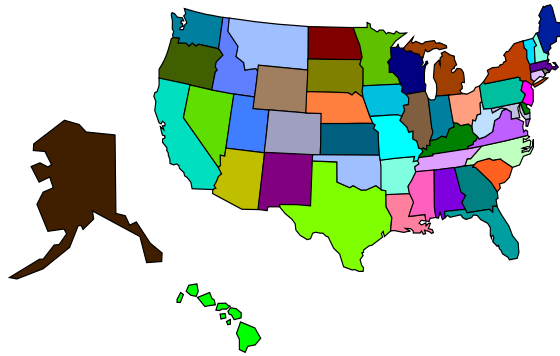


# THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES WOMEN OF TODAY



## CHARTER YEAR

1985-1986

### Barb Fish - Chairman

Fearing the dissolution of the United States Jaycee Women, representatives from ten states met April 12, 1985, at Godfather's Pizza in Tulsa, Oklahoma. An offer was made that "we couldn't refuse" - the opportunity to begin organizing Women of Today.

Vicki Fisher, Region V Vice President from Iowa, conducted the informal meeting, which was mainly a sharing of what was happening in each state. It was felt that, while there probably wouldn't be a national organization for a while, it was necessary to have some unity for those states that were wishing to reorganize as a new organization.

Minnesota gave permission for other states to use the name "Women of Today" - providing they had intentions of becoming a part of the national organization once it was formed.

It was decided that a coordinator was needed to share information among the states until we would meet again at National Convention Indianapolis, Indiana. Jacque Schumacher from South Dakota was unanimously elected.

States in attendance at this first organizational meeting were: Minnesota, Iowa, Oregon, Washington, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, South Dakota, Arkansas, and Missouri.

Another organizational meeting was held in Indianapolis, Indiana at the Howard Johnson's Motel on June 19, 1985.

Minnesota had retained an attorney to help them with their organizational process, and it was his recommendation that we should form a national organization right away rather than wait. We would then be able to incorporate and begin trademark proceedings.

A motion was made by Minnesota, seconded by Iowa to form a national organization under the name of "United States Women of Today". Barb Fish, Minnesota, was elected as National Chairman. She appointed Dawn Young, Minnesota as Treasurer and Debbie Dusi, California, Secretary.

The purpose of the National Organization would be to serve as a network system for states - to provide a sharing of information and to begin the process of trademarking the name and incorporating the organization. The cost of joining the national organization would be \$200.00 per state - \$150.00 to cover legal expenses and \$50.00 to cover administrative expenses.

It was further discussed that the U.S. Women of Today would meet for a Mid-Year Review in January, 1986 and then for the first National Meeting in June 1986. Representatives from 18 states were in attendance.

September 4, 1985, the United States Women of Today were incorporated. Bylaws were written and trademark proceedings for the name were begun.

The Mid Year Meeting was held in Plymouth, MN, January 24-26, 1986. At this meeting the National logo was chosen - Illinois had submitted the winning design. Committee meetings were held and recommendations were made in the following areas: Bylaws, Finance, Programming, Future Directions, Logo and Creed, and Conventions.

North Dakota, Minnesota and Illinois presented bids for National Convention. Illinois won, so National Convention would be held in Peoria on July 10-13, 1986.

By June 30th, 21 states had joined the national organization and would be considered the charter states of the United States Women of Today. There were:

- |                  |                 |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 01 Minnesota     | 02 Washington   | 03 Arkansas     |
| 04 Illinois      | 05 Missouri     | 06 Pennsylvania |
| 07 Massachusetts | 08 South Dakota | 09 Nebraska     |
| 10 California    | 11 North Dakota | 12 Iowa         |
| 13 Montana       | 14 New Jersey   | 15 Idaho        |
| 16 Michigan      | 17 Ohio         | 18 Oklahoma     |
| 19 Wisconsin     | 20 Tennessee    | 21 Wyoming      |

National Convention was held in Peoria, Illinois on July 10-13, 1986. Due to personal reasons, Secretary, Debbie Dusi resigned and Mary Quigley from Michigan filled the position. Lynne Kovash from Minnesota served as Parliamentarian.

Many Bylaws were voted on, a site for the 1987 National Convention was chosen, and elections were held. Mankato, Minnesota would host the national convention and the following officers were elected:

President	Vicki Fisher, Iowa
Administrative VP	Kay Thorton, South Dakota
Programming VP	Pat Moritz, Missouri
Treasurer	Cindy French, Arkansas
Secretary	Susan Schuler, Minnesota

Appointed as Parliamentarian was Ginny Thiesfeld from Nebraska. Barb Fish would serve as Chairman of the Board.

One of the major issues decided at this convention was that there would be no upper age limit for the national organization - however, states could impose an age limit if they chose to do so.

Tremendous accomplishments were made this first year as Women of Today. It has not been an easy year, but because of commitment and belief, the United States Women of Today has grown from nothing to an organization of 21 states and 7,000 members. We have a future!

## **1986-1987**

### **Vicki Fisher, President**

President, Vicki Fisher of Iowa, led the U.S. Women of Today during the 1986-1987 year with the theme "Sharing Our Dreams". Patriotic symbols were used as her logo complete with the colors of red, white and blue. The 1986-1987 year for the U.S. Women of Today was one of great internal growth. Many accomplishments were made in the programming area.

New Ideas were implemented to provide a stronger support system. Sister states were established with a larger state being matched up with a smaller state. Support was shown in many ways such as sharing newsletters, training tips, monetary donations and exchanging ideas. Support sisters, a pen pal type program was also set up. The first U.S. Women of Today Directory was printed and distributed to all the national officers and state presidents.

Information included in the directory consisted of a roster of national and state officers, budget, past U.S. Presidents, history, bylaws and policies, and a bid form for hosting national meetings. A cassette tape was produced by the U.S. President, which contained various motivational messages. Each state president received a copy of the tape to use in travels throughout her state.

With a non-existent travel budget for the U.S. President, this proved to be a very effective tool to enable her to reach the local chapters and members.

The first nationwide "Membership Week" was celebrated November 2-9th. A U.S. flag/Lady Liberty pin was used as an incentive for gaining new members. This proved to be a very successful week as 241 pins were distributed.

The Mid Year Meeting was held in Des Moines, Iowa on January 16-18th. Forty-three members attended representing fifteen states. The first Effective Writing competition was held using the topic "Women of today - Opportunities and Dreams". Guidelines were discussed and decisions reached concerning future competitions in speaking, writing and officer recognition. Closing ceremonies were used to kick off the first "U.S. Women of Today Week" which was celebrated January 18-24th.

Much information was formulated and distributed to the states over the course of the year. Manuals in the areas of Public Relations, Effective Communications – which covered both speaking and writing, and Focus on Women were produced. A new state information packet was assembled. A training and resource material packet, which covered all aspects of our organization, was also compiled.

Receiving notification that the trademark process of the "United States Women of Today" was now complete and realizing the need to increase the treasury, it was decided to begin a ways and means line. All-purpose certificates and membership pins were produced.

National Convention was held on June 11-14th in Mankato, Minnesota with 198 members from 16 states in attendance. Competitions were held for Effective Writing and Speaking. The topic for speaking was "Sharing Our Dreams" and for writing, "Dreams for the Future". It was very exciting to learn that the U.S. Women of Today raised \$57,708.70 for the March of Dimes and \$40,908.30 for Cystic Fibrosis during our first year of working together. State and local officers were recognized for their outstanding achievements. Presidential Medallions were presented to the national officers and state presidents who excelled in the area of leadership.

Many decisions were reached during the convention that would set a precedent for years to come. It was decided that a uniform awards/membership year of May 1 through April 30 would be established. The last full week of September will be recognized as U.S. Women of Today Week and July 1 will be known as Founder's Day. After 18 months of work, the U.S. Women of Today Creed was unanimously adopted. What a special feeling was shared as we joined hands and recited our official creed for the first time.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Susan Schuler, Minnesota
Administrative VP	Pat Moritz, Missouri
Programming VP	Pat Branstad, Minnesota
Treasurer	Ginny Thiesfeld, Nebraska
Secretary	Irene Merrill, California

Cindy French of Arkansas was appointed Parliamentarian and Vicki Fisher of Iowa will serve as Chairman of the Board.

The year concluded with 21 states consisting of 400 chapters with approximately 6,900 members. It was a true desire that some additional states would affiliate this year. Over 75 letters were mailed to try and obtain contact people. We're confident that by utilizing the areas that were developed this year and continuing the use of public relations, we will one day soon be 50 states strong!

## 1987-1988

### Susan Schuler, President

Leading the United States Women of Today during this year was Susan Schuler from Minnesota, using the theme "We the People".

In September, the National Directory was completed, along with a new National Media booklet, consisting of information on state presidents, programming and operations in their states, and national officers. One hundred national pins were awarded throughout this year to outstanding members in the states. Presidential medallions were also awarded to outstanding national officers and state presidents at the Mid Year meeting and the Annual Convention. This was a year of travel for President Sue, as she traveled into 21 states and one newly extended state of Indiana. Nine states had other national officers visiting them. A national presidents' weekly newsletter was provided to state presidents, national officers and foundation representatives.

In the fall, we celebrated U.S. Women of Today Week the last week of September and recognized the chapters participating in this at the Mid Year Meeting. We also recognized chapters participating in the Bicentennial project in programming. We offered individual recognition for All American Members (all members eligible) and the Gold Team (Programming recognition for individuals) and All-American Chapters. These programs were available for all members to participate in and all chapters.

In October, Irene Merrill, National Secretary from California resigned and Terry Plymale Pronko from Nebraska accepted the position.

In November the trademarking of our national logo was completed. With that began the work on the 501(c)3 and 501(c)4 status for our organization, enabling us to be tax exempt and form a foundation. President Sue was invited to Washington D.C. to the March of Dimes 50th Anniversary send off with Beverly Sills, at the Washington Press Club.

The Mid Year meeting was held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, January 15-17, 1988 with 17 states in attendance and 95 members. Effective Writing competition was held along with committee meetings, in the areas of future directions, bylaws, finance, elections and programming. Cystic Fibrosis and March of Dimes presented foundation bids. Pat Zeinz, Illinois, was appointed by President Sue, to work on the extension manual and extensions into new states. In May, Indiana paid their charter fee with Roxie Appel, elected as State President. A few Ways and Means items were available for sale at this meeting, coffee mugs and pens. Awards were presented along with the Presidential Award of Excellence going to Pat Branstad, Programming Vice President for her great strides made in developing the area of programming for our organization.

In April, an extension manual was completed for our states with a National brochure to be made available at the Annual Meeting. In June, Susan was a guest of the March of Dimes in Stanford, Connecticut for a celebration conference, representing our organization. She was also a guest at the Martha Stewart garden party.

The annual meeting was held in Minot, North Dakota, July 7-10, 1988. We made great strides in the programming area, establishing the three internal areas of Focus on women, STEP (Success Through Enthusiastic Participation), and Personal Enrichment.

Competitions were held in the STEP area, Effective Writing and Speaking, 60 entries were submitted for the Project Recognition area. A First Timers program was set up along with a photo contest. Total money raised for the March of Dimes during the year was \$60,975.00 and for Cystic Fibrosis the total was \$52,246.00. March of Dimes was voted in as our three year programming area and Cystic Fibrosis for two years. The March of Dimes also hosted an appreciation breakfast for national officers, and state presidents.

It was approved to increase the amount of affiliation fees for the following year according to state size and the year after go into a \$2.00 per member dues. States may now be chartered with a \$50.00 affiliation fee. Our attorney completed by this convention, the paperwork for the 501(c)3 and 501(c)4 status.

With the 501(c)3 completed we held the first United States Women of Today Foundation meeting. Cindy French, Arkansas was elected Chairman and Pat Moritz, Missouri was elected Secretary/Treasurer.

Recognition was given to the outstanding state presidents, and national officers and program managers for the year. The Presidential Award of Excellence went to Cindy French, Parliamentarian and Ginny Thiesfeld, National Treasurer.

Elections were held as follows:

President	Pat Branstad, Minnesota
Administrative VP	Pat Zeinz, Illinois
Programming VP	Sue Dionne, Wisconsin
Treasurer	Terri Sherman, Nebraska
Secretary	Kathy White, Illinois

Doreen Schilke, North Dakota will serve as Parliamentarian and Mary Moeller, Minnesota will serve as Presidential Assistant, and Susan Schuler as Chairman of the Board.

Lincoln, Nebraska will be the host for the 1989 national meeting.

The year concluded with 22 states, consisting of 6,068 members, with 1778 new member adds for the year. This was a year to aid and assist states in developing accurate membership figures, we strengthened our programming for the membership, and the constant communication brought our organization closer together, this was a year of great success!

## 1988-1989

### Pat Branstad, President

Using the theme "Yesterday's Dream, Today's Successes, Tomorrow's Vision", Pat Branstad of Minnesota, served the United States Women of Today as National President 1988-1989.

Other Executive Committee Members included Pat Zeinz, Illinois, Administrative Vice President; Sue Dionne, Wisconsin, Programming Vice President; Terri Sherman, Nebraska, Treasurer; Kathy White, Illinois, Secretary; Doreen Schilke, North Dakota, Parliamentarian; Susan Schuler, Minnesota, Chairman of the Board; and Mary Moeller, Minnesota, Presidential Assistant. Serving as Cystic Fibrosis

National Program Manager was Mary Quigley, Michigan and Karen Peterson, Minnesota, served as National Program Manager for the March of Dimes.

During the year, 11 issues of the national newsletter were published. Each member of the Board of Directors received a complimentary subscription from the U.S. Women of Today; subscriptions were available for purchase as well. For the first time, a quarterly newsletter was published and sent to each state vice president; information included training and motivational materials submitted by the national officers. National program Managers also published regular newsletters to maintain contact with the state program managers. Half of our states were visited by members of the Executive Committee who conducted training seminars and served as guest speakers.

In October, President Pat, our two Vice Presidents, Sue Dionne, and Pat Zeinz, and National Program Manager, Karen Peterson were guests of the March of Dimes along with other Women of Today representatives from the region, at a Regional March of Dimes conference in Chicago. The conference helped mark the 50th Anniversary of the March of Dimes, and provided training for the Women of Today representatives as well as some great public awareness of our partnership with the March of Dimes.

The Mid Year Meeting was held in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota on November 4-6, 1988. Forty-five Women of Today members from 13 states attended the meeting, which included motivational speakers, training and informational forums, and productive meetings of the Bylaws, Future Directions. Program Study, Finance, Elections, and Membership Committee's as well as the Mid Year Board of Directors meeting. Pat Zeinz, Administrative Vice President and Mary Moeller, Presidential Assistant, were awarded Presidential Awards of Excellence. Competition in Effective Writing was held, with 11 entrants. A U.S. Women of Today Profile was distributed, along with a National Directory. Certification guidelines and requirements were adopted at the Mid Year Meeting for the three national internal programs: Focus on Women, Success Through Enthusiastic Participation (S.T.E.P. I, II, and III), and Personal Enrichment (Effective Speaking and Effective Writing). These certification requirements are effective May 1, 1989.

In the area of programming, two Emphasis Months were held to promote participation in our two nationally endorsed External Programs. November was emphasis month for Cystic Fibrosis and March was emphasis month for March of Dimes. Participation in both educational and fundraising projects increases with fundraising reaching an all-time high: over \$51,000 was raised by the United States Women of Today for Cystic Fibrosis foundation, and over \$150,000 was raised for the March of Dimes birth defects foundation.

Membership promotions were held in each of the last three quarters, beginning with a very successful Women of Today Week in the last week of September. Contacts with people in other states continued, and seeds were planted which we hope will result in new Women of Today states in the near future. Each of the 17 newly extended chapters received an engraved gavel welcoming them to the United States Women of Today, and recognition was given to the extending chapter, and to those individual members recruiting 2, 5, 10 or more new members. The 1988-1989 year end figures, which are the most accurate, to date, show us with 5534 members in 313 chapters in 20 states. Over 1770 new members joined us this year!

There were many opportunities for individual and chapter recognition from the United States Women of Today. In addition to the membership recruitment recognition mentioned above, the following were also awarded: 60 All-American Members, 43 All American Chapters, 90 Presidential Pins, and 34 Presidential Medallions.

Training tools developed during the year included a Parliamentary Procedure Manual, a New Chapter Manual, and Operations Manuals for the Executive Committee members and State Presidents. New Ways and Means items included Women of Today notepads and commemorative mugs with President Pat's theme.

Final determination from the IRS regarding the 501(c)3 status for the United States Women of Today Foundation and the 501(c)4 status for the United States Women of

Today was granted. The Foundation established some organizational structure and developed a system for gathering donations from individuals and corporations. The National convention was held in "Big Red Country", Lincoln, Nebraska on June 8-11, 1989. Consisting of training sessions for State Presidents and other state officers, forums for the general member, the Board of Directors meeting, the Annual Meeting of the United States Women of Today, the year end awards, and the ever present fellowship, the convention was truly an opportunity to remember "Yesterday's Dreams", to celebrate "Today's Successes" and to shape "Tomorrow's Vision" of the United States Women of Today.

All three Past Presidents, Barb Fish, Vicki Fisher, and Susan Schuler were present during the weekend, sharing their leadership in conducting forums and helping us to remember "Yesterday's Dreams" which brought us together as Women of Today. Charter Chairman, Barb Fish, served as keynote speaker at the luncheon. Following a slide show highlighting the past four years of our existence, Barb, Vicki and Susan led us in a moving Candle lighting rededication ceremony.

We celebrated "Today's Successes" with recognition of many individuals and chapters. Presidential Awards of Excellence were presented to Sue Dionne, Programming Vice President and Terri Sherman, Treasurer. Competition was held in the areas of Effective Writing, Effective Speaking, S.T.E.P. (first year member), S.T.E.P. (other members), and Project Recognition. Twenty-five Outstanding Local Officers, 25

Outstanding State Officers, 6 Outstanding State Presidents and 2 Outstanding National Officers were recognized at the Year End banquet, along with many other programming and membership awards recipients.

Shaping "Tomorrow's Vision" of the United States Women of Today was also a big part of the 1988-1989 National Convention. Program Manager positions for Focus on Women and S.T.E.P. were established, and national officers were elected:

President	Pat Zeinz, Illinois
Administrative VP	Kathy Ecklin, Iowa
Programming VP	Terri Sherman, Nebraska
Treasurer	Deb VanMatre, Nebraska
Secretary	Joy Hutchcraft, Illinois

Ellie Singer, Minnesota, will serve as Parliamentarian and Pat Branstad, Minnesota, will serve as Chairman of the Board.

1988-1989 will go down as a year of "growing deep", a year when the United States Women of Today further strengthened the foundation with which it started. We remembered "Yesterday's Dreams", we celebrated "Today's Successes" and we helped shape "Tomorrow's Vision" of the United States Women of Today.

## 1989-1990

### Pat Zeinz, President

Leading the United States Women of Today during this year with the theme "The Heartbeat of America....Women of Today" was Pat Zeinz from Illinois. The focus during the 1989-1990 year was on strengthening the heartbeat of the local and state organizations.

Staff members included: Kathy Ecklin, Iowa, Administrative Vice president; Terri Sherman, Nebraska, Programming Vice President; Joy Hutchcraft, Illinois, Secretary; Deb VanMatre, Nebraska, Treasurer; Pat Branstad, Minnesota, Chairman of the Board; Ellie Singer, Minnesota, Parliamentarian. Program Managers were: Marcie Hansen, Illinois, Cystic Fibrosis; Kelley Rosburg, Nebraska, March of Dimes; Debi Baker, Nebraska, Focus on Women; Barbara Heilman, Pennsylvania, S.T.E.P.; Jeanne Mortenson, Minnesota, Extensions Chairman; Sherry Lamberson, Missouri, Chaplain; and Sheila Falconer, Illinois, Presidential Assistant.

This was the first year for the positions of S.T.E.P. and Focus on Women Program Managers. Individual certifications were offered by national for the first time to local members in the areas of Effective Speaking, Effective Writing, Focus on Women and S.T.E.P. 2780 certifications were completed and awarded.

Chaplain and Extensions Chairman were new appointed positions. Approval was given to establish national positions of Extensions Director, Public Relations Director and Chaplain, taking effect 1990-91. The Administrative Vice President position title was renamed Membership Vice President to better describe the focus of this officer.

Monthly issues of the national newsletter were published. State Vice Presidents received quarterly mailings with training, incentives and motivational information compiled by staff members. For the first time, a mailing was sent by the National President to all chapters. There were two chapter mailings. The September one was sponsored by the March of Dimes and Cystic Fibrosis, to congratulate and thank the local members for their involvement. A February mailing included a personalized letter to the editor commending the chapters for their efforts in their community.

President Pat traveled to 15 member states to visit with local members and state officers. Personal notes were sent to all state officers (222) first quarter. There were 24 Board of Directors mailings and an equal number of staff mailings.

Women of Today Week was promoted and celebrated September 24-30. A "Shout Out With Pride" contest was held to encourage public relations efforts throughout the member states. Information was received from 82 chapters describing how Women of Today Week was shared with over 18 million people through the media.

A very successful Mid Year meeting was held in Indianapolis, Indiana on November 3-5. Twelve states were represented with 56 members attending. The weekend included productive committee and Board of Director meetings, training forums, awards and plenty of celebration. Deb VanMatre, Treasurer, received a Presidential Award of Excellence.

One hundred Presidential Pins were awarded to members throughout the nation.

Presidential Medallions were presented to state presidents and national staff members who exhibited excellence in leadership. Recognition was given to 25 Outstanding Local Officers, 25 Outstanding State Officers, 5 Outstanding State Presidents and the Outstanding National Officer.

Individual membership dues were in effect and for the first time, complete national membership rosters were compiled. A S.T.E.P. manual was completed and distributed to all chapters. The Ambassador Award program was accepted, becoming the highest recognition the U.S. Women of Today can bestow on a local member.

The Foundation flourished under the leadership of Cindy French, Arkansas. The first corporate donations and grants were received, as well as in-kind donations. There were 26 Founders Club Members. The Foundation Board of Directors established a five-year plan of Action.

Participation in external programming areas reach a new high. Over \$36,000 was raised for Cystic Fibrosis, over \$181,000 was raised for the March of Dimes, in addition to the many educational projects held. The Lost Child Network was voted in as a two year external programming area, beginning 1990-1991.

National Convention was hosted by the Missouri Women of Today with Carmella Mongold serving as Chairman. The U.S. Women of Today truly experienced a "Royal Time" in Kansas City and celebrated the many successes of the year. Jacque Schumacher, South Dakota, Temporary National Chairman during 1985, was keynote speaker at the luncheon. Tom Zeinz served as banquet speaker, adding a touch of humor to the evening.

The 1989-90 year ended with 5273 members in 18 states. Efforts continue to encourage the extension of new states and new chapters in present member states. Additional resources and new positions were established to expand the areas of public relations and extensions, effective June, 1990.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Joy Hutchcraft, Illinois
Membership VP	Deb VanMatre, Nebraska
Programming VP	Debbie McTavish, North Dakota
Treasurer	Maxine Turner, Nebraska
Secretary	Carrie Lutz, Massachusetts

The emphasis was put on communications at every level, recognizing the individual member's contributions, increase public awareness, "Shouting Out With Pride", and Strengthening the Heartbeat of each local chapter and each member state. The Heartbeat of Woman of Today is more powerful, more capable than ever, and the future looks very bright!

## 1990-1991

### Joy Hutchcraft, President

President Joy Hutchcraft of Illinois, led the United States Women of Today during the 1990-1991 year with the theme, "Sharing the Vision". The American eagle was chosen as a logo. Staff members included: Deb VanMatre, Nebraska, Membership Vice president; Debbie McTavish, North Dakota, Programming Vice President; Carrie Lutz, Massachusetts, Secretary; Maxine Turner, Nebraska, Treasurer; Pat Zeinz, Illinois, Chairman of the Board; Ellie Singer, Minnesota, Parliamentarian; Carmella Mongold, Missouri, Lost Child Network Program Manager; Pam Neil, Minnesota, March of Dimes Program Manager; Mary Malmberg, Minnesota, Extension Director; Terri Sherman, Illinois, Public Relations Director; Julie Forsberg, Minnesota, Chaplain; and Joyce Workman, Illinois, Presidential Assistant.

This was the first year for the positions of Extensions Director, Public Relations Director and Chaplain. The Administrative Vice President position was renamed Membership Vice President.

During the year, 12 issues of the national newsletter were published. State Vice Presidents received three mailings with motivational articles, training and incentives compiled by staff members. There were two Chapter Mailings. National Program Managers also published newsletters to maintain contact with state program managers.

President Joy traveled to eleven member states to train and visit with state officers and local members. Members of the national staff also traveled into states including New Jersey and South Dakota. Personal notes were sent to all state officers first quarter. There were Board of Director and staff mailings. Women of Today Week was celebrated September 23-29. It was the second year for the "Shout Out With Pride" contest. Information was received from 98 chapters representing over 58 million people reached through public relations.

This was the first year for the "Reach Out and Touch" project conceived by the membership Team. National staff and past national president made calls to over 75 percent of the chapter presidents. It was an effective means of strengthening the bond between the national officers and Women of Today across the nation.

The Mid Year Meeting was held in Des Moines, Iowa, November 2-4. There were 63 members in attendance, representing 9 states. The weekend provided training, committee and Board of Director meetings, awards and lots of fun. Deb VanMatre, Membership Vice president, and Joyce Workman, Presidential Assistant and Mid Year Meeting Chairman, received Presidential Awards of Excellence. A highlight of the meeting was presentation of the first recipient of the Ambassador Award to Vicki Fisher, Iowa, for her outstanding commitment and dedication to the Women of Today.

This was the first year for the Ambassador Award - the highest recognition the U.S. Women of Today may bestow on a local member. Congratulations to our first Ambassadors: Vicki Fisher, Iowa; Barb Fish, Minnesota; Dawn Young, Minnesota; Nancy Dvoracek, Minnesota; Mary Kay Verkennes, Minnesota; Julie Bielke, North Dakota; Debbie McTavish, North Dakota; Sheila Falconer, Illinois; and Karen Hekr, Illinois.

One hundred Presidential Pins were awarded to members throughout the nation. Presidential Medallions were presented to national staff members and state presidents for outstanding leadership. Recognition was also given to 30 Outstanding State Officers and 6 Outstanding State Presidents.

