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March 26, 2007

Atta Girl Winners

Womentum

Ladies Who Lunch

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Great news to report! The second Atta Girl Awards took place March 1st in Laramie, Wyoming. Our three winners were honored with a sold-out crowd that included award presenter Nancy Freudenthal, First Lady of Wyoming, and Marie C. Wilson, founder and president of The White House Project. Each awardee was presented a check for \$500 and a specially designed glass award created by Wilson artists Laurie Thal, Lia Kass and Charlie Thomas.

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Jean Jorgensen, Nikki Brown, Sarah Gorin

And the winners are:

Vision Award: Nicolette D. Brown, a high school student on the Wind River Reservation, was honored as an Atta Girl for continually challenging herself to expand her world. In eighth grade, Nikki qualified for the Indians Into Medicine academic medical prep program on the University of North Dakota campus, and her experience there led her to encourage others to apply. The following year, there were more applicants from the Wind

River Reservation than ever before. As a sophomore, Nikki participated in the TRIO National Student Leadership Congress, traveling with other students to Washington D.C. She has also participated in Upward Bound, Eagle Whistle Youth Council, and still finds time to manage her high school girls' basketball team. But it is her generosity in sharing all that she learns with others, encouraging them to reach high, that makes Nikki a stand-out.

Voice Award: Jean Jorgensen, a resident of Teton County since the late 1960's, was honored for her unwavering contribution to community. She served on the Teton Country School Board from 1978 – 1984, has been a pollster for the League of Women Voters, a Hospice Caregiver, and is a teacher of the natural world through her classes at Teton Science Schools, where she serves as an Emeritus Board member. Jean has participated in the National Geographic Genographic Project, and she also keeps track of her own four children and four grandchildren in a family that spans the Teton Range. Jean's quiet, unwavering voice supports all people to find their own greatest nature through reflection, sharing of knowledge, commitment and mutual support.

Visibility Award: Presented to **Sarah Gorin** of Laramie for her longtime commitment to protecting and expanding the rights of Wyoming women and children through her writing and political advocacy. Sarah is currently the Board Chair of the Equality State Policy Center, which she helped start thirteen years ago. Sarah is an advocate for women's and children's rights and frequently speaks on proposed legislation effecting women and children. As Sarah herself wrote, "Change happens when people work together to achieve it."

The Equipoise Fund created the Atta Girl Awards in the spirit of encouraging Wyoming women who inspire us. We hope that by highlighting the work of these wonderful women, they will inspire many other women and men across Wyoming. Mickey Babcock, Founder and President of the Equipoise Fund, says the awards give Wyoming women and girls a "butt-boost" for all the lives they lift.

Womentum: Banding together to promote "action philanthropy," the Womentum gals hosted Marie C. Wilson in Jackson at a special luncheon to celebrate "Women in Leadership." Ms. Wilson and a panel of Wyoming women leaders, including Wyoming First Lady Nancy Freudenthal, Wyoming Supreme Court Justice Marilyn Kite, "Gov. Dave" campaign field coordinator, Katie Freudenthal and Jackson Town Councilwoman Melissa Turley, addressed a sell-out crowd that included Jackson Town Council members Abe Tabatabai and Mark Obringer.

Wilson talked about the energy and self-belief it takes to step forward into the political and social justice arenas. She encouraged a room packed with members of the non-profit community and leaders in education to consider pursuing political leadership and to support one another when they take time serve their communities, despite the demands of family and jobs.

Ladies Who Lunch (for a reason!): Soroptomists International of Jackson usually meets over lunch. But on March 21st, the organization hosts its 10th Annual "In Celebration of Women"

dinner. Our own Mickey Babcock, founder and president of Equipoise Fund, will be honored as the 2006 Woman Who Made a Difference. She joins Katherine Romero, who will receive the Women's Opportunity Award, and Grace Kelley, who is being awarded the Violet Richardson Award. Town Councilwoman Melissa Turley will serve as keynote speaker.

The event is being held at Snow King Resort on March 21, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased from Jeanne Simanek at 733-5913.

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