

## CHRYSALIS FOUNDATION 2008 POLICY AGENDA

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

**Why is this important?** Although Iowa's women and girls are the majority population (51.2%), for many, achieving economic equality and self-sufficiency remains a challenge. **In Iowa...**

- **Women are 5 times more likely than men to live in poverty;** 41,000 Iowa women, with or without children, lived in poverty in 2006 (*American Community Survey*).
- **One in five girls will drop out of school this year,** facing increased unemployment, lower wages, greater reliance on public support, and costing the nation an estimated \$260,000 over her lifetime (*Alliance for Excellent Education, October 2007*).
- **Women earn 75 cents for every dollar earned by a man,** even when education, experience, and occupation are equal (*AAUW Educational Foundation, 2006*).

**Chrysalis knows that when we invest in women and girls, everyone benefits, families grow healthier, and communities thrive. Chrysalis has identified key issues important to all Iowans through its 2008 POLICY AGENDA.**

### FOR GIRLS: EXPAND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Increase exposure to enhanced education and enrichment to improve academic success, emotional health, and physical well-being to assure successful and productive futures for all girls.

**1. Support the Iowa Afterschool Alliance request for \$6 million toward after-school programs with 25% dedicated to programs serving middle and high school youth.**

Teens not in after-school programs are more likely to exhibit "risky" behaviors and are **40% more likely to become teen parents.**  
(*2003 Harvard Family Research Project*)

**Every dollar invested** in after-school programs is estimated to return **\$8.92 to \$12.90 in improved school success and reduced crime and welfare costs.**  
(*Costs and Benefits of After School Programs: Brown, 2002*)

**2. Support the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women request toward increasing the participation of girls and women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education.**

Nearly equal in proficiency skills (60%) for engineering, **girls represent only 16%** of freshman engineering students and **17% of engineering PhD students.**  
(*2006, Women in Engineering Programs/Advocates Network*)

### FOR WOMEN: IMPROVE FINANCIAL STABILITY through CAREER and WORKFORCE SKILLS

Improve women's success in the workforce by providing education, skills training, and supports necessary to assure preparation for, and access to, high-demand jobs and careers.

**1. Develop comprehensive workforce skill training to assure long-term economic stability through financial literacy, post-secondary education, and pathways to high-demand, high-paying jobs.**

Between 2004 and 2014, 8 out of the 10 fastest growing occupations will require a **post-secondary vocational certificate or associate's degree.**  
(*U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006*)

**2. Assure work supports including benefit enrollment, quality child care, and networks which enhance workforce and career success.**

Of Iowans employed as **part-time, temporary, or contract workers** (12% of employed population overall), 2/3 are female, and 57% report **receiving no benefits of any kind.**  
(*2001 Contingency Worker Study, ICSW*)  
Nationally, 60% of private employers provide healthcare insurance; average annual **employee cost is \$977 for individual and \$3,754 for family coverage.**  
(*U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: August 2007*)