



Melanie Herrera Bortz (front center) and COLOR board members introduce the Healthy Women Healthy Families initiative at a press conference.

Threats from State Legislatures: Fighting the Battle for Women's Reproductive Rights at Home

Across the country, women's reproductive health choices face daily attacks, not only at the national level, but also from punitive bills passed in state legislatures. Two recent state cases have thrown such attacks into the spotlight, receiving national media attention and, in many instances, sparking shock and outrage.

The first is Florida's new adoption law, which requires women giving their children up for adoption to obtain permission from the father; the mother is either required to disclose the name of the father, or take out classified ads seeking men she has had sex with who might be the father. This is required even of minors and in cases of rape and incest. And in Iowa, the death of an abandoned newborn spurred local police to demand that doctors and clinics turn over the names of every woman who took a pregnancy test within a certain nine-month period—a blatant violation of patient privacy—even though there was no evidence that the mother of the

child ever took a test. Planned Parenthood of Greater Iowa fought back, forcing the county to withdraw their demands.

While you may have heard of these cases, you would probably be surprised to know that such attacks are extremely common. In 2001, 398 anti-choice measures were introduced in 49 states and the District of Columbia. State-level attacks became common over a decade ago, prompting the Ms. Foundation to create the Reproductive Rights Coalition and Organizing Fund (RRCOF) to support the groups that tirelessly combat this legislation.

One such RRCOF grantee is the Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR) in Denver. Colorado is a conservative state that has seen more than its fair share of anti-choice measures. Melanie Herrera Bortz, President, said,

continued inside...



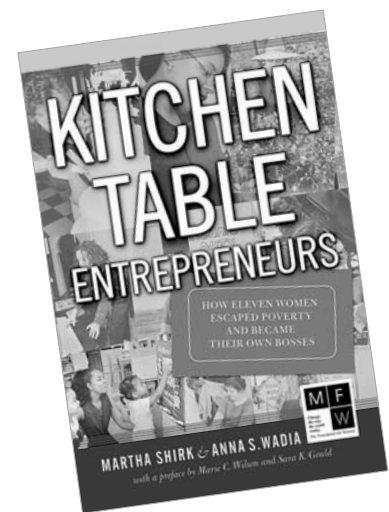
Change
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Ms. Foundation for Women

FALL 2002

Small Businesses, Big Dreams

At a time when the nation is facing tough economic issues, the Ms. Foundation for Women is telling the stories of eleven women who drew on their strength, talent and determination to overcome poverty. Our new book, *Kitchen Table Entrepreneurs: How Eleven Women Escaped Poverty and Became Their Own Bosses*, is an inspiring inside look at how microenterprise strategies, supported for over a decade by the Ms. Foundation, help real women.



Kitchen Table Entrepreneurs will introduce you to women like Roselyn Spotted Eagle, who lives in Shannon County in South Dakota, the poorest county in the United States. Co-authors Martha Shirk and Anna Wadia, Ms. Foundation Director of Program, tell us, "Roselyn Spotted Eagle's \$8,000-a-year income from her crafts

continued inside...

MISSION STATEMENT

The Ms. Foundation supports the efforts of women and girls to govern their own lives and influence the world around them. Through its leadership, expertise and financial support, the Foundation champions an equitable society by effecting change in public consciousness, law, philanthropy and social policy.

Beliefs and Values Statement

Our work is guided by our vision of a just and safe world where power and possibility are not limited by gender, race, class or sexual orientation. We believe that equity and inclusion are the cornerstones of a true democracy in which the worth and dignity of every person is valued.

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Letter from the President and Executive Director



Henry Leutyler

Dear Friends,

As the 30th anniversary of Roe v. Wade approaches, we have much cause to celebrate, but the struggle to retain, and in many cases regain, our reproductive rights continues. Over the years, debate has shifted from the national to the state level and the Ms. Foundation followed suit, supporting those who tirelessly fight the less publicized, but crucial, battles with state legislatures. The recent cases in Florida and Iowa (see cover story) are not unique to those states, and will not be the last word from those who seek to police motherhood and take away the right of women to decide what is best for their own health and well-being.

