



## Women's Crisis Support ~ Defensa de Mujeres

### INCREDIBLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS!

By Laura Segura Gallardo, Executive Director

2009 has proven to be one of the most challenging years in the history of Women's Crisis Support~Defensa de Mujeres. We have survived the Governor's elimination of the state's domestic violence funding which caused our revenue decreases to soar to 40% over the past three years.

Despite the drastic setbacks, we remain resilient and prepared to carry our out mission. WCS-DdM is undergoing a restructuring to focus on core services, improve the quality of services, and strengthen service delivery systems. We received some temporary state funds for this fiscal year and have reopened on Fridays and added an Advocate to help with restraining orders. We have consolidated our Watsonville offices into one building, creating stronger teamwork, saving the agency much needed

money, and centralizing services.

We anticipate similar cuts to our State grants in 2010. However, the Board of Directors has developed an aggressive fund development plan that includes raising \$315,000 over the next two years to help continue services and keep the agency sustainable for years to come.

I am very proud of our work. Even with the layoffs we made this year and being forced to close our offices on Fridays, we have continued to provide the majority of services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in Santa Cruz County. That is an incredible accomplishment! I am inspired by each and every employee and volunteer who commits themselves to helping those in crisis, who often have no where else to turn to for help.

Happy Holidays and Peace on Earth!

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### Thank You To Anastasia Torres-Gil

#### Board President

We offer our sincerest gratitude to Anastasia Torres-Gil for her service to the agency as President for the last two years. Anastasia has served two full terms as President, worked on the Fundraising, Finance and Governance committees, assisted with special events, and donated original artwork as auction items.

Thank you Anastasia! Your hard work and commitment has been invaluable to the agency during these challenging times!



## HOW COULD I NOT?

by Christine Jennifer, WCS~DdM Donor

There are many faces of domestic violence. I'm one of those faces. Chances are, you'd never guess it from just looking at me. On the surface, I look 'normal' enough. Educated, articulate, employable. Just the same as anyone else, I navigated the ho hum ins and outs of daily living— raising kids, work, errands, etc. On the surface, my life looked as 'normal' as my own reflection. But underneath the obvious, I barely existed – living a tumultuous, tormented life filled with fear and shame. I kept my true voice locked up and hidden, even from myself. I played dodge ball 24/7, intuitively side-stepping, glossing over and placating. Hiding my reality.

For me, it was the love of my children that motivated me to confront my own demons, and drum up the courage to ask for help. Wow, did I need it. A lifetime of cover-up can take a very long time and a lot of work to unravel. I've needed a lot of help, which has been humbling to say the least. Put your best face forward, do it yourself and push on. Make it work at all costs had become my modus operandi, much to my and my family's detriment.

I've never actually seen Al Gore's documentary, The Inconvenient Truth, but I love the title. So rarely is the truth convenient, but I now believe it's always worth upholding.

Bringing things to light, exposing the beast of domestic violence, doesn't necessarily make everything great and happy. Frankly, domestic violence is a royal pain and a seemingly endless drain on a community's resources. It's a can of worms, and the casualties are typically women and children. One big muddy mess with far-reaching read-out. But if it takes a village to raise a child, most certainly I think it must take a village to rescue one.

So I am thankful to have moved beyond 'survival' into life, and to have an opportunity to offer my children something far bigger and broader than I'd ever known or experienced. I'm thankful to the friends, counselors, attorneys, doctors who were willing to help. And I'm ever-thankful and remembering of the people who offered me profound comfort when they said, 'I believe you.'

So for me, it's not 'why do I support WCS~DdM' – it's more like 'how could I not?' What's the point in getting pulled out of the combat zone, if you can't go back in and help the wounded who are still takin' it out on the front lines? Resources are strapped. Statewide financial support for domestic violence is waning, but the need for services is still great, and unfortunately ever-increasing. I feel honored and privileged to help support a community I love.



*'Make it work at all costs' had become my modus operandi*

Special thanks to the following who donated goods and services for our facilities:  
Santa Cruz Rotary Club, Talmadge Construction, Ferguson Plumbing Supply, Luke Plumbing, the Loma Prieta Club, and Rafael Torres-Gil.