Project Recognition, S.T.E.P., Effective Speaking and Effective Writing competitions were offered at Mid Year and Annual Convention. Certifications totaled 3793 including Focus on Women. There was a Focus on Women essay contest held with 15 entrants. There were also 37 All-American Chapters recognized from 8 states.

Training tools and materials were introduced this year beginning with the Extensions Media Kit. The kit included sample fliers, brochures, tent signs, public service announcements, and much more. The manuals for Public Relations and Effective Writing/Effective Speaking were introduced at National Convention for approval by the appropriate committees.

National Convention was hosted by the Massachusetts Women of Today, with Carrie Lutz and Kathy Griffin serving as chairman. The United States Women of Today experienced a "Whale of a Time" in Natick. There were 150 members in attendance with 63 First Timers. Presidential Awards of Excellence were presented to Pat Zeinz, Chairman of the Board, and Debbie McTavish, Programming Vice President. Total money raised for the March of Dimes was over \$106,000 and for the Lost Child Network the total was over \$10,000, in addition to the many educational projects held. The Arthritis Foundation was voted in as the three-year external programming area for 1991-1994.

The 1990-1991 year ended with 4962 members in 17 states. Each of the 17 newly extended chapters received an engraved gavel welcoming them to the U.S. Women of Today. The extensions were in Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Pennsylvania and South Dakota. Recognition was also given to the extending chapters and to those individual members recruiting 2, 5, 10 or more new members. There were 1069 new members recruited.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Deb VanMatre, Nebraska
Membership VP	Mary Malmberg, Minnesota
Programming VP	Diana Veenstra, Minnesota
Treasurer	Cindy Glamm, Minnesota
Secretary	Carmella Mongold, Missouri

The 1990-1991 year emphasized membership and communication. The "Shout Out With Pride" contest and the "Reach Out and Touch" project continued to boost these areas. Certifications in all areas of programming hit record highs. The United States Women of Today continued to share in the "vision" of this organization as outlined in our creed.

**1991-1992**

**Deb VanMatre, President**

Using the theme, "Excitement in the Air", Deb VanMatre, from Nebraska, served the United States Women of Today as National President 1991-1992. Using red, white and blue, her logo consisted of the American Flag surrounded by bursts of fireworks.

In addition to President Deb, the Executive Committee included Mary Malmberg, Minnesota, Membership Vice President; Diana Veenstra, Minnesota, Programming Vice President; Carmella Mongold, Missouri, Secretary; Cindy Glamm, Minnesota, Treasurer; Joy Hutchcraft, Illinois, Chairman of the Board; and Maxine Turner, Nebraska, Parliamentarian. Serving as Directors were Lynette Main, Iowa, Public Relations; and Kathy Griffin, Massachusetts, Extensions; and Program Managers were Ellie Singer, Minnesota, Lost Child Network; Linda Gates, Pennsylvania, Arthritis Foundation; Michelle Drentlaw, Minnesota, S.T.E.P.; and Pat Fern, North Dakota, Personal Enrichment. Linda Moon, Missouri, served as Chaplain; Jan Maaske and Terri Sherman, Nebraska, served as Presidential Assistants.

This was the first year for the Personal Enrichment Program Manager position, which replaced the Focus on Women Program Manager. The Focus on Women program was included in the duties of the Programming Vice President. A national dues billing system was implemented, which involved the transfer of data from the prior record keeping system and the update of the computer program to process the information for the national organization. This service was provided through the Minnesota Chapter Service Center under the direction of Executive Director, Nancy Dvoracek. The transition proved to be a challenge, and emphasized the importance of deadlines and details. For the first time, the U.S. Women of Today were able to accurately and completely track their membership.

To begin the year, a training and sharing session followed the Board of Directors meeting in June, 1991 in Natick, Massachusetts, to establish a working relationship and support among the board.

The Mid Year Meeting was held in November 1-3 in Lincoln, Nebraska. What started out as "Excitement in the Air" quickly turned to "Nightmare on Every Street" and then to a "Winter Wonderland" as the Midwest was hit with a major blizzard on Halloween. Many members were delayed and several were not even able to attend as roads and airports were closed. By Saturday morning, all 46 convention attendees representing 8 states who could make it, were there safely. Schedules were rearranged and plans changed, but for those in attendance, it was a weekend they will never forget. In spite of the initial confusion, meetings and training sessions were held, and the staff hosted an Excitement Sharing Session, with tables, games and information on their areas. Lieutenant Governor Maxine Moul of Nebraska gave a welcome, and Pat Taft and Kay McKenzie were featured speakers. Mary Malmberg received a Presidential Award of Excellence and Linda Gates received a Programming Award of Excellence. Due to the talents of Presidential Assistants Jan Maaske and Terri Sherman, the weekend was a success.

The year began with 4962 members, 288 chapters and 17 states. Active states were Arkansas, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington, and Wisconsin. Notice was received at the beginning of the year of the dissolution of the chapters in California and Tennessee. Throughout the year there were 1596 new members, 3282 renewals (66%), and 1680 drops, 17 chapters were extended and 29 chapters dropped. The year ended with 4878 members (-84), 276 chapters (-12), and 15 states (-2). States showing growth for the year were Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, South Dakota and Washington.

Membership statistics were kept on each chapter. Through the use of STATS, membership trends and chapter achievements were tracked, with leadership boards published and chapter recognition given. During the 4th quarter, membership challenges were set with each chapter president, with 117 chapters meeting their challenges. The G.O.L.D. chapter recognition was implemented, recognizing chapters with 3 new members, 75% retention and growth during a quarter. Chapters meeting the three requirements, 3 out of 4 quarters, were recognized at year end, with 4 chapters qualifying. The Reach Out and Touch program was continued as well as recognition for participation in Founder's Day, Women of Today Week and Shout Out With Pride.

In the area of programming, there were 951 Focus on Women certifications, 7 Focus on Women essay entries, 131 Project Recognition entries and 54 Earn Your Wings challenges met. A project idea booklet was distributed and external bid guidelines refined. There were 157 S.T.E.P. I, 32 S.T.E.P. II and 164 S.T.E.P. III certifications and 5 S.T.E.P. II and 4 S.T.E.P. III competitors at National Convention. There were 1040 Effective Speaking and 600 Effective Writing certifications. Competition at Mid Year included 6 Effective Writing competitors, with 1 of the 5 Effective Speaking competitors able to attend. National Convention saw 11 Effective Speaking and 17 Effective Writing Competitors.

The United States Women of Today Newsletter was published monthly, with 54 subscriptions and a total of 109 newsletters mailed each month. A "Name the Newsletter" contest was held. "Today's Leader" was chosen by those attending the National Convention. Three Vice Presidential mailings and two chapter mailings were also distributed during the year. Articles, training, information and incentives were included in the mailings, as well as through the many mailings sent by the individual staff members.

Many new items were added to the U.S. Ways and Means product line. A book of inspirational poems, invocations, and benedictions was distributed and two fellowship services were held using the themes of "Love" and "Friendship". The Bylaws and Policies were thoroughly reviewed, with many changes voted on at the National Convention, including changes to standardize the membership dues and submission dates in all states. Eleven members were recognized with the Ambassador Award. They were: Mary Genzel, Illinois; Pat Zeinz, Illinois; Joy Hutchcraft, Illinois; Shari Chakoian, Illinois; Mary Kenna, North Dakota; Pat Moritz, Missouri; Pat Branstad, Minnesota; Susan Schuler, Minnesota; Cindy French, Arkansas; Carrie Lutz, Massachusetts; Kathy Griffin, Massachusetts.

The U.S. Women of Today Foundation provided a grant to the U.S. Women of Today for the purchase of a copy machine. With the Chapter Grant program in place, there were 10 new Founders Club members, and two promotions were held to raise funds for the Chapter Grants fund. Vicki Fisher, Iowa, served as President of the Foundation. National convention was held June 11-14 in Bloomington, Minnesota, with Ellie Singer serving as chairman. The Minnesota Women of Today did an excellent job of "Putting on the Ritz" for the 241 people in attendance, representing 12 states. Mary Jo Paloranta, a professional trainer with ties to the Women of Today organization, was keynote speaker at the luncheon and a highlight of the weekend.

One hundred Presidential Pins were awarded to members throughout the nation. Twenty-six chapters were recognized as All-American Chapters. Seventeen Presidential Medallions were presented to State Presidents and National Staff Members who exhibited excellence in leadership. Recognition was given to 25 Outstanding Local Officers and 25 Outstanding State Officers. Sheila Carroll,

Minnesota; Linda Foster, South Dakota; and Kelley Rosburg, Nebraska were recognized as Outstanding State Presidents. Diana Veenstra received a Presidential Award of Excellence and Pat Fern received a Programming Award of Excellence. Mary Malmberg was recognized as the Outstanding National Officer.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Mary Malmberg, Minnesota
Membership VP	Kelley Rosburg, Nebraska
Programming VP	Carmella Mongold, Missouri
Secretary	Cindy Glamm, Minnesota
Treasurer	Janet O'Connell, Iowa

The focus for the 1991-1992 year included communication, growth, training, support and motivation, with an emphasis on attitude, commitment and responsibility. Through President Deb's visits to all fifteen member states, visits made by other members of the national staff and communication throughout the year, the local members and state officers found that "Excitement in the Air" is more than a theme, it is an attitude, a positive attitude toward Women of Today. There are still challenges to be faced as we continue to strive toward membership growth and encourage the extension of new chapters and new states. In spite of the challenges, there is much to be proud of in the progress that has been made in each and every year of our existence.

The Women of Today is an organization with many strong, vital chapters, with excited, active members, doing what we do best, serving our communities, taking advantage of the opportunities for personal development, and sharing a special bond of friendship. There is an attitude of "Excitement in the Air" with the Women of Today.

### **1992-1993**

#### **Mary Malmberg, President**

1992-1993 was a year in which members throughout the nation led their chapters, their states and the United States Women of Today with a "Spirit of Excellence". The color red was used by the national staff to symbolize unity and teamwork, which was emphasized throughout the year. The 1992-1993 logo was a heart, red rose and the words, "serving, growing, leading".

Serving as national officers were Mary Malmberg, Minnesota, President; Kelley Rosburg, Nebraska, Membership Vice President; Carmella Mongold, Missouri, Programming Vice President; Cindy Glamm, Minnesota, Secretary; Janet O'Connell, Missouri, Treasurer; Deb VanMatre, Nebraska, Chairman of the Board; Sue Dionne, Wisconsin, Parliamentarian; Melanie Cherry, Massachusetts, Chaplain; Jeanne Mortenson, Minnesota, Presidential Assistant; Deb Peters, Minnesota, Extensions Director; Joey Hedstrom, North Dakota, Public Relations Director; Mary Genzel, Illinois, Arthritis Foundation Program Manager; Jeanne Simington, Massachusetts, Leukemia Society Program Manager; Linda Gates, Pennsylvania, Personal Enrichment Program Manager; and Terri Sherman, Nebraska, S.T.E.P. Program Manager.

The year began with 4878 members and ended with 4671 for a loss of 207 members. Member states included Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin.

Chapters and states were assisted with their membership programs through the Reach Out and Touch Program and special incentives. This was the first year of the One-A-Month Club challenge, as well as continuing other promotions. The Membership committee developed and printed a new, two-color membership brochure. A state "Buddy System" was discussed and given approval for the 1993-1994 year, which would emphasize focused and individual attention for each state. A vote passed at Mid Year ruling that members can belong to just one chapter and one state. Seventeen extensions were completed, highlighted by the addition of a new state, Indiana. The Tri-Town extension was completed by the Homewood-Flossmoor-Glenwood, Illinois chapter. The extension chairman was Claire Adachi.

Thirty-seven First Timers attended National Convention in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Founder's Day, Shout Out With Pride and Women of Today Week promotions were held. Projects were held at Mid Year and Annual convention as a part of a new policy to allow each endorsed foundation to conduct a fund-raiser at a national meeting.

Sixty-two members were recipients of the Outstanding Achievement in Programming, the highest programming award presented.

Research was completed regarding the addition of a personal enrichment course.

Focus on Women - 976 certifications from 12 states. S.T.E.P. - 177 S.T.E.P. I, 35 S.T.E.P. II and 165 S.T.E.P. III from 9 states. There were 1219 certifications in Effective Speaking and 679 certifications in Effective Writing.

The Arthritis Foundation received \$20,969.93 raised from 14 states. A successful Jingle Bell Run was held at Mid Year Meeting. More than \$6,000 was raised for the Leukemia Society. A Celebrity Waiter's Auction was held as an educational project at Mid Year as well as a Hop-A-Thon at Annual.

Eight members were honored as U.S.W.T. Ambassadors. They were Anona Lundstrom, North Dakota; Deb VanMatre, Nebraska; Bonnie O'Neil, Minnesota; Mary Moeller, Minnesota; Kathy Ecklin, Iowa; Barb Kuhn, Iowa; Karen Frank, North Dakota; and Alice Wise, Missouri.

One hundred Presidential Pins were awarded. Twenty Medallions were presented to national staff members and state presidents, as well as to each Past National President. Cindy Glamm was named Outstanding National Officer, Linda Gates was named Outstanding National Staff Member, Cindy Glamm and Kelley Rosburg received Presidential Awards of Excellence, Deb Peters received the Programming Award of Excellence and Mary Hudson, Minnesota; Kathy Mueller, New Jersey; and Carolyn Mount, South Dakota, were named Outstanding State Presidents for the year.

Mid Year Meeting was held in Des Moines, Iowa with 62 members from 11 states in attendance.

Annual convention was held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The convention was chaired by Barb Heilman and Co-chaired by Cindy Hilbert.

U.S. Newsletter subscriptions totaled 66 with 106 mailed out each month. We began using the name selected during 1992-1993, "Today's Leader".



Operations Manuals for U.S. Staff members and Presidents were begun. These manuals will provide duties specific to each position as well as procedures outlines for the U.S.W.T. operations.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Carmella Mongold, Missouri
Membership VP	Melanie Cherry, Massachusetts
Programming VP	Linda Gates, Pennsylvania
Secretary	Joey Hedstrom, North Dakota
Treasurer	Jan Longendorfer, Massachusetts

## 1993-1994

### Carmella Mongold, President

Leading the United States Women of Today with the theme "United We Stand" was Carmella Mongold from Missouri. A torch in front of the United States outline was chosen as her logo. The focus during the year was on consistency and teamwork.

Staff members included: Melanie Cherry, Massachusetts, Membership Vice President; Linda Gates, Pennsylvania, Programming Vice President; Joey Hedstrom, North Dakota, Secretary; Jan Longendorfer, Massachusetts, Treasurer; Mary Malmberg, Minnesota, Chairman of the Board; and Deb Peters, Minnesota, Parliamentarian. Serving as Directors were Amy Pumper, Minnesota, Public Relations and Carolyn Mount, South Dakota, Extensions. Program Managers were Maxine Turner, Nebraska, Arthritis; Kathy Mueller, New Jersey, Leukemia Society; Marcie Hansen, Illinois, Personal Enrichment; and Sheila Carroll, Minnesota, S.T.E.P. Jeanne Simington, Massachusetts, served as Chaplain and Presidential Assistants were Tina Myers, Missouri, and Alice Wise, Missouri.

To begin the year, all members of the Board of Directors were provided a calendar of deadlines, promotions and events for the U.S. Women of Today. This calendar proved vital in planning ahead for states and chapters. It also listed state's meetings so staff members could plan their mailings accordingly. For the first time, the Executive committee held a meeting in August so the officers could share their goals, plan the mailings and plan Mid Year Meeting. This was important in creating an unbeatable team that continued to work together throughout the year - sharing ideas, successes and information. This early meeting set the pace and momentum for the rest of the year!

The year began with 4669 members in 272 chapters in 16 states. Active states were Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington, and Wisconsin. Throughout the year, there were 1404 new members, 3090 renewals and 1580 drops. Nine chapters were extended and 26 chapters were dropped. The year ended with 4493 members (-179), 255 chapters (-17) and 16 states. 107 chapters showed year-end growth and states showing growth for the year were: Indiana, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Chapters and states were assisted through the Reach Out and Touch program - stressing 1-4 contracts with each chapter by a member of the national staff. Membership promotions included: gold chapter, one-a-month chapter, 5 and 10 member recruiter, 100% retention chapters and states, early bird incentives, growth chapters and states, 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter chapter challenge and 4th quarter March Madness. The "Buddy System" was implemented pairing a veteran member with states requesting a "Buddy" - someone else to turn to for ideas, advice, etc. At the request of one of our member states, an individual membership was revoked by a majority of the Board of Directors at Mid Year meeting. This was the first time the U.S. Women of Today felt it was necessary to take such an action.

A membership packet was written, compiled and distributed to all chapters and states. This packet of information included all promotions, forms and explanations of the U.S.W.T. membership area. This packet, together with the programming packet, provides all the forms and promotion information a chapter or state may need.

In the Public Relations area this year, Founder's Day, Women of Today Week, and Shout Out With Pride were promoted. A new promotion was added this year - that of Volunteer Recognition Week April 17-23. Scrapbooks of articles and public relations items from chapters and states was compiled by the P.R. Director and presented to the President at year end. Ten first timers attended Mid Year Meeting and 35 first timers attended year-end convention. News releases were provided for each meeting and releases were sent for all national awards presented. These releases were sent directly to the local newspaper of the member who received the award (totaling more than 120 releases).

Programming's highest award, Outstanding Achievement in Programming was presented to 72 members. Ninety-three project recognition submissions from 33 chapters in 11 states were submitted throughout the year. 941 Focus on Women verifications were presented to members in 15 states. The Focus on Women essay contest had seven entries from members representing five states. Total external monies raised by chapters this year exceeded \$750,000.00!

Other programming certifications included: Effective Speaking 930 and Effective Writing 626 from 13 states. Three members competed in Effective Speaking this year and 13 competed in Effective Writing. S.T.E.P. certification were presented to 792 members in 10 states divided as follows: S.T.E.P. I - 243, S.T.E.P. II - 64, and S.T.E.P. III - 275. The S.T.E.P. and Project Recognition programs were reviewed and revised (together with the S.T.E.P. Manual) and presented to states at year end.

A Personal Enrichment "Leadership Course" was completed and distributed to states at year-end convention. It was decided to add the Focus on Women duties to the S.T.E.P. Program Manager beginning in 1994-1995 in an effort to reduce the volume of certifications and promotions overseen by the Programming Vice President.

For the Leukemia Society 80 projects were held by 13 states raising \$14,619.36. Seventy-seven projects were held by ten states raising \$10,387.53 for the Arthritis Foundation. There was no interest from a foundation to bid to take it's place.

Seven members were honored as U.S. Ambassadors. They were: Hallie Ellicker, Pennsylvania; Cindy Glamm, Minnesota; Alexis Huff, North Dakota; Mary Malmberg, Minnesota; Carmella Mongold, Missouri; Eileen Murray, Massachusetts; Jeanne Simington, Massachusetts. At year-end, ambassador recipients met to vote to become a separate origination with its own officers being elected. Bylaws will begin to be formulated in the coming year.

One hundred presidential pins were awarded. Twenty medallions were presented to national staff members and state presidents. Medallions were also presented to past national presidents. Twenty-five outstanding local and 25 outstanding state officer awards were

recognized at year-end. Forty-seven local chapters qualified as All-American Chapter. A Sister Chapter program was promoted and 18 local chapters participated.

Communication was fine-tuned this year. The first Today's Leader was sent to all local chapters in an effort to encourage subscriptions. Eleven issues were sent with November/December being a combined issue. One hundred-three newsletters were sent monthly with a record 89 subscriptions sold!

A President's mailing was sent to all local chapters for Founder's Day and another for Women of Today Week (which included a letter to the editor for their local newspaper). Two chapter mailings and two vice presidents mailings were sent: August and February. (The August chapter and V.P. mailings were sponsored by a grant from the U.S.W.T. Foundation.) A training packet was sent in March to all states. This packet was provided to states prior to their year end conventions to assist the state presidents in training their local chapter officers in U.S. promotions, incentives and programs. All forms and information was provided in this packet so that for the first time, local chapters and states could have it in their hands prior to setting their goals and making their plans for the following year. The work was continued from the previous administration - to gather roster information from states at year-end - to create mailing lists, chapter lists and officer rosters to make the transition into the following year a smooth one. The operations manuals for members of the Board of Directors were completed and distributed at Mid Year meeting.

To ensure a balanced budget for the present and following year, a nationwide fund raiser was held. A special presidents mailing was sent to all local chapters encouraging their participation. Because of their dedication and commitment, the treasury was able to raise the funds necessary to bring the budget back up to what was needed to administer the current year and secure the future as well. A mandatory carryover of \$1,000.00 was added as a policy for this same reason. The bylaws were also amended at year-end convention to reflect a dues increase to \$4.00 per member and \$50.00 per state with 12 or fewer members effective May 1, 1995. This planned increase was necessary due to rising postage and administrative costs.

Mid Year Meeting was held in Kansas City, Missouri. The highlight of the weekend was the banquet speaker, Dr. Larry Deaton, who taught those in attendance the true meaning of "Celebration!" Awards of Excellence were presented at this meeting to Linda Gates, Programming Vice President and Amy Pumper, Public Relations Director.

Year end convention was hosted by the Nebraska Women of Today and chaired by Deb VanMatre and Terri Sherman. It was held in Omaha Nebraska. At that meeting, Dr. Deaton joined us (back by popular demand) to present two forums. A salute to our past presidents was held at the luncheon and we celebrated our successes of the year all weekend! Awards of Excellence were presented to Melanie Cherry, Membership Vice President and Sheila Carroll, S.T.E.P. Program Manager. Three outstanding state presidents were recognized for the year, together with Outstanding Staff Member, Amy Pumper and Outstanding National Officer, Melanie Cherry.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Linda Gates, Pennsylvania
Membership VP	Joey Hedstrom, North Dakota
Programming VP	Pat Fern, North Dakota
Secretary	Amy Pumper, Minnesota
Treasurer	Nancy Asher, Missouri

The U.S. Women of Today staff worked diligently to create unity among our states and consistency among our promotions and programs. All materials were fine-tuned and distributed in a timely manner to chapters and states. This was a year of standing united!

## **1994-1995**

### **Linda Gates, President**

Members throughout the nation were motivated to go out and "Catch A Rising Star". The logo was a star with the U.S. Flag Staff, and red, and blue stripes within its border. Serving as national officers were Linda Gates, Pennsylvania, President; Joey Hedstrom, North Dakota, Membership Vice President; Pat Fern, North Dakota, Programming Vice President; Amy Pumper Minnesota, Secretary; Nancy Asher, Missouri, Treasurer; Carmella Mongold, Missouri, Chairman of the Board; and Terry Pronko, Pennsylvania, Parliamentarian. Serving as Directors were Becky Miller, Minnesota, Public Relations; and Maxine Turner, Nebraska, Extensions. Program Managers were Carolyn Mount, South Dakota, Leukemia Society; Leila Haugen, South Dakota, Personal Enrichment; and Melanie Cherry, Massachusetts, S.T.E.P./Focus on Women. Karen Hekr, Illinois served as Chaplain and Presidential Assistants were Michelle Balistrerie and Diane Merkel, Pennsylvania.

An Executive Committee meeting was held in August in North Dakota to plan the 1994-1995 year.

The year began with 4493 members in 255 chapters in 16 states. Members states included Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin. We signed 1299 new "Rising Stars", renewed 3079 members and 115 drops. There were 7 chapters extended and 18 were dropped. We ended the year with 4378 members (-115), 237 chapters (-18) and 16 states. "97" chapters and "8" states showed growth for the year, those states were: Indiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Washington and Wisconsin.

We again assisted chapters through the Reach Out and Touch program, which was reduced to two contacts instead of four. It was felt there were better results and more participation with the two. Also the Buddy System which was utilized by eight state presidents. Membership promotions included: gold chapters, one-a-month chapters, 5 and 10 member recruiters, 1005 retention chapters and states, early bird incentives, growth chapters and states, double up chapters, Outstanding Recruiter and Outstanding Membership Vice President and State Treasurer.

Two new areas of recognition were introduced this year, Friendship Day which was August 7th had 75 chapters with over 700 members participating. The other was the Dream Builder Award, 59 Chapters certified for this award. Due to the extent of participation these two areas have been added to the program.

An individual challenge was made to all states during the second half of the year and eight states met or surpassed their goal.

In the Public Relations area Founder's Day, Women of Today Week, Shout Out With Pride and Volunteer Recognition Week were promoted. A scrapbook of articles and P.R. items was compiled and presented to the President at convention. The P.R. Director submitted the U.S. Women of Today for President Clinton's Service Award, we received a letter commending us for all we do to better our community, ourselves and the nation, but, were not one of the award recipients. More than 50 first timers attended national convention this year.

Programming's highest award, Outstanding Achievement in Programming was presented to 81 members. 151 Project Recognition entries were received from 12 states.

882 members from 11 states completed Effective Speaking, 67 members from 11 states completed Effective Writing and 127 members from 5 states completed the Leadership Course. This was the first year the Leadership Course was offered. Approval was given to compile a Team Building Course and add to the Personal Enrichment area.

1010 members certified in Focus on women this year from 14 states. A new Focus on Women certification form was developed and a packet both were approved and each state received a copy at convention. 609 S.T.E.P. certifications were completed from 12 states. The Focus on Women and S.T.E.P. duties were combined this year, it put a double work load on the program manager. It was decided to combine the duties of Focus on Women with that of Chaplain for the 1995-1996 year.

This was the third and final year for the Leukemia Society as a priority program. 94 projects were held in 12 states raising \$19,579.80. For a three year total of over \$40,000.

The U.S. newsletter "Today's Leader" was mailed out monthly with Nov/Dec issue being combined. There were 86 subscriptions with 127 mailings each month. There were two all chapter mailings, two V.P. mailings and a training packet to each state president to train incoming state and local officers on U.S. Promotions, forms, incentive and programs. Ten issues of the Guiding Light were mailed to the Board of Directors and Executive Committee.

Mid Year Meeting was held in New Cumberland, Pennsylvania. We had a great weekend with temperatures in the high 70's. The highlight of the weekend were the

forums by Flossy, Dopey and Paul Hopple's Team Building. Awards of Excellence were presented to Joey Hedstrom, Membership Vice President and Becky Miller, Public Relations Director. A salute to past president Carmella Mongold was held and she was presented with a letter of commendation from the President of the United States Bill Clinton.

