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## **WomanKind's Susan McCormick Hadley Wins *Ann Bancroft Award***

### ***Revolutionary program supports battered and abused women through the medical system***

[MINNEAPOLIS, MN – March 14, 2011] – The *Ann Bancroft Awards*, to be held Thursday, April 28, 2011 at the Hyatt Hotel in downtown Minneapolis, will recognize four recipients for their accomplishments and their support of girls and women. The 14<sup>th</sup> annual awards are hosted by the Ann Bancroft Foundation, a non-profit organization whose mission is to support girls and women in realizing their highest dreams and potential. The Foundation endeavors to recognize individual achievement and promotes initiatives that inspire courage, risk-taking, integrity and individuality in girls and women.

The 2011 winners are: **Susan McCormick Hadley (see her story below)**, Shawnise Watkins, Pam Borton and Women's Advocates.

Proceeds from the event will further the efforts of the Ann Bancroft Foundation. Event sponsors include Best Buy Women's Leadership Forum, Imation, Women's Foundation of Minnesota, KARE 11 and Minnesota Women's Press. For ticket information contact [www.annbancroftfoundation.org](http://www.annbancroftfoundation.org) or call Tracy Adams at 763 479-4499. The reception begins at 5:30 p.m. followed by dinner and the awards program.

### **The Ann Bancroft Foundation (ABF)**

The Ann Bancroft Foundation ([www.annbancroftfoundation.org](http://www.annbancroftfoundation.org)) exemplifies the spirit of explorer and educator, Ann Bancroft, whose leadership and personal and historic achievements have inspired all people to take on new challenges. Bancroft organized and led

the first all-woman expedition to Antarctica, becoming the first woman to reach both Poles across the ice. In 2001 Bancroft and Norwegian Liv Arnesen became the first women in history to cross Antarctica's landmass.

In addition to the *Ann Bancroft Awards*, the ABF's generous donors and mentors help underserved girls take the first steps toward fresh possibilities. *ABF Micro Grants* – of up to \$500 -- fund meaningful experiences for girls, many of whom are disenfranchised and close to falling through the cracks. Mentors encourage the girls to use an ABF Micro Grant as a springboard to the next exploration and to gain a new perspective on their own abilities and goals. Girls discover new self-confidence and self-knowledge as they open their eyes to a broader world -- and to new possibilities within themselves.

**– Susan McCormick Hadley**

**Category: “Woman - Leadership and Achievement”**

Susan Hadley's vision since early adulthood was to help girls and women in abusive situations by changing the systems that interact with women by establishing a model within the medical system to respond to domestic violence. In 1986, she created WomanKind, a revolutionary, integrated program based in health care that provides support and information, and helps ensure safety to thousands of battered and abused women. Today, the WomanKind concept has become national model of 24-hour health response to domestic violence.

Hadley of Prior Lake, Minn. overcame a difficult childhood and turned her life toward helping others safely regain their own self esteem and build the courage to take the risks to live a life free of violence and abuse. Back in the '80s, when domestic violence was still talked about in hushed tones – and never in health care – Hadley was raising awareness of the criminal nature of abuse and working to train the medical and public health communities to respond more effectively. She saw an opportunity to engage and provide valuable support to women through the health care system. In those days, health systems were not interested in integrating a domestic violence program into their hospitals and clinics but Hadley persevered,

insisting that the health system offered an ideal opportunity to intervene with victims who came there for medical care.

Hadley persistently reached out to health care systems in Minnesota, insisting they had a responsibility to address this issue with their patients. With no financial support, Hadley trained health care professionals to ask appropriate questions and direct women in need of these services. A caring bridge was needed between the health setting and available community resources. The result was WomanKind, the uniquely integrated domestic violence program that originated in the Fairview Health System, one of the largest health care systems in the state. The premier model program of its kind in the country, WomanKind has brought about revolutionary change in the medical system's response to victims of domestic abuse. Through Hadley's tireless efforts, the WomanKind Model today is the national prototype for providing integrated, structured services and resources for victims of domestic violence with education and consultation with health care professionals, along with awareness of the dynamics of abuse for the community.

One of the cornerstones of Hadley's work is to reach women when they come to the health system for medical care with appropriate, validating messages and support. She understands that each woman will make decisions about her own circumstances when she is ready. In most cases, support, information and empowering messaging is what is needed in a respectful, non-judgmental atmosphere. And when ready, WomanKind facilitates the woman's connection to the most appropriate community resource.

Hadley is a role model to many in her continual efforts to challenge the systems that disrespect women through minimizing the violence with euphemistic and inaccurate news reporting. She is currently completing her Ph.D. and focusing on how media portray domestic violence and the impact of media messaging on prevention, intervention and personal healing.

Hadley's contributions as author, educator, and nationally recognized expert on health care intervention for domestic abuse are extensive. She continues to donate thousands of volunteer hours each year to dozens of organizations, including the U of M's Center for

Violence Prevention and Control, University of Minnesota Medical School, Sheila Wellstone Institute, American Public Health Association and Family Violence Prevention Fund. In addition, Hadley has participated in the Lifetime Women's Summit, a national invitational meeting of 100 outstanding women from across the country in Washington, D.C. She is also a consultant to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services, American Medical Association and Minnesota Medical Association, and adjunct faculty of the U of M Medical School.

Susan Hadley's tireless, pioneering work has brought about change in the medical system's response to victims of domestic abuse, so that health professionals treat more than just the presenting physical problem, and also address the underlying causes of the medical or mental health problems. Her dream is for each and every woman to live violence-free in a place of safety and security on their way to achieve their own dreams.

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