



**Remarks by Walt Klausmeier, PPHS President/CEO:
Charleston Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony, June 12, 2009**

The longer I lead Planned Parenthood Health Systems, the more I appreciate Margaret Meade's enduring quote, "*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.*"

None of us would be celebrating the opening of this beautiful Planned Parenthood facility were it not for a small group of Charleston citizens who dared to change the world: Janet Segal, Patty Uffelman, Ronda Dean, Harriet Williams, Harriet Rigney and others. These remarkable women deserve our deep and abiding appreciation and support.

The building behind me is the embodiment of their dreams and their efforts. I am hopeful this magnificent facility meets their highest expectations.

Yet, these women never assumed to succeed on their own. Instead, they sought broad community support. Nearly a decade ago, they began forging alliances with community groups, religious institutions, ethnic and cultural organizations, teen pregnancy prevention groups, the medical community and women's organizations – many of which are represented here today.

The efforts of these women and many of you are a testament to perseverance. Your aspirations led to ever-widening ripples of support – first among yourselves, then the larger Charleston community and then across our regional affiliate. Supporters in Charleston inspired Planned Parenthood Health Systems to seek additional funding within our four-state affiliate service area. As a result, Planned Parenthood Health Systems raised more than \$1 million for the Charleston Building Campaign from outside the Charleston area.

I hope you remain inspired by the efforts of these women and of the work of Planned Parenthood. You must. Our survival in Charleston depends upon your financial and moral support, now and in the years ahead. Your monetary contributions and volunteer efforts must exceed those of our opponents.

Just last Saturday, the sidewalk out here was lined with protesters opposed to contraception. They were protesting birth control pills. Nearly a century since Margaret Sanger fought to legalize contraception in the United States, our opponents stubbornly intrude in our clients' access to preventive reproductive health care and medically accurate sexuality education.

Thanks to all of you, Charleston, South Carolina has joined the Planned Parenthood family. Yet, unless supporters like you remain active and vigilant, our opponents will succeed in their efforts to undermine us and all we stand for.

I urge you all to remain inspired, stay active and continue your financial support of Planned Parenthood in the months and years ahead.

Today, we celebrate the opening of our Planned Parenthood health center. Tomorrow – and every tomorrow thereafter – we must ensure that Charleston's women, men and teens can access the health care and education they need to decide when they are best able to have a child and raise a family. Thank you.

It's now my pleasure to introduce Harriet Williams and Harriet Rigney. Many years ago, on a rainy October day, Harriett Williams came to my office in Raleigh and convinced me that Planned Parenthood Health Systems should establish a health center in Charleston. She spoke of her mother, Harriet Simons, who helped establish Charleston's Maternal Welfare Clinic in 1937.

Her passion, her story, and her strong pledge of support, helped me believe that the opening of a health center in Charleston could be achieved. Soon afterwards, her cousin, Harriet Rigney, made an equally forceful plea and an equally generous pledge to invest in Charleston. In 1929, Harriet Rigney's mother, Louisa Popham, had been denied basic birth control information by her doctor because providing such information was illegal. These two cousins share a commitment to Planned Parenthood that is rooted in their family's heartfelt and long-standing testament to preventive reproductive health care and education in the greater Charleston area.

Please join me in welcoming two of the women who are responsible for today's glorious milestone, Harriet Williams and Harriet Rigney.