

State Organizational History

Mrs. Jaycees

First talk of a state organization was in the fall of 1949. Some Jaycee wives met in Brainerd to discuss the pros and cons of a state organization. Those in attendance were: Brainerd, Minneapolis, White Bear Lake, Pipestone, Grand Rapids, Winona, Moorhead, Hibbing and St. Paul. There were 27 members in total in attendance. Plans were set to meet again in March 1950. It was at that meeting that the late Tres Getting, Jaycee President, urged the women to organize the Mrs. Jaycees of Minnesota.

A chairman was elected and a committee assigned to work on the preliminary constitution. In May of 1950, at the Jaycee convention in Moorhead, the vote was in favor of a state organization. The Mrs. Jaycees of Minnesota was born, the ninth state to organize such a group.

The bylaws were adopted and we were a bona fide organization. Each chapter was entitled to one member on the Board of Directors. In September of 1950, the name "Mrs. Jaycees of Minnesota" was accepted.

Our first concern was membership and this became our first state subject. In the second year, we concentrated primarily on keeping the members active and interested. The third year, we were really put to the test when Minneapolis was host to the National Jaycee Convention. Each of the sixteen chapters sent favorite recipes, which were made into a cookbook and sold as souvenirs for our state money making project.

During the next five years, we grew to over 60 chapters. During this period, a bylaw revision created an executive council. This was composed of all state officers and met prior to each State Meeting. The state organization was divided into six regions with a vice president heading each region; she also served on the executive council.

In 1957, we incorporated and expanded in size and ideas. Minnesota had grown into the largest Mrs. Jaycees organization in the nation with 90 chapters and nine regions.

By 1965, redistricting was necessary - 126 chapters and 14 regions. In 1967, the executive council structure changed to add an internal and external vice president. Redistricting occurred also in 1967 -- 137 chapters and 18 regions.

In 1968, our growth reached 19 regions and 147 chapters. The state membership was 2919. Bylaws were revised and the names of the vice presidents were changed to First Executive and Second Executive Vice Presidents with their region number following.

In 1970, we had 22 regions. In 1973, we changed regions to districts and a large redistricting took place. We now had 24 districts. In Birmingham, Alabama, another historic event was taking place - the groundwork was being laid for our National organization.

At the Summer Awards in 1974, we celebrated our 25th anniversary. A special celebration was held with several of our past presidents returning to celebrate. In June the US Jaycee Executive Committee voted unanimously to support the US Jayceettes organization in San Diego, CA. Minnesota made the motion to become a national organization. Membership in the chartering organization was offered to our membership as an option.

Jaycee Women

In 1975, at Summer Awards, open membership was passed. Now, any woman meeting the age requirements could become a member. In 1976, we had 4000 Mrs. Jaycees; we redistricted and had 33 districts. In May of 1979, our name was changed to Minnesota Jaycee Women. We voted

to become members of the US Jayceettes as a state, requiring every member of our organization to be a member of the US Jayceettes.

In 1979, our membership had grown to 5000. We changed our bylaws and policies concerning Vice Presidents and set up our staff with administrative, programming and operations vice president positions. At national convention in Nashville, Tennessee, Minnesota was named **#1 state in the nation** and came home with many national awards.

In 1980, the name of state vice presidents was changed to district directors. Again, additions were made to staff: chapter management, US Jaycees liaison, communications coordinator and ways and means coordinator. We redistricted to 35 districts and 5600 members. In February of 1981, a major redistricting proposal was passed and we had Ten Outstanding Young Minnesotans (TOYM). We hired our first executive director for the new Minnesota Jaycee Women Chapter Service Center, funded through state ways and means projects.

In 1981-1982, we elected our first regional directors. The programming vice president position was divided into internal and external. We had our first chaplain/family life coordinator. It was a landmark year for Minnesota--we never left the top four in the Parade of States for the entire year and for four months we were the #1 state in the nation.

Affiliation was a big issue in 1982-1983. The US Jaycees said that there had to be a Jaycee chapter in order to have a Jaycee Women chapter in the community. We worked closely with the Jaycees to establish Jaycee chapters, so that no Jaycee Women chapters would be lost. Organization of the Minnesota Jaycee Women Foundation was completed. The name of the state program coordinator was instrumental in bringing the name change of the US Jayceettes to the US Jaycee Women.

The year 1983-1984 saw the deletion of the operations vice presidential position. The US Jaycee Women liaison position was changed to National Projects and was changed from a staff to a program manager position. We redistricted to 37 districts and 5060 members.

Women of Today

The year of 1984-1985 was a year of many challenges and changes. On July 3, 1984, the Supreme Court ruled that women must be granted full membership in the Jaycees. A subsequent action by the US Jaycees was successfully taken off the agenda at their special meeting. Minnesota set up a steering committee to examine our options in the event the proposal was brought up again. At the winter district meetings, three options were discussed and opinions obtained from the membership: (1) to merge with the Jaycees; (2) to disaffiliate from the Jaycees; (3) to remain the way we were. In March, through a special mail vote, the membership voted to disaffiliate from the Jaycees. On July 1, 1985, we became the Minnesota Women of Today with 184 chapters, 30 districts and 3670 members.

In 1985-1986, the name of internal programming changed: Parade became Success System, Springboard became STEP (Success Through Enthusiastic Participation), Individual Development became Personal Enrichment and Today's Woman became Women of the 80's. March of Dimes was voted in as a permanent external programming area. Fall Mini-State Meetings replaced the Fall Region Meetings and Fall All State Convention. The first top five Outstanding Young Women and first Outstanding Women in Government were recognized at Winter State. Our name and logo were trademarked. Three new personal enrichment course books were written. National officers from Minnesota were Barb Fish, Charter Chairman; Dawn Young, Charter Treasurer; and Lynn Kovash, Parliamentarian.

