



# The Women's Conference®

*The Nation's Premier Forum for Women*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Maria Shriver to Be Joined by Richard Branson, Katie Couric, Elizabeth Edwards, Dr. Jane Goodall, David Gregory, Valerie B. Jarrett, Caroline Kennedy, Alicia Keys, Annie Leibovitz, Governor Schwarzenegger and 14,000 Women at The Women's Conference 2009 Main Event**

*Conference Expands to Two Full Days with Yesterday's Sold-Out Events – A Day of Transformation and Night at The Village – Bringing Total Attendance to 25,000*

**LOS ANGELES (October 27, 2009)** – More than 70 world opinion leaders and approximately 14,000 women from all walks of life will be gathering today at the sold-out Women's Conference 2009 main event. Hosted by California First Lady Maria Shriver and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, the nation's premier forum for women will be held again this year at the Long Beach Convention Center. As an extension of her award-winning career as a journalist, California First Lady Maria Shriver approaches The Women's Conference as a place for once-in-a-lifetime conversations and news-making moments that combine the world's most authentic and influential voices in discussions about the issues that matter most to women.

“The goal of The Women's Conference is to transform women inside and out – and then empower them to help transform our world as Architects of Change,” said Shriver. “We encourage women to pass on the wisdom, life-lessons and the practical tools they have learned to empower other women to see themselves as capable of making a difference in the world.”

Program highlights from the forum's main stage conversations and twelve breakout conversations include:

- **Robin Roberts** moderates a main stage conversation on Leadership Decisions in Tough Times with Governor **Arnold Schwarzenegger**, FDIC Chairwoman **Sheila C. Bair** and **Sir Richard Branson**;
- David Gregory moderates a main stage conversation on How a Woman's Nation Changes Everything with former Secretary of State **Madeleine K. Albright**, **Amy Holmes**, **Valerie B. Jarrett** and **Claire Shipman**;
- **Maria Shriver** moderates a main stage conversation on Grief, Healing & Resilience with **Elizabeth Edwards**, **Susan Saint James** and **Lisa Niemi**;
- **Katie Couric** moderates a conversation with **Annie Leibovitz**, legend to legend;
- **Robin Roberts** moderates a conversation on Overcoming the Unimaginable with **Gayle Haggard**, **Elizabeth & Lois Smart** and Life Without Limbs President & Founder **Nick Vujicic**;
- *All Things Digital* Co-Executive Editor **Kara Swisher** moderates a conversation on Changing the World Through the Web with **Ashton Kutcher**, Blue State Digital Founder **Joe Rospars**, Kiva.org President **Premal Shah** and Facebook's **Randi Zuckerberg**;

- **Claire Shipman** moderates a conversation on Women in Power with **Arianna Huffington**, *Glamour* Editor-in-Chief **Cindi Leive**, Brown University President **Dr. Ruth Simmons** and U.S. Secretary of Labor **Hilda L. Solis**;
- Paley Center for Media CEO **Pat Mitchell** moderates a conversation on Women Who Use Their Voices to Change the World with **Geena Davis**, **Somaly Mam**, **Lisa Ling** and *New York Times* Columnist **Nicholas Kristof**; and
- **Paula Zahn** moderates a conversation on Raising Strong & Confident Children with **Meghan McCain** and **Danica Patrick & T.J. Patrick**.
- At the end of the day, The Women's Conference will continue its tradition of honoring "Remarkable Women, Remarkable Legacies" with the presentation of **The Minerva Awards**. Held during the afternoon main stage session, the special ceremony is hosted by Maria Shriver and will feature remarks by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist **Nicholas Kristof**, **Alicia Keys** and **Caroline Kennedy**. The 2009 Minerva Award honorees are **Agnes Stevens**, **Helen Devore Waukazoo**, **Dr. Kathy Hull** and **Dr. Jane Goodall**.

"This year's Minerva Award honorees are true Architects of Change," said First Lady Maria Shriver. "They are women who have pursued their own path and true purpose and who passionately dedicate themselves to the service of others. Each of these remarkable women strive to make a difference every day and, by their example, inspire us to do the same."

Each year, full day passes to The Women's Conference sell out in record-breaking time. Tickets this year sold out in less than two hours, beating last year's record of three hours. In response to this popular demand and to expand its reach to larger numbers of women, The Women's Conference expanded to two full days in 2009 with the addition of yesterday's events, A Day of Transformation and Night at The Village. These sold-out events increased attendee capacity by 11,000 tickets, bringing the total attendance to 25,000.

The first day of the conference was kicked off by the debut of **A Day of Transformation**. Hosted by Maria Shriver, the event featured professional, educational and personal sessions packed with practical tips and tools for "how" to transform their lives and become Architects of Change. An extraordinary lineup of thought-leaders, including **Stephen M.R. Covey**, **Martha Beck**, *The First 30 Days* Author & Founder **Ariane de Bonvoisin**, Kiva.org President **Premal Shah** and Women for Hire CEO **Tory Johnson**, taught interactive sessions such as How to Trust Yourself, How to Break the Cycle of Stress, How to Make Your Job Matter, How to Be an Entrepreneur in the Non-profit World, How to Start Your Own Business and How to Turn Your Story into a Book.

