

PRO- CHOICE RESOURCES

advocacy, access, education & empowerment

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PCR NEWSLETTER

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IN CHALLENGING TIMES THE WORK MUST CONTINUE FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I recently read somewhere that "business goes on, whatever the economic conditions." It seems a simple statement, but the underlying issues are so complex. For sure, it is a tough time for many of us, but I am reminded everyday why it is essential that our services are available in the communities we serve.

As you read our newsletter you will hear testimonies from those who have benefited from our services. You will be informed about the exciting new work we are doing around comprehensive sex education on college campuses. You will hear first hand the importance of volunteering your time to

PCR, and you will see how we plan to meet the rising community needs in expanding our programming to neighborhoods across the Twin Cities. You will also begin to understand the difficult decisions we have had to make with the closure of the Abortion Provider Expansion Project.

At PCR we are taking the steps to ensure our viability; new funding sources have been secured, we have reduced operating expenses and we have made important management and financial adjustments to the organization. These choices are sometimes painful and have a human impact on staff and our clients, but in order to sustain the work we provide in the community, they are necessary decisions.

As we move forward we will work on enhancing

the strength of our organization and being good stewards of the resources entrusted to our care. We are humbled by the outpour of support for our programming that was realized through the very successful 16th annual Bowl-a-Thon, and we appreciate the generosity shown even in these difficult financial times.

We are excited to provide a new segment in our newsletter called Mission Moment. This new feature will focus on the direct impact our services have on our community members in their own words. We hope you will recognize how these words capture the essence and the core of why the work must continue; and how they demonstrate that when we invest our time and financial resources in our communities, we all benefit and thrive.

PCR Mission Moment

PCR's mission is to aide women and youth in realizing their right to make decisions about their bodies; and to break down the barriers to reproductive health that keep people from expressing their personal freedom.

us for assistance has her own unique circumstances surrounding the choice to terminate her pregnancy. One HAAF recipient recently shared this story with us, in her own words:

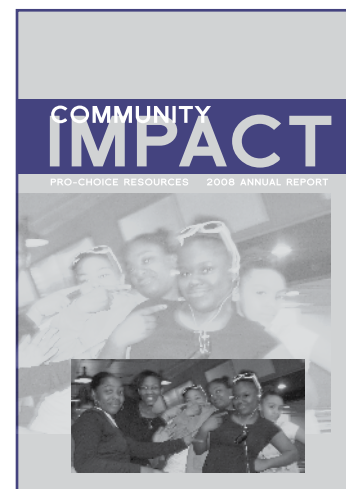
"I was 29 with a 11 year old and a 2 year old, I was in a very bad abusive relationship with a man and I got pregnant, I knew from the start that I couldn't keep the baby, I knew that I would be stuck and have to take the abuse forever, and even worse I knew that my children would have to endure the abuse if I stayed. I had nowhere to go, no money and no one to talk to. I called the Hersey Abortion Assistance Fund number and for the first time in 2 months I felt I could breathe again, the lady that I talked to seemed so caring and understanding. They don't just give you money they help you emotionally and when you go through something like that it means more than all the money in the world. I could never thank them enough. And just so you know I got rid of the boyfriend, and me and my 2 kids have never been better. Thank you so much!"

HAAF works to make choice a reality for ALL women. Due to the current economic crisis, our funding hotline has seen a large increase in calls. To donate to the Hersey Fund, or to read more stories from HAAF recipients, please visit our website at www.prochoiceresources.org.

The Hersey Abortion Assistance Fund (HAAF) helps low-income women and girls pay for abortions. Last year we gave \$120,000 to over 700 women and girls across the country that couldn't afford an abortion and wouldn't have been able to make their choice a reality without our help. Each woman that contacts

Annual Report Now Available

PCR's 2007-2008 annual report is now available for download at our website. Please visit www.prochoiceresources.org or contact us to receive a copy.



Abortion Provider Expansion Project News

Like many other nonprofits, foundations, and companies, the economic downturn has had an impact on Pro-Choice Resources (PCR).

In response to the current budget constraints facing both PCR and NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota Foundation, our organizations made the very difficult decision to discontinue our joint program - the Abortion Provider Expansion Project (APEP).