In 1986-1987, ten new chapter extensions were completed. Children's Miracle Network became a two-year priority project. The Future Directions Committee was restructured and redefined. A plaque was presented to Camp Confidence at Annual for our fundraising work on Coffee Days.

The 1987-1988 year began with the National Convention in Mankato. Our membership voted to replace the Fall Mini Meetings with Fall State in November. The Women of Today Foundation awarded the first Chapter Grant and started a Scholarship Fund to be awarded to WT members returning to school. At Fall State 1988 we had four motivational speakers and the membership had their choice of sessions. At the luncheon, Pat Branstad, National President, was our speaker. The motion to raise dues from \$15 to \$20 was passed.

1989-1990 marked the 40th anniversary of our organization. At Winter State, we celebrated with special guests and a program that highlighted each year. Sixteen of our past state presidents and our National President Pat Zeinz were present. Major redistricting was conducted due to the vote to eliminate regions and the regional director position. We had 22 districts. Future Directions formed an Age Requirement Review Committee to study the pros and cons of open ending our age requirement.

1990-1991 was a year of change. Connie Luedtke was elected president but for personal reasons was unable to fulfill her duties and resigned in September. Tami Ward-Dahl, Administrative Vice President, assumed the office and completed the year. At the Winter State Convention, we celebrated year-to-date growth for the first time since we became Women of Today. Eleven extensions were completed and year-end membership was 2539. At Annual, the first four US Ambassadors were awarded to Dawn Young, Mary Kay Verkennes, Nancy Dvoracek, and Barb Fish.

In 1991-1992, the Minnesota Women of Today showed year-end growth for the first time since we became Women of Today. We ended the year with 21 districts, 157 chapters and 2555 members. Twelve new chapter extensions were completed. Over \$232,822 was raised and donated to our Foundations and our communities. Our organization was recognized by the National Kidney Foundation with the Volunteer Service Award, and three officers traveled to Baltimore, Maryland, for the presentation. A fax and binding machine were purchased for the Chapter Service Center. Our National President, Deb Van Matre from Gibbon, Nebraska was our keynote speaker at Fall State in Rochester. At the Annual Convention in Grand Rapids, Susan Schuler and Pat Branstad were recognized as US Ambassadors.

In 1992-1993, we focused on organizational strengthening, setting up Gold Team Director positions, updating our financial record keeping, developing a new five year plan, writing 17 manuals, piloting a new fundraising approach and improving PR, highlighted by President Mary Hudson throwing out a first ball on Twins Day at the Dome. At Fall State USWT President Mary Malmberg was our keynote speaker and the membership selected the Lupus Foundation as a new external programming area. At Winter State, we voted to retain our focus on Leadership training for young women. Mary Moeller and Bonnie O'Neil were recognized as US Ambassadors. Aid to Retarded Citizens was renamed People with Developmental Challenges. At year-end, we had 155 chapters and 2438 members with eight newly extended chapters.

In 1993-1994, we reached year-to-date growth for the second time in our Women of Today history -- ending the year with 2439 members, 147 chapters and 6 new extensions. With an increased public relations focus, we distributed over 27,000 Women of Today placemats statewide, manned a booth at the State Fair distributing information about our organization and gained increased community awareness. At Fall State, USWT President, Carmella Mongold of

Missouri was the keynote speaker. At the Fall business meeting, our membership voted to include any woman over the age of 18 as a full member. Future Directions developed the Marketing Team as a separate standing committee. Mary Malmberg and Cindy Glamm were recognized as US Ambassadors. Over \$200,000 was raised and donated to our foundations and communities and the Camp Friendship boathouse renovation fundraising goal was met.

In 1994-1995, we reached year-to-date growth for the third time in our Women of Today history and our second year in a row, ending the year at 2442 members, 135 chapters and four new extensions. At Summer Awards, USWT President Linda Gates was the keynote speaker. We set our focus early on celebrating our 45th anniversary. We established a statewide public relations project Tucked in With Care collecting bedding for Mary Jo Copeland's new homeless shelter, Mary's Place. This project was a great success that brought the entire state together, and Mary Jo visited Winter State to speak with us on the plight of the poor. At Winter State Sheila Carroll and Tami Ward-Dahl were recognized as US Ambassadors. Over \$175,000 was raised and donated to our foundations and communities.

In 1995-1996 growth eluded us once again as we ended the year at -16 members. At year-end, we had 2427 members, 128 chapters and four new extensions. At Fall State USWT President Joey Hedstrom was the keynote speaker. Public relations was a major focus as we worked to enhance our name recognition by having a booth at five different expos. This resulted in much needed publicity, many leads on prospective members and several new members for our chapters. We reorganized the GOLD team system, developed a rejuvenation kit to assist chapters struggling with membership and implemented the Phoenix Award to recognize chapters that have rebuilt their chapter structure. After several years of fundraising, our members and their families and other volunteers worked to renovate the Camp Friendship boathouse celebrating its completion in May 1996. An Outstanding Person with Developmental Challenges award was implemented with our first recipient recognized at Annual Convention. Our members reported that over \$250,000 was raised and donated to our foundations and communities.

In 1996-1997, we focused on extensions, further developing our marketing efforts and updating the five-year plan through Future Directions. Seven new chapters were extended, and an extension team was formulated. Growth eluded us once again, as we ended the year at 2373 members, 127 chapters and 18 districts. At Winter State, US President Deb Peters was the Keynote Speaker. Val Kvale-Lunning and Amy Pumper were recognized as US Ambassadors. Through marketing, information booths were sponsored at eight expos or events, bringing essential publicity and over 600 prospective names. The Boathouse was dedicated at Camp Friendship in Annandale with Lieutenant Governor Joanne Benson as the guest speaker. Over \$200,000 was raised and donated to our Foundations and communities, including a donation of over \$3,000 to flood relief.

