



*For Immediate Release*

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## **Women Helping Women event raises \$145,000 to provide mental health counseling for women and girls in need**

➤ High resolution photos at [www.dmpcc.org/WHW2017](http://www.dmpcc.org/WHW2017)

Des Moines, IA – More than 500 persons attended the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center’s 19<sup>th</sup> annual Women Helping Women Luncheon on May 19<sup>th</sup> which raised \$145,000 to provide counseling services to underserved women and girls. This is the most money raised in the event’s history, exceeding the previous year by \$25,000. The event’s proceeds will increase access to vitally important mental health services and will provide nearly 1,300 hours of quality counseling services to underserved and uninsured women and girls.

Social activist, professor and artist Tilly Woodward captivated the audience with her stories of individuals and groups who experienced discrimination and trauma from racism, sexual assault or AIDS, and who were able to heal, in part, because of the power of art. This year’s event honoree was community leader and philanthropist Pamela Bass-Bookey, founding member of the Des Moines Public Art Foundation who has helped to make Des Moines a world class destination for public art.

The Center’s new executive director, Jim Hayes, said, “This was my first time to attend the Women Helping Women luncheon and it was truly as meaningful and inspirational as I had been told it would be. The \$145,000 raised will allow us to continue our important mission of providing hope and healing to those in need, especially to vulnerable women and girls.”

Since 1998 the Center’s Women Helping Women luncheon has raised almost \$700,000, providing access and care to thousands of women and girls in need.

The Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center, founded in 1972 with just two counselors, now employs 26 licensed mental health professionals and serves more than 3,700 persons annually, including nearly 700 children and adolescents. The Center is committed to its mission of bringing understanding, hope and healing to people of all ages through mental health counseling and education.