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Denver, CO 80204  
[www.workoptions.org](http://www.workoptions.org)

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Helping homeless and unemployed women gain the skills and confidence they need to work their way out of poverty and become gainfully and permanently employed in the food service industry.

# WORKSHEET

JULY 2010

NEWS FROM WORK OPTIONS FOR WOMEN

## Congratulations, Angie!

Angie was in transitional housing and hadn't had stable work for more than three years when she came to WOW. With many obstacles to overcome, she was determined to find work to support herself and her young son. "It has been hard to find employment. During my stay at the House of Hope, one of the case managers gave me a WOW pamphlet and I read about the program and decided I would like to try it out. It seemed like a positive program." Shortly before starting her WOW journey, she moved into permanent housing.

Angie flourished at WOW because she had a clear vision of her goal and what she needed to do to achieve it, never letting any setbacks get her down. Both WOW staff and her fellow students recognized her positive, go-getter attitude.

Participating in the WOW program and learning new skills became just the start of a lot of good things to come for Angie. With pride Angie talks about how she learned kitchen and food prep skills like properly using a knife and working with food in a sanitary environment. But the life skills are what Angie really took to heart. "I learned how to take responsibility for myself and become a valuable member of a team," Angie comments, "Everything from showing up on time and being accountable to focusing on a specific task – it all helped me land and keep a good job."

Angie has been employed at Jimmy John's Gourmet Sandwiches in downtown Denver since January 2010, proving to be a real asset to the team. She graduated from the WOW program in April 2010.

When asked what she would tell someone considering the WOW program, she says with enthusiasm, "Go for it!"



### YES! I SUPPORT THE WOMEN IN THE WOW PROGRAM WHO ARE WORKING THEIR WAY OUT OF POVERTY:

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please indicate how to address future correspondence, with title, e.g. Dr., Mr., Ms.)  
Phone Numbers: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Work, Home, and/or Cell – please indicate)  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Examples of how your investment can help make a difference in the lives of WOW students:

- \$25** Provides a student with bus passes for travel to job training and for employment interviews
- \$50** Awards weekly incentive for a student to buy necessary items for her children such as food and medicine
- \$120** Provides students with uniforms for their training
- \$250** Puts WOW culinary training manuals into the hands of 4 students
- \$500** Sponsors 30 hours of culinary training and provides you with an 25% Colorado Enterprise Zone Tax Credit

WOW is an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Please contact WOW if we may be of assistance complying with employer matching gift procedures.

#### Contribution opportunities:

- Go to the WOW website at [www.workoptions.org](http://www.workoptions.org) and click on the "Donate Now!" button, located at the upper right corner. You will be directed to the Giving First website. Giving First pays the credit card processing fees, so your full donation is forwarded to WOW. You also have the opportunity to set up recurring donations here. Please call Dan Mondragon at 720-944-1920 or [dan@workoptions.org](mailto:dan@workoptions.org) with questions.
- Send checks payable to **Work Options for Women** to the following address:  
Work Options for Women  
c/o Dan Mondragon  
Development Director  
1200 Federal Blvd.  
Denver, CO 80204

Well, maybe we're not completely paperless, but we're striving to become "more green" and efficient in our efforts to communicate with you, our WOW friends. This edition of the "Worksheet" is the last newsletter we will print and mail. Please send/confirm your e-mail address to make the switch to our electronic version. You are welcome to let us know if you would prefer to receive printed materials. Contact Dan Mondragon at [dan@workoptions.org](mailto:dan@workoptions.org) or 720-944-1920.

Thanks for helping us save money and for making WOW a little greener!

## Notes from the Executive Director



Catherine Henry  
Executive Director

My first 8 months as Executive Director with WOW have been fantastic. I have enjoyed getting to know the staff and all of their great talents. We really have a terrific team. I am honored to be a part of it.

Since November 2009 we have made some operational changes. We hired a full time Office Manager, Heather Ellerbrock. Heather is a terrific addition to the staff and has really allowed us to refine our reporting and financial systems. In June, we installed all new (used but refurbished) computer

systems with the aid of a grant from Community Computer Connections. We also created our own WOW network, which has allowed us more flexibility and control over our technology. Recently, you may have received an email from us detailing our Social Media roll out. We want to start a conversation with you. We have lots to share, but we also want to hear back from you on social issues facing our students, industry trends, and anything else relevant to our mission. We encourage you to find us on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

We thank you for your continued support of Work Options for Women. We are empowering women to change their lives and the lives of their children. You play a powerful part in what we do. You make a financial contribution, you volunteer hours of your time, you tell your friends and neighbors about WOW. All of that is so important to us. We are truly grateful for your friendship and your encouragement.

*Catherine*

## WomenCook! 2010 – The Perfect Mixture of Fun, Food, and Fundraising

Whether guests were sampling Peppercorn Crusted Ahi Tuna and Red Velvet Petit Fours, chatting with some of Denver's most accomplished chefs, or being inspired by a WOW graduate, the 6th Annual WomenCook! Dining for a Difference event was a resounding success!

On Monday evening May 3, nearly 500 guests gathered at Temple Emanuel to taste delectable creations by chefs from around Denver, bid on unique silent auction items, and learn more about the WOW program. The annual fundraiser, emceed by CBS4 reporter Gloria Neal, brought in \$95,000 that will be used to help women reach self-sufficiency for themselves and their families through culinary training and job placement.

WOW's new Executive Director Catherine Henry recognized the Employer of the Year, Denver Public Schools, and WOW Student of the Year, Vanessa Lawrence. Vanessa was both proud and humbled by the honor, noting, "Seeing the pride in both my mother's and my daughter's eyes made all the hard work very worth it."