Highlights from 1997-1998 included expanded participation in expos. We sponsored our first professional expo at the Summer Awards convention, bringing in 21 business booths. We continued to promote the organization through participation in six women's expos held in various parts of the state, giving us yet again hundreds of names to follow up on. At Fall State, the Towels and Toys project kicked off and ended at Winter State with thousands of towels and toys collected for a homeless shelter. Our membership ended at 2355, with five new chapters extended. We started and ended with 126 chapters. Chapters reported over \$420,800 raised for our foundations and communities, including the new priority project: the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation. Our leadership continued strong, evidenced by having nine MNWT serving the

USWT. Keynote speaker at the Winter State convention was USWT President Sheila Carroll. Deb Peters and Christine Jones were recognized as US Ambassadors.

In 1998-1999, our focus on membership resulted in history being made. For the first time in our 14-year history of Women of Today, we grew all four quarters, ending the year at +38 (2393). We ended the year with one more chapter for a total of 127 chapters. Other highlights from the year included: The 3000 by 2000 committee was renamed the Membership Management Committee; a mission statement and plan of action were implemented making it a permanent committee. Public Relations was successful in getting media attention throughout the year including radio, newsprint, and TV coverage at Fall State convention. Winter State brought the conclusion of the statewide Beth Mensing House project with over \$4000 in donations and 100% of our districts participating in this Kidney Disease project that was featured in the Star Tribune. Annual Convention brought the second Buckets of Sunshine collections to Detroit Lakes, this along with the Fall State collection resulted in over \$5000 worth of donated items to community action programs. External programs reported \$337,389.21 in fund-raising for our communities and the foundations we support.

In 1999-2000, we celebrated our 50th anniversary at Winter State 2000, with 27 past state presidents in attendance. Special events were held throughout the weekend including a memorabilia room, past state president reception, and an anniversary program. A first time event held in August was attending the WNBA Minnesota Lynx game, with proceeds benefiting the Outstanding Young Adult Scholarship fund. The official website of the MN Women of Today was up and running; it is used to market our organization to the public and also for internal use by our members. The Six Principles were approved by the membership at Summer Awards 1999; these principles were a result of compiling information, opinions, and needs of the membership done by the Strategic Plan committee for the previous two years. Vacation of a Lifetime was the statewide project with over \$8650 in sporting equipment and monetary contributions given to Friendship Ventures. At the Annual convention in May 2000, our membership voted to increase dues from \$25 to \$30. Two new chapters were extended during the year and we had 2363 members with 123 chapters.

In 2000-2001, we focused on our five-year plan, implementing many new ideas. At Summer Awards, we held the first Gold Team Buddy recognition ceremony. We continued to promote our organization and our programming areas through many expos around the state and with our project fair at Summer Awards. We also continued with name recognition by attending the WNBA Minnesota Lynx game and the Minnesota Twins games during Women of Today Week. We made many positive changes to our website to make it more informational and user friendly. At Fall State, we presented a Vacation of a Lifetime including sporting equipment and monetary donations totaling over \$4000 to Friendship Ventures to help people with developmental challenges. At Winter State, National President Terri Sherman was our luncheon speaker and special guest for the weekend, and we held our statewide project: Karing for Kids. We donated over \$8000 in toys, games, movies, and car seats to Children's Hospital of St. Paul and Minneapolis. At the Annual Convention in Richfield, we presented more than \$3000 worth of household items to the Beth Mensing Kidney House. In the membership area, we tried a new packet idea for chapters to hold M-nights to recruit and retain their membership. By year-end, we had extended four new chapters and had 2223 members and 119 chapters.

During the year 2001-2002, the focus was on membership. Implementation of the program MLR Day (Members Learning to Recruit) and establishment of a kit to encourage extensions called "Miles to New Beginnings" were part of the process. The year ended with six new

extensions in progress, two new chapters and 17 "Miles to New Beginnings" packets distributed to new communities. Name recognition was promoted as over 300 members and friends attended Minnesota Women of Today Day at the Dome to cheer on the Minnesota Twins. The president / state delegate retreat was the source of great leadership training and the collection place of socks and gloves that were donated to the firefighters in New York City after the 9/11 disaster. Our website continues to be an excellent source of information, as new information is continually added. Winter State brought the conclusion of our statewide, "Safe New Beginnings Project" where over \$7000 was raised for the Domestic Abuse Project and many other shelters. Programming was strong with 2336 internal certifications and \$420,998 in fundraising for our communities and the foundations we support. On April 30, 2002, membership ended with 2221 and 114 chapters with 72% retention for the year.

In the year 2002-2003, we focused on extensions and growth. The Membership Management Committee spearheaded the idea of the "Extension Team" which resulted in four out of our five extensions. Programming 101, a short easy tool to educate the membership on programming, was promoted and handed out by the executive council as they visited over 80 chapters. Our name recognition was again promoted by 250 members at a MN Twins baseball game at the dome. There was a Women's Golden Gopher Basketball game attended by 150 members, which raised funds for the Outstanding Young Adult Scholarship. At Fall State, we presented thousands of teddy bears to the Mayo Clinic and the Rochester Fire Department as a kick off for Kindness Week. The third year of our priority project, Domestic Violence prevention, was completed and Girls Scouts were voted in as the new priority area. At the Winter State convention, we recognized Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer as the Outstanding Women in Government. The Future directions committee adopted a Position Statement in regards to our promotion of 7 members under 40 as a chapter base. We ended the year at growth plus 1, with 2222 members and 114 chapters with 70% retention.