Nine members were honored as U.S. Ambassadors. They included: Lori Akers, Illinois; Sheila Carroll, Minnesota; Melanie Cherry, Massachusetts; Debra Fjeld-Cooper, North Dakota; Tammy Ward-Dahl, Minnesota; Cheryl Davis, North Dakota; Sheila Frazer-Chartier, Massachusetts; Joey Hedstrom, North Dakota; and Barbara Heilman, Pennsylvania. Carmella Mongold served as President of the Ambassadors.

One hundred Presidential pins were awarded throughout the year and twenty-one Presidential Medallions were presented to national staff members and state presidents. Twenty-five local officers and twenty-five state officers were recognized at year end. Fifty-one chapters qualified for All-American Chapters. Outstanding State Presidents were: Jean Fast, Minnesota; Linda Foster and Roxie Whalen, South Dakota; Kathy Lenk, North Dakota; Jan Longendorfer, Massachusetts; and Cheryl Miller, Pennsylvania.

Participation in competitions was excellent this year as 5 members competed in Effective Speaking, 22 in Effective Writing, 8 in S.T.E.P. II, 7 in S.T.E.P. III and 8 in Focus on Women Essay competition.

Year-end convention was hosted by Minnesota Women of Today in Bloomington Minnesota, home of the Mall of America with over 200 registrations. Chairman were Barb Fish and Dawn Young. The theme was "85-95: The Dream Is Still Alive", the logo was a dream catcher. Some of the highlights as we celebrated the 1994-1995 year and our tenth anniversary were: all past presidents and charter chairman Barb Fish were in attendance, the Minnesota choir, slide show honoring all presidents, Good Morning America shooting, and of course U.S. President Clinton's visit and weekend stay will never be forgotten. At the banquet President Linda was present with a letter of commendation from U.S. President Bill Clinton. Awards of Excellence were presented to S.T.E.P./Focus on Women Program Manager, Melanie Cherry and Outstanding National Officer was Joey Hedstrom.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Joey Hedstrom, North Dakota
Membership VP	Deb Peters, Minnesota
Programming VP	Sheila Carroll, Minnesota
Secretary	Terri Sherman, Nebraska
Treasurer	Kathy Lenk, North Dakota

There are many "Rising Stars" in each state training to lead this organization into its second decade of service to our communities and nation. The 1994-1995 staff contributed to the growth of these individuals.

## **1995 - 1996**

### **Joey Hedstrom, President**

With the theme "An All Time High", the United States Women of Today was led by President Joey Hedstrom from North Dakota. A bald eagle, flying with the American Flag in its talons, was the logo for the year. Professional communication and teamwork were emphasized through the year.

Staff members included: Deb Peters, Minnesota, Membership Vice President; Sheila Carroll, Minnesota, Programming Vice President; Terri Sherman, Nebraska, Secretary; Kathy Lenk, North Dakota, Treasurer; Linda Gates, Pennsylvania, Chairman of the Board; and Maxine Turner, Nebraska, Parliamentarian. Serving as Directors were Val Kvale-Lunning, Minnesota, Public Relations; and Pat Fern, North Dakota, Extensions. Program Managers were Becky Miller, Minnesota, Personal Enrichment; Amy Pumper, Minnesota, S.T.E.P.; Barb Heilman, Pennsylvania, Chaplain/Focus on Women; and Sue Dionne, Wisconsin, RESOLVE. The Presidential Assistants were Cheryl Davis, North Dakota; Mary Ramsey, North Dakota; and serving in an executive capacity was Carmella Mongold, Missouri.

The year began with 4,378 members in 237 chapters in 16 states and ended with 4,230 members in 227 chapters in 17 states. The member states of the United States Women of

Today were Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin. An exciting development that year was the extension of a new state, the Ohio Women of Today, chartered in October, 1995 with 11 members.

During the 1995-96 year, 1,184 new members were recruited, 10 extensions completed, and the United States Women of Today had a 70 percent retention rate. There were 15 chapters from six states with 100 percent retention at year-end and 95 chapters from 14 states were at growth.

The eight states that experienced growth during the year were Arkansas, Illinois, Massachusetts, Montana, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Washington.

Members of the Board of Directors received a packet of information at their first meeting on June 11, 1995. In addition to receiving the tools needed to begin their year, members of this year's national staff were quick to develop close relationships and bonds, helping to build an effective team on the national and state levels. As was done in previous years, members of the Executive Committee met in August to finalize plans for the 1995-96 year.

One major goal that year was to provide informative and professional-looking training materials throughout the year. Two Vice President mailings, suited for either the membership or programming area, were sent, one in the fall of 1995 and one early spring, 1996. A comprehensive training packet was also sent in April to state presidents, supplying updated forms and information to train incoming staffs for the coming year.

Consistent and professional communication to the National Staff and Board of Directors was provided. In addition, this was the first year that the national newsletter, Today's Leader, was sent on a bi-monthly basis not only to board members and subscribers, but also to every chapter in the United States Women of Today. In addition, members of the National Staff conscientiously promoted their areas through written communication and newsletters to their corresponding officers in our member states. Other communication sent out included a Founder's Day mailing, a Women of Today Week mailing that included a letter to the editor for chapters, and a motivational music tape for staff and state presidents, twelve monthly issues of the High Times board newsletter, individual notes when appropriate, and a countless number of phone calls.

Many of the regular Women of Today promotions were continued. These included the Reach Out and Touch Program, "Buddy System", Friendship Day and the Fellowship Award, Outstanding Achievement in Programming (this year asking members to "Earn Their Wings"), and National Volunteer Week.

New to the United States Women of Today this year was the "Card of Cheer" secret pal program, the "Where's Wendy" campaign, and a new Team Building course written during the year and introduced at the Annual Meeting in June, 1996.

Made available this year were projects handed down from previous years that included a New State Operations Guide, a revised Extensions Manual, and the outlines for national officer and staff duties were reviewed and updated. Funding to duplicate and distribute the Leadership Course was secured, and every chapter in the United States Women of Today received a copy at about the mid-year point.

A total of 85 members "Earned Their Wings" by certifying in programming's highest award, Outstanding Achievement in Programming. One hundred and eight project recognition entries were submitted during the year and more than \$438,000 was raised in the external programming areas on the local, state and national levels. In its first year in partnership with the United States Women of Today, the RESOLVE foundation received donations that totaled \$4,916.67.

There were 1,026 certifications in the Focus on Women area with nine entries in the essay contest at year-end. Personal Enrichment saw a total of 2,126 certifications, with 918 from 11 states certifying in Effective Speaking, 724 from 10 states certifying in Effective Writing and 484 from 9 states certifying in Leadership. There were 10 entrants from four states in the Mid Year Effective Writing Competition, 15 entrants from 7 states in the Annual Writing Essay and 4 entrants from 3 states in the Annual Speaking Competition.

There were 787 total certifications from 12 states in the S.T.E.P. program during the year. This included 379 certifications in S.T.E.P. I, 72 certifications in S.T.E.P. II, and 336 certifications in S.T.E.P. III. There were 11 S.T.E.P. competition at the Annual Meeting, 6 members from 4 states in S.T.E.P. II and 5 members from 3 states in S.T.E.P. III.

The concept of "marketing" Women of Today was promoted through the Public Relations area. Members spread the word about Women of Today by participating in a wide range of activities that included chapter marching bands in community parades, booths at expos, wearing t-shirts at events, serving on advisory boards, community task forces and by sponsoring scholarships. The new promotion, "We Want Wendy", inviting Wendy Kaufmann of the Snapple company to the annual meeting, brought added fun and recognition to the Women of Today organization.

Fourteen members were honored as U.S. Ambassadors. They were: Melanie Cherry, Massachusetts; Susie Khoury, Arkansas; Kelley Rosberg, Nebraska; Sue Dionne, Wisconsin; Tish Carneghi, Illinois; Kathy Simmons, Massachusetts; Kathy Lenk, North Dakota; Janet O'Connell, Iowa; Vonnie Haakenson, North Dakota; Sandra Mary Hitz, Pennsylvania; Charlotte Peterson, Illinois; Cindy Hilbert, Pennsylvania; Lauren Auchincloss, Massachusetts; and Linda Gates, Pennsylvania. By laws and policies for the Ambassador organization were prepared in November and approved at the Ambassador's Annual Meeting in June. Mary Genzel, Illinois, served as Ambassador president and Deb VanMatre, Nebraska, was Treasurer.

Pat Zeinz served as the U.S. Women of Today Foundation president. Chapter grants and member scholarships were awarded by the Foundation at the annual meeting.

One hundred presidential pins were awarded and 24 medallions were presented to staff members and state presidents. Medallions were also presented to the past national presidents. 39 local chapters, with nearly 1200 members, certified in All American Chapter. 25 outstanding local officers and 25 outstanding state officers were recognized at the annual meeting in June. News releases were provided for both national meetings, and press releases were sent directly to local newspapers for the national awards that were presented.

The Mid Year meeting was held November 2-5, 1995 at the Holiday Inn in Fargo, North Dakota. Although the weather didn't seem to want to cooperate by offering travelers snow and ice to contend with, about 80 members safely made it to the meeting and then made it back home again. Awards of Excellence were presented that weekend to Deb Peters, Membership Vice President, and Vale Kvale-Lunning, Public Relations Director.

The Annual Meeting was hosted by the Missouri Women of Today and chaired by Carmella Mongold of the Raytown Women of Today. It was held June 13 - 16, 1996 at the Henry VIII Hotel and Convention Center in St. Louis, Missouri, and we were all asked to "Meet Someone New in St. Louis." There were 23 First Timers in attendance. Past Presidents attending the meeting were presented with a special gift from the 1995-1996 Executive Committee, a gold name badge in the shape of the United States. A special tribute to Chairman of the Board Linda Gates was done at the Saturday Luncheon, and two slide shows were presented that weekend, one to begin the Opening Ceremonies on Friday Evening, and the President's slide show at the Saturday Banquet. A special candlelight ceremony was also done at the Banquet to formally welcome the Ohio Women of Today.

Awards of Excellence were presented to Sheila Carroll, Programming Vice President, Barb Heilman, Focus on Women Program Manager/Chaplain, and a special Award of Excellence was presented to Presidential Assistant Carmella Mongold. The three outstanding state presidents recognized for the year were Laura Bonds, Arkansas; Joanne Conlon, Massachusetts and Christine Jones, Minnesota. The Outstanding Staff Member of the Year was Val Kvale-Lunning and the Outstanding National Officer was Deb Peters.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Deb Peters, Minnesota
Membership VP	Kerry Nagel-Allen, Minnesota
Programming VP	Kathy Lenk, North Dakota
Secretary	Nancy Asher, Missouri
Treasurer	Christine Jones, Minnesota

In this year, the beginning of our second decade as a Women of Today organization, members were asked to take the theme to dream and set goals. And when they set goals, they asked to set them high, because each member is never alone, but a part of a strong force, the Women of Today. That is the key to our future...what we are able to provide for women, and what all women can expect to receive from us.

Our members have the most noble job of all...they are volunteers. They care about their neighbors, their communities, our country. They lead by example and are teaching our children to care. That leaves a legacy for the future of our country and the United States Women of Today.

If only one thing that came from this year is remembered in the years to come, hopefully it will be the message of spirit that led to "An All Time High" in the hearts and minds of members: "This world already has enough sparrows and pigeons, so when you dare to fly...be an eagle."

## **1996-1997**

### **Deb Peters, President**

By "Planting Our Belief In The Future", the 1996-1997 United States Women of Today members showed their commitment to this organization. The national staff used the festive color red to show and share their excitement. Showing national support, the state presidents wore navy blue and general members wore T-shirts with the presidents theme. The logo was a navy colored watering can with red flowers and green vines.

Serving as national officers were Deb Peters, Minnesota, President; Joey Hedstrom, North Dakota, Chairman of the Board; Kerry Nagel-Allen, Minnesota, Membership Vice-President; Kathy Lenk, North Dakota, Programming Vice-President; Christine Jones, Minnesota, Treasurer; Nancy Asher, Missouri, Secretary; Tina Welman, Minnesota, Parliamentarian; Barb Wigell, Public Relations Director, Illinois; Sheila Carroll, Minnesota, Extensions Director; Brenda Sandahl, Minnesota, Personal Enrichment Program Manager; Marcie Hansen, Focus on Women/Chaplain Program Manager, Illinois; Jill Kirschner, Minnesota, S.T.E.P. Program Manager; Terry Pronko, Pennsylvania, RESOLVE Program Manager and Cindy Glamm, Minnesota, Presidential Assistant.

We began the year with 4,230 members, 228 chapters, 17 states and ended the year with 4,087 members, 224 chapters, 17 states for a loss of 133 members. Member states included, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin. President Deb was able to visit and assist with training in 15 of the 17 states. Six of the national staff members were also very active in state and chapter visits also providing training and support.

Many new things were implemented this year. The first started with a new public relations program "Buckets of Sunshine". It was a huge success with chapters across the nation and it provided us with national recognition from First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and from the Points of Light Foundation. To assist with our national public relations drive, four metro Women of Today chapters/states participated in a

clothing drive, which was promoted by Weight Watchers. The U.S. Extension "Dream Team" was developed, with the following chartering members: Sheila Carroll, MN; Dawn Fraser, MA; Christine Jones, MN; Kerry Nagel-Allen, MN; Rose Confer, PA; and Barb Wigell, IL. A programming sub-committee was formed, chaired by Barb Wigell, IL, to assist with the solicitation of external foundation bids. The goal, to link ourselves with a foundation where our efforts will be noticed nation wide. "Personals" in the Today's Leader were available to members at a charge of \$2.00 for 25 words or less. All states participated in raising money or donating items for flood victims in North Dakota and Minnesota.

Membership support was provided through the State Buddies and the Reach Out and Touch programs. A National Presidential Membership Challenge was sent to each State President and chapter for March Madness. There were 11 extensions completed; Ohio with 2, Missouri with 1, Pennsylvania with 1 and Minnesota with 7. The states achieving year end growth were Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Montana, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Washington.

In the area of programming, there was a total of \$243,946.70 reported for fundraising. We recognized 88 members for Outstanding Achievement in Programming. There were 109 entries for the year in the area of Project Recognition. Our second year of supporting RESOLVE raised \$6,617.34. There were 2,378 Personal Enrichment certifications with 5 members competing in Effective Speaking and 9

in Effective Writing. In the area of Focus on Women, there were 934 certifications and 10 essay entrants. There was a total of 769 S.T.E.P. certifications with 17 S.T.E.P. competitors. Thirteen of 17 states participated in S.T.E.P.

Leading by example, the teamwork of the national staff provided our members with excellent communication, training, growth, motivation, and support. There were 6 bi-monthly Today's Leader newsletters mailed to all chapters, 10 issues of the presidents newsletter the Gardener's Gazette, 4 all chapter mailings were sent for Founder's Day, Women of Today Week, Staff Holiday Greetings and the Chapter and State Membership Challenge. The manuals that were reviewed and distributed to each chapter and national board member at Annual Convention were S.T.E.P., Project Recognition and the Membership Packet. The Team Building manual was distributed at Mid Year and the New Chapter Guide was reviewed and printed. A new Operations Manual/Book of Forms was created this year. The national board received their version at Annual Convention and chapters will receive theirs by Mid Year 1997. The U.S. Women of Today Foundation donated \$500.00 for manual printing.

Carolyn Halliger from the Elk River/Zimmerman, Minnesota chapter submitted the Prudential Company "Community Champions" grant for the United States Women of Today. We were honored by receiving \$1,000.00, which will go towards a lap top computer for the National President. Since our information and manuals are now on diskettes, this will assist in the efficiency of running the organization. The laptop will be passed on from year to year.

We enjoyed a successful "Harvest" at the Mid Year Meeting which was held in Bloomington, Minnesota. There were 89 members in attendance from 11 states.

A "Taste of New England" was enjoyed in Mansfield, Massachusetts for Annual Convention. Co-chairs of the convention were Melanie Cherry, Eleanor McCarter and Jan Longendorfer. Thirteen of the 17 states were represented by 196 members.

The membership voted to change the Mid Year meeting date to the first full weekend in October. It was also passed that Mid Year Meeting bids may be submitted by a state, district or chapter. The acceptance of the bid will be made by the incoming National President. The Childreach Foundation presented an external bid, which was declined by the membership.

Successes celebrated this past year were 3 Gold Chapters: Mansfield, Massachusetts; New Hope, Minnesota and Ramsey, Minnesota, 38 All American Chapters, 25 Outstanding Local and 25 Outstanding State Officers were recognized, 100 Presidential pins were presented, along with 23 Presidential medallions. The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Barb Wigell, Illinois and Sheila Carroll, Minnesota. The Presidential Award of Excellence was presented to Kerry Nagel-Allen, Minnesota and Kathy Lenk, North Dakota. Outstanding State Presidents for the year were Carolyn Mount, South Dakota; Nancy Poland, Minnesota and Karen Trussell, Nebraska. Outstanding National Staff Member was Sheila Carroll, Minnesota and Outstanding National Officer was awarded to Kathy Lenk, North Dakota and Kerry Nagel-Allen, Minnesota.

We were fortunate to honor four new United States Women of Today Ambassadors this year. They are Val Kvale-Lunning, Minnesota; Amy Pumper, Minnesota; Mary Jackson, Massachusetts and Jan Longendorfer, Massachusetts.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Sheila Carroll, Minnesota
Membership VP	Christine Jones, Minnesota
Programming VP	Terry Pronko, Pennsylvania
Treasurer	Lauren Auchincloss, MA
Secretary	Sue Beattie, Massachusetts

As we planted many types of seeds throughout the seasons, we enjoyed the beauty of various growth stages and bountiful harvests of which we should all be proud of and thankful for. We are making many positive strides, which will assist us in bringing a healthy organization into the twenty-first century. Thank you for your efforts in "Planting Our Belief In The Future".

## **1997 - 1998**

### **Sheila Carroll, President**

Leading the United States Women of Today with the theme of "Sharing the Light of Leadership and Service" was Sheila Carroll from Springfield, Minnesota.

Teamwork and training were the emphasis of Sheila's year. As a team, we strove to communicate effectively, provide excellent service to our chapters and to see growth for the national Women of Today. A mission statement was developed by the National Staff to guide them in their leadership positions.

Staff members included: Christine Jones-Minnesota; Membership Vice President; Terry Pronko-Pennsylvania, Programming Vice President; Sue Beattie-Massachusetts, Secretary; Lauren Auchincloss-Massachusetts, Treasurer; Amy Pumper-Minnesota, Extensions Director; Tina Weilman-Minnesota, Focus on Women/ Chaplain; Laura Bonds-Arkansas, Public Relations; Michele Thompson-Minnesota, Personal Enrichment; Patty Carlson-Minnesota, S.T.E.P.; Nancy Asher-Missouri, RESOLVE; Cindy Finney-Ohio, Parliamentarian; and Brenda Sandahl-Minnesota & Sally Anderson-Minnesota, Presidential Assistants.

The year began with 4,097 members and 224 chapters in 17 states and ended with 4,045 members and 219 chapters in 17 states. Member states included: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington, Wisconsin. During the 1997-1998 year, 1,109 new members were recruited, nine extensions completed and the U.S. Women of Today had 72% retention. There were 16 chapters from 9 states with 100% retention and 88 chapters from 15 states were at growth. The seven states that experienced growth for the year were Ohio, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Indiana, Illinois, Nebraska and South Dakota.

Thirteen states were visited by President Sheila or National Staff members for motivation and training.

Membership support was provided by State Buddies and the Reach Out and Touch Program from National Staff. "A Picture of Success" membership challenge was issued for third quarter and March Madness was the focus for year-end growth.

In the area of programming, there was a total of \$411,256.41 reported for external fund-raising. We recognized 68 members for Outstanding Achievement in Programming and there were 100 entries for the year in the area of Project Recognition. Eighty (80) members received the "Red Hot Programming" recognition. There were 2, 325 Personal Enrichment certifications with no competitors in Effective Speaking but 20 in Effective Writing. There were a total of 734 S.T.E.P. certifications and 3 S.T.E.P. competitors for the year.

With an emphasis on communication, one of Sheila's first projects was to compile a Chapter President's Handbook. It was included in an All-Chapter mailing, which recognized Founders Day. Another All-Chapter mailing consisted of a holiday greeting from the National Staff along with a membership third quarter challenge. Quarterly All-Chapter mailings were completed by the Membership Vice President highlighting practical information for chapters, including the "Death by Chocolate" social. Six bi-monthly "Today's Leader" newsletters were mailed to all chapters and 12 issues of the "Bright Ideas" were sent to the Board of Directors. Two personal letters were sent to each member holding a State Office.

Mid-Year meeting was held the first full weekend in October in Fargo, ND, starting a new tradition. It was hosted by the Wahpeton/Breckenridge chapter with Kathy Lenk as chair. The theme of the weekend was "Lights, Camera, Action" with special entertainment from the Schmidt Sisters. There were 82 members in attendance from 10 states. The Presidential Award of Excellence was presented to Christine Jones, Membership Vice President and Laura Bonds, Public Relations Program manager.

Melanie Cherry served this year as Ambassador President. We were pleased to welcome the following seven U.S. Ambassadors: Pat Fern, North Dakota; Deb Peters, Minnesota; Therese Joynt, Iowa; Ruth Hopper, Illinois; Christine Jones, Minnesota; Laura Bonds, Arkansas, and Roxanne Whalen, South Dakota.

Carmella Mongold served as Foundation chairman. The Foundation generously donated \$500 that was used for printing manuals. Chapter Grants and Scholarships were presented at Annual convention.

Annual Meeting was held in Rapid City, SD where "Great Faces, Great Places" came together. Chairman Carolyn Mount reported that 127 members from 13 states were in attendance.

During the business meeting, it was voted to support only one External Foundation, and the new area voted in was Breast Cancer Awareness. Our efforts to get President Sheila on the Rosie O'Donnell show did not go unrecognized, as she was presented with a framed, autographed copy of her photograph, along with a Rosie O'Donnell.

Elections were held and the following will be serving the US WT in the coming year:

President	Terry Pronko, Pennsylvania
Membership VP	Amy Pumper, Minnesota
Programming VP	Laura Bonds, Arkansas
Secretary	Michele Thompson, Minnesota
Treasurer	Barb Wigell, Illinois

Throughout the year 105 Presidential Pins were presented to members from all of our states. Twenty-six Presidential Medallions were presented to Board of Directors members, along with one to each Past National President. The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Michele Thompson, PE Program Manager; Presidential Award of Excellence to Lauren Auchincloss, Treasurer, and Presidential Spirit Award to Tracy Brezicka, President of North Dakota. Four Outstanding State Presidents were honored: Sue Dionne, WI; Eleanor McCarter, MA; Carolyn Mount, SD; and Debbie Johnson, MN. Outstanding Executive Committee member was Christine Jones, Membership VP and Outstanding National Staff Member was Laura Bonds, Public Relations Program Manager.

We made many significant accomplishments this year, among those was closing the gap toward membership growth as a national organization. We worked hard to focus on the local chapters remaining healthy, and as a result membership showed a 61% improvement over the year-end statistics for the previous year. As a result of training, in the communication and team building areas, our officers were extremely qualified and eager to share their knowledge with the US WT. A total of 25 out-of-state visits were made by National Staff members.

The United States Women of Today made an outstanding effort to secure their future, and we had a rewarding year. Many remarkable women gave hours of volunteer time to their communities, as they build leadership skills through our organization. I am proud to have served this year in "Sharing the Light of Leadership and Service."

## **1998 - 1999**

### **Terry L. Pronko, President**

Sharing her "Heart Across America", Terry Pronko from the Dover Pennsylvania chapter, served the United States Women of Today as President 1998- 1999. Her logo was a maroon string of hearts stretching across the United States in navy.

The Executive Committee included: Amy Pumper, Minnesota, Membership Vice President; Laura Bonds, Arkansas, Programming Vice President; Michele Thompson, Minnesota, Secretary; Barb Wigell, Illinois, Treasurer; Sheila Carroll, Minnesota, Chairman of the Board; and Nancy Asher, Missouri, Parliamentarian. Serving as Directors were Dawn Fraser, Pennsylvania, Public Relations and Christine Jones, Minnesota, Extensions. Serving as Program managers were Lauren Auchincloss, Massachusetts, Focus on Women/Chaplain; Linda Buchanan, Ohio, Breast Cancer Awareness; Carolyn Mount, South Dakota, S.T.E.P.; and Terri Sherman, Nebraska, Personal Enrichment. Lisa Pickell and Hallie Elicker from Pennsylvania served as Presidential Assistants.

Mid-Year Meeting was held in October with the Ohio Women of Today hosting, Cindy Finney, chairman. We traveled to the "Heart of it All" and enjoyed our stay at Hueston Woods State Park. The Ohio Women of Today and Ohio Kids of Today were excellent hosts. Presidential Pins and Medallions were presented in addition to Presidential Awards of Excellence.

Joey Hedstrom served as Ambassador President and helped welcome new Ambassadors. Carmella Mongold served as Foundation Chairman and presented chapter grants and scholarships.

National Convention was held in Lancaster, Pennsylvania with Deborah Stein and Cynthia Hilbert chairing. We had a "Hex of a Time" in Pennsylvania with many award being presented including Presidential Pins and Medallions, 2 Presidential Awards of Excellence, 25 Outstanding Local Officers, 25 Outstanding State Officers, 4 Outstanding State Presidents and 2 Outstanding National Officers.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Barb Wigell, Illinois
Membership VP	Terri Sherman, Nebraska
Programming VP	Michele Thompson, Minnesota
Secretary	Brenda Phillips, Minnesota
Treasurer	Amy Pumper, Minnesota

This was the first year for presentation of Buckets of Sunshine at National Convention. Chairman of the Board Sheila Carroll worked with the hosting state, Pennsylvania, to identify organizations that would benefit from buckets made for women in crisis shelters. Five organizations were identified and representatives from each attended the Saturday luncheon where the presentation was made. This was a wonderful project for the Women of Today in the National Convention hosting state and will continue at each National Convention.

Although we did not succeed in growth, we were pleased to be moving in the direction of growth. We ended the year with 3,994 members in 212 chapters, which included 6 extensions, all in Minnesota. This was 51 members down from our beginning base of 4,405 in 218 chapters.

The programming areas were very successful. Forty-five (45) members certified in Outstanding Achievement in Programming and project recognition competition at year-end saw entries from 22 chapters in 7 states and 1 state entry. Donations to charities other than Breast Cancer Awareness were reported by only 6 states with an amazing \$436,671.52 in gifts!

This was the first year of support for Breast Cancer Awareness. Fund-raising and educational projects were held in 15 of 17 member states in support of this program. A reported \$25,907 was raised through fund-raising efforts. Support of this program will continue for an additional 2 years.

