we then had to empower ourselves to live that vision. Yes, we had limited resources, but we were determined to think of ourselves as rich with possibility. We eagerly talked to staff about our mission, our vision, and our plan. We asked staff to determine what specific characteristics we needed to have – as an organization – to carry out our mission, to reach our vision and to put our plan in place. How should we best work with one another, how could we best serve our clients and how would we best provide education and outreach to our community partners? What we developed was a list of organizational values that describe what we hold dear and to which we would all aspire in our daily work. The list includes such attributes as dedication; teamwork; diversity; respect; and excellence. Now, we knew where we were, where we wanted to go and who we had to be to get there.

“Resilience is the ability to work with adversity in such a way that one comes through it unharmed or even better for the experience. Resilience is always rooted in a tenacity of spirit.”

– Unknown

Feeling a renewed sense of empowerment,

it was time for us to move to the final phase - implementation. In 2009, we saw a flurry of activity springing from the strategic plan. The Direct Services team continued to see an increase in demand for our services – a trend that began in 2008. Because of the improvements that were put into place as a result of the strategic plan, the team was able to serve the increasing number of individuals who sought our services. Our Development team established strong internal leadership structures for all of our major events which helped us to expand our message and draw in new supporters. The team also expanded its donor tour program and cultivation activities in an attempt to steward the new and long time donors who have added to our success. Additionally, in 2009, the Human Resources team addressed the salary disparities between our employees and the market by implementing market adjustments (where needed and within financial constraints). The team also developed a long-term plan that assures salaries are fair and in line with the market as well as consistent with our internal salary structure. At the end of the year, the Community Affairs Team began sending monthly e-newsletters and also expanded utilization of new social media tools to attract and engage more supporters. Both endeavors have broadened the scope and the reach of our messaging while increasing our potential for fundraising across new platforms. Gradually, as the plan evolved from words on paper to actual implementation, we saw ourselves transforming from victims to survivors.



Rebecca White and Shawn Raymond

We are still in the process of implementing our plan. We are all excited about the progress we have seen thus far. We look forward to having many, many more success stories to share with you. But for now, we want all of our friends, associates and partners to know that the dismal economy, the stress of change, and the constant increase in demand for our services, were no match for our indomitable spirit. We pulled together to rise above them and we succeeded. The climb was trying at times, but we pushed through and we persevered. We, like those we serve, might have struggled, but in the end, we prevailed. And through the struggle and hard work, we became an even stronger organization and we proved ourselves to be “Resilient.”

We will always have challenges, but with your support we know that we will continue to meet them and rise above them. We thank you for all you do to move our mission forward.

Regards,

Rebecca White
Rebecca White

President and Chief Executive Officer

Shawn Raymond
Shawn Raymond

2009-2010 Chair, Board of Directors



“When I called the hotline I was told, ‘You don’t have to live like this,’ and for the first time, it felt like someone threw me a lifeline.”

– Anonymous Client

“My stay at the shelter has impacted my daughter for the rest of her life and will impact her children and their children so they will never tolerate violence.”

– Anonymous Client



PROGRAMS

CRISIS HOTLINES

Confidential and Available to Everyone

24 hours a day, 7 days a week, the Houston Area Women's Center hotline staff and volunteers are there to help. In 2009, a staggering 40,651 individuals affected by domestic violence and 3,091 individuals affected by sexual violence reached out to our hotline advocates for assistance.

SHELTER OPERATIONS

Building Lives Free from Domestic and Sexual Violence

The Houston Area Women's Center operates the only emergency shelter within the city of Houston available to all victims of domestic and sexual violence. This 120-bed facility is one of the largest shelters of its kind. Through 2009, 1,274 adults and 1,076 children lived safely at our shelter. In addition to providing safety and meeting basic needs, we offer an array of support services onsite – counseling, children and youth services and career development.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Helping Individuals Move Their Lives Forward

Our doors are always open to survivors of domestic and sexual violence in need of counseling and advocacy services. In 2009, 6,532 new clients and 7,215 continuing and returning clients attended group or individual counseling sessions. Beyond the services we offer, clients also receive valuable resource and referral information about other area support services.

Our supportive housing program provided housing assistance, referrals and information to 2,108 clients in the midst of transitioning to safety and independence. Clients were eligible to receive up to 18 months of rental and utility assistance and extensive case management services. Under this program, clients seeking to become self-sufficient by pursuing specific educational and career goals were eligible for additional financial assistance.

When a child needs a friend in court, the staff of our Children's Court Services program is literally right beside them. Children's Court Services is the only program in Houston where a court advocate is allowed to sit with a child witness while the child is testifying. Last year, 763 child victims or witnesses to crime and 2,305 of their caregivers were not alone in court.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Seeking Social Change to End Domestic and Sexual Violence

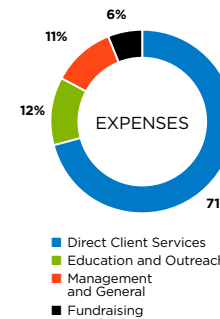
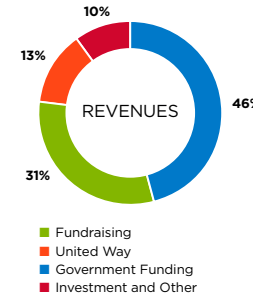
In 2009, the Community Affairs team educated the community about domestic and sexual violence to raise awareness and change attitudes and beliefs. Overall, community education presentations reached 32,174 attendees.



“The Women’s Center has proved to be an invaluable resource to help explain and give real meaning to how domestic and sexual abuse affects not only the victim, but family and friends all around a bad situation – information that may end up saving someone’s life.”

