

OCC programs help women making strides

BY AILEEN WINGBLAD
SPECIAL WRITER

Women today face a host of challenges as they continue to expand their horizons and develop their full potential, whether it be working through divorce, exploring career options, pursuing higher education and searching for personal enrichment.

These struggles needn't be met alone.

The Womencenter, on Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus, has, since 1972, continued to provide hope and support by women for women dealing with issues and concerns in the workplace, at school or at home. As the Womencenter's staff and volunteers mark 25 years of fulfilling their mission of "Women Helping Women," they celebrate the progress made thus far while keeping their sights set on future endeavors.

"We've really moved along as the women's movement has moved along, which is not at all unusual. In many ways the Womencenter has mirrored the women's movement," said Arlene Frank, Womencenter program coordinator since 1992.

"As women have begun to see themselves as able to be more, to do more, our programs have expanded as well. In fact, during the past 25 years we've touched on just about every kind of program to make a difference in women's lives, challenging them to use their minds, challenging them to use their skills and capabilities," she said.

From self-improvement workshops to divorce support groups, from annual health conferences to scholarship assistance, the Womencenter addresses needs of women students and community. "Women from all walks of life walk through our doors," Frank added. "We provide support for each other, support through resources. As women venture into new arenas, whether professional or personal, they can feel uncomfortable and isolated. With the Womencenter, they are offered encouragement, support and help. It's a place where women can be themselves, a place to connect with other women, share feelings and share challenges."

The Womencenter originated from a common vision of OCC faculty members Sadie Davis and Mary White at a time when the student population started tipping to predominantly female. Joining with students, staff and community members, Davis and White laid the framework for the center, providing the now and returning "non-traditional" students a unique, nurturing environment where they could find direction and empowerment, Frank said.

By the early 1970s, some 60 percent of OCC's students were female; that percentage has remained constant ever since. "We attribute this population to economic pressures and the need for two income families, forcing women into a job market which

requires new or updated skills. And there is the unfolding of the fuller reality of women to reach their economic potential," she added.

Two programs which are offered every year by the Womencenter are the Self-Esteem Workshop for Women, which ran earlier this month, and the Assertiveness Workshop for Women, scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 22.

Frank explained that these are "staples" of the Womencenter, particularly because of certain societal pressures that can steer women into passive, static roles.

"We're trying to help women move forward with their lives. In this society it is often (still) difficult for women to have a sense of self, much less a positive sense of self. With the factors that come into play — advertising, the type of family one was raised in, the media — these effects are very powerful in giving a message to women about who they are supposed to be."

"Women often don't really see who they are and who they can be; they are held back, misjudging their own inner strengths. It's hard for women to make it clear that 'This is who I am and this is where I want to be,' she said.

Every month, the Womencenter also hosts a legal clinic where local attorneys are available for advice and information; 1/2 hour appointments are provided for a \$6 donation. "Mostly women come in with questions on divorce and custody issues. The attorneys talk about what options are available and how to move ahead," Frank added.

One-on-one peer counseling is offered by the center as well, on a walk-in or by-appointment basis. Counselors are trained in listening and problem-solving skills. There is no fee for this service, however, long-term counseling at the center is not available.

Frank noted that the Womencenter is very effective for those who take advantage of it, with women using its services in varying degrees. "Some turn to the Womencenter in a small way, such as to get information or a referral. Others come to the seminars and workshops, while others are seeking support. The impact we have on them in either helping them take a first step or the next step, as they move along in their lives to become the people they want to be."

The Womencenter is located in "A" building at OCC-Orchard Ridge. For more information on the Womencenter and its program offerings, call (810) 471-7602.

The Womencenter's 25th anniversary celebration will be held at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 18, in the Studio Cafe on the Orchard Ridge campus. Reservations are required and tickets are available for \$19.75 (honoring the year the center opened) at the Womencenter, (810) 471-7602.

By the early 1970s, some 60 percent of OCC's students were female; that percentage has remained constant ever since. "We attribute this population to economic pressures and the need for two income families, forcing women into a job market which



Speaks Tuesday: Noted Civil rights activist speaks at Oakland on Tuesday.

Civil rights leader speaks at OU

Myrlie Evers-Williams, chairwoman of the NAACP Board of Directors and widow of slain civil rights leader, Medgar Evers, will speak at 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 18, at Oakland University's Meadow Brook Theatre.

The legendary civil rights activist and author of *For Us, The Living*, a book depicting the life of her late husband and the civil rights struggle in Mississippi, will lecture on the topic: "The Ghosts of Mississippi."

Evers-Williams is portrayed by Whoopi Goldberg in *Ghosts of Mississippi*, now playing in local theaters. The feature-length film details Evers-Williams' 30-year struggle to bring her husband's

murderer, avowed racist Byron De La Beckwith, to justice.

