The Mary Byron Foundation
Celebrating Solutions Award Nomination Form

Legal name of organization: University of Washington Foundation – Women’s Center

Program nominated for award: Women’s Center, University of Washington

Address: Box 351380

City/State/ZIP Code: Seattle, WA 98195

Contact person: Cara Mathison

Title: Development Director

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Description of organization:
Since its inception in 1978, the Women’s Center has tirelessly strived to improve the lives of women and men locally, nationally, and internationally through education, counseling, public policy influence, and life skills training. We serve over 13,000 people annually by providing community resources through our domestic violence and human trafficking prevention and research projects; supporting high school-aged girls interested in math, science and technology; and offering counseling to individuals who are considering returning to the University after a significant time away or who, for whatever reason, feel they need additional support and advice in making the transition into higher education.

Geographical area served: Puget Sound Region

Is organization tax-exempt under IRS 501(c)(3) guidelines? Yes

Signature of contact person: Cara Mathison

Date: 9/9/04
The Mary Byron Foundation
Celebrating Solutions Award Program Outline

1. Describe the mission of your organization in five sentences or less.

For the past 25 years the UW Women’s Center has had the privilege of working with individuals in order to better their lives. Ours is a vital center where women and men partner to build a culture of social justice, equity and non-violence, both domestically and globally. We strive to achieve our goals through the following programs:

*Violence Prevention and Human Trafficking*

*Research and Policy Development:*
The Women's Center leads research, activism and policy development around the issues of trafficking and violence against women by hosting international conferences and coalition-building advocacy.

*Re-Entry Program for Returning Students:*
We provide personalized counseling and support to individuals considering a return to college after a significant time away so that they succeed in achieving their graduate and undergraduate achievement goals.

*Making Connections:*
This program serves socio-economically disadvantaged high school students in the Seattle area by promoting college enrollment and offering career explorations in math, science and technology.

2. Describe the most innovative aspects of the program you are submitting for consideration.

*Background:*
Human trafficking is a problem in every part of our nation. Between 50,000 and 100,000 women – the data are far from accurate— are trafficked into the United States each year – primarily from impoverished communities in Asia and Eastern Europe – but also from Africa and Latin America. In 1998, more than 200 international mail order bride businesses operated in the United States, bringing up to 6,000 women each year into this country for marriage to American men — and many end up as battered, or murdered, wives. Sexual trafficking of women and girls across borders, within countries, and across state lines, is a big business that generates enormous profit for the traffickers.

Women and girls become victims of trafficking in a number of ways. Some are “bonded,” sold into indentured servitude or marriage by parents or guardians for financial gain. Though some families may be unaware of the nature of the service, there is evidence that an increasing number of parents, especially in Southeast Asia, knowingly sell daughters into the trafficking trade. Some women enter these marriages voluntarily.
Mail-order brides often lack knowledge of their spouses' previous marriages and potential criminal histories. In abusive mail-order marriages, husbands often make threats of deportation, and depend on isolation, helplessness, and lack of language skills to keep their victims in a subordinate situation.

Despite increasing attempts to police the trafficking trade, international authorities have been ineffective in dealing with the problem. According to Human Rights Watch, "although trafficking in women and girls has become a lucrative and expanding cross-border trade, it routinely escapes effective national and international sanctions."

Program:
The Women's Center and other concerned parties wanted to reach out to those women who are victimized and to the public to say: we want to understand more about the issue and consider some concrete actions to help the victims and punish the perpetrators.

To begin the process, the Women's Center helped form the Washington State Coalition Against Trafficking in concert with many other local, national, and international organizations in the belief that a coordinated plan was needed in Washington State to fight the trafficking industry.

As a result of a growth of awareness of the problem of trafficking in Washington State and worldwide, and a desire to commit public and private resources to fighting this trade in human beings, the Women's Center hosted two international conferences—one in 2001 and one in 2002. In this format, the coalition determined the steps necessary to create legislation to fight human trafficking. The participants in the conference included lawmakers, international scholars, government agencies, community activists, lawyers, policymakers, social workers, public servants, students, representatives from the business community, and victims of trafficking and their families.

