



January 2009

Downtown Women's Center eNewsletter

News From The Heart Of Skid Row

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Greetings from the Downtown Women's Center (DWC)! Thank you for giving a moment of your time to read our eNewsletter - a brief update of happenings at the Center and ideas for how you can get involved!

Our community is deeply touched by the outpouring of support - in record numbers! - received from donors and volunteers this past holiday season. It is with this encouragement we have begun to move forward with our New Year's resolution: to contribute to local momentum for change by continuing to help the growing number of underserved women in Los Angeles achieve their goals and dreams. Please read on for a look back at our strong finish of 2008 and opportunities for involvement in the year ahead.

Now is the time to give back - bring positive change to your community in the New Year by helping DWC bring an end to women's homelessness! Please visit our website at www.DWCweb.org for more information.

~~~Thank You for Giving Back in 2008!~~~

2008 brought 5,000 more hours of donated time from volunteers as compared to 2007. This allowed us to increase our services to meet the needs of the growing population of homeless and very low-income women in downtown Los Angeles.

During Christmas 2008, DWC provided meals to the greatest amount of women in our organization's history.

Supporters contributed enough funds to cover all costs related to holiday meals and gifts in 2008.

## You're Invited!

### *Happenings at DWC*

- **Volunteer Orientation** is a crash course on all of the important information needed to be a successful volunteer, and it will familiarize you with DWC programs, policies, and volunteer opportunities. Leave with your first assignment in hand!  
**Next Orientation Date:** *Saturday, March 7 from 9 to 11 a.m.*
- **Volunteer Training** is a thought-provoking discussion-based workshop that educates volunteers on the root causes of homelessness, current events impacting homeless women, healthy boundaries, active listening, sisterhood, and how to make an impact in your community. Perfect for folks who seek a volunteer role working directly with DWC Participants.  
**Next Training Date:** *Saturday, March 7 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.*

*Please contact Volunteer Coordinator Vanessa Wai at [VanessaW@DWCweb.org](mailto:VanessaW@DWCweb.org) to sign up for either of the events listed above.*

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- **2009 Gala Planning Committee:** Do you have a passion for event planning? If so, please consider helping us prepare for our Annual Fundraising Gala dinner and auction! Monthly meetings will be held through Monday, September 21 - the date of this year's event. Please contact Development Associate Amber Sheikh at AmberS@DWCweb.org for details.
- **Capital Campaign Committee:** Do you find yourself motivating others or have you worked on fundraising campaigns? If so, we would love for you to join our Capital Campaign Committee! Meetings are held every six weeks until DWC moves into our new home just a few blocks away. For more information, please contact Capital Campaign Coordinator Tracy Talaid at TracyT@DWCweb.org.

- **Social Enterprise Committee:** Do you have experience in business plan development, retail stores, or marketing? Would you like to help create a business that builds job training and employment opportunities for low-income women? DWC is looking for business-minded volunteers to help develop a social enterprise at our new location. Please contact Executive Assistant Nui Bezaire at NuiB@DWCweb.org for more information.
- **Medical Clinic Committee:** In 2010, DWC will be opening the first medical and mental health clinic exclusively for women in the Skid Row area. DWC is relying on a Medical Clinic Committee of volunteers from a variety of medical professions to provide us with guidance as we take on this exciting endeavor. If you have a background or interest in the medical or mental health field and would like to help, please contact Senior Director of Programs and Community Education Monica Martinez at MonicaM@DWCweb.org for more information.

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- **Save-the-Date - Burlesque Bingo:** The DWC Public Outreach Team will once again be hosting this fun and successful fundraising event! There will be singing, dancing, comedy, prizes, an auction, and other fun surprises - it's an event you and your friends don't want to miss! Please feel free to contact Development Associate Amber Sheikh at [AmberS@DWCweb.org](mailto:AmberS@DWCweb.org) should you have any questions.

