

CHRYSALIS FOUNDATION 2009 POLICY AGENDA

THE FACTS: Girls and women play a substantial role the Iowa economy today. According to the State Data Center of Iowa:

- **67% of women were in Iowa's labor force (2007)**, surpassing the national average of 59%.
- **81.2% of women with children under the age of 18 participate in Iowa's labor force (2007).**
- **Women own 19.1% of all privately held businesses** in the state, **generating more than \$7.3 billion** in annual sales and receipts.
- **55% of women over 25 has at least some post-secondary education**, compared with 51.5% of men; the number of women with a bachelor's degree or higher has more than tripled since 1970.

THE CHALLENGE: Although girls and women are Iowa's majority population, disparities still exist as to their prospects for success...

- **Women account for 57% of lowans in poverty** (*American Community Survey, 2007*).
- **One in five Iowa girls will drop out of school this year**, facing unemployment, lower wages, greater reliance on public support, and costing the Iowa economy an estimated \$260,000 over her lifetime (*Alliance for Excellent Education*).
- **Women continue to earn less than men (78 cents for every dollar)**, even when education, experience, and occupation are equal (*Iowa Policy Project, 2008*).
- **Women are 32% more likely than men to hold a sub prime mortgage**, facing more likely foreclosure or bankruptcy (*Consumer Federation of America, 2008*).

Chrysalis knows that when we invest in girls and women, everyone benefits, families grow healthier, and communities thrive.

Chrysalis has identified key issues important to all lowans through its 2009 POLICY AGENDA.

FOR GIRLS: SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Assure access to affordable, high-quality after-school programming for all Iowa girls to assure academic success, workplace readiness, and future productivity.

1. **In partnership with the Iowa Afterschool Alliance, move toward creation of a single, sustainable source of funding to provide out-of-school programming to youth across Iowa.**
2. **Promote and strengthen science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education for girls including girls of color to increase workforce skills, support future workforce needs, and reduce gender barriers.**

FOR WOMEN: ENSURE ECONOMIC SECURITY AND WORKFORCE SUCCESS

Assure women's workforce success by emphasizing education, skills training, and work supports to equip them to earn higher wages to support themselves and their families.

1. **Ensure that job training for high-growth careers is widely available for women, particularly low-income and unemployed women.**
2. **Support low-income working women and families through increased access to affordable benefits including health care, child care, transportation, and housing.**

Chrysalis is a public, community-based foundation providing resources to support leadership and economic stability for girls and women in Polk, Warren, and Dallas Counties in central Iowa since 1989.