

**THE WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION
OF COLORADO**

www.wfco.org

*Give the money
to spread the knowledge
to power the change
to alter the future
for women and girls
in Colorado.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**The Women's Foundation of Colorado
Raises Close to \$850,000 at Annual Luncheon**

Comedienne and Co-Host of ABC's The View Joy Behar Keynotes

WFCO Honorary Trustee Merle C. Chambers Makes Matching Gift Announcement

DENVER, COLO. (November 25, 2008) – Laughter, joy and giving echoed through the walls of the Colorado Convention Center on November 13, 2008, as approximately 2,400 donors, friends, community leaders and corporate sponsors came together for The Women's Foundation of Colorado's (WFCO) 21st annual fundraising luncheon with keynote speaker, comedienne and co-host of ABC's *The View*, Joy Behar.

A WFCO Honorary Trustee, Merle C. Chambers made a generous gift announcement during the luncheon to match every gift or new pledge up to \$50,000 to the Fill the Purse Campaign. Chambers is a former WFCO board chairwoman, and longtime supporter of the WFCO and has included the foundation in her enduring philanthropic legacy to help support the organization's mission to improve the lives of women and girls in Colorado.

"We are thrilled with the turnout and success driven at our annual luncheon," said Gretchen Gagel McComb, president & CEO of the WFCO. "From Joy's humorous keynote of a woman on a mission to success to Merle's incredibly generous matching gift offer, we are so pleased with the event as a whole. Through the money raised we are able to continue to fund programs and studies to help create positive change for women and girls in Colorado and guide them on a path to economic self-sufficiency."

In addition to the keynote and speakers at the luncheon, the organization announced its *Fill the Purse* campaign (www.fillthepurse.org) to raise money and awareness to help reduce the Colorado high school girls' dropout rate and continue to support research and advocacy efforts. During the luncheon, 9 candy-apple red purse sculptures made out of fiberglass and resin, representing different communities in Colorado, were unveiled and will be roaming throughout the state over the next nine months, to be filled with donations at regional events and outreach programs.

The goal of the *Fill the Purse* campaign is to raise \$1 million by July 2009; that \$1 million will be a part of the WFCO's larger *Power the Change* endowment campaign, which aims to raise a total of \$15 million by July 2009. The *Power the Change* endowment campaign will:

- Provide funding so the WFCO can support research pertaining to why girls drop out of school
- Increase grant funding for both women and girls
- Sustain and increase awareness around the state about the pressing needs of women and girls
- Assist in public policy pertaining to issues affecting girls
- Improve financial stability for research, education, public policy and grantmaking

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-more-

“Suffragette Elizabeth Cady Stanton once said, ‘a woman will always be dependent until she holds a purse of her own,’ therefore, the WFCO is working to *Fill the Purse* to help build a better future for Colorado’s women and girls,” said McComb.

To make a donation or a new pledge, visit www.wfco.org. To make a donation or a new pledge to the *Fill the Purse* campaign, visit www.fillthepurse.org or visit its Facebook page at http://apps.facebook.com/causes/129748?m=8c3a5226&recruiter_id=13214014.

The 21st annual luncheon was co-chaired by Arlene Hirschfeld and Caz Matthews. The co-presenting sponsors were Bank of Choice and Holme Roberts & Owen LLP. The corporate partner was the Gay & Lesbian Fund for Colorado; the media partners were Comcast, CBS4, the Post-News Community and Denver Woman. The speaker sponsor was Aetna and the VIP reception sponsor was Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield.

The Women’s Foundation of Colorado

Think Big. Be Bold. Make Change. This is **The Women’s Foundation of Colorado’s** mission. Since 1987, The WFCO has invested millions in nonprofit organizations throughout the state to dramatically change the lives of Colorado’s women and girls. Through research, education, advocacy and collaboration, The WFCO sets the agenda and leads systemic change, creating greater opportunities for women and girls to succeed in the 21st century economy. The goal of the foundation is for every woman in Colorado is economically self-sufficient, and every girl in Colorado is on the path to economic self-sufficiency in adulthood. We believe that changes in public policy will have the greatest impact in assisting women in their efforts to achieve economic self-sufficiency. For more information visit www.wfco.org or call 303-285-2960.

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