APEP was established in collaboration with PCR and NARAL in 2002 in response to a combination of two key factors: extraordinarily high rates of unintended pregnancy in the United States and a growing shortage of medical professionals trained to provide contraceptive counseling and abortion care. APEP addressed this deficit by working at the root of the problem: the medical and nursing educational systems. APEP sought to increase the number of medical and surgical abortion providers by supporting pro-choice activists, nursing students, medical residents and physicians in their efforts to gain experience and training, and providing services and resources to directly combat the multitude of barriers that keep many individual medical professionals from providing comprehensive reproductive healthcare to all of their patients.

The effectiveness and impact of the APEP program has been remarkable. Over the past 7 years, APEP was able to meet all of our long-term programmatic goals, filling a critical gap in the continuum of quality reproductive healthcare in our community. We value the foundation, community and strategic partnerships and individual support that allowed us to be successful.

Although we are ending this program, we believe that many nurses, medical students, residents and doctors will continue to benefit from the infrastructure that we have been able to create and support over the term of this program.

Volunteer Spotlight: Mary Walters

We recently caught up with former Hersey Abortion Fund volunteer, Mary Walters, to discuss her volunteer experience with PCR.

When did you start volunteering at PCR?
I began working with PCR in the fall of 2008 with the intention of volunteering my time with Art for Choice, and eventually with other events as my time would permit. At the onset of my involvement, I was struck with the evolution of PCR's programs and services over 42 years of staunch support of reproductive justice.



What did you enjoy about volunteering at PCR?

In my short time as a PCR volunteer, I've come to enjoy the enthusiastic staff, board and volunteers, all promoters of empowerment and fun. I think my most enjoyable experience was fundraising for the Bowl-a-Thon. With support from the shared ideas of fellow participants and the encouraging "break-it-down" e-mails from Wendy, aka the bowl-a-thon guru, I exceeded my aggressive fundraising goal, and felt the satisfaction of knowing I played a role in achieving record breaking earnings. I did, however, reveal my abysmal bowling score of 57 to my daughter Emily who responded, "Good thing the success of PCR doesn't hinge on your bowling abilities."

What's the best thing about volunteering with PCR?

This year, each Wednesday evening for 3 months I answered calls to the Hersey Abortion Assistance Fund from women in need of financial aid for abortions. Without a doubt, fulfilling requests for monetary assistance, especially now when economic straits are claiming more and more women, was the best place for me to be focusing my time

If a friend asked you why they should volunteer here, what would you tell them?

"Well, first I would say that the women who work at PCR are inspiring and if a friend asked me why they should volunteer for PCR, I would tell them that we provide essential services to women and youth in a grassroots manner that depends upon its volunteers.

Thank You Bowl-a-Thon Sponsors!

PCR expresses our deepest gratitude to the following businesses and individuals who supported our 16th annual Bowl-a-Thon. [Please support these businesses who support our work!](#)

Bryant Lake Bowl	Minnesota AIDS Project
Michael Birawer	Treadle Yard Goods
Paintings	Northstar Roller Girls
Fairy Godmother	Spot Spa
Bibelot	The Fun Sisters
Peace Coffee	Pilates Uptown
Hell's Kitchen	Edina Grill
Herkimer Pub & Brewery	Landmark Theatre
Nook & Cranny	Uptown Minneapolis
Park Tavern Bowling &	Wellness Center
Entertainments Center	Common Good Books
NARAL Pro-Choice	Best Wishes Floral
Minnesota Foundation	Linden Hills Co-Op
Hair Police	Half Price Books
Joe's Garage	Rocco Altobelli Salon &
Olive Salon	Day Spa
Brent at Juut	Alexis Baily Vineyards
View Restaurant Lounge	Vine Park Brewery
Our Bodies Ourselves	Palomino Restaurant
Brave New Workshop	Tangle Town Gardens
YWCA Minneapolis	Chowgirls Killer
J&S Bean Factory	Catering
Urban Animal	Solera
May Day Books	45th Parallel Vodka
Casper & Runyon's	Boulevard Gardens &
Nook & Shamrocks	Floral
Bar Abilene	
Comedy Sportz	<i>Individuals</i>
Galactic Pizza	Kathryn Glessing
Fine Line Music Cafe	Channing Riggs
Noodles & Company	

👉 Bowl-a-Thon Sets Fundraising Records

On Thursday, March 26th Pro-Choice bowlers from across the metro area converged on Bryant Lake Bowl to have fun and raise money and awareness for reproductive rights. With your help and support, we raised \$52,383 this year making it the highest grossing Bowl-a-Thon ever!