Focus on Women had a total of 837 certifications from 15 states. There were 11 essays from 5 states in the FOW year-end essay competition. S.T.E.P. saw a total of 616 certifications in the 3 areas: S.T.E.P. I - 293; S.T.E.P. II - 69, and S.T.E.P. III - 254. These certifications were from 128 chapters in 14 states. There were 8 S.T.E.P. competitors from 2 states at National Convention. Under the Personal Enrichment area there were 546 Effective Writing, 700 Effective Speaking, 302 Leadership course and 304 Team Building course certifications for total of 1888. There were 14 competitors for year-end Effective Writing competition and at least 1 competitor in Effective Speaking.

Public Relations was alive and well in our local chapters with 55 sending in Shout Out with Pride certifications. Eighty-nine (89) chapters participated in Buckets of Sunshine projects and 18 chapters sent in certification forms for work during National Volunteer Week. Under our national Secretary, there was participation in Sister States/Sister Chapters.

The Friends of Heart honor was institute and presented to 78 people. organizations and local businesses for their outstanding support of our local, state and national organizations. Twenty-five (25) incentives were given out for participation in the 1<sup>st</sup> Cat's program to support animal rescue organizations. Fifteen of the 17 states were visited by President Terry and/or National Staff members. We had 26 All-American Chapters. One-hundred (100) Presidential Pins and 25 Medallions were presented throughout the year.

All in all, the "Hearts Across America" year was very successful. We look forward to continue success in the 1999-2000 year!

## 1999- 2000

### Barb Wigell, President

Leading the United States Women of Today with the theme "True Colors" was Barb Wigell from Flossmoor, Illinois. Her logo was a prism.

The Executive Committee included: Terri Shemlan, Nebraska, Membership Vice President; Michele Thompson, Minnesota, Programming Vice President; Brenda Phillips, Minnesota" Secretary, Amy Pumper, Minnesota" Treasurer; Terry Pronko, Pennsylvania, Chairnlan of the Board; and Patti Kinder, Pennsylvania, Parliamentarian. Serving as Directors were Karen Irwin, Minnesota" Public Relations and Cathy Shuman, Minnesota" Extensions. Serving as Progra111 Managers were Ruth Wolfe, Pennsylvania, Focus on Women/Chaplain; Sue Beattie, Massachusetts, Breast Cancer Awareness; Anna Gronewold, Minnesota" S. T. E. P.; Cathy Larsen, Iowa, Personal Enrichment. Marcie Hansen from Illinois served as Presidential Assistant Carrie Lutz served as Ambassador President and Joey Hedstrom served as Foundation President.

Mid-Year Meeting was held in October with the Iowa Women of Today hosting. We celebrated the "Five Seasons in Iowa" . Not only did the Iowa Women of Today welcome us to Cedar Rapids but the Mayor of Cedar Rapids was on hand to wish us a successful convention.

National Convention was held in Omaha, Nebraska. The theme "Honor the Past, Imagine the Future" was used to help us step into the new millennium. Chairmen for the convention were Jan Maaske, Terri Sherman and Deb VanMatre. Presidential Pins and Medallions were presented as well as 2 Presidential A wards of Excellence, 25 Outstanding Local Officers and 25 Outstanding State Officers, 2 Outstanding State Presidents and 2 Outstanding National Officers.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Terri Sherman, Nebraska
Membership VP	Barbara Asplund-Wolf, MA
Programming VP	Anna Gronewold, Minnesota
Secretary	Angela Moody, Nebraska

This year we hosted an online forum on Breast Cancer Awareness. The forum proved to be a great success. Plans for another topic were began for next year. The process to trademark the Buckets of Sunshine name and logo was started Growth was a major goal for all members of the National Staff. Although we did not reach our goal, the efforts by the staff and the state presidents resulted in many



other accomplishments. We ended the year with 3,853 members in 198 chapters. This was 141 members down from our beginning base of 3,994 members in 212 chapters. We had three extensions. Two in Minnesota and one in Ohio.

In the programming area there was a total of \$512,864.91 raised, including \$62,515.99 for Breast Cancer Awareness. 46 members received the Outstanding Achievement in Programming. There were 72 project recognition entries from 26 chapters in 8 states for the year. 42 members received the "A.C.E.S." award and 39 chapters received the "Royal Flush" award. There were 1,411 Personal Enrichment certifications. We had 15 entries for the Effective Writing Competition and 1 for the Effective Speaking Competition. We had 132 members that certified in all four areas of Personal Enrichment. There were 527 S. T.E.P. certifications for the year. We also had 640 Focus on Women Certifications from 12 states and 95 chapters.

Public Relations was showing our "True Colors". 43 chapters sent in forms for Women of Today Week. We had 23 chapters report on Buckets of Sunshine/Make A Difference Day. The National Buckets of Sunshine presentation at convention received local TV coverage. The media list was updated this year.

The Crystal Award was given to 50 deserving individuals, organizations or local businesses. We had 17 All American Chapters. 10 states were visited by President Barb and members of the staff. Two national staff retreats were held. The summer retreat was held in July at President Barb's home and the winter retreat was held in Minneapolis.

The United States Women of Today stepped into the year 2000. Their "True Colors" were shining all year long.

## **2000-2001**

### **Terri Sherman, President**

Showing she was "Committed to Excellence" Terri Sherman from Lincoln, Nebraska, served the United States Women of Today as President 2000-2001. Using a lighthouse as her theme the members of her staff strived to keep communication strong with the states.

In addition to President Terri, the Executive Committee included Barbara Aspland-Wolf, Massachusetts, Membership Vice President; Anna Gronewold, Minnesota, Programming Vice President; Angela Moody, Nebraska, Secretary; Kelley Rosburg, Nebraska, Treasurer; Barb Wigell, Illinois, Chairman of the Board and Debbie Johnson, Minnesota, Parliamentarian. Serving as Directors were Carolyn Mount, South Dakota, Extensions Director; Michele Thompson, Minnesota, Focus on Women; Kim Troutdt, Nebraska serving as Public Relations Director; Amy Pumper, Minnesota serving as Personal Enrichment Program Manager; serving as S.T.E.P. Program Manager from Iowa Cathy Larsen; serving as Breast Cancer Awareness Program Manager from Nebraska, Kelle Hunt-Anderson; Jan Maaske and Maxine Turner from Nebraska served as Presidential Assistants.

The year began with 3851 members and 198 chapters in 17 states and ended with 3652 members, 194 chapters and 18 states. Member states included: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin. During the year 303 new members were recruited, 7 extensions completed and the U.S. Women of Today had 71 percent retention. One state had 100% retention and 7 states were at growth. The states that experienced growth were Illinois, Michigan, Montana, New Jersey, South Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin. Our most exciting news for the year was that we added a new state to our rolls. The Kansas Women of Today chartered in January. They started the year with 5 members and ended with 7. We were very happy to welcome them to our organization.

In the area of programming, there was in excess of \$590,000 reported for external fundraising. We recognized 56 members for Outstanding Achievement in Programming and there were 77 entries from 12 states for the year in the area of Project Recognition. 70 members received the "Unmask your True Identity" recognition. There were 2061 Personal Enrichment certifications with 2 Effective Speaking competitors and 16 in Effective Writing. There were a total of 48 S.T.E.P. certifications and 10 S.T.E.P. competitors for the year. We had 789 Focus on Women certifications from 14 states and 12 essays from 4 states were entered into competition at year-end.

Two National staff retreats were held during the year. July retreat was held at President Terri's home in Lincoln, Nebraska and in January winter retreat was held in Kansas City, Missouri. These retreats were a time for the staff to become a team and set goals for the year. The goals of communications, training of staff and Board of Directors and motivation were all attained.

President Terri put out 10 monthly Board of Directors newsletter with each of these being posted on her web site so all members could keep in touch with what was happening with the national officers and in the states. Three All Chapter mailings were sent. Founder's Day, Women of Today Week, Holiday Greetings and March Membership mailing. The Listening Course was completed and distributed to chapters and national board members at Annual Convention.

An on line forum was held during Women of Today week. It featured guest speakers National President Terri Sherman, Past National President Sheila Carroll and past national staff members Lauren Auchincloss and Nancy Asher.

Laura Bonds served as Ambassador President. We were pleased to welcome the following U.S. Ambassadors: Janet Studer from MN and Kathy Krebsbach from IA. Joey's was presented at Annual convention.

Mid-Year meeting was held in October with the Missouri Women of Today serving as hosts and the meeting was held in Kansas City. Carmella Mongold and Nancy Asher were co-chairman. We filled our weekend with fun when we "Let the Games Begin". Presidential pins and medallions were presented in addition to Presidential Awards of Excellence, where were awarded to Angela Moody, Secretary and Michele Thompson, Focus on Women/Chaplain Program Manager.

Annual meeting was held in Bloomington, MN where we enjoyed the "Great Minnesota Get Together and enjoyed their State Fair". Chairman Christine Jones and Cheri Nielsen reported that 120 members from 14 states were in attendance.

During the business meeting it was voted to support Multiple Sclerosis for our new External Programming area for the next two years. For the last two years we have been supporting Breast Cancer Awareness. Last year there were 76 chapters and 4 state projects held. We have really enjoyed our relationship with the Breast Cancer Society.

Elections were held and the following will be serving the U.S. Women of Today in the coming year:

President	Amy Pumper, Minnesota
Programming VP	Sue Beattie, Massachusetts
Secretary	Anna Gronewold, Minnesota
Treasurer	Michelle Crandall, Minnesota

One hundred Presidential pins were awarded. 20 medallions were presented to staff members and state presidents. Medallions were also awarded to each past national president. Twenty-five Outstanding Local Officers and twenty-five Outstanding State Officers were recognized at year end. 26 local chapters qualified as All-American Chapter.

The "Shining Light" Award was presented to 81 people, organizations and local businesses for their outstanding support of our local, state and national organizations.

The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Michele Thompson, Focus on Women/Chaplain Program Manager and the Presidential Award of Excellence was awarded to Debbie Johnson, Parliamentarian. Four Outstanding State Presidents were honored: Lisa Zeltwanger, Pennsylvania; Julie Hutchinson, Massachusetts, Jodie Johnson, Minnesota, Connie Lundbeck, Iowa. Outstanding National Officer was Angela Moody, Secretary. And Outstanding National Staff Member was Amy Pumper, Personal Enrichment Program Manager.

Terri was very proud to have successfully completed her goal of travel this year by visiting all 18 states. This kept member states in touch with the National organization. Other national officers were able to visit 10 states. Going far beyond the call of duty, doing more than others expect? This is what excellence is all about. And it comes from striving, maintaining the highest standards, looking after the smallest detail and going the extra mile. Excellence means doing your very best. In everything. In every way.

The United States Women of Today members were "Committed to Excellence". It showed in the number of volunteer efforts that were seen this year in our states and chapters. They truly went the extra mile and made a difference.

## **2001-2002**

### **Amy Pumper, President**

Sharing "A Vision of Success", Amy Pumper from Rochester, Minnesota, served the United States Women of Today as the 2001-2002 President. Using butterflies as her logo and the exciting color red, she and her staff worked hard to communicate well, educate, working as a team and sharing their commitment to our organization.

Staff members included: Karen Irwin, Minnesota, Membership Vice President; Sue Beattie, Massachusetts, Programming Vice President; Anna Gronewold, Minnesota, Secretary; Michelle Crandall, Minnesota, Treasurer; Terri Sherman, Nebraska, Chairman of the Board; Nancy Asher, Missouri, Parliamentarian; Angela Moody, Nebraska, Extensions Director, Sharon Robinson, Minnesota, Public Relations Director; Daina Mirsch, Minnesota, Webmaster; Dawn Hanson, Minnesota, Focus on Women/Chaplain Program Manager; Karen Hekr, Illinois, Personal Enrichment Program Manager; Lisa Zeltwanger, Pennsylvania, S.T.E.P. Program Manager; Michele Thompson, Minnesota, Multiple Sclerosis Program Manager and Kari Pumper, Minnesota and Cathy Larsen, Iowa, served as Presidential Assistants.

Membership growth was a priority this year and was achieved! The year began with 3646 members in 194 chapters in 18 states and ended with 3706 members in 186 chapters in 18 states. Member states include: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin. Thanks to the Minnesota Women of Today for sharing their MLR (Members Learn to Recruit) training, our members learned how to recruit in a variety of ways and that showed with 1001 new members being recruited throughout the year. There were three extensions completed in two states – Imperial, Nebraska, South Central, Minnesota and Zimmerman, Minnesota and the U.S. Women of Today achieved 74% retention for the year. There were 5 year end growth states, 12 chapters from 6 states achieved 100% retention for the year, 87 chapters from 14 states achieved growth with 4 chapters achieving One-A-Month status and 8 chapters doubled up and one chapter – the Newton, Kansas chapter tripled up. The Reach Out and Touch program was reinstated and staff made contacts three times during the year with local chapter presidents. Our public relations efforts were outstanding with 61 chapters from 8 states participating in Founder's Day, 57 chapters in 14 states participating in Women of Today week.

Our programming team worked hard to have over \$610,000.00 in donations was reported for external fundraising. 44 members were recognized for completing Outstanding Achievement in Programming and there were 78 entries from 10 states in Project Recognition. There were 1987 Personal Enrichment certifications with 4 Effective Speaking competitors and 14 Effective Writing competitors for the year. There were 447 S.T.E.P. certifications and 5 S.T.E.P. competitors. There were 826 Focus on Women certifications from 14 states and 12 essays from 3 states were entered into competition. The Spiritual Enrichment certification was promoted on a trial basis with 489 members certifying from 12 states. In the external programming area this was the first year for Multiple Sclerosis Society and it was reported that 16 states participated with 55 chapters holding 110 projects and 20 chapters in 10 states participated in Multiple Sclerosis Walks.

The staff started the year off by coming together with Sheila Carroll for Team Building and Communication training the Sunday of Annual 2001. There were two staff retreats held. In July, the staff met at Deb Peter's house in Princeton, MN to get acquainted, continue team building and communication training, plan Mid-Year meeting and share some great fun. The staff retreat in January was held in Jonesboro, Arkansas where the staff had a chance to discuss the Marketing Committee's new ideas, plan Annual Convention and held a brainstorming potluck with the Jonesboro chapter members.

Communications was a focus as the national staff provided the states and chapters with excellent training materials, motivation, support and fresh ideas. There were six bi-monthly national "Today's Leader" sent to the chapters and 11 issues of the "Butterfly Bulletin" were sent to the Board of Directors. Five all chapter mailings were sent by President Amy, the membership team sent out four all chapter mailings and the programming team sent one to the chapters to promote the areas, share ideas and help the local members know what is available from the United States Women of Today. A training packet was put on CD and sent to every state to help train incoming state and local officers. Two online forums were held featuring experienced guest speakers from across the nation – one during Women of Today Week to help members learn about the United States Women of Today and one in January focusing on membership and sharing ideas to help members and chapters attain growth for the year.

Two dues billing contract bids were received by the Dues Billing Committee and due to a lack of a quorum at Mid-Year meeting, a mail vote was conducted. The dues billing contract bid went to Terri Sherman.

Linda Gates served as Ambassador President. We were pleased to welcome two U.S. Ambassadors: Cathy Shuman and Lori Anderson from Minnesota. Maxine Turner served as Foundation Chairman. The Foundation presented a chapter grant and a scholarship at annual convention.

Mid-Year Meeting was held in October in Green Bay with the Wisconsin Women of Today serving as hosts. Sue Dionne and Deb Nelson served as co-chairs and filled the weekend with an "Autumn Fest in the Northwoods" and did an excellent job throughout the weekend where everyone had a wonderful time. Presidential pins and medallions were presented. The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Daina Mirsch, Webmaster and the Presidential Award of Excellence was presented to Karen Irwin, Membership Vice President.

Annual Convention was held in Las Vegas, Nevada where we enjoyed "Viva Las Vegas". Chairmen Terri Pronko and Barb Wigell reported that there were 100 members in attendance from 11 states.

The Marketing Committee made many changes to its structure after holding many meetings online through an online messenger service. The committee will now consist of members holding alternating two-year terms. A new Buckets of Sunshine logo is being designed and the Buckets of Sunshine has been reviewed and will be promoted as a project for chapters to do at any time of the year and will heavily promote the Annual Convention Buckets of Sunshine throughout the year after making a decision by August 1. Other items that were worked on are a logo and tagline, Outstanding Woman Award and marketing to 18 to 25 year olds.

The annual Buckets of Sunshine was a three-fold project for the St. Jude's Ranch for Children. States, chapters and members donated well over 10,000 greeting card fronts, gift cards from discount stores to purchase tennis shoes and donations to purchase household goods, books, tools and more. Every state participated in this project with over \$10,000 raised for the Ranch.

Elections were held and the following will serve as the United States Women of Today officers for the 2002-2003 year:

President	Michele Thompson, Minnesota
Membership VP	Karen Hekr, Illinois
Programming VP	Kathy Mueller, New Jersey

One hundred Presidential pins were awarded and 25 Presidential medallions were presented to staff and state presidents. Medallions were also awarded to the past National Presidents. Twenty-five Outstanding Local Officers and twenty-five Outstanding State Officers were recognized. The All-American Chapter award was presented to 31 chapters in eight states. 97 individuals, organizations or businesses were recognized with the "Vision Award" for their support of the local, district, state and United States Women of Today. The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Sharon Robinson, Public Relations Director and the Presidential Award of Excellence was presented to Nancy Dvoracek, Executive Director of the Minnesota Women of Today. There were five Outstanding State Presidents – Shari Chakoian, Illinois; Lynne Duffy, Minnesota, Jan Maaske, Nebraska, Debbie McTavish, North Dakota and Deb Stein, Pennsylvania. The Outstanding Staff Member was Sharon Robinson, Public Relations Director and the Outstanding Officer was Karen Irwin, Membership Vice President.

President Amy was able to visit 14 of our 18 member states with her staff making 22 out of state visits where they held training sessions and forums on their areas. Like a butterfly that goes through a metamorphosis, the United States Women of Today achieved their own metamorphosis by learning, growing, sharing and implementing to become the best of the best. Each member went through his or her own metamorphosis by sharing "A Vision of Success", becoming the best individual and member possible.

A true "Vision of Success" was achieved in the 2001-2002 year with many more successes to come throughout our future. Every member made it happen by stepping out of their comfort zone and making a difference to the United States Women of Today!

## **2002-2003**

### **Michele Thompson, President**

Asking us to believe that "Hand in Hand, Together We Can", Michele Thompson from Richfield Minnesota lead the United States Women of Today as President. The official logo was a circle of people with hands linked. Communication and teamwork were the emphasis this year.

Staff members included: Karen Hekr (IL)-Membership Vice President; Kathy Mueller (NJ)-Programming Vice President; Laura Stone (ND)-Secretary; Barb Wigell (IL)-Treasurer; Amy Pumper (MN)-Chairman of the Board, and Anna Gronewold (MN)-Parliamentarian. Serving as Directors were Karen Irwin (MN)-Extensions and Deb McTavish (ND)-Public Relations. Program Managers were: Dora Degenstein (ND)-Focus on Women/Chaplain, Dawn Hanson (MN)-Personal Enrichment; Kristina Rushing (PA)-STEP, and Elizabeth Stelevich (NJ)-Multiple Sclerosis. The Presidential Assistants were Jill Kirschner and Connie McDonald, both from Minnesota.

The year began with 3706 members in 186 chapters in 18 states. With the addition of 974 new members, nine newly extended chapters, and seven chapters dropped, the year ended with 3664 members in 188 chapters in 18 states. Member states this year included: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin. Of these states, eight (IA, IL, MA, MN, MO, MT, SD & WA,) showed growth for the year.

Starting with second quarter the US Women of Today began working with a new dues biller. Despite a few initial kinks in the system, the transition was made and dues billings for the last half of the year went out in a timely fashion. The Reach Out and Touch program was utilized - giving the national staff an opportunity to work one-on-one with 12-13 chapters each throughout the year. Contacts were made by letter, phone, and e-mail in an effort to strengthen the bond between "national" and the local membership.

Programming started slow but by year-end there were 3,978 certifications (534 speaking, 484 writing, 314 listening, 354 team building, 523 leadership, 742 Focus on Women, 540 Spiritual Enrichment, 236 STEP I, 43 STEP II, and 207 STEP III). Fund-raising was a big part of the year, with \$320,400 in monetary donations, \$25,901 in-kind contributions, and 37,318 service hours reported. Donations included \$20,000 for Multiple Sclerosis & \$10,729.50 in local Buckets of Sunshine. Outstanding Achievement in Programming was attained by 35 members. There were 58 entries from 7 states in the area of Project Recognition. Year-end entrants include: Four Effective Writing; One Effective Speaking and ; Six Focus on Women essays. There were no STEP competitors.

The National staff meet two times for "retreats". The July retreat was held in Richfield MN at President Michele's home -- with eight of the staff present. Goals were set for the year and plans for Mid-Year convention were formulated. Also, in order to have a balanced budget this year, the national staff was charged with raising \$2500. It was decided to hold a cookbook fund-raiser - with 46% of the profits from the Gooseberry Patch cookbooks and calendars going back into the budget. By mid-year, \$500 had been raised. The "winter get-away" retreat was held at the home of Mrs. (Karen) Hekr, Membership VP, where four staff members enjoyed some "down time", a visit to downtown Chicago - and excellent home-cooking by Mr. Hekr.

Eleven issues of Lifelines, President Michele's Board of Directors newsletter was sent out. Six issues of the Today's Leader were sent to the Board of Directors, each chapter and Past Presidents. Despite not having a Secretary until late July, President Michele and her assistants were able to get the National Directory out by early August. Three issues of a "joint" All-Chapter Mailing were sent out during the year. Rather than have each team - programming, membership and National President sending out individual mailings the information was combined into one issue - sent out once each quarter. Individual mailings also went out from several of the national staff for Founder's Day, Women of Today Week, Christmas greetings and March Madness.

In honor of President Michele's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday in December a "Fabulous Fifty" membership recruitment was promoted - with the hope of fulfilling Michele's "Birthday/Christmas wish list" of 50 members in the month of December. Ten states met the challenge and "presented" President Michele with fifty-two (52) new members (including 7 members in Buckeye OH - which chartered on President Michele's birthday!) State Presidents who state's recruited members in December were allowed to throw a pie at President Michele at Year-end convention!

Despite having no official Webmaster on staff, Women of Today became more technologically-aware this year, with the addition of the Today's Leader to the web-site and 18 of 21 manuals put on one CD-Rom - which was distributed to each Board of Director member and each chapter at Mid-Year. Several committees continued to hold meetings on-line, including the Marketing and Election committees.

Mid-Year meeting was held October 3-6, 2002, with Nebraska Women of Today inviting everyone to "Toast Today (in Margaritaville)". Fifty members from eleven states were in attendance. Terri Sherman, Angela Moody and Jan Maaske served as co-chairs for the excitement-packed weekend (including one "cold showers only" morning!). Presidential pins were awarded to 29 members; Six State Presidents received Medallions along with 8 national staff. Because of her continued commitment to national by helping keep the web-site updated, and "burning" the CD-Roms, Daina Mirsch was awarded a Presidential Medallion as well. The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Deb McTavish, Public Relations Director; Kathy Mueller, Programming VP received the Presidential Award of Excellence. Continuing a program started in 1998 to recognize those business, community leaders and/or individuals who have reached out a hand to help Women of Today chapters in their community, the "Helping Hand" award was presented to a 16 individuals/businesses.

In the absence of President Ambassador Roxy Whalen, Terri Sherman was excited to welcome two new Ambassadors - fellow Nebraska WT members Maxine Turner and Angela Moody.

Annual Convention was held in Harrisburg PA where the "Where the STARS Shine Bright". The York (PA) Helping Hands for the Homeless center was the recipient of the annual Buckets of Sunshine donation of \$4,283.12. The Center's director, Cynthia Kemp, was recognized with the first US WT Outstanding Woman award. Thirty-five members were recognized with Presidential Pins. (Thirty-six other pins were awarded during state visits); Four State Presidents and six National Staff were awarded Medallions. (Two State Presidents received Medallions during state visits by President Michele). Twenty-five (25) Outstanding Local Officers and 25 Outstanding State Officers were recognized. The All-American Chapter award was presented to 23 chapters in ten states. "Helping Hands" awards were given to 58 more individuals/businesses (61 had also been awarded during State visits). The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Ext. Dir. Karen Irwin; and the Presidential Award of Excellence was presented to Membership VP Mrs. Hekr. There were five (5) Outstanding State Presidents (IA, MA, ND, MN, PA; Outstanding Staff was Karen Irwin and Outstanding Officer was Mrs. Hekr. Linda Gates presided during a special presentation as Kathy Mueller (NJ) was recognized as the newest Ambassador. Elections were held and the following will serve as the United States Women of Today officers for the 2003-2004 year:

President	Karen Irwin-MN
Secretary	Debbie Funsch-IL
Treasurer	Cathy Shuman-MN
Membership VP	Maxine Turner-NE
Programming VP	Mrs. (Karen) Hekr-IL

President Michele was able to visit 13 of the 18 member states (KS; ND; NJ; OH, IL, WI; NE; MA; MN; PA, IA; SD, & MO) while five of the national staff (MVP, PVP, Ext. Dir., PR, MS) eight state visits (IN, IA, MA, MN, NE, ND, PA, WI), where they held training sessions and forums on their areas.

Although the 2002/2003 started out a bit stressfully - short four staff members & working with a very tight budget -- we came through it "hand in hand"! Communication and teamwork were the keys. Chapters worked with chapters to promote successful projects, new members - and even extensions. At least two of the extensions completed this year were done as a result of the "teamwork" of members from several states working together to help each other spread the word of WT in their states. Thanks to that teamwork, along with improved communications (thanks goodness for e-mail and chat rooms!!), we proved that "Hand in Hand, Together We Can" -- and did -- accomplish anything we set our minds to do.

## 2003-2004

### Karen Irwin, President

Karen Irwin from Oak Grove, Minnesota served as 2003-2004 United States Women of Today President. Karen's theme was "Imagine the Possibilities" and her logo was snowflakes.

