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WE CAN Celebrates 20 Years of Meeting Women’s Needs in Critical Times

20th Anniversary Fund Launches with Strong Support from the Business Community

HARWICH PORT, MA – June 29, 2021 - Since 2001, WE CAN has supported and empowered women going through major life transitions and challenges. This year, the nonprofit celebrates 20 years serving the Cape Cod community.

WE CAN relies on the generous support of volunteers, and individual and business donors to provide *free* services, referrals and resources to help women foster independence and create lasting positive change in their lives. More than 300 volunteers, including more than 40 attorneys, are engaged with the organization, offering their time, expertise and support to participants through legal consultation and financial counseling, employment and career support, and mentorship programs.

“WE CAN serves more than 2,400 Cape women a year because of the generosity of our volunteers and donors.” said Lisa Guyon, WE CAN’s Executive Director. “Over the last 20 years, we have had the honor of empowering thousands of women in our community to find pathways to stability and self-sufficiency in their lives.”

WE CAN’s programs continued without interruption during COVID-19 with staff and volunteers utilizing new technology to deliver services virtually to ensure that women and families received help and resources during a time of complex personal and social challenges.

“WE CAN not only endured COVID-19, we thrived”, according to Teri Cavanagh, President of WE CAN’s Board of Directors, and a Bourne resident. “As we celebrate this important milestone and move into our next decade of work, WE CAN is investing in technology and developing programs that will allow us to expand access to our services for women throughout the entire Cape Cod region.”

In honor of this milestone anniversary and to support the organization’s programs and strategic efforts , WE CAN donors David and Gail Oppenheim, and Sandy Wycoff and Jeff Lang have led an effort to launch the **WE CAN 20th Anniversary Fund**, and each have seeded the fund with a \$50,000 donation. Both couples hope to inspire other donors and the community to raise \$500,000 to support WE CAN. Oppenheim says, “We just felt it was the right time for us to step up – and show everyone that we are fully confident in WE CAN today and in its future.”

David and Gail own the Chatham Wayside Inn, and are passionate about the benefits WE CAN offers to the entire community. “As employers, we are always looking for great people,” he says. “But if one of our people is in trouble, we want to make sure they can reach out and get help. When a woman is in a

stronger place, she is more successful at her job. She interacts confidently with her coworkers and the public. She fuels her growth, enabling her to support her family and they are all afforded more options for their lifestyle. WE CAN benefits the entire community.”

Sandy Wycoff owns the Chatham Clothing Bar and echoes Oppenheim’s feelings about community investment. “I believe the reason WE CAN has endured for 20 years – and will be here for 20 more years – is because they don’t just offer a one-size-fits-all solution. WE CAN provides women with a tool box so they can find their own answers, and everyone’s answers are different.”

As the organization reflects on their first 20 years, there is certainly a forward momentum. After more than a year providing services remotely due to the pandemic, in person workshops and consultations are resuming – and the focus is on making sure anyone who might need help knows how to get it. “The last year has created even more complexity in the lives of the women we serve. Because of our volunteers and donors, WE CAN is able to help women move through employment, financial, legal and life challenges and find opportunities to improve their lives,” according to Guyon. “This 20th Anniversary Fund is vital to WE CAN realizing its strategic plans with a continued build out of our technology infrastructure, eliminating physical barriers so all women can receive the tools they need. As such, 20% of all gifts will go to our established endowment.”

“Even after 20 years, WE CAN is offering a unique service,” Oppenheim says. “The staff and volunteers pull everyone together to help a woman in a challenging position, help her to get to a point where she can deal with her day-to-day realities and build on that to realize her full potential.”

To learn more or to make a contribution to the 20th Anniversary Fund, visit WECANCenter.org

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