



Minerva Foundation for BC Women

Connected and empowered women building stronger communities

Report to the Directors
Period of January 1 to December 31, 2009

Presented by Julia Kim, Chair

INTRODUCTION and SUMMARY

The past year, 2009, was a challenging year for the Minerva Foundation for BC Women. The worldwide economic decline which impacted our organization and other non-profits in the fall of 2008 continued on through to 2009.

Our organization braced itself for an expected revenue downturn. Led by our new Executive Director, we decreased our overhead costs significantly by making cuts to staff hours and by budgeting programs with basics in mind. More volunteers were utilized to augment staff hours and to provide services which we otherwise had to pay for.

Additionally, the Foundation launched a concerted campaign to renew contact and cultivate donors one-on-one, and undertook a direct mail campaign that reached everyone on our database with a human story of a woman we helped.

Fundraising event committees, Board and staff worked extra hard and managed to deliver more than enough revenues to support expenses, resulting in an operational surplus of \$33,857, compared to an operational shortfall of \$190,014 in 2008.

The Foundation managed to deliver its core programs, maintaining the quality Minerva is known for. Of the core programs, only the safety grants were not delivered. Minerva passed the year of challenge with flying colors, showing how adversity releases and increases our strengths as an organization.

The Foundation made a difference in the lives of over 335 women and girls directly, and engaged an estimate 850 women as participants and volunteers in 2009.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Minerva Foundation for BC Women inspires and empowers women and girls to reach their full potential by creating opportunities and offering programs through trusted partnerships in the areas of education, leadership development, economic security, and safety.

OBJECTIVES

The Minerva Foundation for BC Women is an independent non-profit society governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. In addressing the needs of women, the objectives of the Minerva Foundation are to:

- Address the challenges facing women and girls in British Columbia in all of its diversity
- Focus on four priority areas for women and girls in:
 - Education
 - Leadership development
 - Economic security
 - Safety

STRATEGIES

The Minerva Foundation for BC Women has created four key strategies:

- Partner with business, government, service organizations, public institutions and individuals.
- Offer programs and educational awards to develop women's full potential.
- Offer grants to other community groups that fulfill our mission.
- Grow our endowment fund to ensure financial sustainability of the Foundation for the long term.

ADMINISTRATION

In 2009 staff hours were reduced as a cost-saving measure, from 7.4 FTE to 5.99 FTE or a 20% reduction in staffing level. Volunteers were utilized to cover administrative duties of staff let go, and assisted staff whose hours were reduced. Volunteer mentors assisted in fundraising.

A new way of budgeting was put in place allocating a more appropriate level of administrative expenses/salaries and benefits to programs.

The Board/staff strategic planning session reviewed Minerva's programs and priorities in difficult times, and identified sustainable fundraising strategies later applied in the year.

As Minerva's rent-free office space opportunity at TD building terminates in September 2011, staff started searching for office options in 2009. Staff applied for City-owned rent free space at the Woodward Building on a competitive basis (Request for Proposal process) and won. Approximately 1,500 sq ft of rent free office space (with common amenities charge similar but slightly higher than at the TD space) will be available starting August 2010, for a lease of 5 years, renewable every five years for 3 more times, for a total potential lease period of 20 years.

In late 2009, Minerva rebranded through pro bono design work by Ideastream: Catherine Worrall Principal, and the new look and website was launched at the Women in Food event in December 2009. The modernized, streamlined look has been receiving positive reactions from the community.

Financial and Fundraising

In 2009 we successfully raised funds in total of \$ 855,000 through individuals, corporations, institutions, government, foundations and events, broken down as follows: 48% from corporations, 19% from individuals, 12% from ticket sales and 12% from government, and 9% from foundations/other.

Total revenue from sponsorships and donations for the year was \$791,276 up from \$713,095 in 2008.

Government income was \$158,426, down from \$341,699 in 2008.

Investment income in 2009 was \$20,871, down from \$42,259 in 2008.

Board designated funds remained the same.

Externally restricted endowment funds grew by \$104,032 resulting in a total of \$838,176 at year end.

Belt tightening was reflected in actual costs being lower than budgeted costs by 15% for a total of \$159,541 in savings.

In 2009, the Foundation completed its second external audit, by Price Waterhouse Coopers.

Mid-to-late 2008 was extremely challenging in terms of securing sponsorships and donations, and a spirited fundraising campaign by Board members and supporters in Dec 2008/January 2009 saved the Education awards and MHWW. Learning to Lead BC utilized a new way of fundraising, charging registration fees for emerging leaders that could be paid their respective companies out of professional development budgets (not sponsorship budgets which had been reduced). A Go-no-Go policy was instituted that allowed early notice of whether or not programs would take place. With the exception of FAL Victoria, all leadership, economic security and education programs were delivered in 2009.