Staff members were: Maxine Turner (NE), Membership Vice President; Karen Hekr (IL), Programming Vice President; Debbie Funsch (IL), Secretary; Cathy Shuman (MN), Treasurer; Pat Rhein (NJ), Parliamentarian; and Michele Thompson (MN), Chairman of the Board. Serving as Program Managers were Cheryl Miller (PA), Personal Enrichment; Brenda Almoney (PA), FOW/Chaplain; Cindy Hilbert (PA), STEP; and Connie McDonald (MN), Multiple Sclerosis. Serving as Directors were Kayla Hermann (MN), Public Relations and Deb McTavish (ND) Extensions. Presidential Assistants were Cathy Newville (MN) and Lynne Tormoen (MN).

We began our year with 3,662 members and 188 chapters in 17 states. During the year we added 8 chapters, a total of 878 new members and 2658 members renewed, giving 72% retention. Newly extended chapters were Willmar, New Prague, North Branch, Otsego, Melrose and Arden Hills in Minnesota and Nebraska City and Highway 40 in Nebraska. Unfortunately, we dropped 6 chapters and 1 state during the year (Kansas) and ended the year with 3634 members. Member states at the beginning of the year were: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin. There were 14 chapters from 8 states with 100% retention and 72 chapters from 11 states showed growth for the year. Five states – Iowa, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Ohio and Missouri also ended the year at growth. Three chapters – Lakes Area, IA; Chelmsford, MA; and Greene County, OH were Double Up Chapters and one chapter – Mora, MN was a Triple Up Chapter. Mora was also the only Year End G.O.L.D. chapter.

Programming hit a high note this year with an increase in participation, certifications and competitions in all of the programming areas. A total of \$362,522 was reported for external fundraising. Service hours were reported as 28,069. Calculated at minimum wage, the total value of reported services hours was \$144,557. We recognized 69 members for Outstanding Achievement in Programming and there were 83 Project Recognition entries. There were 2,150 Personal Enrichment certifications from 12 states and 8 Effective Writing and 4 Effective Speaking competitors. We had 463 S.T.E.P. certifications and 3 competitors. There were 786 Focus on Women certifications from 13 states, 23 FOW essay entries from 7 states and 531 Chaplain certifications from 11 states.

The staff started their year with team building exercises on Sunday morning after the close of national convention. It was apparent from the start that this team had a special bond with each other that was reflected in everything they did during the year. Every staff member attended summer staff retreat, which was held in Minnesota. Team building, goal setting, effective speaking, planning for mid-year and lots of fun were on the agenda for the weekend. Winter staff retreat was held in January and was hosted by the Ohio Women of Today. Fourteen staff members enjoyed a beautiful weekend in the Hocking Hills area outside of Columbus along with a number of Ohio Women of Today members. The agenda for the weekend included plans for national convention as well as discussion of the wordmark issue.

Mid-year was held in Bloomington/Normal, Illinois on October 2-5, 2003. The theme was "Come Together ... In the Heartland." Eighty-four members from 10 states attended this fun-filled weekend. Hosts for the convention were Mary Genzel, Tish Carneghie and Lori Akers. Presidential pins were awarded to 26 members. Presidential medallions were awarded to 5 state presidents and 7 staff members. The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Cheryl Miller, Personal Enrichment Program Manager, and the Presidential Award of Excellence was presented to Debbie Funsch, Secretary.

The national staff did an outstanding job of leading by example throughout the year. Members were provided with excellent communication, training, motivation and support through newsletters, articles in the Today's Leader and three all-chapter mailings as well as forums at state meetings.

Joy Hutchcraft served as Ambassador President this year. We were pleased to welcome the following U.S. Ambassadors: Lynne Duffy, MN; Karen Irwin, MN; Michele Thompson, MN; Sue Beattie, MA; Julie Hutchinson, MA; Marcia Allison, MA; Jan Maaske, NE; Cathy Larson, IA; Laurie Tiemessen, IA; Connie Lingle, PA; Ruth Wolfe, PA; and Carol Minga, IL.

Carmella Mongold served as Foundation chair. The Foundation donated funds to purchase a new United States Women of Today banner, helped pay for printing for one of the all-chapter mailings and for reprinting the extensions packet.

National convention was held in Framingham, Massachusetts where we enjoyed a "Weekend in New England." Chairpersons Sue Beattie, Barbara Aspland-Wolfe and Julie Hutchinson, along with the Massachusetts Women of Today did an outstanding job of hosting the convention and making everyone feel welcome. There were 118 members from 10 states in attendance. The Kennedy Donovan Center was the recipient of the annual Buckets of Sunshine donation of over \$4,000 in monetary and in-kind donations. During the business meeting, a new External Programming area, POAC – Parents of Autistic Children – was voted on. Presidential pins were awarded to 27 members and presidential medallions were awarded to 4 staff members and 3 state presidents. Additional presidential pins were awarded throughout the year during state visitations. Twenty-five Outstanding State Officers and 25 Outstanding Local Officers were recognized. The All American chapter recognition was given to 28 chapters in 11 states. The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Brenda Almoney, FOW/Chaplain Program Manager. The Presidential Award of Excellence was present to Karen Hekr, Programming Vice President. There were 4 outstanding State Presidents – Jodie Meyer, MN; Becky Fleming, MA; Marlene Elliott, OH and Joyce Harpster, NE. Outstanding Staff Member was Brenda Almoney and Outstanding Officer was Debbie Funsch.

Elections were held and the following will be serving the U.S. Women of Today for 2004-2005 –

President	Karen Hekr, Illinois
Programming Vice President	Brenda Almoney, Pennsylvania
Secretary	Jill Kirschner, Minnesota

President Karen visited 13 of our 16 member states during the year and staff members made visits to 2 of the remaining 3 states. Staff members made numerous visits to state meetings where they presented or assisted with forums and training sessions. All told, the

staff logged over 110,000 travel miles for the year! Throughout the year, over 100 "Imagination Awards" were presented to individuals, organizations and businesses for their support of the local, district, state and national Women of Today organizations.

Despite the overshadowing cloud of the wordmark issue and the many hours spent discussing it, the national staff did an outstanding job in each of their areas. We received comments from many members stating that this staff was one of the most approachable and dedicated national staffs they had ever seen. I am proud to have served with them and to have had the opportunity to work with and meet so many remarkable women across the United States. I hope that we can all continue to "Imagine the Possibilities" to help ensure the future of our organization and to help make this world a better place to live.

## 2004-2005

### Karen Hekr, President

Karen Hekr from Brookfield, Illinois asked us to focus in on our AMAZING HISTORY-INCREDIBLE FUTURE. Her logo was a Rocket ship.

Staff Members were: Kathy Mueller (NJ) Membership VP, Brenda Almoney (PA) Programming VP, Jill Kirschner (MN) Secretary, Cathy Shuman (MN) Parliamentarian, Karen Irwin (MN) Chairman of the Board, Cathy Newville (MN) FOW/Chaplain, Cheryl Miller (PA) STEP PM, Cindy Hilbert (PA) External PM (POAC), Joan Lundquist (MN) Extensions Director, Connie McDonald (MN) PR Director, Cheryl Hopkins (MA) Webmaster, Mary Genzel (IL) Presidential Assistant, Thelma Carnduff (IL) Presidential Assistant, Kari Cottom (IN) Honorary Presidential Assistant.

Our starting membership base on May 1, 2004 was 3,636 ending base as of April 1, 2005 was 3,420 for minus 216 members. Chapter base was 187, ending at 178. We extended into three new communities – Duluth, Red Wing Area, and Hampton in Minnesota.

At Mid-Year convention in Omaha, Nebraska, the Board of Directors voted on the USWT word mark licensing agreement between the Minnesota Women of Today and the United States Women of Today. This was the culmination of many years of research and effort by numerous individuals.

Other highlights of the year included the staff sponsored fundraiser "Trading Faces" drawing for a free registration or cash prize, the kids "Blast Off" coloring contest, the success of our first year with POAC, and the presentation of 125 Friendship 7 Awards to family members, friends, politicians, volunteer organizations, and business owners who have supported our mission.

A total of \$193,997.39 in donations involving 16,777 hours of volunteer service was reported for the year.

National Convention was held in Springfield, Illinois with the theme "Come Play in Lincoln's Backyard". Elections were held and the following will be serving the U.S. Women of Today for 2005-2006 –

President	Brenda Almoney, Pennsylvania
Membership VP	Debbie Funsch, Illinois
Programming VP	Cindy Hilbert, Pennsylvania
Secretary	Kim Troudt, Nebraska
Treasurer	Joyce Harpster, Nebraska

President Karen visited 10 of 16 member states during the year. Staff members were also able to visit a number of states, providing leadership training, motivation, experience, and excitement. On ready alert, as luggage lay in our assorted homes, the staff traveled over 80,000 miles to Women of Today functions.

Thank you United States Women of Today for giving me the change to serve as your president. I am so grateful to those who helped to write our "Amazing History" through chapter, state and national involvement. When I look at you, and all that you are and all you are capable of being – I see our "Incredible Future!" Here's to the next 20 years... Remember yesterday, Dream for tomorrow, Live for Today!

## 2005-2006

### Brenda S. Almoney, President

Brenda S. Almoney from York, Pennsylvania served as 2005-2006 United States Women of Today President. Brenda's theme was "Blending Our Talents" and her logo was a teapot.

Staff members were: Debbie Funsch (IL), Membership Vice President; Cindy Hilbert (PA), Programming Vice President; Kim Troudt (NE), Secretary; Joyce Harpster (NE), Treasurer; Chellie Funsch (IL), Parliamentarian; and Karen Hekr (IL), Chairman of the Board. Serving as Program Managers were Nancy Kvamme (ND), Personal Enrichment; Kayla Hermann (MN), Focus on Women/Chaplain; Cathy Newville (MN), S.T.E.P.; and Sue Dionne (WI), POAC. Serving as Directors were Janet Esper (IL), Public Relations; Cindy Urlacher (NE), Extensions and Becky Fleming (MA), Webmaster. Serving as Presidential Assistants were Deb Stein (PA) and Ruth Ann Weirich (PA).

Mid-Year Meeting was held in October with the Iowa Women of Today hosting. We celebrated with "Rock 'n Roll is here to stay ... party with the Women of Today". The event was held in Clear Lake, IA and was very successful.

National Convention was held in Green Bay, Wisconsin. The theme was "Summertime By The Bay". Chairmen for the convention were Sue Dionne, Karen Kinninger and Rita Bohm. Presidential pins and medallions were awarded as well as the following awards: Outstanding National Officer, Joyce Harpster, Treasurer; Outstanding Staff Member, Kayla Hermann, FOW/Chaplain PM; Presidential Award of Excellence, Cindy Hilbert, Programming Vice-President; Programming Award of Excellence, Kayla Hermann, FOW/Chaplain PM & Cindy Urlacher, Extensions Director. Also awarded were 25 Outstanding Local Officer Awards, 25 Outstanding State Officer Awards and 6 Outstanding State President Awards.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Cindy Hilbert, Pennsylvania
Membership VP	Kayla Hermann, Minnesota
Programming VP	Debbie Funsch, Illinois
Secretary	Sue Beattie, Massachusetts
Treasurer	Maxine Turner, Nebraska

Although we did not meet our goal for growth this year, the efforts by the staff and state presidents resulted in many other accomplishments. We ended the year with 3,230 members and 179 chapters in 16 states. This is 198 members down from our beginning base of 3,418 members and 178 chapters in 16 states. During the year we added 9 chapters, a total of 904 new members, 2326 members renewed, giving us 70% retention.

In the Programming area we had 37 members certify in Outstanding Achievement in Programming, 56 total Project Recognition submissions, 1,1476 Personal Enrichment certifications, 551 FOW certifications, 493 Chaplain certifications, and 427 S.T.E.P. participants.

We raised \$6,167 for Parents of Autistic Children (POAC) this year. Our Buckets of Sunshine brought \$4,500 to Safe Haven in Shawano, Wisconsin. The "Caring Friends" Award was given to 98 deserving individuals, organizations or local businesses. We had 10 All American Chapters. President Brenda and members of her staff visited twelve of the 16 states. Two national retreats were held. The summer retreat was held in July in York, Pennsylvania and the winter retreat was held in January in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.

The United States Women of Today joined President Brenda in "Blending Our Talents" this year and will continue by "Blending Our Talents" in years to come.

## **2006 - 2007**

### **Cynthia M Hilbert, President**

Cindy Hilbert from Mt. Wolf, Pennsylvania served as 2006-2007 United States Women of Today President. Cindy's theme was "Patchwork of Friendship" and she used quilts as her logo.

Staff members were: Kayla Hermann (MN), Membership Vice President; Debbie Funsch (IL), Programming Vice President; Sue Beattie (MA), Secretary; Maxine Turner (NE), Treasurer; Kim Troutd (NE), Parliamentarian; and Brenda Almoney (PA), Chairman of the Board. Serving as Program Managers were Chellie Funsch (IL), Personal Enrichment; Vicki Jo Smith (PA), Focus on Women/Chaplain; Joyce Harpster (NE), S.T.E.P.; and Janet Esper (IL), POAC. Serving as Directors were Cindy Urlacher (NE), Public Relations; Nancy Kvamme (ND), Extensions and Becky Fleming (MA), Webmaster. Serving as Presidential Assistants were Deb Stein (PA) and Bonnie Miller (PA).

Mid-Year Meeting was held in October with the Nebraska Women of Today hosting. We celebrated with "It's a Jungle out There". This 'Jungle Safari' was held in Lincoln, Nebraska, where we learned about generational diversity to cooking a quick elegant meal.

National Convention was held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The theme was "Come to Treasure Island Where the Pirates Play". Chairmen for the convention were, Terry Pronko and Deb Stein. Presidential pins and medallions were awarded as well as the following awards: Outstanding National Officer, Debbie Funsch, Programming Vice President; Outstanding Staff Member, Janet Esper, External Programming Program Manager (POAC); Presidential Award of Excellence, Debbie Funsch, Programming Vice President; Programming Award of Excellence, Janet Esper, External Programming Program Manager (POAC) & Chellie Funsch, Personal Enrichment Program Manager. Also awarded were 25 Outstanding Local Officer Awards, 25 Outstanding State Officer Awards and 5 Outstanding State President Awards.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Kayla Hermann, Minnesota
Programming VP	Janet Esper, Illinois
Treasurer	Laura Morris, Missouri

Although we did not meet our goal for growth this year, the efforts by the staff and state presidents resulted in many other accomplishments. We ended the year with 2,893 members and 172 chapters in 15 states. This is 331 members down from our beginning base of 3,230 members and 179 chapters in 15 states. During the year we added a total of 608 new members, 2285 members renewed, giving us 68% retention.

In the Programming area we had 29 members certify in Outstanding Achievement in Programming, 66 total Project Recognition submissions, 1,739 Personal Enrichment certifications, 495 FOW certifications, 481 Chaplain certifications, and 185 S.T.E.P. participations.

We raised \$9,658.36 for Parents of Autistic Children (POAC) this year. Our Buckets of Sunshine brought \$3,000.00 to Bethlehem Haven, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The "Caring Friends" Award was given to 94 deserving individuals, organizations or local businesses. We had 14 All American Chapters. 10 of the 15 states were visited by President Brenda and members of her staff. Two national retreats were held. The summer retreat was held in July in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and the winter retreat was held in January in Sugar Grove, Ohio.

The United States Women of Today joined President Cindy in quilting a "Patchwork of Friendship" that will continue to grow and provide fellowship for many years to come.

## **2007 - 2008**

### **Kayla Hermann, President**

Simply asking us to "Believe", Kayla Hermann from Madelia, Minnesota served as the 2007-2008 United States Women of Today President. Her logo was Daisies.

Staff members were: Membership VP, Mary Zurn (MN); Programming VP, Janet Esper (IL); Secretary, Sharon Robinson (MN); Treasurer, Laura Morris (MO); Parliamentarian, Bonnie Waller (MN); and Chairman of the Board, Cindy Hilbert (PA). Serving as Program Managers were Personal Enrichment, Sandra Melton (MO); External Area, Sue Dionne (WI); Chaplain/ Focus on Women, Karen Stark (IL); S.T.E.P., Thelma Carnduff (IL). Directors were: Public Relations, Vicki Jo Smith (PA), and Extensions Cindy Umland (MN). Presidential Assistants were Karae Grundmeyer (MN) and LuAnn Dostal (MN).

We began the year with 2900 members in 14 states. Member States included: Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin. During the year we added one new chapter, Norwalk, IA. A total of 606 new members and 2,123 members renewed, achieving 73% retention. The year-end membership was 2752. There were 9 chapters from 5 states with 100% retention. There were 60 chapters from 7 states that achieved year-end growth. 5 states ended the year with growth: Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. 2 GOLD chapters were recognized Brooklyn Park, MN and St. Michael/Albertville, MN.

Summer Staff retreat was held in Minnesota with 9 staff members attending. We brainstormed a new format for Mid-Year. Karen Irwin and Cathy Shuman presented "The Secret" to the staff and there was team building activities and training. The staff attended the area Relay for Life and supported the local chapter.

The membership is asking the National organization to change things and to breathe new life into the organization. In an effort to meet some of the challenges, here are some things that were worked on: The format for the Mid-Year meeting was changed up. Committees were asked to conduct meetings prior to the conference. Committees then met at the same time in the same room for one hour and then reported to the general assembly. The general assembly also did round table brainstorming on what we can do as an organization to thrive. A general assembly forum on "The Secret" was presented. There was a speaker at the banquet. The Today's Leader received a face-lift and was sent via email to anyone that wanted it. It was also posted on the website.

Mid-Year was held in Kansas City, MO. 49 members from 9 states attended and Independence, MO was the host for the weekend. Presidential awards were presented to members across the nation. The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Sue Dionne, External Program Manager and the Presidential Award of Excellence was awarded to Programming Vice President, Janet Esper.

Winter Staff Retreat was held in Shawano, WI with all staff at the Bowl-a-Thon. The USWT Believe team raised over \$1,700.00 for the fundraiser! The staff worked on the Year-End format and learned about each other's Color Temperaments.

Year-end was hosted by the MNWT in Rochester, MN. 110 members from 11 states were in attendance. The general assembly had the option to attend the Rochester Honkers baseball game. Presidential awards were presented to local and state officers who showed outstanding leadership and dedication. Our Buckets of Sunshine recipient was the Dorothy Day House in Rochester to which we donated \$2,490.00.

The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Chaplain/ Focus on Women Program Manager, Karen Stark and the Presidential Award of Excellence was Secretary, Sharon Robinson. Outstanding National Officer was Janet Esper, Programming Vice President and Outstanding Staff Member was Sue Dionne, External Program Manager. Five Outstanding State Presidents were recognized: Penny Bussell - Iowa, Lisa Clark - Illinois, Bonnie Olmanson - Minnesota, Brandi Brown - Nebraska and Deb Stein - Pennsylvania. 25 Outstanding State and 25 Outstanding Local officers were recognized. 17 chapters were recognized with the All-American Chapter recognition.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Janet Esper, Illinois
Membership VP	Kim Troudt, Nebraska
Programming VP	Dana Anderson, Minnesota
Secretary	Terri Hebda, Illinois
Treasurer	Lisa Clark, Illinois

Ambassador President was Cathy Shuman from Minnesota. The following were recognized as Ambassadors this year: Sharon Robinson MN, Deborah Stein PA, and Sandra Melton MO.

President Kayla and various staff members visited 11 out of 14 states. The overall reported donated monies throughout the organization were just over \$511,000.00 with over 40,000 reported service hours. It is clear that the United States Women of Today impact our communities greatly. Each members Believes in what we can do to make the world a better place. The United States Women of Today is moving into the future with renewed energy. There are exciting changes in the wind to ensure the future of our organization for generations to come. "For if we always do what we have always done, we will always get what we have always got." BELIEVE!

## **2008 - 2009**

### **Janet Esper, President**

Janet E. Esper from Springfield, Illinois served as the 2008-2009 United States Women of Today President. Janet's theme was "New Dreams - New Vision - New Stars" and her logo was an angel in flight holding a star with a smaller stars around her.

Staff members were: Membership VP, Kim Troudt (NE); Programming VP, Dana Anderson (MN); Secretary, Terri Hebda (IL); Treasurer, Lisa Clark (IL); Parliamentarian, Cindy Umland (MN); and Chairman of the Board, Kayla Hermann (MN). Serving as Program Managers were Personal Enrichment, Louise Orem (MA); Focus on Women/Chaplain, Marcia Allison (MA); S.T.E.P., Vickie Vitalie (NJ); External Program Domestic Violence, Sue Dionne (WI). Directors were: Public Relations, Penny Bussell (IA), and Extensions, Deborah Stein (PA). Presidential Assistants were Allison Howard and Thelma Carnduff (IL).

Mid-Year meeting was held in October with the Nebraska Women of Today hosting. Chairing the event was Jan Maaske, Terri Sherman, and Angela Moody. We celebrated with them as they asked "Did you say the "F" Word". The event was held in Omaha, NE and was fun, fantastic, and full of football. Presidential Award of Programming Excellence was presented to Marcia Allison - Focus on Women/Chaplain (MA) and the Presidential Award of Excellence was awarded to Lisa Clark -Treasurer (IL).

National Convention was held in Kansas City, Missouri. The theme was "Celebrate the Holidays in Missouri." Chairmen for the event were Carmella Mongold, Laura Morris and Nancy Asher. Presidential Pins and Medallions were awarded as well as the following awards: Outstanding National Officer - Lisa Clark, Treasurer (IL); Outstanding Staff Member - Deborah Stein, Extensions Director (PA); Presidential



Award of Excellence - Kim Troudt, Membership VP (NE); Programming Award of Excellence - Deborah Stein, Extensions Director (PA); Outstanding Service Award to Allison Howard and Thelma Carnduff, Presidential Assistants (IL). Also awarded were 25 Outstanding Local Officers, 25 Outstanding State Officers and 5 Outstanding State Presidents: Michele Thompson - Iowa, Sarah Gafkjen - Minnesota, Maxine Turner - Nebraska, Pat Rhein - New Jersey and Terry Pronko - Pennsylvania.

Although we did not meet our goal for growth this year, the efforts by the staff and state presidents resulted in many other accomplishments. We ended the year with 2,542 members, 143 chapters in 13 states, 638 new members, 1,892 members renewed giving us a total of 69% retention. We also extended our organization into 5 communities. Welcome Crookston Women of Today (MN), St. Joseph Women of Today (MN), Waconia Area Women of Today (MN) Monarch Women of Today (NE) and North Jersey Women of Today (NJ). Achievement in Programming and 38 total Project Recognition submissions. We had 989 Personal Enrichment certifications, 179 Focus on Women certifications, 105 Chaplain certifications and 139 S.T.E.P. certifications. We raised \$2,751.93 for our year-end Buckets of Sunshine, Wonderland Camp in Missouri. Our national service area brought in \$22,172.62 for Domestic Violence Awareness. The total money donated this year was \$372,960 with 20,582 service hours from 44 chapters. The "Angela Among Us" award was given to 53 deserving individuals, businesses and organizations. There were 3 All-American Chapters.

Janet and members of her staff traveled to 12 of the 14 states - logging over 50,000 miles. Two national retreats were held with summer retreat being held in Springfield, Illinois, where some members found that "necklace" everyone is wearing. Winter retreat was in Shawano, Wisconsin and the staff participated in the Bowl-a-thon for the Domestic Abuse Center - Safe Haven. The national staff raised \$1,700 for the fundraiser.

Ambassador President was Brenda Almoney from Pennsylvania. The following members were recognized as new U.S. Ambassadors: Mary Zurn - Minnesota, Jill Kirschner - Minnesota, Vickie Vitalie - New Jersey, and Janet Esper - Illinois.

The United States President's Volunteer Service Award was presented to Janet Esper - Illinois and Kayla Hermann - Minnesota, from United States President Barack Obama.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Sue Dionne, Wisconsin
Membership VP	Brenda Schramm, Minnesota
Programming VP	Joyce Harpster, Nebraska
Secretary	Deborah Stein, Pennsylvania
Treasurer	Dana Anderson, Minnesota

Also serving in 2009- 2010 are: Janet Esper, Chariman of the Board (IL); Directors: Stacy Coughlin, Extensions Director (ND); and Debbie Funsch, Public Relations Director (IL); Program Managers: Cindy Umland - Focus on Women/ Chaplain (MN), Kim Troudt, STEP (NE), Kathy Simmons, Domestic Violence Awareness (MA) and Pat Fern, Personal Enrichment (ND). Also serving are: Sarah Gafkjen, Parliamentarian (MN), Kayla Hermann, Presidential Assistant (MN) and Simon Curry, Webmaster (MA).

As with Martin Luther King, Abraham Lincoln and Neal Armstrong - I had a Dream, I had a Vision and I went to the Stars. I was blessed with "Angels Among Us" and the Past National Presidents for being "The Wind Beneath My Wings." The angels Dream made a beautiful Vision and illuminated the power of our Vision from the Stars.

## **2009 - 2010**

### **Sue "Hinky" Dionne, President**

Sue "Hinky" Dionne from Shawano, Wisconsin served as the 2009- 2010 United States Women of Today President. Her theme was "Together We Make a Difference" using the World with People around it as her logo.

President Sue would like to introduce to you the Greatest Staff ever that served with her: Membership VP, Brenda Schramm (MN); Programming VP, Joyce Harpster (NE); Secretary, Deborah Stein (PA); Treasurer, Dana Anderson (MN); Parliamentarian, Sarah Gafkjen (MN); Chairman of the Board, Janet Esper (IL). Serving as Program Managers were: FOW/ Chaplain, Cindy Umland (MN); Personal Enrichment, Pat Fern (ND); S.T.E.P., Kim Troudt (NE); Domestic Violence, Kathy Simmons (MA); Directors were: Extensions, Stacy Coughlin (ND) and Public Relations, Debbie Funsch (IL). Presidential Assistant was Kayla Hermann (MN) and Webmaster, Simon Curry (MA).

This year we switched from quarters to trimesters giving membership a challenging new twist. We began our year with 2548 members in 13 states. Member States included: Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Wisconsin. During the year, we added one new chapter, Eagan, MN, extended by District 10 (Burnsville, Lakeville, Richfield). We signed a total of 685 new members and 1850 members renewed achieving 72% retention. The year-end membership was 2496, ending with 136 chapters in 12 states. We lost the state of Ohio this year.

Promoting positive communication was a goal of the entire National Staff this year. This was promoted with Monthly newsletters to Staff and State Presidents. A new formatted bi-monthly Today's Leader was sent via email. Two All Chapter Mailings were sent to each chapter. One was sent in August promoting Mid-Year Convention and one in April promoting Annual Convention. Postcards were sent to each new member that signed and encouragement letters were included in the dues billings that were shared with the members up for renewal. Regular phone calls and emails were sent as needed to the Board of Directors. The National Staff also promoted positive communication through their newsletters each trimester. It was a goal to filter our information all the way down to the local chapter members so they were kept informed of the happenings in our organization.