– D'Artagnan Bebel
Vice President, General Manager
FOX 26

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS



STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES for the year ended December 31, 2009

REVENUES	2008	2009
Operating Revenues		
Fundraising	\$1,428,144	\$1,914,029
United Way	743,242	765,619
Government Funding	2,702,069	2,764,039
Other Income	128,029	43,279
Total Operating Revenues	\$5,001,484	\$5,486,966
Other Revenues		
Investment Return/(Loss)	(418,624)	580,744
TOTAL REVENUES	\$4,582,860	\$6,067,710
EXPENSES		
Operating Expenses		
Program Services		
– Direct client services	\$4,249,480	\$4,185,291
– Education and outreach	754,148	735,120
Subtotal-Program Services	\$5,003,628	\$4,920,411
Management and General	664,785	656,844
Fundraising	277,845	343,559
Total Operating Expenses	\$5,946,258	\$5,920,814
Other Expenses		
Depreciation	356,244	456,683
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$6,302,502	\$6,377,497
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$(1,719,642)	\$(309,787)



“The Harris County Sheriff’s Office is proud to partner with the Houston Area Women’s Center to provide domestic abuse counseling to inmates. This is a new service that will educate inmates on how to stop domestic abuse. The Women’s Center works to achieve a better life for women in our community.”

– Sheriff Adrian Garcia
Harris County Sheriff’s Office



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**2009 AND 2010
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Nancy McGregor Manne
James J. Postl
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SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

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President and Chief Executive Officer

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Chief Financial Officer

Cassandra Thomas
Chief Compliance Officer

Adrienne Barker
Vice President of Development

Yolanda Bevill
Vice President of Community Affairs

Valencia Lewis
Vice President of Residential Services

Caresse Young
Vice President of Human Resources

* Board service concluded in 2009.

** Immediate Past Chair.

+ Joined Board in 2010.



“Our partnership with the Women’s Center results in a safer community for all. Through our Anti-Domestic Violence Campaign every fall, victims are served and offenders are arrested, preventing continued criminal activity and interrupting the cycle of violence.”

– Katherine Cabaniss
Executive Director
Crime Stoppers of Houston



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

\$100,000 and up

Astros’ Wives Organization
The Bank of America Charitable
Foundation, Inc.

\$50,000 - \$99,999

The Brown Foundation, Inc.
Healthcare and Nursing
Education Foundation
Houston Endowment Inc.

\$20,000 - \$49,999

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Foundation
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\$10,000 - \$19,999

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Neal Manne
Marathon Oil Corporation
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Foundation
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Beverly and Jim Postl
Alicia and Shawn Raymond
Chris and Don Sanders
Verizon Wireless
Women of Wine Charities

\$5,000 - \$9,999

1335 Foundation
Anadarko Petroleum
Corporation
BHP Billiton
Bechtel Group Foundation
Bloomberg
The Butcher Fund
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Swartz Family Charitable Trust
The TJX Foundation Inc.
Windham Foundation

\$2,500 - \$4,999

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\$1,000 - \$2,499

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Annunciation Greek Orthodox
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Association of Women in
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Baker and McKenzie LLP
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Catherine Lamboley
Joe Levit Family Foundation
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“Bank of America’s Neighborhood Excellence Initiative committee chose the Women’s Center for its NEI Builder award in 2009 because of the tremendous work they perform. They provide services with care and compassion, often times in more than one language, and with the help of countless dedicated volunteers. We are proud to recognize the Women’s Center for all they do to empower individuals and improve our community.”

— Kim Ruth
Houston Market President
Bank of America

Community Support

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Ron Loewenstein
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MedVance Institute
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The Methodist Hospital System
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BP Foundation, Inc.
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Shawn L. Raymond
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Joe W. Redden, Jr.
H. John Riley, Jr.
Charlene Ripley
Gay A. Roane
Rebecca L. Robertson
Rocky Robinson
Kelly B. Rose
Scott E. Rozzell
Megan and Jason Ryan
Tom Ryan
Katie Sammons
Margo Scholin
Rufus S. Scott
L. E. Simmons
David W. Skarke
William Slusser
Gerald Smith
Jennifer Smith
Walter J. Smith
David Sterling
Gail W. Stewart
Charlene Sumlin
Ellen and Steve Susman
Charles Swanson
Jack Sweeney
Bruce M. Taten
G. Irvin Terrell
Bobby Tudor
Kellie Vasquez
Caroline C. Vetterling
Keith Watson Wade
Mark Wawro
Rebecca L. White
Gary L. Whitlock
Anne Whitlock and
Michael Skelly
Elaine M. Williams
Claudia Wilson Frost
Dan Wolterman
Women of Wine Charities
Phillip D. Wright
R. Paul Yetter
Shira R. Yoshor



“Not only have our nursing students used the information they gain from the Women’s Center training programs to help others by timely evaluation and referrals, they have often benefited themselves by being motivated to seek help. Others have become volunteers at the Houston Area Women’s Center. All have been enriched by the experience.”

— Lene Symes, PhD, RN
Associate Professor
Texas Woman’s University, College of Nursing



Thank you to the Houston Area Women's Center employees, volunteers and supporters who are changing lives and making our community a safer place.



Houston Area Women's Center
Ending Domestic and Sexual Violence

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE **713-528-2121**
TDD **713-528-3625**
TOLL FREE **800-256-0551**

SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE **713-528-RAPE (7273)**
TDD **713-528-3691**
TOLL FREE **800-256-0661**
www.hawc.org



HARRIS COUNTY
COMMUNITY SERVICES
DEPARTMENT