The recommendations of workshop groups were discussed, amended, and approved by the conference participants, and agreed upon as a policy proposal for the state government and a message to the public. This culminated in the creation of the first statewide task force, spearheaded by Representative Velma Veloria.

As a result of focused and solution-oriented coalition building at the conferences, legislation making human trafficking a crime (HB 1175, SB 6412) was introduced and passed in the state of Washington in 2002. For the first time in U.S. history, state law criminalized the heinous acts of human trafficking. The women victimized by international marriage brokerage systems now have a legal path for recourse and protection.

Recently, coalition leaders were invited to Washington, D.C. to testify before national leaders about this international epidemic. In spring 2004, Sutapa Basu, Executive Director of the Women's Center; Velma Veloria, Washington State Representative 11th Legislative District; Norma Timbang, Former Executive Director of Asian & Pacific

3. Describe your program’s implementation. What barriers did your organization have to overcome? How did you marshal the necessary resources for implementation?

Time was of the essence. Two women brought to the Seattle area as mail-order brides were murdered by their husbands in the late 1990s. Statistics showed that between 50,000 and 100,000 women continued to be trafficked into the United States each year. Many of the men using international marriage brokerage systems (IMBs) have histories of violence and/or multiples uses of IMBs.

Mail-order brides are often illegal immigrants in the destination country and repeatedly punished more harshly than the traffickers themselves. The women involved do not have access to or do not know how to access health care, housing, education, and legal assistance. Fundamental to preventing violence against women being trafficked to America is state legislation criminalizing the acts committed against these women.

The Women’s Center struggled to communicate the vulnerable position of mail-order brides: because subjects of trafficking are frequently unfamiliar with the laws, cultures, and languages of the countries into which they have been trafficked, because they are often subjected to coercion and intimidation including physical detention and debt bondage, and because they often fear retribution and forcible removal to countries in which they will face retribution or other hardship, these women often find it difficult or impossible to report the crimes committed against them or to assist in the investigation and prosecution of such crimes.

Out of this lack of public understanding and resources was born a fierce desire to help the people hurt by trafficking crimes. Through a tremendous spirit of cooperation, many partners joined together to turn the international conference work on human trafficking into tangible solutions. Through both well-established and newly formed professional, legal and social networks, the Women’s Center was able to marshal frustration and fear into public education and legislative success.

4. How do you know your program works? Please cite two examples.

Washington State has been the forerunner in introducing and passing legislation that will protect and defend groups marginalized by human trafficking. This state model to reach
this goal is one that can be repeated in states nationwide and serve as an example of how
this nation as a whole can pass legislation to stop these human rights abuses.

(I) The Women's Center was able to create a coalition of activists, legislators, and
scholars who worked as a team to create legislation which incorporated ideas from a
cross section of perspectives, gathering and analyzing critical information, creating
common goals, and finding a workable solution. This system allowed for the
incorporation of knowledge produced in many arenas, therefore creating a holistic
approach to solve this complicated problem. In doing so, we have been able to create a
powerful force which is qualified and equipped to take action.

(2) The legislation is definitely a landmark not only for our state but nationally and
internationally as well. Texas Representative Lon Burnam was able to attach similar
legislation to another bill that passed in Texas Legislature. Both pieces of legislation
remain to be tested. Federal resources are not interested in one person slavery cases.
This bill will allow local prosecutors to be more intent in pursuing local perpetrators.
Law enforcement officials also need to be trained to identify trafficking crimes and a link
to national anti-trafficking laws must be made

5. Who are your key partners? What are their roles?

A coordinated plan is needed to fight the trafficking industry—a plan that must be
inclusive, confronting the broadly distributed causes and consequences of trafficking.
The most notable partners are the women who dare to share their personal experiences of
human trafficking. Other significant partners include conference sponsors, members of
the Washington State Coalition Against Trafficking and concerned lawmakers.