Our Committee Chairs worked via email with their committees before the conventions so they were able to accomplish more when they came together. This brought out very good discussion and the members were caught up with the times when they came to convention.

Summer Staff Retreat was held in Eagan, MN. 13 Staff Members were present and the other two joined us via skype. We had training on Communication and Motivation presented by Pat Branstad. We worked to develop the schedule for the Mid-Year Meeting and Sarah

Gafkjen presented 212 Degrees Presentation to encourage Staff to give one more degree. These motivational trainings helped prepare the National Staff for an exciting year. Recognizing the need to add more training to our organization, we scheduled an All Officer Training to be held at Mid-Year.

Mid-Year was held in Nebraska City, NE. 56 members from 11 states attended Arbor Day in Nebraska City. President Sue and PVP Joyce Harpster were fortunate enough to join the local radio station for a talk show to discuss the Women of Today organization and our purpose and mission. We offered All Officer Training for local and state officers. We also offered forums on Facebook by Brenda Schramm and Just do It! a motivational forum presented by Anne Johnson. Presidential Awards were presented to members across the nation. The Programming Award of Excellence was awarded to FOW/Chaplain Program Manager, Cindy Umland. The Presidential Award of Excellence was awarded to Membership Vice President, Brenda Schramm. Asking the members of the USWT to rededicate themselves and renew their enthusiasm to the organization we held a Renewal Ceremony during our banquet which added a special touch to the evening.

Winter Staff Retreat was held in Shawano, WI with 13 Staff Members in attendance. We visited Safe Haven, the domestic abuse shelter, and participated in the "Spare the Violence" Bowl-a-thon. The USWT STaff raised over \$2,100 for the fundraiser. The Staff was pampered with massages, facials and pedicures. Much of the weekend was spent preparing the schedule for Annual Convention. We once again trained our own with Brenda Schramm presenting "Live Out Loud" a presentation on being positive and Hinky presented a "Strong Finish" program to get Staff geared up for the last 6 weeks of the year. After our fellowship service, the evening was topped off with Humstrum 101!!

Year-End was hosted by the MNWT in Rochester, MN. 96 members from 10 states were in attendance. It was also our 25th Anniversary Celebration 20 of the 25 National Presidents were in attendance which was amazing! An Anniversary Program hearing from each of those Presidents as well as 5 charter members was held at the luncheon. Laughter Yoga was presented at the luncheon as well which got the members excited to receive their awards. Our Buckets of Sunshine recipient was the Gift of Life Transplant House in Rochester to which we donated \$13,936. We offered a Motivational Forum to the Membership as well as State President Training. Committees met and made great progress. The vote was passed on the Programming Restructure which will go into effect in 2011.

In the Programming area, we had 63 Project Recognitions submissions and 25 members received their Outstanding Achievement in Programming. We had 840 Personal Enrichment Certifications and 124 S.T.E.P. certifications. The total certifications for FOW/Chaplain area were 1, 100.

Presidential Awards were given to local and state members and officers who showed outstanding leadership and dedication. The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to External Program Manager, Kathy Simmons and the Presidential Award of Excellence was presented to Joyce Harpster, Programming Vice President. Outstanding National Officers were Secretary, Deborah Stein and Membership Vice President, Brenda Schramm. Outstanding Staff Member was FOW/Chaplain, Cindy Umland. Three Outstanding State Presidents were recognized: Cindy Urlacher, NE, Jen Kinzer, MN and Stacy Coughlin, ND. 25 Outstanding State and 25 Outstanding Local Officers were recognized. 8 chapters were recognized with the All American Chapter recognition.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Deborah Stein
Membership VP	Sarah Gafkjen
Programming VP	Cindy Umland
Secretary	Stacy Coughlin
Treasurer	Maxine Turner

Ambassador President was Brenda Almoney from Pennsylvania. The following were recognized as Ambassadors in 2009-10: Bonnie Olmanson, MN; Rebecca Flemming, MA; Stacy Coughlin, ND; Lisa Clark, IL and Louise Orem, MA.

President Sue and her staff members visited all 12 states this year logging over 108,000 miles sharing Training, Unity and FUN!! The overall reported money raised was \$262,009.22 with over 10,693 service hours. We raised \$23,459.43 for our External Priority, Domestic Violence Awareness, with 100% state participation.

This year President Sue asked the members to Rededicate themselves to the USWT and Renew the Enthusiasm our Organization once had. Promoting the importance of FUN, we have seen an increase in Motivation and Enthusiasm!! We need to share Positive Energy as we promote our organization and offer the Woman of Today opportunity to everyone along the way. We have seen the impact of our organization in the communities across the nation. If we continue to work Together we can ensure a strong future for our organization and build a better world for the next generation!! With all the accomplishments we celebrated during the 2009-2010 year, it was very obvious..."Together We Make a Difference"!!

## **2010 - 2011**

### **Deborah L. Stein, President**

Deborah Stein from York, Pennsylvania served as the 2010-2011 President of the United States Women of Today. Her theme was "New Directions" using a Diamond as her logo

Helping President Deb with her incredible year were the following staff members: Chairman of the Board, Sue "Hinky" Dionne (WI); Membership Vice President, Sarah Gafkjen (MN); Programming Vice President, Cindy Umland (MN); Secretary, Stacy Coughlin (ND); Treasurer, Maxine Turner (NE); and Parliamentarian, Marcia Allison (MA). Serving as Program Managers were: Focus on Women/Chaplain, Pat Fern (ND); Personal Enrichment, Kathy Simmons (MA); S.T.E.P., Chellie Funsch (IL); and Domestic Violence Awareness, Debbie Funsch (IL). Serving as Directors were: Extensions, Brenda Schramm (MN) and Public Relations, Judy Herrala (MN), Simon Curry (MA) served as Webmaster and Beverly Grove (PA, Deb's sister) and Angie Elfner (PA) were Presidential Assistants.

Key goals for President Deb and her staff this year were: Membership Growth, Completion of the Programming Restructuring, Utilization of new communication services to enhance your communication across all levels of the organization.

To ensure a fast start for her staff and the organization, Summer Staff Retreat was held in July in York, PA. 9 staff members were able to attend in person and 1 attended via Skype. Much of our time was devoted to finalizing the certification forms for the new programming area as well as planning an exciting/educational Mid-Year Meeting. It was also decided to start utilizing GoToMeetings to hold Staff Meetings, Committee Meetings and President to President meetings throughout the year.

Our Mid-Year Meeting was held October 1 - 3, 2010 in Des Moines, Iowa. The Iowa Women of Today, with Michele Thompson chairing, hosted 47 members from 9 states to a "Family Reunion." It was the first time to have an impromptu speaking competition, which turned out to be a huge success. In honor of October being Breast Cancer and Domestic Violence Awareness month, two activities were provided by President Deb. One was scarf stamping and the other was "Bust Your Bust." Members were asked to donate \$.10 per inch of their breast measurement. Needless to say, members walked away with some lovely scarves and \$247 was raised for Breast Cancer Awareness which was matched by President Deb for Domestic Violence Awareness. The new and improved Programming Area was finally unveiled and received rave reviews. Numerous Programming, Membership and Presidential awards were presented to members across the nation. The Programming Award of Excellence was awarded to Chellie Funsch, S.T.E.P. Program Manager, and the Presidential Award of Excellence was awarded to Stacy Coughlin, Secretary and Cindy Umland, Programming Vice President.

The Winter Staff Retreat was held in March in Shawano, WI with 12 staff members in attendance. Once again the USWT Staff participated in the "Spare the Violence" Bowl-a-thon benefiting Safe Haven, a domestic abuse shelter in Shawano, raising over \$1000. Much of the weekend was spent preparing the schedule for Annual Convention as well as finalizing the manuals for the new and improved programming area.

Year-End Convention was held June 9 -12, 2011 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Women of Today, with Terry Pronko and Cindy Hilbert co-chairing, hosted 61 members from 10 states to the "Gateway to the West." To kick the weekend off, members in attendance were able to enjoy a relaxing two hour boat ride along Pittsburgh's three rivers: the Ohio River, the Allegheny River and the Monongahela River.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Pat Fern
Membership VP	Debbie Funsch
Programming VP	Chellie Funsch

Our Buckets of Sunshine recipient was Gilda's House in Western Pittsburgh to which we donated \$1500. Numerous Programming, Membership and Presidential awards were presented to members across the nation. The Programming Award of Excellence was awarded to Brenda Schramm, Extensions Director and Debbie Funsch, Domestic Violence Awareness Program Manager, and the Presidential Award of Excellence was awarded to Sarah Gafkjen, Membership Vice President. The Outstanding Staff Member for the Year was awarded to Chellie Funsch, S.T.E.P. Program Manager and the Outstanding Officer for the Year was awarded to Cindy Umland, Programming Vice President. To recognize those individuals and businesses outside our organization that support us, 75 "Precious Gem Awards" were awarded. 25 Outstanding State and 25 Outstanding Local Officers were recognized. 7 chapters were recognized with the All American Chapter recognition. Five Outstanding State Presidents were recognized: Lucy Kelliher (MA), Anne Johnson (MN), Midge DeLisi (MO), Laura Wachter (NE) and Vicki Jo Smith (PA).

Although we did not meet our goal of growth for the year, we still welcomed 572 members and 5 new chapters into our Women of Today family. Welcome Savage Area (MN), Andover (MN), Hibbing (MN), Woodbury (MN) and Greater Bridgewater (MA). Our base membership was 2482 members in 135 chapters in 12 states. We had 42 chapters achieve year-end growth, and 12 chapters achieved 100% retention for the year. Brainerd Lakes Area and Melrose Area (MN) were GOLD chapters for the year, and Havana (IL) was a double-up chapter. Our ending membership figures were 2399 members in 131 chapters in 12 states. As a token of appreciation, President Deb sent a postcard to each and every member throughout the year thanking them for their dedication and commitment to the organization.

This was the last year for the Programming Area that we all came to know and love. 40 Project Recognitions from 8 states were submitted for year-end competition and 37 members from 6 states received their Outstanding Achievement in Programming. 217 members from 11 states certified in Focus on Women and 238 members from 10 states certified in the Chaplain Area. One member entered the Focus on Women Essay Contest, 5 members entered the God in My Life Essay Contest and 9 members entered the Poetry Contest. 377 members certified in Personal Enrichment with 54 of them certifying in all five areas for a total of 919 certifications! In the S.T.E.P. area, 32 members certified in S.T.E.P. I, 5 in S.T.E.P. II, and 57 certified in S.T.E.P. III for a total of 94 certifications. For Domestic Violence Awareness, 34 chapters from 10 states sent in transmittals totaling \$46,701.24 and 1044 hours. In other donations reported by 18 chapters in 9 states, we raised \$53,412.12 and had 2585 service hours.

President Deb and her Staff were fortunate enough to visit all 12 member states this year, including a visit with the President of Cyprus Women of Today while visiting Michigan. The memories created and the friendships formed will forever be remembered.

Ambassador President was Michele Thompson. The following members were recognized as Ambassadors in 2010-2011: Sarah Gafkjen (MN), Ruth Ann Weirich (PA) and Vicki Jo Smith (PA).

May 1, 2001 launched our new and improved Programming Area which now included the following new areas: Health and Wellness, Personal Development (which now included STEP) and Domestic Violence Awareness (now our permanent and only external area.) Project Recognition and Outstanding Achievement in Programming remained basically untouched, but new to the STEP area was a 4th level for our more vested members. It was our hope that the new areas would once again spark enthusiasm in programming and members

would want to start certifying again. A project that started over 5 years ago was finally completed. It was not an easy task, but one that was well worth the time and energy.

As you can see, this year was definitely the year of "New Directions". But had it not been for the use of GoToMeetings throughout the year, much of what was accomplished may not have occurred. Over 30 GoToMeetings were held throughout the year. Much of the new programming area was completed via these meetings. Communications was greatly improved among the Staff and State Presidents. Issues could be addressed and dealt with in a much more timely fashion. State Presidents were able to get advice from other State Presidents whom they might only see at National Meetings. Plus, committee meetings were able to meet outside of National Meetings and get things accomplished. It was a learning curve for all of us, but a technology that turned out to be priceless!

The pride, love and duty that I feel for this organization is something that words cannot explain. Thank you for the opportunity, the wisdom and the belief in me to serve as the 26th President of the United States Women of Today. I leave you with this quote by Karen Kaiser Clark - "Life is change. Growth is optional. Choose wisely."

## **2011 - 2012**

### **Pat Fern, President**

In 2011-2012 the United States Women of Today was led by Pat Fern from Stanley, ND with the theme of "Building our Future" and the logo of two people putting together two pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Serving with Pat were Membership Vice President Debbie Funsch, Illinois, Programming Vice President Chellie Funsch, Illinois, Secretary Sue Beattie, Massachusetts, Treasurer Cindy Urlacher, Nebraska, Parliamentarian Maxine Turner, Nebraska, Chairman of the Board Deborah Stein, Pennsylvania, Directors Kathy Mueller, New Jersey, Public Relations, Judy Herrala, Minnesota, Extensions and Programming Program Managers Laura Wachter, Nebraska, Domestic Violence Awareness, Angie Dietz, Iowa, Personal Development and Tracey Pierson, Iowa, Health and Wellness and Simon Curry, Massachusetts, Webmaster and Presidential Assistants Stacy Coughlin and Edith Smith, North Dakota.

This was the first year with the new Programming Areas of Health and Wellness and Personal Development. The STEP Program added STEP IV for those members of over 5 years. STEP Competitions were dropped. The former programming areas were absorbed into the two new areas. Domestic Violence Awareness continued as the permanent External programming area. The Donation Summary became Community Connections. The criteria and judging sheets for Project Recognition were updated as was the Outstanding Achievement in Programming. STEP, Community Connections, Project Recognition and the OAP are now the responsibility of the PVP. All the new areas were well received as can be seen in the number of certifications listed below. Membership and retention were the focus as was how to get more members at the convention in order to promote another very important aspect of Women of Today, training. National Staff was given an incentive to attend state conventions and share their expertise with the states. Communication was also stressed throughout the year.

Summer Retreat was held in Bloomington, Minnesota in August. Activities included planning the year and for Mid-Year Convention, making cards for servicemen as part of the Project Recognition challenge, learning more about each other in a getting to know you game, fun and fellowship and a trip to the Mall of America. Several staff members went through the water life display and watched as the fish swam over our heads! It was a relaxing weekend with 9 staff members attending in person and one by Skype. We accomplished a lot that weekend.

Mid-Year was hosted by the North Dakota Women of Today in the capitol city of Bismarck. Thirty four members from 10 states attended. There were 11 first timers. Winner with the most signatures was Sarah Smith, North Dakota. The staff cooked and served supper at the Ruth Meiers Hospitality House Men's Homeless Shelter. Spaghetti cooking will never be the same! Ruth Meiers Hospitality House Battered Women's Shelter was presented with 100 tie blankets made by members from 6 states and by national staff members. After the tour of the facility and learning bedding was always needed, a collection was taken and they were also presented with several pillows and sheet sets. In addition to membership and programming forums, members participated in a pumpkin decorating contest, learned how to decorate cakes, and tried their luck at several stations for team building exercises. Thirty five members from 6 states received a Presidential Pin. Eleven chapters were presented certificates for Project Recognition reports. Twenty four members from 6 states certified in Personal Development and 34 members from 6 states certified in Health and Wellness. Outstanding State Presidents for 1st trimester were Donna Friedman, Missouri, Janet Esper, Illinois and Kim Hermann, Nebraska. Presidential Awards of Excellence for 1st trimester were Chellie Funsch, PVP and Judy Herrala, Extensions Director.

Winter retreat in March found 9 staff members back in Bloomington, MN. Planning Year End Convention was the hot topic of conversation. Manual review and Marketing strategies were also highly discussed. We talked again about how to get more members to attend the conventions. Offering more training and more activities were some of the suggestions during the brain storming session. Once again good food beckoned and we ended up at the Mall of America. The Women of Today name was put out there when once again the "pink ladies" were approached by several people wanting to learn more about the organization. Several staff members were going to take in the Princess Diana display.

President Pat and her sidekick Betty Stewart were able to visit all 12 states logging close to 50,000 miles each. Pat also got to Skype with the Cypress Women of Today during her visit to Minnesota thanks to Sue Ellen Toppings. Both Pat and Betty enjoyed the visits to the states learning how other organizations operate and taking much knowledge back to the North Dakota Women of Today and project ideas back to their local chapter. The highlight of course was meeting so many people and making so many new friends. This was a year to remember.

Ambassador President Janet Esper awarded 4 Ambassadors this year. They include Connie Lundbeck, Iowa, Jen Kinzer, Minnesota, Cindy Umland, Minnesota and Cindy Urlacher, Nebraska.

Nebraska Women of Today invited all of us to "Putting on the Ritz" in Fremont, Nebraska. Forty members from 10 states attended Year End Convention. The Buckets of Sunshine recipient was Crises Center in Fremont. We toured the facility and learned a lot more

about Domestic Violence. We learned the answer to "Who Moved my Cheese?", learned the right way to do dues billing, and some real and concrete suggestions on membership and programming and ways for women to protect themselves. The dues billing was taped and will be made available to all chapters and states.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Maxine Turner, Nebraska
Membership VP	Cindy Urlacher, Nebraska
Programming VP	Judy Herrala, Minnesota
Secretary	Angelina Dietz, Iowa
Treasurer	Sue Beattie, Massachusetts

Outstanding State Presidents were recognized for 2nd and 3rd trimester. Presidential Awards of Excellence for 2nd trimester were Angie Dietz, Personal Development PM and Debbie Funsch, MVP and for 3rd trimester Kathy Mueller, PR and Sue Beattie, Secretary. Sixty six "World Class Builder" recognitions were given to supporters of Women of Today in 5 states. Six chapters in 2 states received the All American Chapter recognition. PVP recognized 23 Project Recognition entries. Effective Writing had 7 entries with Diane Stanaway, New Jersey receiving top honors. There were 230 Personal Development certifications from 10 states and 300 Health and Wellness certifications from 9 states. STEP certifications included 27 STEP I, 9 STEP II, 13 STEP III and 20 STEP IV. Total monies raised for Domestic Violence Awareness was 33,368.71, 22 educational programs given and 777 hours of in kind services. \$132,912.19 with 15,099 in kind hours were reported for Community Connections. Buckets of Sunshine totals were \$11,065. Thirty six members from 6 states were recognized with the Outstanding Achievement in Programming.

One of the goals for this year was to get a good handle on just how many members there are in the United States Women of Today. MVP Debbie Funsch worked diligently to make that happen. Base membership was 2399. We ended the year with 2238 members. We had 498 new members, 1722 renewals for 72%. New member adds totaled 489. Seven extensions were filed with 1 being completed. Welcome to the Central New Jersey Women of Today. Final statistics are 2239 members in 125 chapters in 12 states for a 160 member loss. The states ending at growth were Illinois, Massachusetts, Nebraska and South Dakota. Other membership notables were 1 triple up chapter, 1 Once a Month chapter and 1 Year End Gold Chapter.

Sixty two Presidential Pins from 11 states were presented. Twenty Outstanding Local Officers from 10 states and 20 Outstanding State Officers from 9 states were recognized. Outstanding State Presidents for the Year were Donna Friedman, Missouri, Luc Kelliher, Massachusetts and Cindy Sanders, Minnesota. Outstanding National Officers were Chellie Funsch, Illinois, Programming Vice President and Judy Herrala, Minnesota, Extensions Director.

2011 – 2012 was an amazing year, not only for me but for our organization. We began moving in New Directions the year before and we will be Reaching for the Stars this coming year. What a wonderful organization we have! What an amazing group of people make up this organization. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for allowing me the opportunity to serve you as President. It was a year of learning, growing, making new friends, and just an unbelievable 12 months. AND no matter what other presidents say, I had the GREATEST STAFF EVER! One thought to leave you with: Remember, a smile can change a life, share yours freely.

## **2012-2013**

### **Maxine Turner, President**

Maxine Turner from Fremont, Nebraska served as 2012-2013 President of the United States Women of Today. Her theme was "Reach for the Stars" using a Star as her logo.

The Executive Committee included: Cindy Urlacher, Nebraska, Membership Vice President; Judy Herrala, Minnesota, Programming Vice President; Angelina Dietz, Iowa, Secretary; Sue Beattie, Massachusetts, Treasurer; Pat Fern, North Dakota, Chairman of the Board and Pat Rhien, New Jersey, Parliamentarian. Serving as Directors were Laura Wachter, Nebraska, Extensions and Diana Fraundorfer, New Jersey, Public Relations. Serving as Programs Managers were Lucy Kelliher, Massachusetts, Health & Wellness; Joyce Harpster, Nebraska, Personal Development; Diane Stanaway, New Jersey, Domestic Violence Awareness; and Julie Fogleman and Terri Sherman, from Nebraska served as Presidential Assistants.

Goals for this year were Membership Growth, Communication and Training for state and local members.

Summer Retreat was held in July in Fremont, NE. Seven staff members were able to attend in person. Much of our time was devoted to finalizing the Mid-Year Agenda, as we wanted an exciting/educational Mid-Year Meeting.

Mid-Year Meeting was held the full weekend in October with the Springfield Women of Today hosting, Chellie and Debbie Funsch as co-chairman. We traveled to Illinois for a "Star Studded Weekend". There were 39 members in attendance from 10 states. Our National Officers held a Project Fair promoting their areas this weekend and we also served supper at a Ronald McDonald house for our Mid-Year project. We held 5 forums this weekend for our members. The Presidential Award of Excellence was presented to Judy Herrala, Programming Vice President and Joyce Harpster, Personal Development Program Manager.

The Winter Staff Retreat was held in January in Lancaster County in PA. Seven staff members were able to attend in person. Much of our time was devoted to finalizing the Annual Convention Agenda, as we again wanted an exciting/educational Annual Meeting.

Eleven states were visited by President Maxine or National Staff members for motivation and training.

The year began with 2255 members and 120 chapters in 12 states and ended with 2133 members and 108 chapters in 12 states. Member states included: Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Wisconsin. During the 2012-2013 year, 465 new members were recruited, one extension completed and the U. S. Women of Today had 80% retention. There were 14 chapters from 7 states with 100% retention and 42 chapters from 12 states were at growth. The 4 states that experienced growth for the year were: Illinois, Nebraska, Pennsylvania and South Dakota.

In the area of programming, there was a total of \$563,089 and 22,646 hours reported for external fund-raising.

We recognized 24 members for Outstanding Achievement in Programming and there were 22 entries for the year in the area of Project Recognition. There were 302 Personal Enrichment certifications with 2 competitors in Speaking and 8 competitors in Writing. STEP certifications included 31 STEP I, 12 STEP II, 20 STEP III, and 19 STEP IV, total of 85. Health and Wellness 10 states participated with 220 certifications. Our members raised \$19,128.48 with ten states participating in the Domestic Violence Awareness area.

With an emphasis on communication, six bi-monthly "Today's Leader" newsletters were sent out and six bi-monthly "The Galaxy's" were sent out to the Board of Directors. Nine editions of "The Shooting Star" newsletter was emailed out to the staff.

Janet Esper served as Ambassador President and helped welcome new Ambassadors Anne Johnson, MN; Becky Goetsch, IL; Anneliese (Schmidt) Flourney, ND and Angie Dietz, IA.

Debbie Funsch served as U S Founders President. The U. S. Founders Charities generously donated \$518.00 that was used for Go To Meeting and Speaker. A scholarship was presented to Nicole Jones of Iowa.

Annual Meeting was held in Fremont, NE where "Reach for the Stars" year came together. Co-chairman Julie Fogleman and Terri Sherman reported that 54 members from 10 states were in attendance. Officer Training was introduced for State and Chapter officers. We also held 5 forums this weekend for our members.

Elections were held and the following will be serving the USWT in the coming year:

President Cindy Urlacher, Nebraska

Membership VP Judy Herral, Minnesota

Our Buckets of Sunshine recipient was Crisis Center for Domestic Abuse/Sexual Assault in Fremont, NE to which we donated \$628.66.

Throughout the year 92 Presidential Pins were presented to members from all of our states. Twenty –six Presidential Medallions were presented to Board of Director members, along with one to Past National Presidents in attendance at Mid-Year Meeting, Annual Convention and through president's travels. The Programming Award of Excellence for second trimester was presented to Angie Dietz, Secretary and Laura Wachter, Extensions Director. The Programming award of Excellence for third trimester was presented to Cindy Urlacher, Membership Vice President and Diana Fraundorfer, Public Relations Director. Ten All American Chapters were recognized. The Outstanding Executive Committee member was presented to Judy Herral, Programming Vice President and Outstanding Staff Member was presented to Joyce Harpster, Personal Development Program Manager. Three Outstanding State Presidents were honored: Nicky Anderson, Minnesota; Becky Goetsch, Illinois and Terri Danner, Missouri. Sixteen members were recognized as Outstanding Local Officers and twenty members were recognized as Outstanding State Officers.

President Maxine had three membership challenges out there for our members, chapters and states. Seventeen members were recognized for completing the Three Member Recruiter Challenge. She also challenged the chapters to be at Base +6 and 80% Retention at year end, there were six chapters recognized for completing this challenge. She had challenged the states to be at Base +5 and 80% Retention at year, there were no states that completed this challenge.

## **2013-2014**

### **Cindy Urlacher, President**

Cindy Urlacher from Omaha, Nebraska served as 2013-2014 President of the United States Women of Today. Her theme was "Reflecting Commitments" using an angel with an American flag for her logo.

Her Awesome staff included Chairman of the Board Maxine Turner (NE); Membership Vice President Judy Herral (MN); Secretary Laura Wachter (NE);

Programming Vice president Mary Wright (SD); Treasurer Michelle Crandall (MN)

Parliamentarian Angelina Dietz (IA); Extensions Director Becky Goetsch (IL); Public Relations Director Julie Fogleman (NE); Personal Development Program Manager

Joyce Harpster (NE); Health and Wellness Program Manager Sarah Smith (ND); Domestic Violence Awareness Program Manager Kandy Dorlack (MN); and serving as Presidential Assistants Jessica Urlacher (Ne) and Cindy Umland (MN).

To start our year we had Summer Retreat in Missouri with 9 staff members that were able to attend. Much of the weekend was devoted to working on the agenda for a successful mid-year meeting.