PCR would like to thank all of those who donated and participated in this year's event. We couldn't have done it without you.

Below are photos of four bowl-a-thon teams having good times.



Emerge Expands to St. Paul

PCR's EmERGE after-abortion discussion and support group will begin holding sessions at the Rice St. Library in St. Paul on June 1st. The group, a collaboration between Pro-Choice Resources and Chrysalis/Tubman Family Alliance, has been run for over two years out of Chrysalis' South Minneapolis location. The group will continue to be held in South Minneapolis as well as St. Paul so that we are able to better serve women from throughout the Twin Cities Greater Metro Area with the only pro-choice after-abortion support group in the state.

EmERGE is a discussion and support group for women who have had an abortion. Women who participate in the group meet weekly, for six weeks, to share their individual experiences in a safe, respectful and supportive environment with other women who have had abortions.

The next EmERGE session begins on Monday, June 1st at the Rice St. Library in St. Paul from 6-8pm. Please call Melissa

Interested in supporting our programs?

Donate online at

www.prochoiceresources.org/donate.php

👉 The Birds & Bees Project is Organizing on College Campuses

In January, the Birds & Bees Project embarked on an exciting new endeavor to bring awareness of the importance of comprehensive sex education to three college campuses: Augsburg College, Minnesota State University-Mankato, and St. Cloud State University. Program coordinator Amy Kodet hired interns from each campus to work as part-time campus organizers throughout the spring semester: Kelli Carlson (SCSU), Stacy Marden (Augsburg), Nicole Goebel (MSU-Mankato) and Meg Martinson (MSU-Mankato).

Campus organizers experienced the unique successes and challenges of grassroots organizing on campuses for a new project, working to gain faculty support, inspire students to take action, and connect with community members. They started new student groups, or joined existing ones, to increase the amount of programming focused on sexual health and sexuality. The Birds & Bees Project sponsored a film & discussion at both SCSU and MSU-Mankato, and hosted workshops on Open Adoption and Healthy Sexuality at Augsburg. Great foundations were laid to continue this work over the next school year.

Birds & Bees Project organizers also broadened our understanding of the need for teachers to have further access to training to deliver effective sex education. In one meeting, a university staff person told us that she sees a definite need for teachers to have more training on teaching sex education in her community. She said that her kids were in middle school, and the sex education they received was dismal. In one class, the teacher was using a Red Cross HIV curriculum from the 1980s, when the virus that causes AIDS was referred to as HLTV-3. She also said that on a multiple choice anatomy exam, the correct answer wrongly informed students that eggs traveled down the fallopian tube due to gravity. Additionally, campus organizers conducted outreach to Education Majors to promote

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the Sexuality Education Shadowing Program. Twenty-four students have applied to-date to participate in a one-time "day in the life" observation of a sexuality educator during the

spring semester. This program is designed to help future educators understand that *what* young people are taught about sexuality is as important as *how* they are taught. One student said "this taught me a lot about the teaching methods that are the most successful, how to interact with different groups of students, and how to effectively lead parts of a class." Another participant said "I learned a lot about how to present this information in a way that gets the students' attention."

We look forward to providing additional updates to you about this work by Pro-Choice Resources' Birds & Bees Project to support current and future teachers to provide comprehensive sexuality education. We'd like to thank The Ford Foundation for supporting our Sexuality Education Residency, Campus Organizing and Research Initiative. We'd also like to thank our community partners who are offering students the opportunity to shadow: Annex Teen Clinic, Central MN Red Cross, Family Tree Clinic, Midwest Health Center for Women, NIP Uptown Clinic, Planned Parenthood, and West Suburban Teen Clinic.

Pro-ChoiceResources

PROMOTING EDUCATION & ACCESS

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ART FOR CHOICE

Oct 2nd, 2009 6:30-9:30pm
W Hotel - Minneapolis

**Mark your calendars for the hottest
pro-choice fundraiser of the year!**