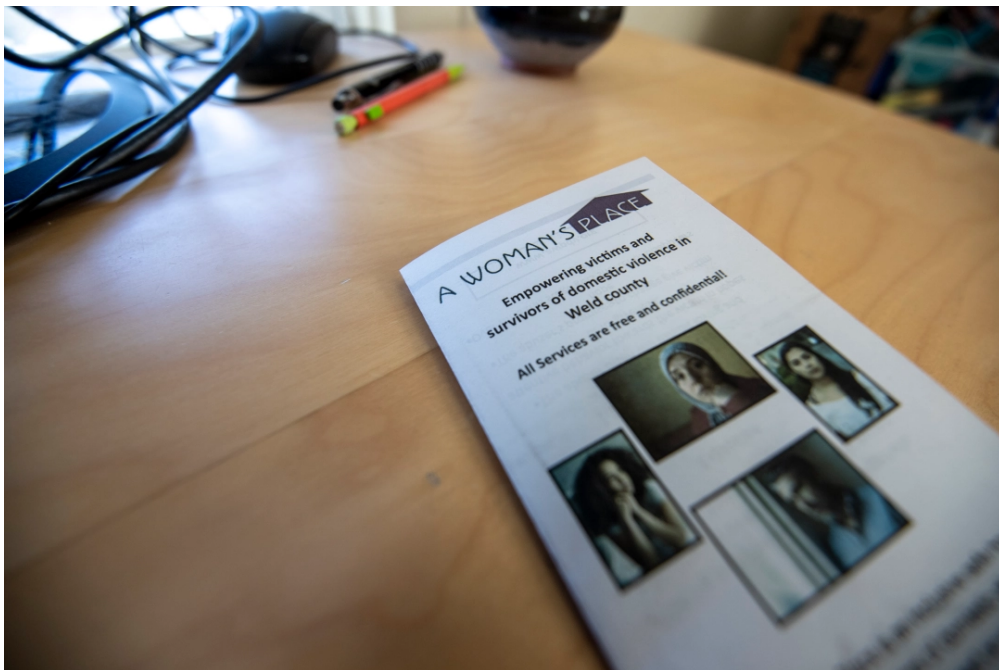


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A Woman's Place receives national award for supporting domestic violence victims

"The award is important, but what's more important is the people that we serve," Heldt said.



GREELEY, CO – NOVEMBER 17: A brochure for A Women's Place, an organization serving survivors of domestic violence in Weld County, is seen in Greeley Nov. 17, 2020. (Alex McIntyre/Staff Photographer)

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As Weld County's only domestic violence shelter, A Woman's Place doesn't often get to highlight its successes due to the confidential nature of its work.

The shelter, however, recently earned national attention for its work supporting those in rural communities.

[DomesticShelters.org](https://www.domesticshelters.org) granted the 2022 Purple Ribbon Award for Winner for "Rural Initiative of the Year" to A Woman's Place.

Rural Initiative of the Year is offered to an organization that makes a substantial and positive impact on the lives of domestic violence survivors in rural areas through education, raising awareness and helping end domestic abuse, according to Diane Heldt, executive director of A Woman's Place.

"I think it's an encouragement to be recognized for the hard work that we do," Heldt said.

Heldt, with 21 years of nonprofit experience, joined A Woman's Place in January 2019.

Since 1977, the organization has provided a supportive environment that empowers domestic violence survivors to rebuild their lives free from violence. Over the past 45 years, the shelter has grown to become a 29-bed safe house with a 24-hour crisis line.

In addition to operating as a shelter, A Woman's Place provides domestic violence victims free and confidential services including legal advocacy, counseling, safety planning, employment support, housing support and more.



A Woman's Place received recognition for its excellence through the 2022 Purple Ribbon Award for Winner for "Rural Initiative of the Year" by DomesticShelters.org. The award aids the organization between \$500,000 and \$2,000,000. (Courtesy of Diane Heldt)

The award underscores the staff's consistent hard work, Heldt said, especially when it comes to reaching the diverse ethnic groups in Weld County.

Diversity is one of the award categories emphasized, which is why Heldt believes A Woman's Place stood out. The agency opens its door to all genders, cultures, races, sexual identities and religious beliefs.

"I'm very proud of not only the staff who are working so hard but also the fact that we are reaching a number of different ethnic groups from Weld County," she said. "Last year, our agency served families that spoke 13 different languages. And 60% of our staff are bilingual."

Though the award is meaningful to A Woman's Place, granting shelter, services and empowerment so victims become safe, secure and self-sufficient is the utmost rewarding aspect of working in domestic violence, Heldt said.

"The award is important, but what's more important is the people that we serve," Heldt said. "Every day we're helping people who are in crisis and bringing them

In 2021, the shelter served 402 adults, according to the agency's website.

"In my office, I have a quote from one of our recent clients that says, 'You helped save my life,' and I think that that's more important than any award," Heldt said.

To support

A Woman's Place has two fundraisers planned later this year, including a [cornhole tournament fundraiser](#) Aug. 27 at Island Grove Park and [the annual Gala](#) Oct. 22 at Aims Community College.

For more information or to donate, go to www.awpdv.org. To reach the 24/7 crisis line, call (970) 356-4226.



Morgan McKenzie

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