**What:** Burlesque Bingo

**When:** Sunday, January 25 at 7 p.m.

**Where:** Royal Claytons

1855 Industrial St., Los Angeles 90021

(in the Toy Factory Lofts)

\$20 Suggested Donation *\*This is a 21-and-over event.*

- **Save-the-Date - Business Venture Wisdom Holders Meeting:** Do you have experience in workforce development, operating a small business, managing a retail space, or do you live in a downtown community? If so, please share your wisdom and experience and help DWC build our retail/job training space at Project Home! Please contact Executive Assistant Nui Bezaire at [NuiB@DWCweb.org](mailto:NuiB@DWCweb.org) for more information or to sign up. **Meeting Date:** Thursday, February 26 from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Dinner will be provided.

## Generosity Outside Of The Box

*Hands-On Supporters Who Helped Make Our Holidays Bright*

Over the holidays, our Day Center Participants and Residents were shown that even in the toughest of times, there is still plenty of love to send their way! In addition to the much-appreciated influx of in-kind and monetary donations received over the holidays, we also received assistance around the Center from a number of helping hands! We appreciate those who went out of their way to make this year's festivities extra special for the Ladies; you inspired all of us to be creative in our approach to giving back.

We had a special visit from Actress **Marcia Cross**, who helped serve food and facilitate an "I Am Thankful" craft activity with the Ladies on Thanksgiving.

- New Volunteer and high school student **Janna Feldman** fundraised with her school for our Chanukah celebration this year and helped make homemade latkes to share with the Ladies.
- Meals on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were sponsored by donors **Lance Still**, **Chris Carlisle**, and **Amir Goldfiner**.
- Volunteers **Chris and Nancy Blackman** provided personalized gifts for each Resident.
- Volunteer **Marylu** got her company, Warehouse Shoe Sale, to donate new shoes and gift certificates for new shoes to all of the Ladies.
- **Sidley Austin LLP** visited DWC on December 30 to celebrate Kwanzaa with gifts and a special breakfast.
- **KPMG** hosted a service day at DWC at which 24 Volunteers helped sort and wrap gifts, paint the stair railing in the Residence, sort food in our pantry, and clean the refrigerators in the basement.
- Haircuts and styling were offered by Volunteer **Andrea**, who put in extra hours helping the Ladies get glamorous for the holiday season.
- The **GE Women's Network** took Residents out to a nice holiday meal at Engine Co. 28, downtown's hot spot for gourmet firehouse food.
- **DWC's Board of Directors** joined the Residents for Christmas tree decorating and sponsored our trees.
- New Volunteer group **Craftopia** shared their special talents with the Ladies by teaching cookie decorating tips and techniques (not to mention giving us lots of tasty cookies to eat!).
- **Many more thoughtful community members supported DWC over the holidays in ways too numerous to mention. We thank you for your generosity!**

## Spotlight on Participants

*Ladies Reflect on the 2008 Holiday Season at DWC*

**"My favorite thing about the holidays at DWC was..."**

"...the donation of trees! The first (words) out of my mouth when we saw them were about how beautiful they were. It was fun decorating them, too."

- Carolyn

"...special visitors. I loved it when Santa Claus came to the Day Center and when IHOP volunteers brought food to share!"

- Judith

"...the surprises. I woke up very early and found presents waiting for me outside of my door. It was so nice. I felt like a kid again!"

- Diane

"...the fun! It's always a good time at DWC during the holidays."

- Gloria

## **How You Can Help**

### *Giving Back in the New Year!*

The year ahead is sure to be exciting - yet challenging - for us all. DWC sincerely appreciates any help you are able to provide for our programs and services, and we offer a range of opportunities for you give back in 2009. From in-kind gifts - such as food and household items - to stock and insurance contributions to online shopping, we offer a range of opportunities to help meet DWC's needs that work with your charitable goals. Please visit our [Gifts and Donations web page](#) or call us at (213) 680-0600 to find the right arrangement for you. Thank you for keeping us in your heart and mind this New Year!