

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY CAMPAIGN

Investing in Women to Build a Better Future for All



the WOMEN'S FOUNDATION of CALIFORNIA



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OUR MISSION

The Women's Economic Security Campaign (WESC) is dedicated to increasing opportunity for low-income women and their families. Our tools include public policy, advocacy, education and grant making to organizations that strive to eliminate poverty by helping women in need.

WESC was launched through the combined efforts and leadership of four regionally diverse women's funds -- the Chicago Foundation for Women, the Washington Area Women's Foundation, the Women's Foundation of California and the Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis. Working in collaboration with the Women's Funding Network, we seek to harness the voice and power of women's foundations nationwide to improve the lives of low-income women.

Women's funds have invested nearly \$500 million over the last 20 years and have over \$456 million in collective working assets. Women's funds collectively invest in women and women-led solutions to systemic root causes of poverty. We have worked to improve women's economic security through both local outreach and longer-term policy change on issues such as paid sick leave, pay equity and quality child care. Through our extensive connections as community leaders and funders, we have the ability to bring together experts and advocates from across the political spectrum. Together, we intend to reframe the debate on improving our nation's economy to include greater support for programs and policies that create opportunity for low-income women and their children.

More than 56 percent of America's 37.3 million low-income people are female. Of the nation's 12.8 million children living in poverty, 8.5 million are being raised in single-parent households -- 89 percent of which are headed by women. We believe, and research has consistently shown, that helping these women move out of poverty is the most effective way to boost economic security for all America's struggling families.

OUR GOALS

WESC focuses our efforts in three primary areas:

1. Increasing awareness among policy makers, opinion leaders and the public about how policy affects women's economic security;
2. Creating, strengthening and protecting policies and practices that support the ability of women and their children to achieve economic security;
3. Demonstrating the value of women's funds in efforts to reduce poverty.

OUR ACTIVITIES

In 2009 and 2010 WESC will expand its reach and influence through a variety of efforts, including:

- A series of policy briefs aimed at promoting legislative efforts and programs that would create more jobs for low-income women with children, and give them the training and supports they need to move ahead.
- Coordinated efforts through the Women's Funding Network to actively engage women's funds across the country in key policy debates, including information sessions, op-ed and letter-writing campaigns, meetings with policy makers and grant making. The emphasis will be on linking the experiences of grantees and the women they serve to the national policy conversation on women's economic security and job creation.
- A series of policy meetings and forums that bring together our extensive network of opinion leaders, ranging from local advocates to national experts and policy makers, to stimulate dialogue on how to create greater economic security for low-income women.

WESC is supported by the Ford Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Sara Lee Foundation, and the Lira Foundation