Mid-year was held in October hosted by Duluth Minnesota, Cindy Sanders as chairman. Theme for the weekend was fall in love with Minnesota. There were 52 members in attendance from 9 states. National Officers held a Project fair and promoted there areas of what they were doing for the year and the national staff participated in a skit at the Friday night party. We also participated in a service project, playing Bingo at the assistant living home and I had the honors on calling the bingo numbers. WE held four forums for the membership. Presidential Pins and The Medallion was presented. The Award of excellence was presented to Judy Herral, Membership Vice President and Kandy Dorlack, Domestic violence Awareness Program Manager.

Winter Retreat was held at the Mahoney State Park in Nebraska and 8 staff member's attended and 1 skyped in. The weekend was all about making the Year End National Convention one that no one forgot.

Membership was one of our goals to grow, but we fell short of this goal. We started the year with 2135 and ended with the year as 1985. Ended the year with 75% retention and with 12 States and 112 chapters. We recruited 373 new members for 2013-2014 year.

In the area of programming we ended with 253 Personal Developments certifications and 70 step certifications. We have received 29 outstanding achievements in programming, 31 project recognitions from 3 states. Hours worked were 21,073.50 and raised \$294,473.87 from 10 states in the External fund raising.

Year End Convention was held in Wisconsin hosted by the Shawano women of today. With 75 members attended from 11 states. With the theme of Celebrating Country Style. We held officer training for the incoming state Presidents and held four forums for the membership.

Elections were held and the following will be serving 2014-2015 year

President	Judy Herrala, Minnesota
Membership VP	Nicky Anderson, Minnesota
Secretary	Jane Hanson
Programming VP	Joyce Harpster
Treasurer	Barb Wigell

Our year end buckets of sunshine were for the Safe Haven and we raised \$1497.36.

Held our year end Banquet and Presidential Pins and Medallions were presented. Had 9 all American chapters. Many reflector Awards were presented to individuals and companies that have helped assist with chapters and States. Award of Excellence for 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester was presented to Sarah Smith, Health and Wellness Program Manager; Mary Wright, Programming Vice President; Laura Watcher, Secretary. Award of Excellence for third trimester was presented to Maxine Turner, Chairman of the Board; Becky Goetsch, Extensions Program Manager; Julie Fogleman, Public Relations Director. 20 outstanding Local Officers, 16 Outstanding State Officers. 3 Outstanding state Presidents were presented to Joyce Harpster, NE; Vicki Rockwell, MN; and Linda Gates, PA. Outstanding Executive Board Member was presented to Judy Herrala, Membership Vice President and outstanding staff member was presented to Joyce Harpster, Personal Development Program Manager.

Many challenges were throughout the year and for August the challenge was for members to recruit 47 members for President Cindy's birthday and we recruited 65 members which President Cindy and her staff wore rainbow tutus at Mid-Year Convention. Public Relations are an area that we need to focus on as well and am proud of our states and chapters for raising \$5203.15 with 181 hours. I want to thank all the states and chapters and to my awesome staff for a great year and keep on Reflecting Commitments.

## 2014-2015

### Judy Herrala, President

Judy Herrala from Nowthen, Minnesota served as the 2014-2015 President of the United States Women of Today. Here theme was "Soaring to New Opportunities" and she used a hot air balloon as her logo.

Judy's staff included: Chairman of the Board, Cindy Urlacher (NE); Membership Vice President, Nicky Anderson (MN); Programming Vice President, Joyce Harpster (NE); Secretary, Jane Hanson (MN); Treasurer, Barb Wigell (IL), and Parliamentarian, Diana Fraundorfer (NJ). Serving as Directors were: Extensions, Wendy Lindberg (MN) and Public Relations, Becky Goetsch (IL). Serving as Program Managers were: Health and Wellness, Kandy Dorlack (MN); Personal Development, Cindy Umland (MN) and Domestic Violence Awareness, Laura Wachter (NE). Patsy Ajax (MN) served as Presidential Assistant.

Summer Retreat was held the first weekend in August in East Bethel, Minnesota at a craft retreat with 9 staff members attending. The weekend included some team building, leadership training, work on manuals, planning mid-year meeting and "the Friendship Ride," (a pontoon ride with the staff celebrating Friendship Day.) A lot was accomplished on this weekend.

Mid-year meeting was held October 3-5, 2014 in Clear Lake, Iowa, hosted by the Iowa Women of Today. The theme was "Come Join the Band." 60 members from 8 states attended this meeting. There were 6 First Timers in attendance. The staff worked a service project at Opportunity Village in Clear Lake Iowa at the Village General Store. Opportunity Village supports people with disabilities to find success at home, work and in their community. They were also able to take a tour of the facility and hear from recipients who use the services of Opportunity Village. There were four opportunities for enrichment at this meeting, there was a Membership Team Forum, Health and Wellness Forum, a communications forum and a Leadership Forum by the Training Team. Our national officers held a Project Fair promoting their areas. President Judy had challenged the staff to participate in an Ice Bucket Challenge for Domestic Violence Awareness. This was done late in the evening outside the hotel entrance with temperatures in the mid 30's. Six brave staff members and Judy's husband participated. The staff raised over \$275.00 in this challenge with the money given to the Domestic Violence agency of President Judy's choice. There were numerous membership, programming and presidential awards given to members across the nation. The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Cindy Umland, Personal Development Program Manager. The Presidential Award of Excellence was given to Joyce Harpster, Programming Vice President and Jane Hanson, Secretary.

The Winter Staff Retreat was held in Bloomington, Minnesota. 8 staff members attended. It was at this staff retreat where we planned Annual Convention. There was a long discussion about Go To Meetings and Communications. The staff went over to the Mall of America and had dinner.

President Judy, 2 staff members, and two others were able to travel to Wisconsin to participate in the Annual "Spare the Violence Bowl-a-thon" in March.

This year, the Marketing Committee worked hard to create a Public Service Video by putting out notice they were doing this and they asked all members/chapters to contribute a short video and then these would all be edited and a video created. This video was not complete at year end, but shortly after that, it was finished.

Annual Convention was held June 11-14, 2015 in Fargo, North Dakota. This convention was unique in that there was no bid for Annual Convention by any state/chapter. It was also the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the United States Women of Today. A communications forum was presented during the luncheon. There was a 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary program at the Banquet. At mid-year it was decided to put this convention together in such a way that all states would play a part in hosting or doing work for some part of it. The states agreed and many volunteered to host parts of the convention. Cindy Urlacher, President Judy and Terri Sherman were the co-leaders of this convention. 75 members from 10 states attended and "Celebrated 30 Powerful Years." The staff attended a tour of the

Cass Clay YWCA Women's Shelter which was the recipient of our Year-end Buckets of Sunshine donation. The donation was \$1,020.00 which was received from nine states.

There were many Programming, Membership and Presidential awards presented to members across the nation. The Programming Award of Excellence was awarded to Kandy Dorlack, Health and Wellness Program Manager and Becky Goetsch, Public Relations Director. The Presidential Award of Excellence was awarded to Joyce Harpster, Programming Vice President and Nicky Anderson, Membership Vice President. The Outstanding Staff Members for the year were: Becky Goetsch, Public Relations Director and Cindy Umland, Personal Development Program Manager. The Outstanding Officers for the year were: Nicky Anderson, Membership Vice President and Joyce Harpster, Programming Vice President. To recognize those businesses and community members who support our chapters, the "Above and Beyond" award was awarded to 70 chapters at Annual Convention. Total for the year were 140. 20 Outstanding State and 20 Outstanding Local Officers were recognized. There were ten chapters that received the All American Chapter recognition. Four Outstanding State Presidents were recognized: Barb Wigell (IL), Michele Thompson (IA), Deb Stein (PA), and Laura Gaylord (MN).

We did not meet our goal to grow in membership this year. We began the year with a membership base of 1984 members, 12 states and 112 chapters. Member states included: Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Wisconsin. We welcomed 349 new members this year, renewed 1,516 members and our retention was 76% for the year. We also welcomed three new chapters to the United States Women of Today. Welcome to: Lincoln Land (IL), Pawnee (IL), and Anacortes (WA). We also welcomed the state of Washington. 37 chapters achieved year end growth. 14 chapters achieved 100% retention for the year. There were three states with year end growth: North Dakota, Nebraska, Illinois. Our year end membership numbers are: 1880 members, 13 states and 113 chapters. There were some new membership events added this year with ideas which our chapters can use when they host events.

In the Programming area, there were 22 project recognition submissions this year, and 33 members received recognition for their Outstanding Achievement in Programming. There were 318 Personal Development certifications and 106 STEP certifications. Those were: STEP I=45, STEP II=5, STEP III=21, STEP IV – 35. There were 349 Health and Wellness certifications for the year. For Domestic Violence Awareness, the total dollar amount donated was \$14,779.91 and hours with a market value of \$2,797.42. The total amount of dollars and hours donated as reported on the Community Connections report for the year is: Dollars=\$644,004.14; Hours worked=20,619.90.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Joyce Harpster, NE
Membership VP	Cindy Umland, MN

President Judy and her staff were able to visit 10 states this year.

The Ambassador president was Deborah Stein (PA). The following were recognized as ambassadors in 2014-2015: Terri Hebda, Illinois and Nicky Anderson, Minnesota.

Communication was on President Judy's mind all year as she asked her staff to add articles to six Today's Leaders, six State President Newsletters from the entire staff, two all chapter mailings (one of which was a Training packet for our states, and membership and programming team newsletters each trimester. President Judy told her staff to take pride in all of the communications they are involved in with our states. The website continues to be talked about as a main form of communication to our states/chapters. Staff was encouraged to keep their webpage updated whenever there is new information in their area. The United States Women of Today did "Soar to New Opportunities" this year which will carry into our organization's future. The year began with a very tight budget and President Judy and her staff had new opportunities to make this work. They came up with new ways of doing things with less budget money. Hats off to our thirty years of existence and to our next thirty years. And a big thank you to the *Best Staff Ever* for your hard work. Thank you United States Women of Today, for your belief in me. Always remember, "The best way to predict our future is to create it." And that, we did.

## **2015-2016**

### **Joyce Harpster, President**

Joyce Harpster from Nebraska City, Nebraska served as the 2015-2016 President of the United States Women of Today. Her theme was "Lasting Connections" using a rainbow as her logo.

Serving with President Joyce were the following fabulous staff members: Chairman of the Board Judy Herrala (MN); Membership Vice President Cindy Umland (MN); Programming Vice President Kandy Dorlack (MN); Secretary Cathy Shuman (MN); Treasurer Carmella Mongold (MO); and Parliamentarian Angela Moody (NE). Serving as Program Managers were: Diane Hellman (ND) Health & Wellness; Julie Fogleman (NE) Personal Development; Becky Goetsch (IL) Domestic Violence Awareness and serving as Directors were: Laura Wachter (NE) Public Relations; and Nicky Anderson (MN) Extensions. Maxine Turner (NE) and Cindy Urlacher (NE) served as Presidential Assistants.

Goals for the year included:

Membership, Teamwork, Communication, Programming and Training.

Joyce began her year with 1880 members and 113 chapters.

Summer Retreat was held in Independence, MO at the home of Carmella Mongold with nine staff members in attendance. Planning for the Mid-Year meeting was the main emphasis for retreat with Leadership Training, Communication Training and Listening exercises included. There was also time for fun and learning more about each other.

The Mid Year meeting was held in Kanas City, MO October 2-4, 2015 with the theme "A Taste of Kansas City". There were 45 in attendance from 7 states and this included 3 First Timers. The staff worked on a service project with another organization at



Harvesters Food Bank. Staff and other Women of Today members worked on an assembly line with 685 snack bags prepared for school students to use on the weekends.

A panel of members was able to participate in a BBQ sauce contest at the Friday night party with KC Masterpiece voted as the favorite!

There were forums presented on Health & Wellness, PR and Recruiting and P (Programming) vs M (Membership) and The Others (Secretary, Treasurer, Parli, COB) was held in the place of a Project Fair with a fun way to educate members on the various areas. A Hoe Down/Show Down was also held with President Joyce and Membership Vice President Cindy using water guns against states qualifying in the Membership Challenge.

There were many awards presented in the Membership, Programming and other staff areas.

A 31 bag fundraiser was held in July and another 31 bag fundraiser will be held in the fall. It was decided to hold an annual 31 bag fundraiser to support the National Treasury.

The webmaster committee met and Chellie Funsch was awarded a new three-year contract to be the USWT webmaster.

A highlight of the Mid-Year meeting was GROWTH 1<sup>st</sup> trimester of +8 bringing the 1<sup>st</sup> trimester base to 1888!

The Presidential Award of Excellence was presented to Carmella Mongold, Treasurer and Angela Moody, Parliamentarian.

The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Becky Goetsch, DVA Program Manager.

Winter Staff Retreat was held January 22-24, 2016 at Mahoney State Park in Ashland, NE with 11 staff members in attendance. Three staff members attended through GOTO meeting with 100% staff participation. Planning for the Annual meeting was held as well as discussion on GOTO meetings, communications, and challenges. Games, food and fun was enjoyed by all.

Annual Convention was held June 9-12, 2016 in Lincoln, NE with the theme "Star Spangled Celebration". 66 members from 9 states were in attendance. The staff was able to tour "Friendship Home" in Lincoln which was the year-end Buckets of Sunshine recipient. \$1,315 in cash and in-kind donations was presented to Friendship Home. Kay Matthews representing Friendship Home was present to speak at the luncheon and gratefully accept the donations.

A fun forum held was "All the Colors of the Rainbow" which included a Color Personality quiz as well as Adult Coloring Fun. A forum "DVA Speaks" was also presented by Chloe Meier from the UNL speech team. Her speech was titled "How the Rhetoric of Abuse Silences Survivors: Changing the Ways We Talk About Abuse".

Chef Brandon Harpster presented a forum on Saturday afternoon. Members in attendance were not only able to see the demonstration but got to sample the wonderful pork that was prepared.

There were many Programming, Membership and Presidential Awards presented to members across the nation. The Programming Award of Excellence for 2<sup>nd</sup> Trimester was presented to Diane Hellman, Health & Wellness Program Manager and the Presidential Award of Excellence was presented to Cat Shuman, Secretary.

The Programming Award of Excellence for 3<sup>rd</sup> Trimester was presented to Laura Wachter, PR Director and the Presidential Award of Excellence was presented to Cindy Umland, MVP. Outstanding Staff Members were: Becky Goetsch, DVA Program Manager and Laura Wachter, PR Director and the Outstanding Executive Staff Member was Judy Herrala, Chairman of the Board. Outstanding State Presidents were: Terri Hebda, IL; Terri Dahlberg, MN; Nancy Asher, MO and Laura Wachter, NE.

To recognize those businesses and community supporters the "Prism of Light" award was created and there were 29 presented. There were 20 Outstanding State Officers and 20 Outstanding Local Officers recognized. There were 100 Presidential Pins Presented and 7 All American Chapters.

We did not meet our goal to grow this year despite our growth 1<sup>st</sup> Trimester. We began the year with 1880 members - 13 states 113 chapters. Member states included: Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin. 2<sup>nd</sup> Trimester base was: 1888; 3<sup>rd</sup> Trimester membership base was: 1819. We welcomed 345 new members this year. We renewed 1,435 and our retention was 76%. We welcomed four new chapters to the United States Women of Today: Sangamon Co, IL; Coon Rapids, MN, Lakefield, MN and Kankakee/Iroquois, IL. We ended our year with the following membership numbers: 1796 members, 13 states and 107 chapters. 15 chapters achieved 100% retention for the year 34 chapters and 4 states achieved year-end growth.

In the Programming Area there were: 26 Project Recognitions submitted this year and 21 members received Outstanding Achievement in Programming recognition. There were 170 Personal Development certifications and 41 S.T.E.P. certifications. S.T.E.P. I=13; S.T.E.P. II =1; S.T.E.P. III = 6 and S.T.E.P. IV = 21.

There were 215 Health and Wellness certifications from 39 chapters and 11 states for the year.

The totals for Domestic Violence Awareness were: 41 transmittals from 9 states. \$119,186.41 total dollars raised and 2420.5 volunteer hours.

Totals from the Community Connections Reports were: \$125,610.71 and 18,308 hours.

Totals from Buckets of Sunshine were: \$3,000 and 175 volunteer hours.

Elections were held with the following results:

President:	Barbara Wigell, IL
Membership VP:	Nicky Anderson, MN
Programming VP:	Becky Goetsch, IL
Secretary:	Sue Beattie, MA
Treasurer:	Carmella Mongold, MO

Julie Hutchinson, MA bid and was voted to be the 2016 – 2017 Domestic Violence Awareness Program Manager.

The Ambassador President was Deborah Stein from Pennsylvania. The following were recognized as Ambassadors for 2015-2016: Vicki Rockwell, Minnesota and Laura Wachter, Nebraska.

US Founders Charities was Carmella Mongold from Missouri.

President Joyce and her staff visited 11 states this year.

There were five issues of the Today's Leader published and two All Chapters Mailings with the spring mailing focusing on local chapter officer training. The website continued to be a focus for communication as well as GOTO meetings.

The year of "Lasting Connections" was a truly amazing year.

## **2016-2017**

### **Barb Wigell, President**

Barb Wigell from Chicago, Illinois, served as the 2016-2017 President of the United States Women of Today. Her theme was "Strong Women!!!" The United States Women of Today staff included: Chairman of the Board, Joyce Harpster (NE); Membership Vice President, Nicky Anderson (MN); Programming Vice President, Becky Goetsch (IL); Secretary, Sue Beattie (MA); Treasurer, Carmella Mongold (MO); Parliamentarian, Cindy Umland (MN); Health and Wellness Program Manager, Laura Gaylord (MN); Personal Development Program Manager, Diane Hellman (ND); Domestic Violence Awareness Program Manager, Julie Hutchinson (MA); Extensions Director, Colleen Todd (MN); Public Relations Director, Kimberly Rowland (MN); Presidential Assistant, Terri Hebda (IL).

Goals for the year included extensions and Judy Herrala (MN) was appointed to chair an extension team.

The year began with 1796 members from 13 states and 107 chapters.

Summer retreat for the staff was held in Tinley Park, Illinois, and the plans for the year were developed.

Midyear meeting was held in Kansas City, Missouri, which included a service project to make blankets for several shelters in Missouri.

Annual Convention was held in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Buckets of Sunshine went to Shade Tree, a domestic violence shelter in Las Vegas. A speaker from Shade Tree attended the luncheon and presented an overview of the shelter and to accept donations.

The USWT Strong Award was given to many non-members who help chapters throughout the year. Two new awards were given out this year. The Rose of Friendship, a membership award given to members who worked on an extension and recruited new members for their chapters. The Steel Magnolia award was presented to chapters who started a new project that had an impact on their community.

The Presidential Award of Excellence was presented to Treasurer Carmella Mongold. The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Health and Wellness Program Manager Laura Gaylord. The Outstanding Staff Member was presented to Programming Vice President Becky Goetsch. There were three Outstanding State Presidents awarded; Jane Hanson, Minnesota; Michele Thompson, Iowa; Nancy Asher, Missouri.

Seven extensions were completed. We welcomed Boone, Iowa; Eastern Carver County, Minnesota; Hutchinson, Minnesota; Willmar Area, Minnesota; Alexandria, Minnesota; Valley of the Sun, Arizona; Rose Rock, Oklahoma. This included two new states – Arizona and Oklahoma.

Two states folded this year – Michigan and Washington.

We ended the year with 1734 members from 13 states and 108 chapters. Retention was 76%.

Deb Stein, Pennsylvania, served as Ambassador President. There were two Ambassadors presented this year: Laura Gaylord, Minnesota, and Judy Herrala, Minnesota.

Carmella Mongold, Arizona, served as US Charities President.

Elections were held with the following results:

President:	Nicky Anderson, MN
Membership VP:	Colleen Todd, MN
Programming VP:	Laura Gaylord, MN
Secretary:	JoAnn Miller, MN

It was a great year of "Strong Women" who introduced many new women to the world of Women of Today.

## **2017-2018**

### **Nicky Anderson, President**

Nicky Anderson from Staples, Minnesota served as the 2017-2018 President of the United States Women of Today. Her theme was "Imagine ~ Create ~ Inspire" using daisies as her logo.

Serving with President Nicky were the following staff members: Chairman of the Board Barb Wigell (IL); Membership Vice President Colleen Todd (MN); Programming Vice President Laura Gaylord (MN); Secretary JoAnn Miller (MN); Treasurer Bonnie Waller (MN); and Parliamentarian Joanne Becker (IA). Serving as Program Managers were: Health & Wellness Samantha Mongold (AZ); Personal Development Cindy Sanders (MN); Domestic Violence Awareness Terri Hebda (IL) and service as Directors were: Public Relations Daina Mirsch-Wenner (MN) and Extensions Cathy Snyder (MN). Jane Hanson (MN) and Kayla Hermann (MN) served as Presidential Assistants.

Goals for the year were communication, zoom meetings, moving to on-line zoom committee meetings and revamping the conventions.

Summer retreat was held in Staples MN with 11 staff present. Planning for the Midyear Meeting and the year were the emphasis. Communication was the theme, with training for MN Past President and Ambassador Jen Kinzer. Leadership and position training, along with team building and getting to know each other was a priority.

The Midyear meeting was held in Ankeny Iowa Oct. 6-8 with the theme of Field of Dreams. There were 59 in attendance from 9 states, this included 5 first timers. The staff worked on a service project preparing a meal at the Ronald McDonald House. New to this meeting was the staff "speed dating" event; states sat together and staff moved from state to state with training. Friday night also included the staff participating in a "friendly competition", state tables and a Trifecta hands on Membership Event. There was also a walk for Domestic Violence. President Nicky and PA Jane presented a training on "What's your Why" helping members with the language they can use to recruit members and talk about Women of Today during the luncheon. The Presidential Award of Excellence for Trimester 1 was given to JoAnn Miller, Secretary and Laura Gaylord, Programming Vice President. The Programming Award of Excellence was given to Cindy Sanders, Personal Development.

Winter Staff Retreat was held in Coon Rapids MN February 23-25, 2018 with 9 staff members attending with 2 attending via zoom. Planning for Annual convention was a focus. Staff began working on position operation manuals.

Annual Convention with a theme of "Get Inspired" was held in Mankato MN June 8-10, 2018 with 69 members in attendance from 19 states, including 9 first timers.

A blanket tying activity was held Friday night during the Friday Night party for the local CADA House, a domestic violence facility. One highlight was Jean Abbott, guest speaker who spoke on Wheels to Heels; a Positive Purpose; encouraging us to focus the positive.

There were many Programming and Membership awards presented to members across the nation. The Programming Award of Excellence for third trimester was presented to Samantha Mongold, Health and Wellness and the Presidential Award of Excellence was given to Bonnie Waller, Treasurer. Outstanding Executive Staff Members were: Laura Gaylord, Programming Vice President; JoAnn Miller, Secretary and Outstanding Staff Member was Cindy Sanders, Personal Development. Outstanding State Presidents were Becky Goetsch (IL), Angie Dietz (IA), Shelli Struzyk (MN) and Maxine Turner (NE).

To recognize the businesses and community supporters the "Inspire Award" was given to 39 recipients. There were 20 Outstanding State Officers and 20 Outstanding Local Officers recognized. There were 75 Presidential Pins awarded and 6 All American Chapters.

We began the year with 1750 members and 104 chapters. Members states were Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Wisconsin. We welcomed 1 new chapter, South Loop IL. We ended our year with the following membership numbers: 1636 members, 13 states, chapters and 78% retention.

Certifications reported were 261 Personal Development, 43 STEP 1, 7 STEP 2, 11 STEP 3, 40 STEP 4, and 258 Health and Wellness. Twelve states reported 594.5 service hours for DVA. Community Connections reported 13,446.25 service hours and \$198,885.05 raised.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Laura Gaylord, MN
Membership VP	Cindy Sanders, MN
Programming VP	JoAnn Miller, MN
Secretary	Angie Dietz, IA
Treasurer	Jane Hanson, MN

The following members presented bids and were accepted:

Theresa Johnson	Personal Development/STEP
Lisa Hahn	Extensions
Michelle McGowan	DVA
Laura Bentley	Health & Wellness

The Ambassador President was Joey Hedstrom from Arizona. Recognized as an Ambassador was Terri Dahlberg, MN. US Founders Charities Chair was Carmella Mongold from Arizona. It was a year of Inspiring each other!

## **2018-2019**

### **Laura Gaylord, President**

Laura Gaylord from New Ulm, Minnesota served as the 2018-2019 President of the United States Women of Today. Her theme was "Wings to Fly...Dreams to Be".

Serving alongside President Laura were the following staff members: Chairman of the Board Nicky Anderson (MN); Membership Vice President Cindy Sanders (MN); Programming Vice President JoAnn Miller (MN); Treasurer Jane Hanson (MN); Secretary Angelina Dietz – Robinson (IA) and Parliamentarian Hillari Zweibohmer (NE). Serving as program managers were: Domestic Violence Awareness Michelle McGowan (MN); Health & Wellness Laura Bentley (IA); Personal Development / STEP Theresa Johnson (OK). Serving as directors were: Extensions Lisa Hahn (MN) and Public Relations Dina Self (OK). Serving as the presidential assistant Colleen Todd (MN).

Goals for the year were extensions, membership, communication, travel and continuation of the use of zoom meetings.

Laura started her year with 13 states, 102 chapters and 1637 members. The member states were Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

Summer retreat was held in New Ulm Minnesota with all 13 staff members in attendance. The retreat focused on Mid-Year convention planning, communication and listening trainings along with team building and developing a team relationship.

The Mid – Year meeting was held in Hartford South Dakota with the theme of “Together Towards Tomorrow”. Members from Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota, Nebraska and Oklahoma were able to attend. There were forums on membership and extensions and programming forums focusing on Domestic Violence Awareness. The service project was collection of items for the Children’s Inn shelter in Sioux Falls SD. Members collected / donated over \$1000 in items and monies. President Laura and Membership Vice President Cindy Sanders presented a training on recognizing the leader in each person. The Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Health and Wellness Program Manager Laura Bentley and the Presidential Award of Excellence was given to Treasurer Jane Hanson and Membership Vice President Cindy Sanders.

Winter Retreat was held in Sartell Minnesota with 11 of the 13 staff members attending. Chairman of the Board Nicky Anderson led a team building training on “Relax, Rejuvenate and Refresh”. The team building exercise was designed to encourage and keep the staff to focus on the team goals, rejuvenate the excitement and finish the year strong. Staff members also planned the Annual Convention.