This important anniversary reminds us just how far we have come, despite the obstacles still in our way. Reflecting on the last three decades of our work, we realize that supporting state-level reproductive rights work was a major turning point for us, but it is only one instance of how we have always shifted with the environment and the changing needs of women and girls. Over ten years ago, when women told us it was essential to create jobs in their communities, we turned to a solution proven in many countries, but little known in the United States: microenterprise development. Despite doubts from the wider economic development field, the Ms. Foundation showed that women could start very small, often home-based, businesses and thereby improve their lives.

Today, we are a widely acknowledged leader in this field, receiving a Presidential Award for Microenterprise Development and other accolades. We have recently released a fabulous new book, *Kitchen Table Entrepreneurs*, that demonstrates that microenterprise is not an esoteric financial strategy; it touches and transforms real women's lives (see "Small Businesses, Big Dreams"). Please read and share this book with others; we know that you will be moved as deeply by the stories as we were.

December marks another important milestone: World AIDS Day, celebrated every year on December 1. The rise of HIV and AIDS in women and girls is yet another area where the Ms. Foundation took the lead, funding organizations that are led by and for women with HIV/AIDS to ensure that their unique health concerns are addressed by the medical and legislative communities. Our Women and AIDS Fund was started six years ago and is still the only national fund that addresses the effect of HIV/AIDS on women and girls, despite the fact that women and girls comprise the fastest growing population of new cases in this country. As long as AIDS research remains focused on men, the Ms. Foundation will continue to fight for recognition of women's unique needs.

Since our inception, the Ms. Foundation has consistently listened to the women and girls most closely connected to the problems as the source of the best solutions, and with your support we have funded their solutions. As you know, our work is far from over. As the Foundation evolves to best meet the challenges of our changing world, we hope to count on your continued support.

Marie C. Wilson Sara K. Gould

Marie C. Wilson
President

Sara K. Gould
Executive Director



cover story

Threats from State Legislatures continued...

“Every year, we fight late-term abortion bills, parental consent proposals, and cuts to Planned Parenthood’s funding. Fortunately, we’ve managed to prevent passage or overturn all the anti-choice bills that have been passed, but it’s getting more difficult. The anti-choice groups are becoming more sophisticated.”

COLOR is already contending with a recently passed bill including fetuses in state child insurance plans—a move that undermines abortion law by defining a fetus as a person. In addition, COLOR anticipates seeing insidious regulatory measures such as building codes so difficult to meet that abortion clinics would be forced to shut down. Melanie stated, “We’ve already seen such legislation taking hold in other states, and building codes are something that would be very difficult for us to fight.”

Still, Melanie remains optimistic in both her role as President of COLOR and a board member of Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains. Each year, COLOR organizes, along with Protect Families Protect Choice coalition, a Lobby Day at the state capitol, bringing an essential, and often overlooked, Latina viewpoint to senators’ offices. COLOR also fills a much-needed function in the community: providing reproductive health information to Latinas and their families, succeeding where other health professionals often fail.

“Although we discuss things like sex and contraceptives that are considered taboo, we work within Latino cultural norms to meet our goals,” Melanie said. “For example, our Healthy



COLOR staff and board members unveil the Healthy Women Healthy Families logo at a press conference.

Women Healthy Families initiative, designed in cooperation with Latinas, takes one of the most important Latino cultural values—that of family—and uses it to educate women about their reproductive health choices. Our argument is that when women are healthy, and when they have the information to make choices, then their families are healthy.”

Whether lobbying at the state level, or giving workshops to Latina youth in high schools, Melanie’s main focus is to give women, especially young women, choices. However, she acknowledges that the road ahead will be rough. “Our state legislature includes more pro-choice than anti-choice policymakers right now, which helps to prevent passage of many anti-choice bills,” she stated. “However, elections are coming up in November, and many seats are being contested—I won’t know what kinds of battles we’re going to be fighting until after elections. But COLOR will keep fighting to ensure that women in Colorado have the knowledge and the power they need to make their own health choices.”

