



The Women's Conference®

The Nation's Premier Forum for Women

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 26, 2010

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California First Lady Maria Shriver and The Women's Conference Expecting to Serve Thousands of Families in Need at 'WE Connect Weekend Los Angeles'

*Three-Day Community Resources Fair to Provide Vital Programs and Support Services
Such As Free Tax Preparation, Free Flu Shots, Free Healthy Food, Free Housing and Home
Foreclosure Assistance, Free Job Assistance and More*

*More Than 26,000 Families Took Advantage of Free Services at WE Connect Weekend Fresno,
Claiming Over \$200,000 in Tax Refunds and Receiving Over 100,000 Pounds of Food*

March 26, 2010 – Beginning this afternoon, California First Lady Maria Shriver and The Women's Conference organization will continue their commitment to supporting families in need by hosting **'WE Connect Weekend Los Angeles'** – a three-day community resources fair being held at The LA Forum that is expected to connect thousands of families with money-saving programs and free support services.

Event organizers are working with corporate partners, dozens of community-based organizations and government agencies, and more than 600 volunteers to provide a range of services and resources to thousands of Los Angeles residents such as: free tax preparation from certified tax consultants, free flu shots, free healthy food, free home foreclosure assistance, free homeownership assistance, free job and resume assistance and much more. At WE Connect Weekend Fresno, more than 26,000 families took advantage of these services, claiming over \$200,000 in tax refunds and receiving over 100,000 pounds of food.

WE Connect Weekend Los Angeles is open to anyone who would like to participate and will run on Friday, March 26 from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; on Saturday, March 27 from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; and on Sunday, March 28 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. **Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and First Lady Maria Shriver are expected to attend the event on Saturday at 12:30 p.m. and will be available to address all media at the conclusion of their visit.**

Los Angeles County's unemployment rate has reached 12.5%. That, combined with the 15.1% poverty rate in Los Angeles County, makes it urgently important that individuals and families be aware of the resources available help them.

"The need for these support services is great – and only growing," said Maria Shriver. "As families have been impacted by this faltering economy, many have become eligible for programs they never thought they would need. We have found that many Californians don't know what resources are available to them and what services they may be eligible for."

The WE Connect Weekend events are designed to help families take full advantage of valuable existing resources available to them – such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) – by bringing

together local, state and federal public and private partners all in one place. Through EITC, for instance, low-income working families can qualify for up to \$5,657 in tax refunds.

As many as 800,000 eligible Californians are missing out on the EITC, leaving more than a billion dollars on the table, according to a new report published through a collaboration between the New America Foundation and economists at California State University at Fresno. In 2006, Los Angeles County residents alone missed out on \$370 million as more than twenty percent of the county's eligible federal tax filers did not claim EITC.

“WE Connect is about putting money back into the pockets of California's hard-working families,” said Shriver. “If all eligible families took full advantage of EITC, they would create a billion dollars of economic activity for California's businesses and economic growth for California's communities, which leads to more jobs and opportunities for everyone.”

WE Connect Weekend attendees will have the opportunity to use the WE Connect program's **Web Connector**, an exclusive, easy-to-use online tool developed by **Intuit** that helps working families determine exactly which programs they may be eligible for with step by step instructions for how to apply. Californians can access this free tool any time at www.WEConnect.net.

“Intuit and its Financial Freedom Foundation are committed to programs that increase financial literacy and empower people to save and make money,” said Brad Smith, president and CEO of Intuit. “In partnership with California First Lady Maria Shriver’s WE Connect campaign, we’re connecting hard working Californians, individuals and families statewide, to numerous money-saving programs and helping them take advantage of unclaimed state and federal dollars, like the Earned Income Tax Credit.”

The community partners that have teamed up with WE Connect Weekend Los Angeles include: Intuit, Legal Aid Society of Orange County, United Way of Greater Los Angeles, Internal Revenue Services, Los Angeles Regional Food Bank, LA Works, Operation Hope, Los Angeles Forum, Albertsons/Sav-on Pharmacy, California Community Colleges, Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services, La Opinión, Clear Channel Outdoor, The California Association of Foodbanks, AT&T, Verizon, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Employment Development Department and 211.

More information about WE Connect Weekend events and the WE Connect program can be found at www.WEConnect.net.

About WE Connect

First launched by Shriver in 2005, the WE Connect program model is now being emulated by 24 other states. In addition to the WE Connect events and the Web Connector tool, WE Connect has partnered with organizations across the state to communicate with people in new and innovative ways. Through a partnership with La Opinión, the nation’s largest Spanish-speaking newspaper, WE Connect has developed three editions of a 24-page, full color, bi-lingual supplement that has been distributed to over 20 million Californians in need. WE Connect has also worked with partners to create permanent WE Connect Neighborhood Centers in Fresno, Santa Ana and Irvine. In December 2009, The Women’s Conference created the WE Connect–Million Meals Initiative, as the organization made a donation to The California Association of Food Banks to provide more than one million meals to California families in need. The donation was allocated to the food bank's 44 member organizations who then distributed the food to California families through its more than 5,000 community-based organizations.

About The Women's Conference

The Mission of The Women's Conference Organization is to create Architects of Change – people from all walks of life who see a problem and seek to create the solution, be it in their home, their

community, their state or our world. Led California First Lady Maria Shriver, The Women's Conference has created a global community of Architects of Change who gather every year at the nation's premier forum for women in Long Beach, CA. More than 25,000 women attend the two-day nonpartisan conference and many thousands more watch the event live online. WomensConference.org — the Home for Architects of Change — has become a thriving online community of more than one million women who visit the site to be empowered with daily editorial and video content, inspirational conversations and stories, and life-changing tips, tools and resources. The Women's Conference has formed strategic partnerships with established organizations to create lasting change through six far-reaching programs – WE Educate, WE Invest, WE Connect, WE Act, WE Inspire and WE Honor. Through these programs, The Women's Conference community works together 24/7 on the front-lines of humanity to finance dreams and invest in entrepreneurs, lift people out of poverty, help end the cycle of violence, send young women to college, build community centers, playgrounds and gardens, honor courage, wisdom and strength, and inspire people by the remarkable history of their state. For more information about The Women's Conference, visit: <http://www.womensconference.org>.

About Intuit

Intuit Inc. is a leading provider of business and financial management solutions for small and mid-sized businesses; financial institutions, including banks and credit unions; consumers and accounting professionals. Its flagship products and services, including QuickBooks®, Quicken® and TurboTax®, simplify small business management and payroll processing, personal finance, and tax preparation and filing. ProSeries® and Lacerte® are Intuit's leading tax preparation offerings for professional accountants. The company's financial institutions division, anchored by Digital Insight, provides on-demand banking services to help banks and credit unions serve businesses and consumers with innovative solutions. Founded in 1983, Intuit had annual revenue of \$3.1 billion in its fiscal year 2009. The company has approximately 7,800 employees with major offices in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, India and other locations. More information can be found at www.intuit.com.

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