Ten grant applications were made to government and foundations, 4 of which bore fruit in early 2010: Status of Women Canada 3 year advanced leadership program (\$367,529), Ministry of Advanced Education increase in MHWW funding and areas of application (\$72,000), INAC (\$25,000) and Hamber Foundation (\$1000).

AAG Vancouver, Victoria, and Prince George and WIF netted revenues higher than 2008 by 8% or \$15,845.

Direct mail campaign targeted our entire database, told the story of a woman Minerva Foundation helped, and follow up calls were made, resulting in \$16,487 more than raised in 2008.

BOARD GOVERNANCE

The Board of Directors met for a two day planning session June 20-21, 2008 at Blake, Cassels and Graydon offices in Vancouver with facilitator, Ludmila Jagiellicz, a certified management consultant with Western Management Consultants Group. The first day reviewed successes/challenges of the previous year and identified priorities for the next year and 2 years.

The morning of the second day reviewed fundraising strategies and a fund development plan. It was decided to form a Minerva Patrons Circle, and as of May 2010, the Patrons Circle was launched with 10 members.

One of the strategies was the inclusion of male presence in governance, and as a result 2 of the Patrons Circle are men, and two candidate Board members for 2010 are men.

The Board undertook a Governance survey of its members, with 9 respondents, showing an overall high satisfaction with the way the Board is governed.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Education

Our Education Awards portfolio consisted of \$101,411 in awards for 2009, down from \$104,558 in 2008. We gave awards to more than 90 women in need in BC. To deliver these awards we partnered with 11 universities, 12 colleges, and 3 private institutions.

The annual Education Awards recognition luncheon was not held in 2009 as a cost-saving measure.

A new education endowment award was received in 2009: the Jacqueline Frewin Endowment Award (\$45,000).

Leadership Development

Our Leadership Development programs were in full operation in 2009, with volunteer committees developing and managing the programs. In summary we offered development opportunity to (number) community leaders, (number) emerging leaders, and (number) Grade 11 girls in British Columbia.

We held:

- A BC Learning to Lead™ in Vancouver on May 29-31, 2009, with
 - 66 participants:
 - 21 Community Leaders;
 - 21 Emerging Leaders; and
 - 21 Grade 11 Future / Student Leaders
 - 3 Welch Award winners from the previous Grade 11 participants
 - Keynote speakers: Tamara Vrooman, VanCity CEO and Naomi Divine
- Follow A Leader™ Vancouver, October to November, with:
 - 20 Participants:
 - 10 Community Leaders
 - 10 Emerging leaders
 - Keynote Speaker: Bev Van Ruyven, BC Hydro Acting CEO

Economic Security

Our Minerva Helping Women Work™ (MHWW) program reduced in size due to decrease in Government funding.

In 2009, the MHWW program trained over 172 protégées, and had over 350 registered mentors in a wide variety of fields throughout BC.

The programs and activities delivered included:

- MHWW Career Program – January to May
 - 17 protégées selected to participate in the 5 month program
 - Private funding
- MHWW Career Program – September to December 2009
 - 25 participants in 17 sessions over 2 months
 - Funding mostly by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market
- MHWW COS Program
 - Haida Gwaii – January – 14 participants
 - Prince George – January – 20 participants
 - Lower Mainland – February – 16 participants
 - Fort Nelson – December – 15 participants
- Mentors Coaching Workshops – January and September – 45 mentors in attendance
 - Leadership Through Wisdom of the Horse Workshop – June – 20 attended

Community Grants

In 2009 Minerva did not distribute any grants due to the limited funding.

Combining Our Strength™ Initiative

This was the third full year for the Combining Our Strength™ initiative. Our team of Courtney Daws and Lisa Tallio have led this initiative to deliver strong programs.

COS Council

The COS Council was chaired by Jody Wilson-Raybould and Lisa Ethans in 2009. The Council had 15 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women provide direction and guidance to our unique program initiative.

The Council welcomed two new Council members in September 2009: Chastity Davis and Kim Van der Woerd. Both of these women are graduates of Minerva programs (Chastity – Follow A Leader™, and Kim – Learning to Lead™ South).

In late 2009, Council members Nancy McKinstry and Jeannie Cranmer stepped off the Council due to other commitments. We thank them so much for their hard work and commitment over the past 3 years.

Education

Through our Combining Our Strength™ initiative, \$49,250 in awards were presented to Aboriginal Women in 2009. The awards are distributed by the following institutions: Simon

Fraser University, Thompson Rivers University, BCIT, College of the Rockies, Douglas College, JIBC, North Island College, Northern Lights College, Northwest Community College, BC Housing.

