

Letter From President and CEO Vicki Cowart

With the New Year now upon us, Planned Parenthood of Wyoming is looking forward to 2011 with great optimism while cognizant of the many challenges we'll face throughout the year.

The election of 2010 gave rise to candidates with extremely conservative views. Given the new national political makeup, we are likely to see efforts to limit access to birth control and additional attacks on abortion; specifically, efforts to ban all insurance coverage for abortion under health care reform even in the private market.

Closer to home in our state of Wyoming, we expect to see a wide variety of anti-choice attacks on access to the full range of reproductive health care services. As is our tradition, PPW will partner with NARAL Pro-Choice Wyoming to defend and advance pro-choice policies. We are confident that with support from stalwart donors like you, we will continue to be powerful and effective in standing up for policies and programs that benefit women, men, and young adults.

These threats are real. Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains recently celebrated a huge pro-choice victory in the 2010 election with another resounding 3-1 defeat of the Personhood Amendment on the Colorado ballot for a second time. Amendment 62 would have outlawed all abortions in Colorado, including when a woman has been raped, is the victim of incest, or when her life or health is at risk. It also could have banned emergency contraception and commonly used forms of birth control like the Pill. As with all challenges we face, no matter how persistent or extreme our opponents, your commitment to protecting



access to reproductive health care helps us achieve such victories.

This time of year also reminds us how many people in our communities need our help. Even with some bright spots in the Wyoming economy and job market, we see more people each day who turn to PPW for affordable health care. People are coming to our health center because they have lost their job or their insurance, and PPW is here for them. Thank you for standing with us to make this possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vicki Cowart', written in a cursive style.

VICKI COWART





A Manager with a Mission

Jessica Snyder is on a mission to educate and empower the community. As the new manager of the Casper health center, she is dedicated to providing the community's residents with quality health care at a price they can afford.

Jessica joined Planned Parenthood in August 2008 and became manager of the Casper health center in 2010. She has lived in Wyoming for five years and considers herself lucky to work in Casper, a town that she describes as modern with traditional values. She regards Planned Parenthood as an important part of the community, saying "we offer a wide variety of affordable health care services to women, men and young adults, and we have the most updated and accurate information on birth control. We also provide resources on parenting and adoption and give unbiased abortion information."

Jessica enjoys working directly with the community and educating people about the number of services offered at the Casper health center. "Unfortunately, many people are unaware of all of the services we offer," she says. "Most members of the community only associate us with a few services. It's my goal to change this."

She also believes that Planned Parenthood plays an important role in, "empowering people to have children when they choose to and provide them with the knowledge to have safe sexual relations."

When asked what she likes most about her job she simply responded, "I love every aspect of my job."

The Wyoming Abortion Fund: Opening the Door of Choice

Imagine you are the woman who heard these words: "You shouldn't have gotten pregnant. If you can't find an abortion doctor, that's your problem. I guess you're just going to have to live with your mistake."

And now imagine being unable to find an abortion provider close to where you live. Now you must find a doctor in another state, plan for a lengthy drive to Colorado, Kansas, or Montana, arrange and pay for child care, find someone to give you a ride to and from the doctor, take time off work, and find \$400 to \$2,000 to cover the procedure. Your safe and constitutional right and legal option is literally hundreds of miles away and financially devastating.

Thankfully, PPW established the Wyoming Abortion Fund in 2004. Women who live in Wyoming who need an abortion but cannot afford it, can contact PPW for a confidential consultation. If a woman qualifies for the fund, the Wyoming Abortion Fund will pay all or a portion of the total cost of the procedure and other expenses.

The Wyoming Abortion Fund was established at the bequest of a longtime PPW supporter who had the foresight to create a fund that would make abortion accessible to women in Wyoming. Through the generosity of this endowment, and other Wyoming supporters like you, the fund is financially sound, meeting the needs of Wyoming women.

Since its establishment, the Wyoming Abortion Fund has assisted thousands of women. In 2010 alone, over 200 women called our hotline for information with over 150 benefiting from the fund.

Women decide responsibly and thoughtfully whether and when to have children, and that decision should never be dictated by legislators or extremists. For women across the state of Wyoming, the Wyoming Abortion Fund opened the door of choice to access a safe and legal option.