In 2003-2004, we focused on retention, extensions and training. Six extensions were completed, along with a healthy list of extensions in progress to begin the new year. Public relations activity was stressed, with over 200 attendees at the Minnesota Women of Today Day at the Dome. The Gophers game, raising funds for the Outstanding Young Adult scholarship program, had 125 individuals attending. Interviews at WCCO radio occurred, along with the creation and distribution of an informational video by the Women's Consortium. At Winter State, we donated \$5,000 in funds to the Jeremiah Program, the recipient of the statewide project.

We participated in our first of a three-year priority project with the Girl Scouts. At Winter State, we honored 5 Outstanding Young Adults, One Outstanding Woman in Government and 6 Outstanding Young Women. At Annual Convention, we collected supplies for our troops overseas in Iraq - over 2,500 pounds of supplies were donated. On April 30, our membership ended with 2,195 members, 116 chapters and 70% retention.

In 2004-2005, we celebrated our 55th anniversary at Winter State 2005, with 25 past state presidents in attendance. The luncheon was the setting of an exciting look at our history and celebration of the many successes of our organization. The weekend also included special events such as a memorabilia room and past state president reception. Public Relations events throughout the year had us attending the Minnesota Women of Today Day at the Dome and the Gopher Women's Basketball game, which raised funds for the Outstanding Young Adult scholarship program. Our statewide project was Project Linus, which brought districts and chapters together to make fleece blankets for children in need. We donated 900 blankets with total donations equaling \$27,000. At Winter State, we honored 5 Outstanding Young Adults and

2 Outstanding Women in Government. Three extensions were completed, helping us end the year with 111 chapters and 2039 members.

In 2005-2006, we focused on membership growth and extensions. Implementation of "Plan to Win with Trek to 2040" was asking every member to participate. Katrina's Kids was a huge undertaking by the External Area – Civic Awareness. MNWT donated money, material items and food items at Fall State. The Cheerful Givers program was a huge success with 2,366 birthday bags being presented at Winter State. We attended the Day at the Dome with 99 members and the MN Women's Gopher Game with 48 participating. The new Programming Model was accepted by the membership and is well under way, we will be implementing the new programming areas in a 2-year process. Girls Scouts has now completed their third year and Jacob Wetterling Foundation was voted to be our next three-year priority area. The year ended with 6 new chapters and 3 in progress with -72 members for the year. On April 30, 2006, membership ended with 1967 and 112 chapters with 68% retention for the year.

Visions of the year 2006-2007 included the new programming model. Phase one of the new model was ready to implement starting in 2007-2008 after many manual reviews, outlines, discussions and bids by state program managers. Our Buckets of Sunshine project – Operation Minnesota Nice – was a tremendous success with donations of cash and material items of over \$43,000 for our troops overseas. Operation Greeting Card was a huge undertaking and resulted in 54,795 greeting cards collected for our troops. We were honored to receive an award from the Minnesota National Guard for Outstanding Support of the National Guard at their annual meeting. Total funds raised in external programming equaled \$446,715.83 and total service hours reported were 16,399.50 – equivalent to \$307,818.61. The Convention Review Committee was hard at work developing new ideas and formats for state meetings and the Executive Council meetings were changed to include more training. We ended the year with 1,764 members and 109 chapters.

Efforts in 2007-2008 resulted in an improved financial picture at year-end and approval of a dues increase. Summary Chapter Information Packets (CIPs) were distributed at conventions with full CIPs provided at MNJOTS and also available online for the remainder of the year. The Strategic Plan Committee formulated a new 2-year plan recommending review and potential changes in several areas to enhance professional image, membership, and name recognition. The Convention Review Committee continues to work on ways to retool conventions. At Winter State, US President Kayla Hermann was our Keynote Luncheon Speaker. Three Outstanding People with Developmental Challenges were honored at the Winter State banquet for the first time along with recognizing one Outstanding Woman in Government and three Outstanding Young Adults. Sharon Robinson was recognized as US Ambassador at Annual Convention 2008. Stitches for Hope was the statewide Buckets of Sunshine project with many volunteers sewing, crocheting, or knitting scarves and hats for cancer and hospital patients totaling a value of \$10,717. A feature story for the project was covered on KARE 11 Live. Other public relations activities included Day at the Dome, the Gopher Women's Basketball game and a live TV drop-off and interview for Toys for Tots. Grand total for external areas of money raised and service hour value was \$607,953.72 -- funds raised \$343,573.71; total service hours reported 13,551 – equivalent to \$264,380.01. The year ended with 1,633 members representing 93 chapters with one extension in progress. Phase One of the new programming model was completed with the debut of Women's Wellness and Records & Recognition.

The 2008-2009 year saw the beginning of many more changes. At Summer Awards we voted to move to the trimester system, which meant many changes to the yearly schedule including,

holding three conventions during the year and having to update the membership database to the trimester system. The Convention Review Committee along with the Executive Director, Nancy Dvoracek worked to make these changes happen. The Pajama Program was the statewide Buckets of Sunshine project for the year with over \$5600 in pajamas and cash donations. Membership was a major focus as we saw three completed extensions to Waconia, St Joseph and Crookston. We showed membership growth +11 during the third quarter. Women of Today went beyond borders in 08-09 when a fellow member moved to Cyprus, a Greek island in the Mediterranean and wanted to start a Women of Today chapter there. At the Annual convention the membership voted to support a sponsorship to Cyprus Women of Today. Grand total for external areas of money raised and service hour value was \$472,862.24 -- funds raised \$301,638.37; total service hours reported 8455 – equivalent to \$171,223.87. The year ended with 1556 members representing 88 chapters with two extensions in progress. The final phase of the programming changes was completed, with the addition of Living and Learning, Community Connections and Youth of Today.

