

July 2009

## Dear SOS Members,

I am delighted to have this opportunity to send greetings as your newly elected president and to share an uplifting update with the entire SOS Membership.

We have just celebrated our 2009 Grant Awards at an amazing Annual Meeting! Keynote speaker **Colleen Willoughby**, founder of the Washington Women's Foundation or WWF ([www.wawomensfoundation.org](http://www.wawomensfoundation.org)), reminded us of all the great reasons we are members of SOS.

The motto of our sisters in Seattle is **Giving. Learning. Leading. Together.** In just 13 years, WWF has granted more than \$9.5 million to community organizations and inspired the formation of more than 20 similar funds across the country, including ours.

Colleen was a wonderful speaker and an inspiring woman whom we were honored to get to know during her visit. She encouraged us to continue to:

- Do important work in the community.



Photos by Patti Gabriel

(From left) SOS President Vicki Sheehan, SOS Founder Shelby Schagrin, and Colleen Willoughby, founder of the Washington Women's Foundation.



(From left) SOS Founder and retiring Co-Chair Shelby Schagrin, SOS President Vicki Sheehan and SOS retiring Co-Chair Susan Block.

- Engage and empower our members by offering them educational opportunities.
- Expand our ability to be a part of something that is more meaningful together than what any of us do individually.

This is done by offering excellent research into community needs and educating members about those needs while also pooling funds to make well-researched, meaningful grants that make a notable impact on our community. It was nice to have so many of us together for our Annual Meeting at the Steinberg Gallery and at a wonderful breakfast the next day at Susan Block's home, where we got to know Colleen and more about one another in an informal setting. *(A listing of all the awards we granted this year can be found at the end of this letter.)*

**Shelby Schagrin**, our founder, and **Susan Block**, have served as co-chairs of SOS since its start in 2006. This year, we awarded \$195,000 in grants to the community, bringing our total combined

## Words from SOS Founder

It has been a great honor to have founded and co-chaired SOS with Susan Block over the past three years, greatly assisted by an amazing board. Our growth has been dramatic and significant. We reached a \$500,000 milestone this year -- awarding \$125,000 in 2007, \$180,000 in 2008 and \$195,000 in 2009.

SOS has also built a unique community of extraordinary women who deeply care and together are learning about our region and becoming more confident in giving.

I am very excited by our new leadership team. They are smart, enthusiastic and totally committed to our mission. They will strengthen SOS so we can continue to grow, improve and extend our reach in the community.

*Shelby Schagrin*

grants to \$500,000 in just three years.

Shelby and Susan have taken new leadership roles as immediate past co-chairs, continuing their amazing commitment to contribute their time and extraordinary talents to SOS. Together, they have nurtured



(From left) Retiring SOS Membership Chair Gayle Palmer with SOS members Meghan Sheehan, Lynn Dole, Gwen Wesley (new Membership Chair), Norma Fitzwater, Jan Poneta, Cheryl Holman and Pam Trapp.

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SOS to an organization of 200 members. We are learning more about our community and joining with other interesting women to support organizations that need us now more than ever.

**Thank you from all of us** to Shelby and Susan for your vision, determination, sparkle and talent! We love working with you and look forward to continuing

our efforts together!

Shelby and Susan will remain on our board, which now has 19 members, including six new board members. We have lots of energy for the work we are focusing on over the next two years. The full board is shown below, and we welcome others. The **Nominating Committee** will be seeking ideas for new board members early next year, so *please* let us know if you have an interest! We welcome new faces and like new ideas!

In the coming year, I hope you'll look forward to **more frequent communication and gatherings** with SOS. We are doing important work, and we want each member to know more about what your dollars are doing for the community, and how you can become more involved with SOS if you wish! **Regular communication** is a big key to enhancing your SOS experience, and we will be working on this. (It is a little more

difficult than we might have imagined, but we are going to get there!) It's good to remember we are only three years old and developing our organization takes time!

We also have created an **Education Committee** to address that very important element of our mission:

*The Spirit of St. Louis Women's Fund (SOS) strengthens the St. Louis community through informed, focused grantmaking by educating and inspiring women to engage in significant giving.*

We also plan to offer **more social and educational events** this year. So no matter what your interest in SOS may have been when you joined, I hope you'll take every opportunity for social, educational, and grant-making participation as we advance together. You are warmly encouraged to become involved at any time, on any level.

As I begin a two-year term as president of the SOS Board, I have great excitement and enthusiasm for this opportunity. SOS offers nearly unlimited potential for learning about and doing good in the St. Louis community, while really getting to know a large number of very interesting women. That sounds like great fun to me.

I hope to meet each of you, and would love to hear from you about why you are a member of SOS and what you think we can do to be even better. Join us as we continue to grow and perfect an amazing organization - Spirit of St. Louis Women's Fund.

