



The Women's Conference®

The Nation's Premier Forum for Women

FACT SHEET

WHO WE ARE ARE: THE CONFERENCE

- The California Governor and First Lady's Conference on Women, now known simply as The Women's Conference, is **the nation's premier forum for 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.
- For two full days, more than **100 newsmakers and world opinion leaders** gather with more than **25,000 women from all walks of life** to be educated, inspired and empowered to be **Architects of Change** in their own lives, within their communities and around the world.
- The Women's Conference is **the destination for the world's greatest voices, hearts and minds.** Speakers have included former Prime Minister Tony Blair, Cherie Blair, Bono, Warren Buffet, Deepak Chopra, Thomas Friedman, Diane von Furstenberg, Heidi Klum, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Jennifer Lopez, Her Majesty Queen Noor, Indra Nooyi, Michelle Obama, Sandra Day O'Connor, Her Majesty Queen Rania, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Tim Russert, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, First Lady Maria Shriver, Martha Stewart, Oprah Winfrey, Barbara Walters and Muhammad Yunus.
- The Women's Conference has become a “must attend” event. Each year, full day passes 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 surging demand, The Women's Conference expanded the event to two full days with the addition of A Day of Transformation and Night at The Village. These first-day events increased attendee capacity by 11,000, bringing the total attendance to 25,000. Tens of thousands of women also watch the conference's main event live on its Web site at **WomensConference.org**
- The first event of the conference, beginning the morning of **October 26**, is called **A Day of Transformation.** This event features the nation's top experts and speakers leading professional, educational and personal sessions offering practical tips and tools for how to transform their lives and become Architects of Change.
- The first day of the conference is capped off with a **Night at The Village.** More more than **10,000 women** “meet, mix and mingle” with the nation's best-selling authors, most inspirational speakers, top chefs, socially responsible companies and Architects of Change like themselves, all in a dynamic 160,000 square foot women's village. The Village stays open for shopping, networking and book-signing throughout the conference and it is a popular gathering spot for speakers, authors and attendees to connect with each other and build a community.
- **The Women's Conference 2009** main event on **October 27** features its signature news-making moments and “once-in-a-lifetime conversations” that combine the world's most authentic and influential voices with engaging discussions about the issues that matter most to women's lives. The forum's main stage conversations and twelve breakout conversations address topics such as Making Tough Decisions in Tough Times, Grieving, Healing & Resilience, Overcoming the Unimaginable, Using Your Voice to Change the World, Changing the World Through the Web, Starting Your Own Business, Beating the Odds, Managing Health & Stress, Raising Strong & Confident Children, Managing Money, and many others.
- This year's lineup of speakers and participants includes former Secretary of State **Madeleine K. Albright**, FDIC Chairwoman **Sheila Bair**, **Martha Beck**, **Sir Richard Branson**, **Katie Couric**, **Stephen M. R. Covey**, **Geena Davis**, **Paula Deen**, **Elizabeth Edwards**, **Linda Ellerbee**, **Dr. Jane Goodall**, **David Gregory**, Senior Advisor to the President **Valerie B. Jarrett**, **Caroline Kennedy**, **Alicia Keys**, **Ashton Kutcher**, **Annie Leibovitz**, **Lisa Ling**, **Cindy Hensley McCain**, **Somaly Mam**, **Dr. Mehmet Oz**, **Danica Patrick**, **Robin Roberts**, **Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger**, **Claire Shipman**, First Lady **Maria Shriver**, U.S. Secretary of Labor **Hilda Solis** and **Paula Zahn.**

- At the end of the day, The Women's Conference will continue its tradition of honoring **'Remarkable Women, Remarkable Legacies'** with the always inspirational and moving presentation of **The Minerva Awards**. Held during the afternoon main stage session, the special ceremony is hosted by Maria Shriver and features 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**.
- Women leave The Women's Conference transformed, inside and out. The conference encourages women to pass on their stories, wisdom, inspirational life-lessons and practical tools to empower other women to see themselves as capable of making a difference in the world.
- **WHAT WE DO: THE WE PROGRAMS**
- Commonly referred to as "the conference with a conscience," the annual event is produced by a non-profit, non-partisan organization that has also 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 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 in a groundbreaking way 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 been extended to 22 states across the country.
- **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 we are expanding our 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. The conference's efforts through WE Inspire has helped double adult attendance at The California Museum.
- **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 through the WE Honor program. Past Minerva Award winners have included Dr. Helene Brown, Betty Chinn, former First Lady Betty Ford, Billie Jean King, The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Dr. Sally Ride, Eunice Kennedy Shriver and Gloria Steinem.
- Through its annual two-day forum, ongoing WE Programs and online community, the California Governor & First Lady's Conference on Women has impacted – and continues to impact – the lives of tens of millions of women around the world.

WHAT WE KNOW: THE FACTS THAT INFORM OUR WORK

- For the first time in our nation's history, **half of all U.S. workers are women.**
- Mothers are the primary breadwinners or co-breadwinners in **two-thirds of American families**; yet **85% of women** say that, even when both partners have jobs, they are bearing the primary responsibility for the home and family, including care for children and elderly parents.
- Women make the vast majority (**surveys show 72%**) of the buying decisions in America's homes today.
- 59% of all Bachelor of Arts and 61% of Master's Degrees in the U.S. are earned by women. That said, **women still don't earn equal pay for equal work.**
- **Less than 30%** of children in the U.S. live in a home with a stay-at-home parent. **One out of four families** in America are being headed by a single parent.
- **70 percent of men** today are supportive of having women work outside the home, and three-quarters of Americans view the rise of women in the workplace as a positive development for society.
- The majority of people living **below the poverty line** in the U.S. are women and their children.
- Companies that work to support and retain women in leadership positions have a **healthier bottom line.**
- Women now start businesses at **twice the rate** of men. There are more than **10 million women-owned businesses** in the U.S., growing by the day.
- California is home to more more women (**over 18 million**) – and more women-owned businesses – than any other state in the nation.
- **One in three** women nationwide reports being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives. **One in four** women murdered in this country die at the hands of a husband or boyfriend.
- This year, Maria Shriver will be launching a landmark national study prior to the conference called **The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Changes Everything** in partnership with the Center for American Progress, *Time* Magazine, NBC Universal, USC Annenberg Center on Communication Leadership and Policy and the Rockefeller Foundation. Inspired by The Women's Conference, the report will ignite a national conversation across all media platforms about the fundamental changes in American society brought on by the current recession and women's emerging economic power.

HOW WE PASS IT ON – WOMENSCONFERENCE.ORG

- WomensConference.org is the "**Home for Architects of Change.**" The site is 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.

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