The 2009-2010 year successfully experienced the change from quarters to trimesters and from four conventions to three conventions. At Fall State the format changed to accommodate a Project Fair along with Enrichment Sessions and a Service Project, which was to make Fleece-Tie blankets for the Shriners Children's Hospitals, our Buckets of Sunshine Project for the year. Winter State was themed around our 60th Anniversary as an organization. Thirty past State Presidents were in attendance to celebrate the occasion, along with USWT President Sue Dionne from Wisconsin. Our Buckets of Sunshine Project, Shriners Hospitals was presented \$13,089 in monetary and in-kind donations. We also held a successful Outstanding Awards Banquet, recognizing three Outstanding Young Adults, three Outstanding Person w/Developmental Challenges recipients and our first ever Women Who Impact recipient. At the Annual Convention we celebrated our yearly accomplishments collecting a total of over \$170,352 in External fundraising and the donation of 14,728.50 service hours for a total of \$311,655.06. In addition we held our second statewide service project, making up laundry detergent bags for the local food shelf in Alexandria. In membership, we celebrated monumental accomplishments in the first and second trimester, ending +40 and +24 and 75% and 72% retention respectively. Despite our huge strides in membership in the first and second trimester, we fell short at year end with a total of 1537 members at year end (-20 for the year) and 70% retention. We added one chapter to the Minnesota roster, the Eagan Women of Today and ended the year with 83 chapters. In addition we moved our mid-year Executive Council Training to November and also held LOTS training in April.

In 2010-2011, we focused on leadership training and membership growth. Learning how to maximize their own leadership strengths and mobilize the leadership strengths of others, the Executive Council studied the book, *Strengths Based Leadership*, throughout the year. Over 150 people celebrated "MNWT Day at the Diamond" at a Twins baseball game at the new Target Field. At Fall State in Brooklyn Park, members made over 700 sandwiches for the homeless as our convention service project, which benefited the 363 Days organization. Winter State was held in January in Minneapolis, with the USWT President Deb Stein as our Keynote Luncheon Speaker. We also held a successful Outstanding Awards Banquet, recognizing three Outstanding Young Adults, two Outstanding Person w/Developmental Challenges recipients, and a Women Who Impact recipient. Our Buckets of Sunshine Project was Camp-Get-A-Wella. At the Annual Convention in Morton, we celebrated our yearly programming accomplishments collecting a total of over \$214,439.54 in External fundraising and the donation of 4,553.50 service hours for

a total of \$303,899.54. Long-time Executive Director Nancy Dvoracek, Anoka, retired after 26 years of dedicated service in that role, and Katie Castro, Eden Prairie, was hired. The Minnesota Women of Today raised more than \$2500 for Can Do Canines, in its second year as a Priority Project, allowing us to “Name a Puppy,” which we called “Faith.” In membership, we celebrated growth two trimesters, added 449 new members to our organization, and increased our retention to 74% at year-end, with a total of 1532 members (only -5 for the year) and 81 chapters. Our biggest accomplishment in membership was the addition of 4 new chapters: Andover, Savage Area, Hibbing, and Woodbury.

In 2011-2012 we continued the focus on training at the local and district level by bringing training to chapters and districts as requested. 247 people attended Day at the Diamond as we cheered on the Minnesota Twins and celebrated Women of Today week. Fall State was held at Cragun’s in Brainerd, hosted by the Aitkin chapter. Our big project was the Birthday Bag Blitz to support Second Harvest Heartland. We collected over 700 pounds of supplies for making birthday bags so that children could celebrate their birthdays with a party. We voted in a new priority area, Isaac’s Journey, which will start in 2012-2013. At Winter State, our featured keynote luncheon speaker was Pat Fern, USWT President. We recognized two Outstanding People with Developmental Challenges, three Outstanding Young Adults and a Woman Who Impact recipient. Our Buckets of Sunshine this year was Green Sneakers. At Annual Convention in Hinckley, MN we celebrated our year-end successes. This was the last year for our priority area Can Do Canines, raising enough money to allow us, for the second year in a row, to Name A Puppy in honor of the Minnesota Women of Today. We celebrated our programming accomplishments by collecting a total of \$160,718.83 in External Programming and the total number of service hours was 18,494, calculated at \$21.79 per hour equal to \$402,984.26, for a grand total of \$563,703.09. This year we added 355 new members and our retention was 70%. We ended the year with 1434 members with 75 chapters.

During the 2012-2013 year we focused on teamwork from the staff and executive council to all the chapters and districts resulting in stronger chapters, working together with better communication. Staff led 101 members attending the Day at the Diamond to Take Me Out to the Ballgame during the 7th inning stretch. Fall State was held in Rochester and our service project were bags for Ronald McDonald House, 300 bags were delivered. State Program Managers read their own reports during the business meeting for the first time. New format was introduced at the President/State Delegate retreat with 39 attending. A Wii Bowl-a-Thon was held, raising \$1,234 for the US Women of Today Domestic Violence Awareness programming area. Winter State in January was held in Minneapolis with US Women of Today president Maxine Turner as our Keynote speaker for the luncheon. We recognized 3 Outstanding Young Adults, 1 Outstanding People with Developmental Challenges and 1 Women Who Impact recipients. Highlights of the weekend were the entertainment of Sister at the Banquet and the First Luminary Walk for Isaac’s Journey. Our Buckets of Sunshine project was Ella’s Halo. At the request of the Area 1, DOTS training (District Officer Training Session) was offered and held in Areas one and four after the Area Meeting for the first time. LOTS training offered a new format including Board Leadership Training. Skyping and Google Hangout were used for committee meetings and district meetings with much success. The Annual Convention was hosted by District 6 and held in St. Cloud. We celebrated programming successes with 15,239.5 service hours and \$375,687.38 donations in External Programming areas. We calculated the service hour value at \$22.14 per hour equaling \$337,397.39, for a grand total of hours and donations of

\$713,084.77. This year we added 381 new members and our retention was 71%. We added one new extension, ended the year with only 4 chapters on TLC, 70 chapters and 1,394 members.

