

WomenVenture launches strategic plan to help more women overcome current economic challenges

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For more than 30 years, St. Paul-based WomenVenture has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to helping women achieve economic independence and prosperity. Now as the economy has plunged still more women and families into uncertain times, WomenVenture is implementing a new strategic plan designed to have a broader impact on an even greater number of women.

WomenVenture (womenventure.org) is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to helping women gain economic prosperity. The organization fulfills its mission by teaching women skills to find careers with higher wages; navigate job loss and changes; start and grow small businesses and manage their economic resources.

“We have successfully helped more than 90,000 women gain employment, improve their earning strength and enhance their financial literacy,” says WomenVenture Chairman of the Board Mary Blegen. “That need has never been greater; it is the right time to step up our efforts. We are very excited because we have the foundation, the direction and the commitment to reach a broader group of women, and to positively impact their lives and the economy.”

To be launched over the next few months, the plan will enable WomenVenture to:

- Expand its ability to meet the changing economic needs of women by developing new products and services.
- Institutionalize its operating systems to demonstrate its ability to have greater economic impact.
- Become an even stronger leading voice for women’s economic success and prosperity.
- Build its organizational capacity to expand its mission.

As the organization prepares to stretch its boundaries, Blegen credits Tené Wells as being a visionary who helped to bring WomenVenture to this point in its history. Wells is currently transitioning from her position as President of WomenVenture , which she has held for 10 years, to pursue other career interests. “Tené has made many important and positive contributions to WomenVenture , and we wish her all the best in her future endeavors,” says Blegen.

Nonprofit leadership specialist Linda Tacke is stepping in as interim president. Tacke is President of Leadership Tactics, Inc., a consulting firm that specializes in leadership and change management for public service organizations. “Linda is a dynamic person who is extremely qualified to lead WomenVenture as we implement these new tactics,” comments Blegen.

Adds WomenVenture First Vice Chairwoman Colleen Willhite, “ WomenVenture has many tried and true programs that have helped women throughout our community, and in doing so have made important contributions to our local economy. In this technologically advanced world, we see a real opportunity for our programs to have a greater impact on women, and to expand our mission. This is a big step forward and we are ready for the challenge.”