The Washington State Coalition Against Trafficking is aware of the pressing need to
educate the public and produce coordinated plans of action that include state legislation.

Members of the Washington State Coalition Against Trafficking:
Asian Pacific Islander Women and Family Safety Center (APIWFSC)
Center for Women Policy Studies, Washington, D.C.
City of Seattle, Women's Commission
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF), Seattle chapter
National Lawyer's Guild, National Immigration Project
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
State Representative Velma Veloria
University of Washington Center for Women and Democracy
University of Washington Women's Center
Washington Alliance for Immigrant & Refugee Justice (WAIRJ)
Washington Council on International Trade
Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Washington State Office of Trade & Economic Development
Legislative partners:
State Representative Velma Veloria
State Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles
State Senator Jeri Costa
U.S. Senator Patty Murray

6. Could/should your program be replicated in other areas of the country? Why?

With enough support, legislation similar to that in Washington State could be implemented across the country, protecting the security and quality of life for women illegally and inhumanely trafficked to America.

The network of support created in Washington is a promising model which other states in the nation could and should replicate. By gathering community leaders, NGOs, academics and legislators at the same table, other individual states can produce legislation that would be effective in preventing and eliminating these horrendous crimes against humanity. Through shared discourse, clear communication and the identification of common goals, a network of support can be created to assist those who are currently suffering and to prevent future abuses.

By doing so, we would be demonstrating to the international community that we are serious in our promotion of human rights. We can serve as an example to the world and lead in obtaining workable solutions.
1. Submit three letters of support which illustrate why the applicant is deserving of the award. Attached.
   • A partnering or collaborative organization or agency:
     Leslie Wolfe, President
     Center for Women Policy Studies
   • A victims’ organization:
     Emma Catague, Program Manager/Senior Community Organizer
     Asian and Pacific Islander Women and Family Safety Center
   • An elected official who represents the state where the program operates:
     Phyllis Gutierrez-Kenney, State Representative
     Washington State District

2. Submit proof of 501 (c)(3) status. Attached.

3. Submit last year’s budget for the program to be served by the award.

### FY 2003-2004 Violence Prevention in Human Trafficking Budget

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4) Respond to the following questions:

a) What is the approximate number of individuals served annually by the applicant or nominee?
This is difficult to determine as we do not provide direct services—6,000 women are trafficked into Washington annually, and these women are all protected by the successful state legislation and state law enforcement. 50,000 women are trafficked into the United State annually, and we strive to gain protection for all victims of human trafficking.

b) Are there past awards, accolades, and grants furnished upon the applicant or nominee that would further exemplify its success in combating domestic violence?
Sutapa Basu, the UW Women’s Center’s Executive Director, is an internationally sought speaker. She has traveled all across the country and to several foreign nations to encourage further education, dialogue and action. The Women’s Center has helped other states and nations develop legislation to assist “dual victims” (of trafficking and domestic violence). Dr. Basu also works to develop faculty teaching of domestic violence and trafficking as human rights issues in university programs of study, such as public policy, public health, social work, law and criminal justice. Listed below are a small fraction of the groups she has addressed in the past two years:

- January 2004, Global Social Forum – forum on trafficking; Mumbai, India
- July 2004, Center for Women Policy Studies – delegation of ambassadors; Washington, D.C.
- Ongoing, Puget Sound Region – educational presentations; area Rotary Clubs, high schools, ongoing conferences at the University of Washington

c) How will the agency use the Celebrating Solutions Award funding?
Celebrating Solutions Award funding would be applied to the many educational and research forums held on campus each year. For example, the Women’s Center hosted the National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum in March 2005. At this forum, potential impacts of the proposed International Marriage Broker Regulations Act under consideration by the U.S. Senate were discussed and a positioning statement regarding the legislation was issued.

We would also like to publish multi-lingual, informational brochures informing victims of their legal rights and resources; as well as educational brochures to be shared with individuals or groups seeking an introduction to the topic of domestic violence in human trafficking.

