

31st annual fundraiser for A Woman's Place comes at time of growth

Domestic violence shelter is the only one in Weld County



Clockwise from top left: Anita Templeton McSwain, Susan Vogel, Alice Nava, Lindsey Galindo, Jodi Hartmann and Valeria Ortiz. (Courtesy/Friends of A Woman's Place)



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An increased need for services for victims and survivors of domestic abuse has led to two fundraising efforts this year on behalf of Weld County's only domestic abuse shelter, a nonprofit called A Woman's Place.

The organization recently started a capital campaign for a new safe house to double the current capacity and to improve accessibility and security.

The current shelter serves only eight families at a time, and A Woman's Place has to turn away more than 400 people a year, according to executive director Diane Heldt. Only one bedroom in the current location is accessible for people with disabilities.

“Expansion is important,” Heldt said. “Weld County has tripled in size since we opened the current safehouse, and we know the needs in the community are beyond what the current building can provide.”

On Saturday, an all-volunteer auxiliary board for A Woman’s Place will host its 31st annual Celebrating Women Gala to honor six women who have been leaders and contributors to the Greeley-area community.

Friends of A Woman’s Place hosts the gala from 7:30-10 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 19 at Aims Community College’s Welcome Center, 4901 W. 20th St. in Greeley.

Tickets are \$12.51 for students and \$33.85 for general admission, and are available at fawpdv.org. Tickets are also available at the door.

The honorees this year are Lindsey Galindo, banking vice president; Jodi Hartmann, housing solutions executive; Anita Templeton McSwain, musician and teacher; Alice Nava, nonprofit leader; Valeria Ortiz, senior citizen health and life insurance advocate; and Susan Vogel, early childhood educator.

“We’re so fortunate this community has so many outstanding women, and we’re pleased we get to honor them every year,” Friends of A Woman’s Place board member Jean Morrell said.

A Friends of A Woman’s Place committee selects the honorees based on nominations.

Morrell was among a group of Weld County residents who founded and developed A Woman’s Place in the late 1970s. Planning for A Woman’s Place began in 1977, and the organization incorporated in 1978.

The Celebrating Women Gala will raise money for operations to keep A Woman’s Place open and serving victims, Heldt said. Among the programs benefitting from the funds are the 24-hour crisis line, the safe shelter, language services, safety planning, legal, housing and employment advocacy and counseling.

The gala raised \$105,000 last year.

Galindo is a Greeley native and FirstBank senior vice president of Greeley branches. She is a graduate of the University of Northern Colorado’s Monfort School of Business. In 2022, Galindo was honored with the BizWest Women of Distinction Award in business and finance.

She serves as president of the Greeley-Weld Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors, and she was previously the treasurer of Friends of A Woman’s Place.

Hartmann is the executive director of the High Plains Housing Development Corporation. Her career has been focused on housing solutions in a variety of roles.

Hartmann was previously the executive director of the Greeley Transitional House, now called the Greeley Family House.

Hartmann is currently a leader of the development of the North Weld Village in Greeley, which is an affordable housing campus for more than 150 individuals and families. She has a master's degree in nonprofit management from Regis University.

Templeton McSwain taught music at Cameron and Monfort elementary schools in Greeley-Evans School District 6. In 1990, she was a founding director of the Greeley Children's Chorale, and she's been a member of the Greeley Chorale since 1988.

Templeton McSwain has a bachelor's degree in music education and a master's of education in creative arts. For four years, she organized and produced the entertainment for the gala.

The Greeley Children's Chorale will perform at this year's gala.

Nava is the founder of Gifts from the Heart, a nonprofit to provide items and share community resources with families in need. She volunteered with the Alzheimer's Foundation, providing information and translation in Spanish.

Nava has served on multiple boards including for the Rodarte Center, American Veterans and Latino Chamber. Nava is also a member of International Women Voters, League of United Latin American Citizens and she's president of Padres United at Salida del Sol Academy.

Ortiz has worked in the health and life insurance field since 2013. Ortiz's focus has been on helping senior citizens with healthcare options. She currently runs Ortiz Insurance, a 10-person bilingual agency specializing in Medicare and health and life insurance products.

She is a founding member of Las CEOs, a nonprofit supporting Latina youth with scholarships and mentors. Ortiz has been recognized as entrepreneur of the year by Creando Alianzas, a networking organization for Latinas, and she's earned other awards and recognition from the Evans Area Chamber of Commerce, and a 40 under Forty award and a nomination as a Woman of Distinction from BizWest, a Northern Colorado business journal.

Vogel, recently retired, was an early childhood education teacher for more than 30 years including at the Little Angels Christian Preschool in Windsor. Vogel also worked at Trinity Lutheran school, Gloria Christian Lutheran Preschool and ABC Child Development Centers.

For more than 30 years, Vogel has been a member of Xi Epsilon Lambda chapter of Beta Sigma Phi, which is a an international women's sorority dedicated to lifelong

learning and friendship. Vogel has long served as “Sunshine Chair” for the group, recognizing others with gifts, and phone calls and cards in times of need.

Domestic violence awareness month is recognized in October.

To donate to A Woman’s Place, go to awpdv.org/donate.

For donations to the capital campaign, go to awpdv.org/capital-campaign.