Small Businesses, Big Dreams continued...

business on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation might not seem like much to most people. But for Roselyn and her disabled daughter and grandchild, it has meant being able to move from a tiny cabin with a three-bedroom mobile home with not just a bathroom, but a washer and dryer.”

Roselyn is just one of the many courageous, talented and spirited women across the nation who have started their own small businesses to support themselves and their families. Find out how she, and ten other women, succeeded in meeting their goals and dreams. *Kitchen Table Entrepreneurs* is available in bookstores everywhere, or visit www.ms.foundation.org to purchase the book online.

Expanding Your Giving: Supporting the Ms. Foundation's Endowment

In today's challenging times, women's leadership and solutions to society's most pressing problems are crucial. If the Ms. Foundation is to make a meaningful impact, it must have the financial freedom and flexibility to move swiftly and efficiently to give women and girls the resources they need to change the world.

We gain much of that flexibility from annual gifts from our supporters. As the year draws to a close, you may be considering your year-end gifts to organizations such as the Ms. Foundation for Women. Annual donations are an excellent way to

research and development, and create new agendas for the future. This is essential to our organization's recognized hallmark: tackling ideas that others find unpopular or impossible—and succeeding.

In addition, our endowment provides us with stability, ensuring that we will remain an enduring institution that will always be there for the women, girls, and communities who need us most. A permanent base of support is the best way to guarantee that the Ms. Foundation will continue to act as an advocate for women and girls well into the future.

Our endowment enables us to move quickly in times of great need or opportunity, invest in research and development, and create new agendas for the future. This is essential to our recognized hallmark: tackling ideas that others find unpopular or impossible—and succeeding.

support the organization, giving us the necessary financial means to move our work on behalf of women and girls forward. In addition, your gifts are put to immediate use in the same year we receive them.

Did you know that another way to support the Ms. Foundation is to make a gift to our endowment? If you are interested in giving immediate and long-term support, an endowment gift is excellent option. This year, as you consider your annual contribution, we hope that you will also think about investing in the Ms. Foundation's future.

Established in 1986, our endowment greatly enhances our work, giving us more financial flexibility to create innovative programs that meet the needs of women and girls. Our endowment also enables us to move quickly in times of great need or opportunity, invest in

The larger our endowment, the greater our ability to tackle the toughest issues, identify and fund the cutting-edge solutions, and anticipate and plan for the future. Many of our counterparts in philanthropy making comparable annual grants have an average endowment of close to \$68 million. The Ms. Foundation's endowment currently stands at \$17 million. As we move ahead, we need enough of our own funds to do vital work and the ability to put our money where we want it to be. This will ensure that what we have worked for will continue and grow, protected against social and economic pressures. For this, we need your help. You can support our endowment in several ways.

- Make a direct gift to the endowment. Consider expanding your annual contribution by adding a gift designated for the Ms. Foundation's endowment.

You can even make this enduring gift in honor or in memory of someone special in your life. As with all gifts to the Ms. Foundation, endowment contributions are fully tax-deductible.

- Give to the Gloria Steinem Fund. Each year, Gloria Steinem uses the interest from her fund, which is part of the Ms. Foundation's overall endowment, to help activists across the country transform the lives of women and girls. Contributing to this fund not only enhances our endowment, it increases the resources Gloria has to directly support the work of courageous women.

- Leave a bequest for the endowment. Creating a bequest or trust naming the Ms. Foundation as a beneficiary of your estate is one of the best ways to make certain your commitment to transforming the lives of women and girls will continue to impact future generations. One of the most important decisions you will make about your finances is what kind of legacy you want to leave.

Moving forward, the Ms. Foundation expects to greatly expand our work to realize our mission of helping women and girls govern their own lives and influence the world around them. However, we can only do this with permanent resources and support. We hope that you will consider making this crucial investment in the capabilities and dreams of today's and tomorrow's women and girls.