In 2013-2014 we focused on training on all levels of the organization. Fall State was held in Morton and was hosted by St James. The weekend included a project fair as well as enrichment sessions. Winter State in January was held in Minneapolis with US Women of Today president Cindy Urlacher as our Keynote speaker for the luncheon. We recognized three Outstanding Young Adults, an Outstanding Person with Developmental Challenges and a Women Who Impact recipient. Our Buckets of Sunshine project, Kody's Closet was presented \$14,528.89 in monetary and in-kind donations. DOTS training (District Officer Training Session) was offered and held in Areas one and four after the Area Meeting for the second year in a row. LOTS training included position training, board training, and two guest speakers. The Annual Convention was hosted by District 1 and held in Mahnomon. The membership passed a motion for a bylaw change requiring a chapter to have a minimum of 10 members, with a minimum of 5 under the age of 40. We celebrated programming successes with 23,258.5 service hours and \$203,199.72 donations in External Programming areas. We calculated the service hour value at \$22.14 per hour equaling \$514,943.19, for a grand total of hours and donations of \$718,142.91. This year we added 288 new members and had 72% retention, ending the year with 1294 members and 66 chapters.

In 2014-2015 we focused on retention and finding the Women of Today passion on all levels of the organization. Fall State was held in Plymouth and was hosted by STMA. The weekend included a project fair as well and USWT president Judy Herrala joining us as our Keynote speaker at the luncheon and an inspiring Sunday brunch speaker with Paul Batz. Winter State in January was held in Minneapolis and was also the celebration of the 65th anniversary of the Minnesota Women of Today. We recognized three Outstanding Young Adults, an Outstanding Person with Developmental Challenges and a Women Who Impact recipient. DOTS training (District Officer Training Session) was offered and held in Area four after the Area Meeting for the third year in a row. LOTS training included position training, board training, and a team building training with three past state president guest speakers. Annual Convention was hosted by New Hope and held in Alexandria. The membership passed a motion for a bylaw change requiring a member in good standing shall pay annual dues in the amount of \$50, due in their anniversary trimester. We celebrated programming successes with 16,261.5 service hours and \$141,774.99 donations in External Programming areas. Our Buckets of Sunshine project, Mothers Emerge Academy, was presented \$1,925.00 in monetary and in-kind donations. We calculated the service hour value at \$23.07 per hour equaling \$375,152.81, for a grand total of hours and donations of \$518,852.80. This was the last year for our priority area Isaac's Journey and we welcomed our new three year priority area Breaking Free. This year we added 262 new members and had 73% retention, ending the year with 1214 members and 65 chapters.

Training, transmittals, and improvements to key programming areas were the focus of the 2015-2016 year. Hans and Franz and the Aitkin chapter hosted Fall State at Cragun's Resort in Brainerd. The weekend included a very busy project fair, enrichment sessions, and forums. We all visited Gilligan's Island at Winter State in Minneapolis. US Women of Today President Joyce Harpster was our Keynote speaker at the luncheon and enjoyed the ONTO carnation festivities. During the banquet, three Outstanding Young Adults were recognized and one Outstanding Person with Developmental Challenges. Buckets of Sunshine project "Ruff Start Rescue" received a check for \$2,465. And, for the first time in the 66 year history of the Minnesota Women of Today, the bylaw requiring a specific number of members under the age of 40 was

defeated. LOTS training included break-out training sessions on membership topics and was hosted by District 5 in Rice. Annual Convention was held in Mankato, MN and hosted by the state – with several chapters in Area 4 assisting: Madelia, Byron, New Ulm, Mankato and Glenville. Programming successes were celebrated with \$159,544.94 donated to external programming areas and 17,466 service hours reported. When service hours were calculated at \$23.56/hour, the dollar value of service hours equaled \$411,498.96, and the combined donation value to programming with 42% of chapters reporting was \$571,830.67. Two new chapters were extended in the third trimester; Coon Rapids chartered on February 29th and Lakefield chartered on April 12th, giving us 62 chapters at year end. Retention held at 73% throughout the year and we signed 211 new members, ending the year with membership at 1106.

In 2016-2017 we focused on getting back to basics and renewing a passion and excitement in our organization. The President/State Delegate Retreat was moved to a 1 day retreat held in July and was a huge success. We enjoyed a Fiesta with Hans and Frans at Craguns in Brainerd, hosted by the Aitkin Women of Today. The weekend included a project fair, enrichment sessions and Sunday Brunch Dawn Kaiser speaking on Joy. Winter State was held in Minneapolis. We introduced CONNECT! on Friday night, 1:1 on meeting with 2 and under chapters and USWT president Barb Wigell was our keynote speaker at our luncheon. We recognized three Outstanding Young Adults, an Outstanding Person with Developmental Challenges and two Women who Impact recipients. Our Buckets of Sunshine project was Firefly Sisterhood and \$756.10 was donated. Committees worked hard to bring changes to our organization including; updating the State Delegate and District Program Manager reporting forms, created a new Local Programming Trimester Report that combines all of the LPM reports and transmittals into one report, updated Success form, simplified Mid-Year and Year-End Evaluation forms, an updated strategic plan, and participated in a marketing class project that gave us direction on marketing our organization and a new brochure. Annual convention was hosted by District 2 as we took a Road Trip with Paul and Babe to Bemidji. We celebrated programming with 6,830.5 service hours and \$144,769.26 donations to the External Programming areas. Service hours are valued at \$24.14 per hour valuing \$164,888.27, for a grand total of hours and donations of \$309,671.53. This year we added 4 extensions; Eastern Carver County, Hutchinson Area, Alexandria Area and Wilmar, ending the year with 1038 members, 72% retention and 60 chapters.