COS Learning To Lead™

The third Learning To Lead™ COS program was held in at St. John's College on the campus of UBC in Vancouver from June 12-14, 2009. There were over 70 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women from 7 different regions in BC (Cranbrook, Nass Valley, Prince George, Haida Gwaii, Fort Nelson, Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland) as participants. Our Curriculum Committee had developed a unique curriculum for this program and it was very well received. The program was developed with the help of three elders and we had two "elders in residence" over the weekend. Ten elders participated in workshops over the weekend. In addition, continuing education for these participants with trained facilitators was developed for each of the 7 communities. These Community Circles continued to meet, follow the curriculum and planned projects in their local communities. The feedback was very positive on these Circles.

COS Minerva Helping Women Work™

In 2008, building on the success of the seminar version of MHWW COS, and building on our goal to reach more Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women in communities across the province, the Minerva Foundation developed a unique program, MHWW COS Community Outreach Program. This program took the curriculum out to the communities where the Aboriginal women had great need. It has been generously supported by the Imperial Oil Foundation and TD Bank Financial Group. In 2009, this program was run in Haida Gwaii, Fort Nelson, Prince George, and the Lower Mainland to overwhelming success. (see MHWW section for program stats)

COS Cross Cultural Awareness Learning

The CCAL project was delivered four times, by facilitators Lisa Tallio and Gerry Ambers, to employees at BC Hydro. The end of 2009 saw the development of a strategy to roll out this program to other organizations in BC.

EVENTS

Two major events were held in Vancouver by the Foundation as fundraisers and networking events in 2009. They were the All About Girlfriends™ gala and Women In Food luncheon:

All About Girlfriends™ Glamour

- Networking and Silent Auction cocktail party at the Four Seasons Hotel
 - March 12, 2009 (to coincide with International Women's Day);
 - 434 tickets sold (slightly down from 450 in 2008)
 - Kim Haakstad and Kerri Brkich, Co-Chairs; and
 - Sophie Lui from Global TV, emcee
 - Raised \$66,000 (net).

Women In Food Luncheon

- Recognition luncheon at the Four Seasons Hotel
 - December 2, 2009;
 - Heather White and Janice Martin, Co-Chairs
 - 460 tickets sold –sold out 2 weeks prior to luncheon;
 - Raised \$59,000 (net).
- Honoured three distinguished women for leadership, excellence and philanthropy in food:
 - Karen Barnaby
 - Trish Chung
 - Kim Osborne
- Guest speaker: Vikram Vij from Vij's restaurant – first male Emcee

Alumnae Event

No Alumnae event was held in 2009.

Volunteer Event

- Sponsored by Obakki
- Event held at Obakki's store in Gastown, Vancouver and Obakki gave away cocktails, free manicures and free hairstyles by Blo, the Blo Dry Bar.
- Event attended by over 50 Minerva volunteers past and present
- No monies were generated from the event but helped to reconnect Minerva to important volunteers

BRANCHES

Our two branches in Victoria and Prince George held successful programs and events in 2009 and became stronger and more visible in their communities.

Prince George

The Prince George branch committee and volunteers delivered:

- Third annual All About Girlfriends™ event, Divine Desserts, March 2009.
- Numerous Breakfast events.
- Chair Marie Nygaard stepped down as chair as her place of employment and residence moved to Terrace. Currently, a consultation in the Prince George area is being planned to determine women's needs, what might be the role for Minerva and whether or not a Branch is needed, outreach of services from head office, or some other branch model.

Victoria

The Victoria and Islands branch committee and volunteers delivered:

- Speaker Series events with regular attendance of 60 women or more, at the Victoria Union Club focused on highlighting successful community leaders including:
 - Dr. Gail Gibson, author of “Who You Are Is How You Lead”
 - The Hon. Ida Chong, Minister of Healthy Living and Sport
- All About Girlfriends, Jeans ‘n Jewels, held May 2009 and raised over \$15,000; attended by a sold out crowd of over 200
- Two leaders from Victoria attended the Spring 2010 Learning to Lead Program
- Golf n Gals at the Royal Oak Golf Club attended by over 30 women
- MHWW alumni event held at the Laurel Point Inn
- Planning in progress for the following:
 - 2010 Follow a Leader (scheduled for Sept/Oct 2010)
 - 2010 All About Girlfriends – featuring noted fashion historian Ivan Sayer
 - 2010 combined MHWW and FAL alumni event (date to be determined)
 - 2010 fall speaker series (details to be determined)
- Developed a sponsorship program that provides donors with ability to participate in both Follow a Leader and the events (speaker series and AAG)
- Chair Maggie Winters stepped down as a result of a move to Vancouver, and Bonnie Gunderson appointed as new chair
- A consultation in the Victoria area is needed to determine the more appropriate role for Minerva in Victoria and whether or not the branch model needs to be adjusted. It’s difficult to sustain both the funding and level of volunteer commitment required under current model. There are also competing programs that serve similar purposes.