If you are interested in making a gift to the Ms. Foundation for Women, please contact Dagmar Kohring at (212) 742-2300 ext. 411 or dkohring@ms.foundation.org.



ms. bits

Marie C. Wilson Opens the NASDAQ Stock Market

On August 7, 2002, Marie C. Wilson joined NASDAQ host Doreen Davis-Owen, Vice President of Nasdaq International, to preside over the Market Open. Joined by Ms. Foundation employees, family, and friends, Wilson rang the opening bell in a ceremony broadcast live on networks such as Bloomberg, CNBC, CNN, CNNfn, and FoxNews.



Marie C. Wilson sounds the opening bell at NASDAQ.

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Laughing for a Cause

On October 22, 2002, we laughed for a great cause at the Ms. Foundation's 14th Annual Comedy Hour at Carolines on Broadway! This year's show was co-hosted by Marie C. Wilson and Gloria Steinem, and presented by Caroline P. Hirsch. Friends and donors laughed the night away as they were entertained by the savvy wit of comedians Caroline Rhea, Kate Clinton, Mimi Gonzalez, Vickie Shaw, Kathleen Madigan, and Aisha Tyler.

EmPOWERment to the People

Mark your calendars for the 12th Institute for Women's Economic EmPOWERment! Hundreds of economic development and economic justice advocates will gather in Austin, Texas, on April 3-6, 2003, to learn about the latest issues in their field, make connections, and exchange ideas to move their work forward. Registration starts in November; for a copy of the registration brochure, visit the Ms. Foundation website at www.ms.foundation.org or call (212) 742-2300 ext. 317.

Funding Women's and Girls' Leadership: Recent Grants

In June 2002, the Ms. Foundation for Women distributed \$685,000 in grants through several of our program areas.

Safety. The **Safety Program** made 11 grants to programs targeting marginalized communities in addressing violence against women. These groups are exploring alternative strategies that strengthen communities while working on ending violence against women and girls. In addition, several smaller Safety grants have been made throughout the year for technical assistance and special activities.

Women and AIDS. The **Women and AIDS Fund** made grants in June 2002 to four new organizations. The new grantees are located in Texas, New Jersey, Louisiana and southern California, and work to ensure that the needs of women affected by HIV/AIDS are recognized and addressed.

Reproductive Rights. Also in June 2002, the **Reproductive Rights Coalition and Organizing Fund (RRCOF)** made grants to 16 groups across the country. Grantees represent organizations working on sexuality education, state and nationwide choice campaigns, the de-criminalization of women, and youth leadership for young women of color. Included in the 16 groups were two grants made out of RRCOF's **Welfare Reform Initiative** to groups organizing against the attacks on reproductive rights within current welfare reform legislation. Grantees represent states as far ranging as Alaska, Montana and South Carolina. In addition, in July 2002, the **New Partners, New Initiatives Fund (NPNI)** re-granted seven of its eight original grantee organizations. NPNI supports non-traditional reproductive rights groups in their efforts to take on the issue of youth access to sexuality education. NPNI is in its second of three years and gives grants to groups in the states of Washington and Arizona.

Women and Labor. The **Women and Labor Fund** made seven grants to build women's leadership in labor unions. The organizations funded work on a wide range of issues from living wage, to building community support for unions and cultivating the leadership skills of young women.

For more information on these Ms. Bits, visit www.ms.foundation.org.

Acknowledging World AIDS Day at Home

- On December 1, 2002, people around the globe will commemorate World AIDS Day. This year's event focuses on ending the stigma still experienced by HIV positive individuals. Patricia Jerido, Program Officer for the Ms. Foundation's Women and AIDS Fund, offers these suggestions for bringing World AIDS Day to your community:

- Find out what your workplace policies on HIV/AIDS are, especially around discrimination, hiring, and healthcare. World AIDS Day is a great time to either let your employees know about or launch such policies. You can also include news about the Day in your regular employee newsletter or bulletin.

www.ms.foundation.org

For more ideas and resources, please visit www.ms.foundation.org.

- Volunteer at an HIV/AIDS organization in your community.
- Organize a World AIDS Day event. It doesn't need to be a large event; it can be as simple as a candlelight vigil, a discussion, or a display that gets people thinking and talking about HIV/AIDS issues.



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