Tireless pioneers of the Civil Rights Movement, Medgar and Myrlie Evers worked to help blacks in the impoverished Mississippi Delta attain voting rights, economic stability and justice in the '60s and '70s. The Evers opened and managed the first NAACP Mississippi State Office, and were the target of constant threats.

In June 1963, Evers was fatally shot while standing in his driveway. Although De La Beckwith was charged with the crime, he went free after two hung jury trials. In 1994, Evers-Williams saw the third trial, in

which De La Beckwith was tried and found guilty of murder. He is now serving life in prison.

Evers-Williams' address, the third installment of OU's Student Life Lecture Series, is sponsored by the Student Life Lecture Board, Student Congress and the Student Program Board. It is also part of OU's African-American Celebration Month festivities.

Tickets for the general public are \$10, \$7 for OU faculty, staff and alumni associates; and \$4 for students. They can be purchased at the service window of the Campus Information and Programs Office, 49 Oakland Center, (810) 370-4407.



Arlene Frank Womencenter program coordinator



Introducing
a new
way to
stretch
your
Medicare
benefits
and your
dollars

M-CARE'S NEW HEALTH PLAN FOR PEOPLE ON MEDICARE

M-CARE's new Senior Plan offers the extra benefits you want at virtually no extra cost. It's a wise choice for so many reasons — no monthly premium beyond your normal Medicare payment, hardly any paperwork, and so many member-friendly benefits:

- > Comprehensive hospitalization coverage
- > \$500 annual prescription benefits
- > \$7 prescriptions
- > \$7 office visits with Senior Plan physicians
- > Extra wellness and health promotion benefits

What's more, M-CARE's Senior Plan has a one-year accreditation from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). As an M-CARE Senior Plan member, you may choose from more than 2,000 of Michigan's most experienced physicians and

specialists and have access to the state's leading hospitals including Beaumont, Botsford, Chelsea, Genesys Regional Medical Center, Oakwood, Providence, St. John, St. Joseph Mercy Macomb and the University of Michigan Medical Center.

So why pay extra for supplemental coverage? M-CARE's new Senior Plan offers the extra coverage you want at virtually no extra cost, for everyone who is eligible for Medicare. Plan now to attend our next informational meeting in your neighborhood by calling (800) 810-1699.

M-CARE
SENIOR PLAN

M-CARE SENIOR PLAN INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS:

Location: Bill Knapp's Restaurant 36650 Grand River Ave. Farmington Hills	Location: Bill Knapp's Restaurant 2078 E. Big Beaver Rd. Troy	Location: Bakers Square Restaurant 26660 Greenfield Rd. Oak Park
Times: February 6 - 9:30 AM February 20 - 9:30 AM	Times: February 7 - 9:30 AM February 14 - 9:30 AM February 21 - 9:30 AM February 28 - 9:30 AM	Times: February 5 - 9:30 AM February 11 - 9:30 AM February 18 - 9:30 AM February 25 - 9:30 AM
Location: Bakers Square Restaurant 825 Bowers St. Birmingham	Location: Bill Knapp's Restaurant 27925 Orchard Lake Rd. Farmington Hills	Location: Bob Evan's Restaurant 26245 Telegraph Rd. Southfield
Times: February 5 - 9:00 AM February 12 - 9:00 AM February 19 - 9:00 AM February 26 - 9:00 AM	Times: February 13 - 9:30 AM February 27 - 9:30 AM	Times: February 4 - 2:00 PM February 11 - 2:00 PM February 18 - 2:00 PM February 25 - 2:00 PM

Refreshments will be served at the informational meetings. Reservations are recommended. Call (800) 810-1699 for reservations or to schedule a home appointment. No cost or obligation.

Golf benefits arthritis

The Arthritis Foundation is offering the 1997 Michigan Golfers Discount Guide with 500 rounds of free golf for a \$25 donation and \$3 shipping fee. The bound, four-color coupon book lists all the public golf courses in Michigan. It lists the address, telephone number, directions, number of holes, par and total yardage for each course.

There are more than 350 public golf courses throughout Michigan that are participating in offering "two for the price of one" coupons in this book. Many of the coupons can be redeemed

two to four times. The coupons are valid from April — November 1997.

According to the Arthritis Foundation, doctors know that when arthritis is under control, people can improve their health and fitness through exercise, without hurting their joints. Exercising for fitness is as important for people with arthritis as for anyone else.

For more information about arthritis or the Gopher Discount Guide, contact the Arthritis Foundation, Michigan Chapter at (800) 968-3030 or (810) 424-9001.

The M-CARE Senior Plan is a product of M-CARE, a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) with a Medicare contract. Anyone with Medicare may apply,* including those under age 65 entitled to Medicare on the basis of Social Security Disability Benefits. Members must continue paying Medicare premiums. Senior Plan members must use M-CARE Plan Providers and contracted pharmacies. An M-CARE Sales Representative will be present at the informational meetings and provide more information and application forms. *Persons receiving Medicare benefits for End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) or Hospice Care are not eligible for the M-CARE Senior Plan.

97-025-SM