



SOWN Together:

Supporting Adults, especially Women 50+, through Life's Transitions

THE E-NEWSLETTER OF THE SUPPORTIVE OLDER WOMEN'S NETWORK

March 2010

News from the Executive Director

Dear Readers:

This issue marks the start of exciting transitions for SOWN! As we undergo marvelous changes we continue to expand in creative ways to match the increase in demands for our programs and services for older adults. Our first change is to welcome seven new staff members. We are excited to have this wonderful combination of talent, experience, and personality among our new staff.

Our continued successes could not have been accomplished without you—SOWN remains a powerful network of *people* because of our subscribers and supporters, and as always, I am deeply grateful for these connections.

Until Next Month,

Merle Drake

Meet the New Staff

Karen Bareiss, MSW, Financial Analyst. Karen first offered her financial services in 2009 as a SOWN volunteer and joined the staff in January. She brings immense experience as a former teacher and social worker with twenty-five years of corporate and not-for-profit finance expertise. She enjoys conducting architectural walking tours as a volunteer guide for the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia and is a skiing enthusiast.

Hillary Blecker, MPH, Healthy Living Coach and Educator. Hillary has done civic engagement work with immigrants in Pennsylvania and developed an immigrant leadership program. Other experience includes coordinating an occupational health and safety program for day laborers in Seattle, and conducting health and safety trainings for meatpacking and poultry workers and farm workers. She has extensive experience in designing and facilitating participatory education. Hillary speaks English, Spanish, and Hebrew.



New Staff Members

Top Row: Kim Cox, Karen Bareiss, Seulky McInneshein, Ebony Carter, Hillary Blecker, and Arlene Segal.

Bottom Row: Maura Kelly.

In Brief

SOWN's **GrandFamily Resource Center** held its first conference to connect kinship caregivers, many of whom are grandmothers, to other caregivers and to community resources. The workshops focused on ways to keep vulnerable families together by supporting these grandparents in their role of raising grandchildren while living in distressed communities. Almost 60 kinship caregivers and community members attended.

SOWN Together:

Meet the New Staff (*continued*)

Ebony Carter, Community Engagement and Outreach Specialist. Ebony has over five years of community development experience, working with underserved communities, assisting with program and project implementation. She also spent time in eastern Montana, with a focus on programs with the Native American community. She has a Bachelor of Arts in History, and plans to pursue a dual degree in English/JD.

Kim Cox, LSW, GrandFamily Resource Center Social Worker. Beginning in development for the arts in Virginia, she moved to California and worked for the environmental movement and found her love of social service with the Bay Area Red Cross in San Francisco. A native Texan, she moved to Austin to be closer to her family and work with Candlelighters, a foundation that serves children with cancer and their families, and later worked with the Center for Battered Women. Within the last seven years she has been pursuing her interests in working with older women and creative writing. She has a certificate in facilitating writing workshops from Amherst Women and Writers and in Gestalt Therapy from the Pennsylvania Gestalt Center. She is a graduate of Bryn Mawr College School of Social Work and Social Research. When not at work, Kim enjoys reading mysteries, working crossword and Sudoku puzzles and relaxing with her husband Ned and her mini schnauzer Colby.

Maura Kelly, Operations Manager. Maura has a diverse background that includes employment at an Independent Living Center, a Tax Accounting/Mortgage Broker Firm, and Big Brothers Big Sisters International. She has worked as an Office Manager, Technical Writer, and Independent Living Specialist. She is the youngest of 6, with siblings, literally, all over the world.

Seulky McInneshein, Ph.D., Deputy Director. Seulky has served as Director of the Remley Women's Center and as a history professor with specialties in women's history and African-American history. Having lived in 6 states, she still says y'all and you betcha on occasion. She is a graduate of Duke University and the University of Minnesota.

Arlene Segal, MS, Growing Healthy Lives Together Program Coordinator. Arlene began her career at the Supportive Older Women's Network in 1983, serving as the Direct Service Coordinator until 1992. In that capacity, Arlene initiated and facilitated dozens of support groups throughout the Philadelphia area. She also helped to design and present trainings for peer and professional leaders. Throughout her career, Arlene also coordinated an elder abuse prevention task force, a geriatric care management program and an RSVP program. After spending 10 years in the private sector, while also serving on SOWN's Board of Directors, Arlene has returned to SOWN as the Project Coordinator for *Growing Healthy Lives Together*. Arlene received a Bachelor's in History from Temple and a Master of Science degree in Community Counseling and Human Services from Villanova.

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Because No One Should Age Alone

For more information, or to send a donation: www.sown.org