The first day of the conference was capped off with **Night at The Village**, which transformed the Long Beach Convention Center's exhibit hall into an over 160,000 square foot women's village for more than 10,000 attendees. The event featured stage conversations with prominent speakers and renowned experts such as health and wellness expert **Jillian Michaels**, life coach and author **Martha Beck**, celebrity chef **Paula Deen**, *Dancing With the Stars* choreographer **Wendy Johnson**, celebrity trainer **Bob Greene**, environmental advocate **Majora Carter** and acclaimed yoga teacher **Seane Corn**; stage interviews and book signings with more than 25 best-selling authors such as **Claire Shipman**, **Kate Gosselin**, **Sue Monk Kidd & Ann Kidd Taylor**, **Greg Mortenson**, **Kay Warren**, **Candace Bushnell**, **Kim Barnouin**, **Caroline Kennedy** and **Jean Chatzky**; live music and dancing exhibitions; and unique shopping experiences, products, services and information for women from more than 330 exhibitors. The Village stays open throughout the conference and is a popular gathering spot for speakers, authors and attendees.

Tens of thousands of women also watch the conference's main event live on its Web site at [WomensConference.org](http://WomensConference.org). Substantial portions of the event will be streamed live from 8:00 a.m. to

7:00 p.m. PDT. Since launching in July 2009, WomensConference.org has become the “Home for Architects of Change.” The site continues to be a thriving online community that takes all of the timely issues explored at the conference and makes them available to millions of women online 365 days a year. With a diverse range of contributors – from the well known to new voices – the site provides daily editorial and video content, tips, tools and inspiration for women who want to become Architects of Change in their own lives and in the lives of others.

In addition to its own live Web cast, today's main event will be available through a live cable television broadcast on the California Channel, satellite radio broadcasts on SIRIUS XM Satellite Radio, and satellite television broadcasts to all participating California community colleges and universities, museums, community organizations and to the conference's corporate partners.

Commonly referred to as “the conference with a conscience,” the annual event is produced by the non-profit, non-partisan organization, the **California Governor & First Lady's Conference on Women**, which has formed strategic partnerships with organizations to develop far-reaching programs and initiatives that seek to directly empower women all year round. **Proceeds from The Women's Conference, Night at The Village, A Day of Transformation and the Shop With a Purpose (SWAP) Conference Store** directly support the conference's six **WE Programs**.

**WE Educate** expands the educational pursuits of young women in need by providing ten \$2,500 scholarships. Since 2005, the conference has given 32 Minerva Scholarships and \$350,000 through the WE Educate program. **WE Invest** invests in women entrepreneurs by providing resources for business training, mentoring, a support network and micro-loans. In June 2009, the conference partnered with Kiva.org to launch their first-ever domestic micro-lending program and help women in the U.S. start or expand their own business. Since the launch of the WE Invest-KIVA partnership, 82 entrepreneurs in 11 states have received nearly 13,000 micro-loans, totaling more than \$410,000. **WE Connect** connects poor working families to money-saving programs and government services they may be eligible for but are unaware of through WEConnect.net. WE Connect has partnered with organizations across the state to reach more than 11 million individuals, bring more than \$110 million in savings to families and open permanent neighborhood centers in Santa Ana, Fresno and Irvine that will serve thousands more. The WE Connect model has now been extended to 22 other states.

**WE Act** helps women who are victims of all forms of violence and supports domestic violence shelters and programs that protect women in life-threatening situations. In 2008, the conference awarded grants to two domestic violence shelters in the Long Beach area, and this year the conference is expanding its grant making to three organizations throughout California. **WE Inspire** supports the work of The California Museum in Sacramento, funding exhibits and programs that educate women about the extraordinary contributions and on-going achievements of remarkable women to our state's rich history and encourage them to make their own mark on history. **WE Honor** recognizes and rewards remarkable women who have stepped forward and changed the world with their courage, wisdom, and strength with the prestigious Minerva Awards. The awards were created by Shriver in 2004 and named after the Roman goddess, Minerva, who graces the California state seal. The Minerva Award winners also receive a Minerva Prize from the conference to further their work or grow it beyond its current reach. Since 2004, the conference has honored 28 remarkable women and granted \$470,000. Past Minerva Award winners have included Dr. Helene Brown, former First Lady Betty Ford, Billie Jean King, The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Dr. Sally Ride, Eunice Kennedy Shriver and Gloria Steinem.

The Women's Conference 2009 is supported by generous sponsors that share its mission of empowering, inspiring and educating women. Safeway, a Conference Presenting Sponsor, will feature the best of California's healthy cuisine at The Village. Target will return as The Minerva Awards Presenting Sponsor. The Shinnyo-en Foundation is the Presenting Sponsor of A Day of Transformation. The Conference National Media Partner is Disney ABC Television Group. Wells Fargo and the Women's Self Worth Foundation are the Conference Community Investment

Champions. Conference Official Sponsors include Anthem Blue Cross, Apple, BP, Cisco, FedEx, HealthNet, Intuit, Mattel, PG&E, Verizon, Visa and Walgreens. Virgin America is The Official Airline of The Women's Conference.

For more information about The Women's Conference 2009, visit [www.WomensConference.org](http://www.WomensConference.org).

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