Though the University of Washington supports the faculty salary and facility costs of the UW Women’s Center, we receive no additional university funding to specifically support education and research in human trafficking.
5) Individual Organization Semi-finalist Questions
University of Washington Foundation – Women’s Center

1. How did the program forge relationships with victims?
The conferences held in 2001 and 2002 gave visibility to individual groups within the Washington State Coalition Against Trafficking (WSCAT) formed there. Relationships with victims are most commonly forged by the groups administering direct services. From these relationships, a few victims have become activists and participants on behalf of victims of trafficking and domestic violence.

After the first conference in 2001, word of mouth resulted in women coming in to the UW Women’s Center to share their stories and seek help.

Nationally, it has been very challenging to forge relationships with victims because of multiple threats and dangers in their speaking out—either from law enforcement/immigration officials on one side or from their abusers on the other side.

2. Through what mechanisms did victims typically report abuse?
At the Women’s Center, we have most commonly experienced a one-time conversation with a previously unknown victim, who desperately blurts out her story, then quickly disappears. We provide referrals for the agencies most able to help particular individuals, and these agencies are also often sought out by individual victims.

Due to the nature of these interactions, the Women’s Center has chosen to combat the problem on the preventive and legal ends of the problem, allowing other member agencies of WSCAT to offer the direct services in which they specialize.

Unfortunately, the state of Washington has too often discovered abuse when it was too late...after several notorious murders of trafficked women occurred in the late 1990s.
Please provide a summary of the recommendations that resulted from the two international conferences. Are your recommendations being followed?

Conferences resulted in recommendations:

- That Washington state form a coalition of interested groups into a task force addressing issues of trafficking and abuse. **COMPLETED** – Washington State Coalition Against Trafficking remains vital and internationally active.
- That the state legislature pass a law to give “mail-order brides” and trafficked sex workers legal rights. **COMPLETED** – Washington state law now protects, rather than prosecutes, victims of human trafficking and abuse.
- That research be conducted to identify and analyze the scope of trafficking. **ONGOING** – Federal funds currently being sought.
- That reasons for limited availability of “victim friendly” visas be further explored. **ONGOING** – INS and immigration rights groups conducting primary work in this area.
- That the State Department provide more information on rights and background checks to women before or at the time of visa application. **ONGOING** – To date, unsuccessful. State Department cites privacy concerns.

3. You refer to the Washington state law that criminalizes acts of human trafficking. How does this differ from Federal laws that address the same issue?

Excellent question! Federal legislation is not enforced on an individual basis. The federal law and its enforcement are focused on punishing large trafficking rings. The federal law does not address the rights of individual victims seeking amnesty or legal redress against their abusers.

State and local officials needed a state law to help locally trafficked women seeking escape from domestic violence, rather than punishing them.

4. Was the immigration services (INS) involved in your conference? If so, how?

Yes. Rebecca Story, Associate General Counsel for the INS Office of General Counsel, Refugee and Asylum Division, offered workshops at both conferences about “victim friendly” visas and outlined the ways that the INS is attempting to focus on protecting trafficking and abuse victims. Other INS representatives participated in both conferences and returned to the agency with much greater knowledge to apply to their work.

Member agencies of the Washington State Coalition Against Trafficking have continued to train INS officials in the state of Washington about issues related to domestic violence in human trafficking.
5. Now that the anti-trafficking legislation is passed, what are the next steps or goals for the program in terms of addressing this issue?

Unceasing public education remains our number one priority—and the best way to counter the domestic violence which so often accompanies human trafficking. We currently work on training Washington state police officers, prosecutors, and immigration officials to alert them to the issues surrounding domestic violence and human trafficking. We host ongoing forums both on the University of Washington campus and within the Puget Sound region addressing these same issues.