In 2017-2018 we focused on recruitment and retention. This included some great trainings throughout the year on “What is your Why?” The President/State Delegate retreat was once again a 1 day retreat in July with a fantastic turnout! We started out the year at Fall State in Hinckley, we were to “Choose our Renaissance” and District 3 did an outstanding job hosting. We had our project fair, many got their “Sheets Galore” and who can forget the belly dancing? Winter State was our next successful convention in St. Louis Park. We had another successful Friday evening with CONNECT!, some informative forums and USWT president Nicky Anderson was our keynote speaker at our luncheon. We recognized two Outstanding Young Adults as well as a Women who Impact recipient. Our Buckets of Sunshine project was Wigs for Women. We celebrated a very fun and successful year at Arrowwood Lodge and an “Aloha in Alexandria” with District 8 hosting. The committees worked hard all year to keep the membership informed and continued to make positive decisions to benefit us all. The staff and membership team worked hard to finish the year with 80% retention for the 3rd trimester that hasn’t happened since 2005!

For the 2019-2022 year we continued implementing more programming changes approved at Annual 2019 convention and saw the introduction of email me forms, which was used to convert our MNWT online Book of Forms. We also merged our MNWT Facebook pages into 8 central pages: Minnesota Women of Today, Administrative, Membership, Programming, Finance, Committees, Foundation, and Key Woman. It was the first year for the new Programming Vice President staff position, replacing the dual internal and external vice presidents. The PVP now supervises five state program areas: Community Connections, Living & Learning, Priority Area (currently Wishes & More), Women's Wellness, and Youth of Today. MNWT transitioned to some additional coordinator positions – in addition to the State Store Manager, we also have a Public Relations Assistant, Success Coordinator, and Newsletter Editor. Our membership area continued their focus on a high rate of retention along with signing new members. First trimester closeout ended with 77% retention and just shy of growth. We celebrated at the Fall State Convention, held at Arrowwood Lodge in Baxter and hosted by the Monticello chapter with the theme of “Border Battle,” and a good time was had by all attendees. In honor of the 70th Anniversary to be celebrated at the Winter State convention, our goal was “sign 70 new members in honor of our 70th anniversary.” We added 2 new chapters (Rogers-Otsego-Dayton and St Joseph) totaling 65 new members for the 2nd trimester with 78% retention and WE GREW +5. What a celebration we had for our 70th Anniversary at Winter State convention held at the Doubletree in St Louis Park with 21 past presidents in attendance! Sweet Dreams for Kids was our Buckets of Sunshine project and many pairs of pajamas were collected by our members. The Outstanding Awards Banquet celebrated 3 outstanding young adult scholarship winners and a Key Woman honoree. We were on a roll heading into the third trimester, and then something new was introduced into our lives – the novel coronavirus, aka COVID-19. By the end of March, we were reeling from the changes we were facing: stay at home orders, social distancing, face masks, bars and restaurants shut down, and all of our meeting places closed. Zoom and Go To (platforms for online meetings) became the new venue for meetings and socials, training and conventions. Believe it or not, MNWT hosted all these events using Zoom or Goto: trimester district meetings, area meetings, Local Officer Training Sessions, Closeout, and Annual Convention, including business meetings, elections, and awards. We helped support the postal service with all the awards and recognition that we mailed out to chapters and individuals! And yes, this is the new normal as we head into the 2020-2021 year.

In 2020 – 2021 we had to R.I.S.E. to the occasion as we took time to pivot though a year of social distancing. With the theme Recruit Inspire Support Empower (R.I.S.E.) members were inspired to find inventive ways to keep in touch. The year started with the President/State Delegate Retreat being held via Zoom and our annual Day at the Diamond Event being cancelled. Our Fall State Convention was held online. Trainings were held via zoom and chapters were encouraged to find unique ways to meet and hold service projects six plus feet apart. This was the first year we held the Person with Determination Award. At Winter State we honored two Outstanding Young Adult recipients. one Woman Who Impact recipient, and one Person with Determination Recipient. Our Membership Vice President hosted an all-state online charcuterie membership social with over 100 members in attendance. The programming team led by our PVP, hosted an online programming bingo event where members were educated on all things MNWT programming. March planning was the first state event of the year held in person with a handful of members joining to support our organization. Our chapters donated \$128,000 to organizations throughout the state. Membership rose to the challenge and we ended the third

trimester with 85% retention and plus ten members. We had a fully in-person Annual convention where we celebrated a full year of new adventures.

2021-2022 was a wonderful year of celebrations and new friends. With the theme of “Something Wonderful”, members were encouraged to unite to support local communities, try new things, and increase participation with positivity. The year started with a BANG! With the new Marketing Vice President, there were many statewide promotions including lighting bridges across the state blue for both Founder’s Day and Women of Today Week. Past President Trading Cards were passed out at conventions to members and many photo opportunities were added including giant MNWT letters and a life size cutout of the President. On January 31, 2022 our executive Director, Katie Castro stepped down after ten years of outstanding service. The Membership Team had an amazing year. All of our chapters came off TLC, a new 12 week extensions plan was created, and we ended our year with plus 66 members and 85% retention. Our PVP along with her SPMs educated members on all areas of programming. We donated over \$500,000 in service hours, monetary, and in kind donations to our local communities throughout the year. The following members received the MNWT Key Woman Award during the 2021-2022 year; Sandy Trossen, Kathy Hansen, Wendy Homyak, Linda Nindorf, and Glorie Balfanz. In May of 2022 Tanya Rothstein was hired as the new Executive Director for the MNWT organization.