**WCS~DdM is supported by your contributions and the following funders:** The California Emergency Management Agency, the California Department of Public Health, the County of Santa Cruz, the Cities of Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Capitola and Scotts Valley, the Blue Shield of California Foundation, Verizon Wireless Hopeline Program, the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County, and our Corporate Sponsors, Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP, Chaminade, and Dominican Hospital.

## 2009 Employee of the Year – Maria Barranco

For the first time, WCS~DdM has decided to honor an employee for outstanding performance during the past year. This year's winner was an easy choice—Maria Barranco, Lead Shelter Advocate.

Maria's origins are in Oaxaca, Mexico, where there is a high rate of domestic violence. When she graduated from UC Santa Cruz with a BA in Sociology, she wanted to apply her expertise to help victims of domestic violence. She came to work for WCS~DdM in 2002.

Maria has served the agency as a Crisis Intervention Advocate, a Shelter Advocate, and, finally, as the Lead Shelter Advocate. Maria now supervises the agency's 24-hour emergency response system, ensuring that victim assistance is available at all times.

In addition to serving clients, Maria has also served her co-workers, by acting as Union Shop Steward for the last four years.

Maria says she loves her program. Not only is she working with a great group of people, but "sheltering women and knowing you can save their life" is very important to her.

Maria has made a big impact in her position as Lead Shelter Advocate. The agency's emergency response

system is working more smoothly than ever under her guidance. Not only is she meticulous in her work, but she is always willing to go the extra mile to take care of whatever needs to be done, whether it's a Spanish translation of instructions for using the shelter oven, or accompanying a sexual assault victim to a forensic examination.

Maria, we honor you for your outstanding work during 2009!



## ¡LOGROS INCREÍBLES!

Por Laura Segura Gallardo, Directora Ejecutiva

2009 ha sido el año más difícil en la historia de WCS~DdM. Hemos sobrevivido la eliminación por el Gobernador de los fondos estatales para víctimas de violencia doméstica que provocaba que nuestros ingresos disminuyen por 40 % durante los últimos tres años.

A pesar de los reveses drásticos, continuamos resistente y dispuestos a llevar a cabo a nuestra misión. WCS~DdM está experimentando con una reestructuración para centralizar los servicios básicos, mejorar la calidad de los servicios, y fortalecer los sistemas de proveer servicios a nuestras clientes. Hemos recibido algunos fondos temporales del estado para este año fiscal para reabrir las oficinas los viernes y agregar una empleada para ayudar con ordenes de restricción. Hemos consolidado las oficinas de Watsonville en un edificio, creando un equipo más fuerte, ahorrando di-

nero muy necesario, y centralizando los servicios.

Anticipamos recortes similares del Estado en 2010. Sin embargo, los Directores han desarrollado un plan agresivo para recaudar fondos que incluye una meta de aumentar los fondos por \$315,000 en los próximos dos años para ayudar la continuación de los servicios y mantener la Agencia sostenible durante los años que viene.

Me siento muy orgullosa de nuestro trabajo. A pesar de los despidos que hicimos este año y la obligación de cerrar las oficinas los viernes, hemos continuado de proporcionar la mayoría de los servicios a las víctimas de la violencia doméstica y el asalto sexual en el Condado de Santa Cruz. ¡Es un logro increíble! me inspira cada uno de nuestros empleados y voluntarios que se comprometen a ayudar a aquellos en crisis, que no tienen otros recursos para obtener ayuda.

¡¡Felices Fiestas y Paz en La Tierra!



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## *Women's Crisis Support ~ Defensa de Mujeres*

Services for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault:

- 24-Hour crisis line and emergency response
- Emergency Shelter
- Legal assistance
- Individual counseling
- Services for children and teens
- Domestic Violence support groups
- Community education, workshops and outreach

All services are available in English and Spanish and are free or low-cost.

Servicios para sobrevivientes de asalto sexual ó violencia doméstica.

- Línea de crisis y respuesta de emergencia las 24 horas
- Refugio de emergencia
- Asistencia legal
- Consejería individual
- Servicios para jóvenes y niños
- Grupos de apoyo para sobrevivientes de violencia doméstica
- Educación, talleres y alcance comunitario

Todos los servicios son disponibles en español e inglés, y son gratis ó a bajo costo.

### **WEBSITE:**

**WCS-DDM.ORG**

Office Hours: Mondays-Fridays, 9-5  
425-4030 or 722-4532

Horas de Oficina: Lunes-Viernes 9-5  
722-4532 o 425-4030