WOW Board Member John Imbergamo introduced the group of outstanding chefs, thanking them for their time and exceptional talent. Catherine Henry recognized the founders, WOW staff, and board of

directors, focusing on the team aspect of the organization. "You all work so hard and really care about what you do."

"The sense of dedication to the WOW program by everyone in attendance was very apparent," commented one WomenCook! guest. "Everything from the food, the ambiance throughout the venue, and the poignant video made for a wonderful evening."

For five of the last six years WomenCook! has been held at Temple Emanuel in southeast Denver. WOW is grateful for the opportunity to showcase the event in such a beautiful venue. At this year's WomenCook! an honorary thank you gift was presented to Temple Emanuel's Executive Director Janet Bronitsky.

No one went home hungry... everyone left with a smile... and WOW was honored by the outpouring of support from guests, featured chefs, sponsors, and volunteers!



### News From CAFE OPTIONS

1650 Curtis Street  
Denver, CO  
303.573.0733  
www.cafeoptions.com

Stop in and check out the changes.

- A new entryway into the restaurant
- Fresh additions to the menu – YUM!!!

## WOW Employee Spotlight

### Laura Aycock – the Link Between Students and Employers

Laura Aycock, WOW's Manager of Employment Services, works as the valuable conduit between WOW students and employer partners. She oversees all WOW support services for students, works with students in securing employment, and manages employer partner relationships for the organization. Laura works to help students take that all-important step between student and employee.

Laura came to WOW in October 2008 with a Masters in Management from University of Phoenix and a B.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences with a concentration in Child Family Social Services from Nicholls State University. Before coming to Colorado, she spent over five years at the YWCA of Western Massachusetts



Laura Aycock (center) with WOW Case Managers Katie Matteson and Ashley Ness

as a case manager/program director in the agency's workforce development program.

From interviewing practice to teaching students about how best to present themselves to employers, Laura works diligently to help students find and keep jobs. "One of the best aspects of my job is when a student goes through our program and proves me wrong," comments Laura. "I'll begin to work with a student and help them learn the ropes at

WOW, and sometimes I'll have my doubts if they have the perseverance to finish our program. Then, one by one, they overcome barriers to their success, work super hard, and prove me wrong by finishing strong and landing a good job. It's very rewarding to see that happen."

One of the key components in making WOW a successful program is WOW's association with our employer partners. Laura finds and develops business relationships with solid companies who see the value in hiring WOW graduates. WOW students receive the training and skills development to step right into a food service position and become immediately productive. Laura also tracks students through their employment, working to give them an opportunity for independence while assuring that employers receive a skilled, dedicated employee.

Connecting students to jobs and assuring the success of that relationship is why Laura is an invaluable employee for WOW.

## A WOW "Thank You"

The 2010 WomenCook! event would not have been the tremendous success it was if it weren't for our incredible volunteers, sponsors, supporters, and everyone who joined us for this delectable evening. WOW is grateful for the many hours given freely by so many.

### The Amazing Chefs

Aniedra Nichols – Elway's Cherry Creek  
Elise Wiggins – Panzano  
Jennifer Jasinski – Rioja and Bistro Vendôme  
Kate Horton – Black Pearl  
Kathleen Kenny Davia – Gateaux  
Lisa Bailey – D Bar Desserts  
Mary Nguyen – Parallel Seventeen  
Sheila Lucero – Jax Fish House  
Sandra Adams – Grand Hyatt Hotel Denver  
Yasmin Lozada-Hissom – Duo and Olivéa  
Francesca Ruiz – Los Cabos  
And from Work Options for Women:  
Michael Benson – WOW Café  
Craig Dixon – Café Options

### Generous Sponsors

Executive Chef Sponsor – SysTest Labs  
Sous Chef Sponsor – Bank of the West  
Foodie Sponsors – Blue Sky Plumbing & Heating, CBIZ MHM, Dorsey & Whitney, EKS&H, FreshPoint, Shamrock Foods

Venue Sponsor – Temple Emanuel

Media Sponsors – CBS4, Gearbox, 5280 Magazine, Westword

Table Sponsors – American Institute of Wine & Food, BodyFuel for Health, Callahan Capital Partners, Dr. Janet Stewart Claman, Delaware North Companies, Duff & Phelps, EnCana Oil & Gas, FirstBank of Wheat Ridge, Holland & Hart, The Imbergamo Group, Lewis and Floorwax For Kids Foundation, LIVE Urban Real Estate, Patton Boggs, ReadyTalk, Russ & Debra Shaw, Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Spectrum General Contractors, UBS Financial Services

### Special thanks to:

Gene Brown, LXI New Media Productions  
Gloria Neal and CBS4 production staff  
Chef Mike Pizzutto, Creative Ice Sculptures

### Talented and Dedicated Volunteers

Planning Team Members –  
Charlene Krogh, Event Manager  
Tamara Barron, Silent Auction Chair  
Vikki Stevens, reservations and editor of event materials  
Tonya Schloemer, promotions & CREW Denver liaison  
Wayne Rigsby, invitation and PR materials graphic designer  
John Imbergamo, recipe cards designer  
Rachel Mondragon, program booklet designer  
Heather Baker, slideshow designer  
Jean Vianney Mindak, CSJ, office support  
Randy Raitz, technology

Kimberly Bowers, Robin Cupka,  
Tanya Lehmann, Ros Patterson,  
Kristin Schumacher, Debra Shaw

Event work crew –  
CREW Denver  
Junior League of Denver