Yours in spirit,  
Vicki Sheehan

SOS gratefully acknowledges the donation of newsletter services by **Casey Communications, Inc.**  
[www.caseycomm.com](http://www.caseycomm.com)

### Spirit of St. Louis Board of Directors

Vicki Sheehan	President of Board	2009-2011
Lynn Dole	Secretary	2009-2010
Ann Sutter	Treasurer, Chair of Finance	2009-2011
Marie Casey	Chair, Communications/Public Relations	2009-2011
Linda Finerty	Chair, Education	2009-2011
Felice Joyce	Co-Chair, Grantmaking	2009-2011
Elaine Queathem	Chair, Grantmaking	2009-2011
Ilene Ordower	Chair, Nominating	2009-2010
Mary Schoolman	Chair, Evaluations	2009-2011
Gwen Wesley	Chair, Membership	2009-2011
Parker McMillan	Website	2009-2010
Pat Cole	At-Large	2009-2010
Allison Ferring	At-Large	2009-2010
Norma Fitzwater	At-Large	2009-2010
Gayle Palmer	At-Large	2009-2010
Pam Trapp	At-Large	2009-2010
Carol Wall	At-Large	2009-2010
Shelby Schagrin	Founder, Immediate Past Co-Chair of Board	2009-2011
Susan Block	Immediate Past Co-Chair of Board	2009-2011



(From left) SOS Members Annie Schlafly, Sally Cohn and Judy Harris.



(From left) SOS Membership Chair Gwen Wesley with members Felice Joyce and Lily Seymour.



(From left) SOS Grantmaking Chairs Parker McMillan and Elaine Queathem with grant recipient, Dawn Davis Belizaire, of CASA.

## The Spirit of St. Louis Women's Fund Bucks Downward Donation Trend

### Group Awards \$195,000 in Charitable Grants to 13 Area Nonprofit Organizations

Since its founding in 2006, SOS has awarded more than \$500,000 in grants to support 33 varied grassroots nonprofits across the bi-state region. In 2009, more than 100 St. Louis-area organizations requested grants from SOS exceeding a total of \$2 million. The 2009 grant recipients and the amounts awarded in early June follow.



(From left) SOS Grantmaking Chairs Parker McMillan and Elaine Queathem with grant recipient, Dr. Brady, of the Mildred Brady and Rena Martin Charitable Foundation.

Grant Recipients	Purpose	SOS Grant Funding
<b>ALIVE</b>	Provides counseling, emergency sanctuary and critical services to adults and children impacted by domestic abuse	<b>\$10,000</b> to support the "Nights of Safety" program
<b>Boys Hope Girls Hope of St. Louis</b>	Provides value-centered homes and education through college to in-need children	<b>\$10,000</b> to support summer programs and educational activities
<b>CASA</b>	Advocates for abused and neglected children from birth to 18 years of age needing safe, permanent homes	<b>\$20,000</b> toward adding two case advocacy supervisors to staff
<b>College Bound</b>	Provides underprivileged high school students with the academic tools and life skills needed to succeed in college	<b>\$20,000</b> to support 150 current and future students
<b>Immigrant &amp; Refugee Women's Program</b>	Teaches English, life skills and domestic abuse rights to immigrant women	<b>\$12,000</b> to support services to 100 women for one year
<b>Legal Advocates for Abused Women (LAAW)</b>	Provides crisis intervention, advocacy and legal representation	<b>\$20,000</b> to support free legal representation and the crisis/legal helpline
<b>The Little Bit Foundation</b>	Provides clothing and supplies to disadvantaged school children at 12 St. Louis area schools	<b>\$20,000</b> to sponsor one additional school
<b>The Mildred Brady and Rena Martin Charitable Foundation</b>	Provides comprehensive eye care to the homeless and medically disenfranchised	<b>\$25,000</b> for optical goods and services
<b>Project Backpack</b>	Supplies backpacks filled with necessities to at-risk children removed from homes during a crisis	<b>\$5,000</b> to support staff and <b>\$10,000</b> to buy backpacks and items
<b>Ready Readers</b>	Inspires at-risk preschool children to read by hosting readings and increasing exposure to books and stimulating activities	<b>\$15,000</b> to recruit volunteers and purchase books
<b>Sherwood Forest Camp</b>	Develops the character and competence of children through camp experiences in a healthy, caring community	<b>\$4,000</b> to support six campers for 12 days
<b>St. Louis ArtWorks</b>	Provides work experience through art apprenticeships to St. Louis metropolitan youth	<b>\$4,000</b> to support four apprentices in a six-week summer program
<b>St. Martha's Hall</b>	Helps abused women and children break the cycle of violence in their lives	<b>\$20,000</b> to fund the children's program coordinator position