Additionally, we would like to conduct both local and multi-national research to firmly identify sources of trafficking victims, distribution of trafficking victims and rates of domestic violence. Both President Clinton and President Bush have publicly acknowledged the issues of women being trafficked into the United States, and the tide of federal funding dollars is slowly turning to support urgent work like ours. The University of Washington Women’s Center is hopeful that unceasing work on the issues of domestic violence in human trafficking will have a global impact.
February 15, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to write a letter recommending the University of Washington Women’s Center for the Mary Byron Foundation Celebrating Solutions Award.

I had the opportunity to work with the UW Women’s Center when they sponsored and hosted the ongoing trafficking conferences in 2001. A dynamic coalition has been born of the conferences, involving multiple non-profit and governmental agencies. With the UW Women’s Center spearheading the Washington State Coalition Against Trafficking, the conferences resulted in writing state legislation that ease the perils of domestic violence for victims of human trafficking.

I was pleased to have be involved in passing the legislation, and I commend the University of Washington Women’s Center’s continuing work to help victims of human trafficking.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Gutierrez-Kenney
State Representative, 46th District
February 15, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

I am delighted to have this opportunity to express my support and admiration for the University of Washington Women’s Center. I cannot think of another institution that is more deserving of the Mary Byron Foundation’s Celebrating Solutions Award.

The Women’s Center is internationally known for its incredible programs on the full range of women’s human rights issues. For example, the Women’s Center has brought together a remarkably diverse group of NGOs, public agencies, and other leaders to form the Washington State Coalition Against Trafficking. The Women’s Center’s skill in engaging groups from a variety of interests and communities has produced a groundbreaking coalition, which is a national model of success.

The Center for Women Policy Studies has worked with Congress and both the Clinton and Bush Administrations on trafficking of women and girls into the United States. But our most important work has been with state legislators – starting in Washington state in 2001 – to ensure that states take on their responsibility to confront the local impact of this global crisis. Without the early leadership of the Women’s Center at the University of Washington, our work would not have flourished nationwide. Indeed, the Women’s Center co-sponsored the first-ever statewide conference on trafficking as a state policy issue in November 2001. The resulting legislation and creation of the Washington State Coalition Against Trafficking have shown other states the way to address these issues.

Today, the Center for Women Policy Studies continues its efforts to advance state trafficking laws across the country. And we are proud to continue our relationship with the Women’s Center. During 2005, we hope to conduct joint research projects on effective ways to combat trafficking and support women who have been brought to our country under these horrific conditions.

Our work would be much less successful without the leadership and support of the UW Women’s Center. I hope you will accept my enthusiastic support for the UW Women’s Center and grant them the Mary Byron Foundation Celebrating Solutions Award.

Sincerely,

Leslie R. Wolfe, Ph.D.
President

1211 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 312
Washington, DC 20036
202.872.1770 phone 202.296.8962 fax
cwps@centerwomnepolicy.org email www.centerwomnepolicy.org website
February 18, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

As Program Manager for the Asian & Pacific Islander Women and Family Safety Center, (APIWFSC) it is my pleasure to recognize the UW Women's Center and the role it has played in aiding domestic violence victims of human trafficking.

Spurred by a spate of local murders, the UW Women's Center and many other victims' organizations banded together to support legislation helping survivors of human trafficking preyed upon by violent people. Those suffering domestic violence are often stuck in limbo—report and be deported, or suffer silently in fear.

The 2001 and 2002 conferences hosted by the UW Women's Center led to groundbreaking legislation, locally enforceable, that changes the life chances today's human trafficking victims have.

The Mission of the APIWFSC is to prevent violence against women through community organizing and education; provide safe, culturally relevant services for women, youth, and children; and create housing resources for families who face domestic and sexual violence, and victimization from human trafficking in Asian and Pacific Islander communities.

There is a lot of work to be done. The Asian & Pacific Islander Women and Family Safety Center looks forward to continued collaboration with the UW Women's Center.

Please feel free to contact me at 206-467-9976 or email me at emma@apialliance.org

Sincerely,

Emma Catague
Program Manager/Senior Community Organizer