Annual Convention was held in Duluth Minnesota June 13– 15, 2019. The weekend included two training speakers, focusing on public relations for our members, chapters and states. Mark Anderson presented “Make a Splash with Your Local Newspaper” giving tips and examples of how to advertise in your local newspaper. Daina Mirsch-Wenner educated the membership on the what, how and why to using hashtags in our organization.

The membership received many programming and membership awards for the successful year in programming and membership. Third trimester Programming Award of Excellence was given to DVA program manager Michelle McGowan and Programming Vice President JoAnn Miller. Extensions Director Lisa Hahn received the Presidential Award of Excellence. Outstanding Executive Staff member was Health and Wellness Program Manager Laura Bentley and Outstanding Staff member was Jane Hanson, Treasurer. Outstanding State Presidents Michelle Crandall-Arizona, Brenda Sather-Minnesota, Julie Fogelman-Nebraska, Theresa Johnson-Oklahoma and Roxanne Whalen-South Dakota. 20 Outstanding State officers and 20 Outstanding local officers recognized. Five chapters achieved the status of the “All American Chapter” and nine individual community supporters of the Women of Today were recognized with the Hummingbird Award.

We ended the year with 13 states, 99 chapters and 1589 members and 80% retention.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Cindy Sanders – Minnesota
Membership Vice President	Angie Dietz-Robinson – Iowa
Programming Vice President	Laura Bentley – Iowa
Secretary	Kelly Porter – Minnesota
Treasurer	Robyn Farm – Minnesota

The following bids were presented and approved

Health and Wellness	Dorie Halbfass
Domestic Violence Awareness	Cindy Golbuff
Personal Development / STEP	Cathy Snyder
Extensions	Theresa Johnson

The Ambassador President was Joey Hedstrom from Arizona. Recognized as the newest Ambassador was Jane Hanson, MN. The US Founders Charities chairperson was Carmella Mongold from Arizona. Many members found their “Wings to Fly.... Dreams to Be”!

## **2019-2020**

### **Cindy Sanders, President**

As we celebrated our 35<sup>th</sup> year as an organization, Cindy Sanders from Duluth, Minnesota served as the 2019-2020 President of the United States Women of Today. Her theme was “Discovering Our Future” using a rocket and a planet as her logo.

Serving with President Cindy were the following staff members: Chairman of the Board Laura Gaylord (MN); Membership Vice President Angie Dietz-Robinson (IA); Programming Vice President Laura Bentley (IA); Secretary Kelly Porter (MN); Treasurer Robyn Farm (MN); and Parliamentarian Michelle Crandall (AZ). Serving as Program Managers were: Health & Wellness Dorie Halbfass (IA); Personal Development Cathy Snyder (MN); Domestic Violence Awareness Cindy Golbuff (MN) and serving as Directors were: Public Relations Deb McDonald (MO) and Extensions Theresa Johnson (OK). Lisa Hahn (MN) and Cindy Umland (MN) served as Presidential Assistants.

Goals for the year were communication, online forms, using zoom meetings for presidential visits, and combining the Personal Development/STEP and Health and Wellness programming positions into one position called Wellness and Personal Development. We also worked at transitioning the STEP program moved under the Membership Vice President.

Summer retreat was held in Sartell, MN with 13 staff present. Planning for the Midyear Convention the year were the emphasis. Communication was the theme, with training from the Webmaster on Google drive and Google Docs. An activity in communication was lead by President Cindy.

The Midyear Convention was held in Clear Lake, Iowa Oct. 11-12 with the theme of Believe in Yourself. There were 40 in attendance from 6 states. The staff toured Northern Lights Alliance for the Homeless and presented them with \$480 in kind donations including products and money. New to this meeting was that all presidents were invited to the state president meeting for the first half of the meeting, doing a communication activity. Also a contest at the state sharing tables for the most creative table and who showcased their state the best. There was also a luminary walk for Domestic Violence. A Communication and Teamwork Activity ran by President Cindy using blindfolds and having teams move around the hotel learning more about communication and teamwork at the

same time during the luncheon. The Presidential Award of Excellence for Trimester 1 was given to Angie Dietz Robinson, Membership Vice President. The Programming Award of Excellence was given to Cathy Snyder, Personal Development.

Winter Staff Retreat was held in Minneapolis following the Minnesota Winter State Convention January 26-27<sup>th</sup>. 12 staff members attended in person and 2 attended via zoom. Planning for Annual convention was the focus along with a presentation by Jodie Meyer of MN on expectations from each other.

In March, Covid 19 pandemic changed how we did things as social distancing and shelter in place orders were given by many states. A new way of doing things such as zoom meetings, state meetings and conventions, online membership events and even some projects were completed. This pandemic affected us for the remainder of the year.

Annual Convention was to be held in Staples, Minnesota with a theme of "Thelma and Louise". However due to the pandemic, convention was changed to a zoom meeting. The National Staff got together for the weekend and we broadcast from Sartell, MN. The dates were June 12-13, 2020 with 81 members from 11 states attending the Board of Directors Meeting/Business Meeting. Many others joined in for the awards ceremony. There were 11 first timers. The Programming Award of Excellence for second trimester was presented to Laura Bentley, PVP and the Presidential Award of Excellence was awarded to Kelly Porter, Secretary. The third trimester Programming Award of Excellence was presented to Cindy Golbuff, Domestic Violence Awareness Program Manager and the Presidential Award of Excellence was given to Jane Hanson, Minnesota. Outstanding Executive Staff Members were: Angie Dietz Robinson and Laura Bentley, PVP, and the Outstanding Staff Member was Cathy Snyder, Personal Development. Outstanding State Presidents were Cathy Shuman (MN), Tracey Pierson (IA) and Julie Hutchinson (MA).

To recognize the businesses and community supporters the "Rocket Award" was given to 60 recipients. There were 20 Outstanding State Officers and 20 Outstanding Local Officers recognized. There were 73 Presidential Pins awarded, 25 Presidential Medallions and 2 All American Chapters.

We began the year with 1579 members and 99 chapters. Member states were Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Wisconsin. We welcomed 3 new chapters, St Joseph and Rogers, Otsego, Dayton from Minnesota and Cass County, NE. We ended our year with the following membership numbers: 1507 members, 13 states, 99 chapters and 79% retention.

Certifications reported were 221 Personal Development, 15 STEP 1, 10 STEP 2, 12 STEP 3, 15 STEP 4, and 186 Health and Wellness. Eleven states reported 228 service hours for DVA and raised \$6826.63 in donations. Community Connections reported 11532 service hours and \$141,075.

Elections were held with the following results:

President Angie Dietz Robinson, IA

Membership VP Laura Bentley, IA

Treasurer April Smith, IA

The following members presented bids and were accepted:

Deb McDonald, MO – Wellness and Personal Development

Amanda Johnson, OK – Extensions

Kathy Hansen, MN – DVA

Theresa Johnson, OK – Public Relations

The following positions were appointed after elections:

Programming VP Laura Morris, MO

Secretary JoAnn Miller, MN

The Ambassador President was Joey Hedstrom from Arizona. No Ambassadors were recognized this year. US Founders Charities Chair was Cindy Urlacher from Nebraska.

Although it was a challenging year with the pandemic, we made an impact on our organization in many ways including the communities we served.

## **2020 – 2021**

### **Angelina Dietz, President**

Angelina Dietz-Robinson from Nashua, Iowa served as the 2020-2021 President of the United States Women of Today. Her theme was "Stronger Together" with a palm tree and a sun as her logo.

Serving with President Angie were the following staff members: Chairman of the Board Cindy Sanders (MN); Membership Vice President Laura Bentley (IA); Programming Vice President Laura Morris (MO); Secretary JoAnn Miller (MN); Treasurer April Smith (IA); and Parliamentarian Sarah Smith (ND). Serving as Program Managers were: Wellness & Personal Development Deb McDonald (MO); Domestic Violence Awareness Kathy Hansen (MN) and serving as Directors were: Public Relations Theresa Johnson (OK) and Extensions Amanda Brown (OK). Tracey Pierson (IA) and Therese Trojahn (IA) served as Presidential Assistants.

Goals for the year were communications, using Zoom meetings for presidential visits especially due to the COVID pandemic, and kicking off the first year of the combined position for Wellness & Personal Development.

Summer retreat was held in Nashua, IA with 10 staff members present with two staff Zooming in. Planning for the Mid-Year Convention was the emphasis. Communication, how to promote our organization and website training were key items we discussed. We had a speaker who has raised millions of dollars for small towns who gave us tips.

Mid-Year Convention was held on Oct. 2 – 3 via Zoom due to the pandemic cases being on the rise with the staff being all together in New Hampton, IA. We had over 100 members attend electronically. Our staff held forums on 501c3 information and "What you want to know about Founders Charities", along with State Presidents round table. We were able to hold an impromptu competition, a membership challenge of matching throwback pictures of staff and a virtual happy hour prior to our Awards Banquet. The Presidential Award of Excellence for trimester one was given to JoAnn Miller, Secretary. The Programming Award of Excellence was given to Laura Morris, Programming Vice President.

Winter staff retreat was held virtually due to the concern for COVID cases. Eleven staff members attended electronically. We talked about each person's progress for the year and what we can do for the remainder of the year. Planning for the Year-End Convention was the focus.

Annual Convention was held in Des Moines, IA on June 11 -13, 2021. On Thursday, National staff visited Safe Shelter, the recipient of our Buckets of Sunshine donations. We held forums on aging parents and "What is your financial health?" After the Opening Ceremonies, we had a special presentation for the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary for Women of Today with memorabilia divided into 5-year increments. Our guest speaker for the luncheon was the Safe Shelter director.

The membership received many Programming and Membership awards for the successful year. 19 Outstanding State Officers were recognized while 9 Outstanding Local Officers received this recognition. Second trimester Programming Award of Excellence was given to Deb McDonald, Wellness & Personal Development program manager. April Smith received the Presidential Award of Excellence for second trimester. For third trimester, the Programming Award of Excellence went to Kathy Hansen and the Presidential Award of Excellence went to Cindy Sanders. The Outstanding National Officers included Laura Morris, Programming Vice President, Kathy Hansen, Domestic Violence Awareness PM, and JoAnn Miller, Secretary. Outstanding State Presidents were Illeana Miller, Minnesota, Tracey Pierson, Iowa, and Kathy Griffin, Massachusetts. Sixteen community members were recognized with the "Strength Award." We ended the year with 13 states, 97 chapters and 1460 members with 83% retention. Member states were Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

The service hours performed totaled 10,273.25 and monies raised were \$166,174.15.

The Elections were held with the following results:

President – Cindy Umland, MN  
Membership Vice President – Cathy Snyder, MN  
Programming Vice President – Tracey Pierson, IA  
Treasurer – Laura Morris, MO  
Secretary – JoAnn Miller, MN

The following bids were presented and approved:

Wellness & Personal Development – Julie Hutchinson, MA  
Domestic Violence Awareness – Deb McDonald, MO  
Public Relations Director – Jennifer Lantz, IA

The Ambassador President was Joey Hedstrom from Arizona. Recognized as the newest Ambassador was Sammi Mongold from Arizona. The US Founders Charities chairperson was Cindy Urlacher from Nebraska.

Our members were definitely "Stronger Together" through this very challenging year.

## **2021-2022**

### **Cindy Umland**

Cindy Umland from St. Cloud, Minnesota served as the 2021-2022 President of the United States Women of Today. Her theme was "Branch Out, Reach for Your Dreams" using a tree as her logo.

Serving with President Cindy were the following staff members: Chairman of the Board Angie Dietz (IA), Membership Vice President Cathy Snyder (MN); Programming Vice President Tracey Pierson (IA); Secretary JoAnn Miller (MN); Treasurer Laura Morris (MO) and Parliamentarian Sue Beattie (MA). Serving as Program Managers were Wellness & Personal Development Julie Hutchinson (MA); Domestic Violence Awareness Deb McDonald (MO); serving as Directors were Public Relations Jennifer Lantz (IA) and Extensions Director Michelle Crandall (MN) and serving as Presidential Assistant was Lisa Hahn (MN). Cindy was also blessed with Jane Hanson (MN) and Michelle McGowan (MN) as assistants. With all these ladies Cindy felt she was truly blessed with the Dream Team.

Goals for the year were to encourage members to try a new branches and training and utilizing zoom.

Summer Retreat was held in Sartell MN with 9 of 12 staff being present. Events for the weekend included Come Make S' more friends with WT, where individuals were invited to come meet the National Staff with several members visiting. Training was done by Past President and Ambassador Kayla Hermann.

The Midyear Meeting was held in Norman, Oklahoma Oct 1-2 hosted by the Oklahoma Women of Today with a theme of "Everything Coming up Roses. President Cindy only had one good hand due to a hand injury, but was grateful for all the assistance she received at Midyear and until healed. Several members arrived early and visited the Oklahoma bombing sight and were moved by it. On Thursday members toured Grace House, a home for women who find themselves alone in a crisis pregnancy. Friday night was an event called Branch Out with US where the programming and membership team each presented a fun interactive game. With commercials brought to you by the State Presidents. Thirty-five members were in attendance. The Award of Excellence were presented to Treasurer Laura Morris and MN President Anna Nichols

Winter Staff Retreat was held in Plymouth Minnesota January 30 with 11 Staff members attending with 1 attending by zoom. The staff enjoyed training by Past US President Nicky Anderson and past MN President Jane Hanson; they participated in an Amazing Race Training and a great training on Communication and plenty of bonding over the weekend.

Annual Convention with the theme of Everyday is a Holiday in Duluth, Minnesota June 9-11 with 79 members including 15 first timers. Due to Covid still happening the Staff toured the Buckets of Sunshine recipient Casda, in Superior Wisconsin. Ten of 13 states were in attendance. Members enjoyed an Insta pot class on Friday afternoon and training on how to navigate the website.

Awards of Excellence for 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester were presented to Programming VP Tracey Pierson, Wellness and Personal Development Program Manager Julie Hutchinson and Secretary Joann Miler and 3<sup>rd</sup> Trimester Award of Excellence to Domestic Violence Program Manager Deb McDonalds, Arizona President Joey Hedstrom, and Membership VP Cathy Snyder. It was a pleasure to recognize several members with yearend awards with 24 outstanding local officers, 24 outstanding state officers, and 3 outstanding state presidents were recognized were Arizona Joey Hedstrom, Massachusetts Kathy Griffin and Minnesota Anna Nichols. Two outstanding staff were recognized; Wellness and Personal Development Julie Hutchinson and Domestic Violence Awareness Manager

Deb McDonald. Outstanding Officers were Treasurer Laura Morris, Secretary JoAnn Miller, Programming VP Tracey Pierson and Membership VP Cathy Snyder.

To recognize the business and community supporters the "Visionary Award" was given to 70 recipients. There were 75 Presidential Pins awarded and 10 All American Chapters.

Cindy wanted to recognize individuals that she felt had made a difference and at year end gave the L.I.F.E Award the recipients were Julie Hutchinson (MA) Julie Fogelman (NE) Tracey Pierson (IA) Tevyan Sorenson (MN) Bonnie Waller (MN) Lisa Hahn (MN) and Jane Hanson (MN).

We began the year with 1462 members in 13 states and ended the year with 1491 members in 13 states. The year ended as only the second time in history with growth +29. Member states were Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

Certifications reported were 172 Wellness & Personal Development 45 STEP Certifications and in Service hours and Donations made to Domestic Violence, and other Community Connections reported was a \$1,330,626.29

An area of passion this year was the Alzheimer's Association. President Cindy encouraged members to learn more about this and make a difference in their communities. Cindy offered a raffle for a homemade afghan and a total of \$550 was raised and donated to the local office in Minnesota.

Elections were held with the following results

President Laura Morris, MO  
Membership VP Tracey Pierson, IA  
Programming VP Cathy Snyder, MN  
Secretary Jane Hanson, MN  
Treasurer Mary Hansen, MN

The following members presented bids and were accepted

Theresa Johnson Domestic Violence Awareness  
Jill Kirshner Wellness & Personal Development  
Laura Bentley Public Relations

The Ambassador President was Amy Pumper from Minnesota. Recognized as Ambassador was Lisa Hahn, MN, and Tracey Pierson, IA and Dee Clark, MA. Founders Charities Chair was Cindy Urlacher.

This year President Cindy was truly blessed to have a Dream Team the team got out and each person on Staff visited at least one other state other than their own and several attended meeting in person and via zoom as Covid was still present

## **2022-2023**

### **Laura Morris**

Serving as President for the 2022-2023 year, Laura Morris was only the second President elected from the state of Missouri. Her theme was "Inspire" with a purple mountain and sun as her logo.

The staff for the year were Chair of the Board Cindy Umland (MN); Membership Vice President Tracey Pierson (IA); Programming Vice President Cathy Snyder (MN); Secretary Jane Hanson (MN); Treasurer Mary Hansen (MN); and Parliamentarian Anna Nichols (MN). Serving as Directors were Extensions Kandy Dorlack (MN) and Public Relations Laura Bentley (IA). Serving as Program Managers were Wellness & Personal Development Jill Kirschner (MN) and Domestic Violence Awareness Theresa Johnson (OK). Laura's Presidential Assistants were Deb McDonald (MO) and Terri Danner (MO). Program Manager Theresa Johnson had to withdraw from her position part way through the year. Programming VP Cathy Snyder stepped in and fulfilled those responsibilities.

Goals for the year were Staff development, training, membership growth, programming participation, and development of a marketing plan including looking at revamping the logo.

Summer Staff retreat was held at The Lake of the Ozarks in Missouri with 8 in attendance in person, while others attended via Zoom. The weekend was used to team build and train on running committee meetings, job responsibilities, Zoom meetings, communications, and social media. We also planned Midyear and the rest of the year. Also enjoyed a little lake time.

Midyear meeting was held in Lee's Summit, MO (Kansas City) Oct 7-8 with the theme of "Fall in Love with KC." 57 members attended from 6 states. Staff and many members toured Heart to Heart International in Lenexa, KS (where President Laura happens to work). The Friday night Tailgate Party started with a hygiene kit building project completed by a competition between two teams. 450 hygiene kits were built and were delivered to hurricane survivors in Florida by Heart to Heart. \$868 was also donated by members to Heart to Heart. The luncheon Saturday had a guest speaker from Paws 4 Autism, and more donations were collected for them. Forums included discussion of rebranding and a possible new logo, games from Membership and Programming, and an impromptu speaking competition. Saturday night began with a wine tasting fundraiser, and we celebrated growth of +48 for 1<sup>st</sup> trimester. The President's Awards of Excellence for 1<sup>st</sup> Trimester were given to Jane Hanson, Secretary; Tracey Pierson, Membership VP; and Jenise Teske, MN President.

Winter Staff Retreat was held in Plymouth, MN on January 29<sup>th</sup>, following Minnesota's Winter State convention. Training and planning for the Annual Meeting were done with 11 staff present.

Annual Convention was held in Tempe, AZ with 56 members from 9 states attending and a theme of "Warm Welcome to the Wild West" on June 9-10, 2023. We started with a Thursday bus trip to Sedona, AZ. We had more fun Friday night with Wild West games. Forums included chapter officer membership and programming training, state president's training and sharing of M-night ideas. Our Buckets of Sunshine project was A New Leaf, which included a guest speaker for the luncheon Saturday and presentation of a check for \$449.59, along with other in-kind donations.

2<sup>nd</sup> Trimester Awards of Excellence were given to Mary Hansen, Treasurer; Jill Kirschner, WPD Program Manager; and Cindy Hilbert, Pennsylvania State President. 3<sup>rd</sup> Trimester Awards of Excellence were handed out to Anna Nichols, Parliamentarian; Laura

Bentley, Public Relations Director; and Joey Hedstrom, Arizona State President. For the year, 36 Visionary awards were given out in recognition of community members who assisted our chapters during the year. There were 2 All-American Chapters and 4 Presidential Challenge recognitions for Autism Awareness. Also recognized for their hard work for the year were 29 Outstanding Local Officers and 18 Outstanding State Officers. President Laura was honored to hand out, throughout the year, 75 Presidential Pins to members across the nation; and Medallions were awarded to 11 Staff and 10 State Presidents.

The Outstanding National Officers for the year were Tracey Pierson, Membership VP and Mary Hansen, Treasurer. Outstanding National Staff was Laura Bentley, Public Relations Director. Outstanding State Presidents were Cindy Hilbert (PA), Joey Hedstrom (AZ) and Jenise Teske (MN).

We began the year with 1491 members in 13 states and ended the year with 1493 members in 12 states, for the second year in a row of growth (+2). Member states were Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Wisconsin. We lost the state of Oklahoma during the year, but we did charter one new chapter, Wild West, AZ.

Certifications reported were 186 Wellness & Personal Development, 31 STEP Certifications, and 18 OAPs. It was reported 182.5 service hours and \$33,725 donations were made to Domestic Violence Awareness, and Community Connections reported totals of 13,765 volunteer hours and donations of \$126,216.31.

Elections were held with the following results:

President	Tracey Pierson, IA
Membership VP	Cathy Snyder, MN
Programming VP	Laura Bentley, IA
Secretary	Sue Beattie, MA
Treasurer	Jane Hanson, MN

The following member presented bids and were accepted:

- Public Relations Director - Shellie Matthes, MN
- Extensions Director - JoAnn Miller, MN
- Domestic Violence Awareness PM - Julie Hutchinson, MA
- Wellness & Personal Development PM - Deb McDonald, MO

The Ambassador President was Cindy Sanders from Minnesota. Recognized as new Ambassadors for the year were Laura Morris (MO), Nancy Asher (MO), Pat Finnigan (MA), Brenda Sather (MN), Julie Fogleman (NE) and Pat Saulina (AZ). Founders Charities Chair was Cindy Urlacher from Nebraska.

2022-2023 was a year that we had the opportunity to Inspire ourselves and each other.

## **2023 – 2014**

### **Tracey Pierson**

Tracey Pierson from Spencer, Iowa served as the 2023-2024 President of the United States Women of Today. Her theme was “Believe in Yourself” using angel wings as her logo.

Serving with President Tracey were the following staff members: Chair of the Board - Laura Morris (MO), Membership Vice-President - Cathy Snyder (MN), Programming Vice-President - Laura Bentley (IA), Secretary - Sue Beattie (MA), Treasurer - Jane Hanson (MN), and Parliamentarian - Mary Hansen (MN). Serving as Program Managers were: Wellness & Personal Development - Deb McDonald (MO), Domestic Violence Awareness - Julie Hutchinson (MA). Serving as Public Relations Director - Shellie Mathes (MN) and Extensions Director - JoAnn Miller (MN) and serving as Presidential Assistants were Therese Trojahn (IA) and Connie Lundbeck (IA).

Goals for the year were to utilize the technology we have and have the United States Women of Today create a QR code along with each chapter and state and find a way to gain membership using different ideas of how to draw them in.

The summer retreat was held in Everly, IA at the cabins in Scharnberg Park with ten out of thirteen staff present. Events that weekend were one-on-one with President Tracey, planning the schedule for mid-year and a trip to Okoboji, IA for a boat ride on the Queen II. We did a LIVE to help Jane Hanson, Treasurer fill her pot with money for ways and means.

The midyear meeting was held in Omaha, Nebraska, October 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> hosted by the Past National Presidents of Nebraska with a theme “Midway Fun at the County Fair”. There were 52 registered members throughout the weekend with 12 first timers. The Staff and members arrived Thursday and toured the Open Door Mission offering safe shelter to people experiencing homelessness, nutritious meals, and safe shelter. Friday the Programming and Membership teams played the game of Life and Jeopardy with Women of Today information. Friday night we made Halloween bags with candy and trinkets and money from a ring toss that was donated to Open Door Mission. Friday night also saw a rousing game of SINGO with the money going to ways and means, a Style Show was presented by the USWT 23-24 staff, where the “Sheriff” (Mary Hansen, Parli) won. Amy Pumper was filling in for Ambassador President Cindy Sanders and recognized Laura Bentley, IA with the Ambassador award. Founder’s Charities Chair was Cindy Urlacher. The Award of Excellence was presented to Treasurer Jane Hanson and Public Relations Director Shellie Matthes.



The winter staff retreat was held in Plymouth, Minnesota on January 28<sup>th</sup> with 9 of 13 staff members in attendance and 2 attended by zoom. Planning for the year end convention was done along with a secret Santa gift exchange. We finished early because dangerous winter weather was coming our way.

Annual Convention with a theme Come UP, UP and Away with the Iowa Women of Today in Des Moines, Iowa June 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> with 89 in attendance and 10 first timers. We had 25 out of the 38 past National Presidents in attendance along with 14 of Tracey's immediate family. We toured Children and Families of Iowa domestic violence house on Thursday and the staff ate supper at the Machine Shed along with other members attending the convention. Highlights of the convention was the Friday night party where the past presidents kidnapped President Tracey for ransom and the ransom money went to Children and Families of Iowa. 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester Award of Excellence was awarded to Shellie Haun, NE and Amy Pumper, MN. We started the year with 1500 members and 12 states and ended with 1481 and 12 states, we lost at least 10 members due to deaths. We had retention for the year of 83%, over a million dollars reported in the Community Connection reports, 240 Wellness and Personal Development certificates were handed out, donated \$20,145.85 to DVA, awarded 75 Presidential Pins, 4 All American Chapters, recognized 90 business and community supporters with the "Angel Award", 26 outstanding local and state officers and 20 Presidential Medallions. Ambassador President, Cindy Sanders recognized Amy Kaiser with the Ambassador Award. The Award of Excellence was president to Chair of the Board, Laura Morris and Domestic Violence Program Manager, Julie Hutchinson.

Elections were held with the following results:

President - Jane Hanson, MN  
Membership Vice President - Shellie Matthes, MN  
Programming Vice President - Lisa Hahn, MN  
Secretary - Mary Hansen, MN  
Treasurer - Bonnie Waller, MN

The following members presented bids and were accepted:

Dawn Nissen, IA Domestic Violence Awareness P.M.  
Shellie Haun, NE Wellness & Personal Development P.M.  
Cindy Golbuff, MN Public Relations Director  
Jenise Teske, MN Extensions Director

This year, President Tracey visited 11 of 12 states. President Tracey was able to hand out pins, medallions, and Awards of Excellence at her state visits. The challenge for the year was to get your blood sugar checked. It is easier to make changes before it is too late and you are a diabetic. After a remarkably busy and successful year, it is sad for it to come to an end but look forward to the possibilities yet to come.