During the year 2022-2023, with the theme of “Giving a Piece of Your Heart,” members were encouraged members to build one another up, to be their best selves, and to nominate members of their communities who were giving of their hearts, with the result of 16 H.E.A.R.T. awards being granted. Under Marketing, a fundraiser through gosneakers.com to complete the goal of raising enough money (with supplemental funds from the MNWT Foundation) to buy a bench at the MN State Fairgrounds with our name on it. The Membership team had another awesome year, continuing growth for the 6th consecutive trimester, adding 169 new members and achieving 81% retention at year-end. There were two communities being explored as potential new chapters —Richfield and Stillwater, with many events held and many prospective members’ names gathered. Programming reporting had a significant increase this year, with \$728,826 reported as in-kind and monetary donations and service hours. The District Directors, along with the Administrative VP met the challenge of informing chapters of the redistricting plan. It was voted on and passed at Winter State, with the following results: Hawley moved from District 2 to District 4; Melrose, Avon and Albany moved from District 4 to District 5; Hutchinson area, Monticello, and Rogers-Otsego-Dayton moved from District 5 to District 6; Champlin, Anoka and Coon Rapids moved from District 6 to District 7; and New Hope moved from District 7 to District 8; in addition, District 10 was renamed District 9. Four members were recognized with the Key Women award during 2022-2023: Mary Hansen, Shellie Matthes, Sue Jammes, and Connie Fink; as well as to Brenda Sather who was recognized with the USWT Ambassador award.

For the 2023-2024 year, the theme was, “Visions of Success”, had us making an effort to work as a team no matter the level and by year end, we could feel that members were more engaged on all levels of the organization. The year began with 919 members in 48 chapters. We had 81 percent retention with 746 members renewing and added 178 new friends to achieve year end growth of +5 in 47 chapters. Training was a priority as we had a great President/State Delegate Retreat, offered a Chapter Operations Training after the Regional Meetings, the Membership team focused on Orientation, Activation and Retention. Programming Roundtables were added to conventions to help our members with their programming questions. We had three

great webinars including a Laughter Yoga that was very well attended. Our programming team saw an increase in reported in-kind and donated dollars and volunteer hours with a grand total of \$730,255.53 reported. The annual Day at the Diamond was moved to the Saints game where our state president threw out a first pitch. Our committees were busy with a new Project Sharing form, a new Leadership Toolbox, update to what is included in the State Plan of Action, New Member Orientation, and three-part New Member Letter. Our long-time webmaster, Daina Mirsch-Wenner resigned effective October 30th with Sherri Streff being hired in January 2024. At Winter State, our keynote speaker at the luncheon was our national president, Tracey Pierson. We recognized two Outstanding Young Adults with scholarships and two Persons with Determination award recipients were honored. Four members were recognized with the Key Women Award – Michelle Cloutier, Sue Lemke, Allie Staley and Shirley Viesselman. Anna Nichols was recognized with the USWT Ambassador award.

2024-2025 was a year where our members huddled together and grew stronger as “We Go Together”. The membership rose to the challenge to “Be a Connector! Be Present! Be Positive!” by being a resource for each other, paying attention to the needs of the membership and the chapters with intention and purpose, and showing up with a thoughtful and solution-focused mindset. We had a year of engagement and enthusiasm for what our chapters and our organization can accomplish. The year began with 924 members in 48 chapters. We made connections in two new chapters, Iron Range Women of Today chartering on October 15, 2024 and extended by the Duluth chapter, and Litchfield Area Women of Today chartering on February 17, 2025 and extended by the Hutchinson Area chapter. In September we kicked off Women of Today week by turning the I-35 bridge in Minneapolis pink. We held an incredible Fall State in Brainerd where we welcomed USWT President Jane Hanson of Madelia and her staff. October saw members across the state gathering on Make A Difference day to hold service projects in their communities. In December, we launched a new MNWT.org website to terrific results. And Winter State saw the celebration of 75 years of Women of Today. We hosted 200 attendees at convention including 32 Minnesota Mrs. Jaycees, Jaycee Women and Women of Today past presidents. We also recognized three Outstanding Young Adults with scholarships and one Person with Determination and one Women Who Impact award recipients. In February a new tradition began with over 30 members and friends gathering together at the Xcel Energy Center in St Paul for a Minnesota Frost (professional women’s hockey) game. Chapters across the state placed an emphasis on service in April, including over 20 members cleaning at Camp Friendship in Annandale for Community Connections and chapters all over the state gathering to complete projects or hold events on April 12 for a statewide MNWT Day of Service. President Tevyan Sorensen and Marketing VP Michelle Cloutier visited 5 events across the state that day! In Programming, we introduced a new Priority Project REACH and SPM Deb Froemming traveled the state and held monthly calls to connect chapters with schools to support. Across all programming areas, we donated over \$550,000 in service hours, monetary, and in kind donations to our local communities throughout the year. With membership, we recognized 84% retention and 178 new members ending the year with 49 chapters and 950 members with growth by +26. We wrapped up the year with a fun celebration at Annual Convention which included the luncheon key note speakers, authors Patty Wetterling and Joy Baker. Five new Key Women were honored – Tawn Hanson, Sharon Erickson, Cheryl Watson, Cindy Golbuff, and Andrea Schue along with five new USWT Ambassadors from Minnesota – JoAnn Miller, Kandy Dorlack, Jenise Teske, Mary Hansen, and Cathy Snyder.