To contact the Wyoming Abortion Fund, please call our toll-free hotline at **1.866.372.7526** (PLAN).

2011

Brings New Political Challenges

The 2011 legislative session promises to be a busy one. This year's landscape includes anti-choice majorities in the House and Senate as well as an anti-choice governor. We expect to see a wide variety of attacks on access to the full range of reproductive health care services. These include:

- Banning abortion coverage in the health insurance exchange,
- Establishing fetal personhood and/or Unborn Victims of Violence Act,
- A resolution in support of crisis pregnancy centers,
- Mandated ultrasounds and biased counseling, and
- Pre-viability bans based on fetal pain.

For the 2011 session, PPW has partnered with NARAL Pro-choice Wyoming. Sharon Breitweiser, executive director of NARAL Pro-Choice Wyoming, describes the session and partnership with Planned Parenthood, "we are anticipating another busy session but never know for sure what will hit. Anti-choice groups have been trying to pass Fetal Personhood and Unborn Victims of Violence Acts for many years. The anti-choice group WyWatch has also stated that a bill mandating ultrasounds is another priority. NARAL Pro-Choice Wyoming will work closely with PPW during the session, and we will persevere against these attacks."

Giving Options

You may have received requests for your support from PPW by mail, phone, or email. Whichever method you choose to make a donation, you can be guaranteed that your gift stays local to support our invaluable work in Wyoming. If you wish to make your gift online simply mark the "local" box at www.ppfa.org. We offer our supporters many additional ways to support PPW.

MONTHLY DONATIONS to PPW's Champions for Choice sustainer program help us with monthly financial support we – and our clients – can count on.

WORKPLACE GIVING can double your giving! Talk to your employer about payroll deductions and matching gift programs.

HONORARY OR MEMORIAL DONATIONS celebrate a loved one. Your donation in the name of friends or family members will help support and expand Planned Parenthood's important work.

SECURITIES because giving the gift of stock is simple. Please send an e-mail to info.development@pprm.org for electronic transfer information.

PLANNED GIVING AND BEQUESTS fund the future of PPW. Bequests through your will or living trust ensure reproductive freedom for generations to come.

If you have questions, please contact our Development team at **303.813.7714** or send an e-mail to info.development@pprm.org.



Want Less Mail?

Our DIALOGUE newsletter is now available via email. If you would prefer an electronic version of this newsletter, please send your email address to info.development@pprm.org

Thirty Years After First Diagnoses

Planned Parenthood of Wyoming is Working to Ensure the AIDS Epidemic is Never Forgotten

Former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop recently declared that AIDS has become the “forgotten epidemic.” *The Washington Post* article that included these words warned of complacency in reducing HIV infection.

HIV/AIDS has changed dramatically since the first diagnoses of AIDS in the 1980s. As treatments have reduced rates of AIDS-related complications and deaths, it’s easy to forget that many people remain at risk for infection. Indeed, while new infection rates have decreased in some parts of the world, HIV infection rates in the United States are growing.

Of those newly infected in the United States, one in three is a young adult. Why? Because the majority of these young Americans are entering adulthood without the knowledge, power, and tools they need to protect themselves from sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.

PPW believes we can do better. Nearly half of American teens are sexually active. As a community we must demand that young people have the information they need to protect their health; starting with non-judgmental education about sexuality and drug use as well as access to condoms and birth control.

One in five individuals living with HIV is unaware of their status. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends HIV testing for everyone

ages 13 to 64. Yet lack of information, fear, judgment, and social stigma are just a few of the barriers that prevent people from getting tested. Others mistakenly believe that they have been tested as part of an annual exam or physical.

PPW would like to remind the community that getting tested is the first step to preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS. Most tests involve a simple finger prick, and results are available in less than 12 minutes.

To secure a healthy future for us all, we must increase awareness and normalize conversations around HIV/AIDS so young people are informed to make healthy life decisions. Together we can ensure that HIV/AIDS is never the “forgotten epidemic.”

For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact the Casper health center at **307.234.1669** or visit us at www.pprm.org.

