

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 16, 2013

Contact: Chrissa Pullicino
Office: 845.266.4444, ext. 404

27 NONPROFITS RECEIVE RETREAT GRANTS FROM OMEGA TO STRATEGIZE ON HOW TO SURVIVE AND KEEP THRIVING

Omega's 9th Annual Service Week to Focus on Nonprofits Reinforcing a Broad Range of Social Services, Including Those Supporting Strength & Safety for Women & Girls in the Mid-Hudson Valley & Beyond

RHINEBECK, NY – As service-oriented nonprofits struggle to survive in the current budget-slashing environment, Omega is offering 27 nonprofits the opportunity for much needed planning retreats where they can develop solutions to the challenge of balancing high demands and low resources. For the ninth consecutive year, Omega has offered grants to its nonprofit peers to participate in their own strategic planning retreats at Omega's 200-acre campus in Rhinebeck, New York. Since its inception, approximately 184 organizations and 3,178 people have participated in this unique retreat grant program. Omega's annual [Service Week](#) is comprised of two sessions. The first session focuses on Mid-Hudson Valley nonprofits that address social service, social justice, and safety-net needs. The second session brings together nonprofits that serve women and girls for a unique experience called the [Women Serving Women Summit](#).

"At a time when nonprofits that provide safety net services are forced to do more with less, our Service Week grants provide a rare opportunity for these organizations to get out of the office and take a step back from the front line of their work to plan, network, and build capacity," said Carla Goldstein, chief external affairs officer at Omega and cofounder of the Omega Women's Leadership Center. "The 2013 Women Serving Women Summit focuses on organizations working to ensure the safety of women and girls since their well-being and ability to thrive is crucial to worldwide social, political, and economic development," concluded Goldstein.

All grantees are awarded two-day, two-night organizational retreats that include free room and board, a private meeting space, use of all the facilities at Omega, and a consultation with Omega's partner, the New York Council of Nonprofits (NYCON). NYCON will also host a roundtable on fundraising.

"The positive value and impact of Service Week on grantee nonprofits and the communities they serve becomes more evident each year. Today's service and business challenges are many, and Omega has truly stepped up to help—contributing space, support, and opportunity that only Omega can provide," said Doug Sauer, chief executive officer of NYCON.

Omega's Service Week program is divided into two distinct sessions:

Session 1) 9th Annual Service Week, May 27–May 29. For nearly a decade, Omega has been committed to serving those who serve others through its annual Service Week grant program. Grantee organizations can utilize the time to develop strategic plans, cultivate relationships among their board members and with other nonprofits on campus, re-engage with their mission statement, deepen staff cooperation, and enjoy some much needed peace and relaxation. Service Week is funded in part by a grant from the Dyson Foundation that supports Mid-Hudson Valley nonprofits.

“Our participation in Service Week truly set the foundation for development within our organization. The backbone for a broad organization strategic plan that we formed at Omega has positioned us to take important steps toward implementation,” said Milan Bhatt, executive director at Worker Justice Center of New York, participants in the 2012 Service Week.

Session 2) 3rd Annual Women Serving Women Summit, May 29–31. The only nonprofit leadership retreat of its kind, the Women Serving Women Summit, a convening of nonprofits working to improve the lives of women and girls, is an integral part of the Service Week program. Coordinated by the Omega Women's Leadership Center, the theme of this year's summit, Building Safety & Strength, brings together national and regional organizations serving the needs and interests of women and girls.

“The 2012 summit was such an incredible opportunity for us to get away from the daily work of our organizations and see our staff and board not just in their work roles, but as people,” said Emily May, cofounder and executive director of Hollaback!, which is participating in the Summit again this year.

Omega is pleased to award 2013 Service Week retreat grants to the following organizations, which are actively engaged in creating a more compassionate and sustainable world:

9th Annual Service Week Grantees:

Mid-Hudson Valley Organizations:

Big Brothers, Big Sisters
Dutchess County Arts Council
Eastern Dutchess Community Coalition
Headstart of Eastern Orange County
Literacy Connections
NAACP: Northern Dutchess County
NorthEast Community Center
ReThink Local
Rosendale Theater Collective
Taconic Resources for Independence
Wild Earth

Additional Organizations:

Legal Aid, Juvenile Rights Division
Press Pass TV

3rd Annual Women Serving Women Summit Grantees:**Mid-Hudson Valley Organizations:**

Family of Woodstock
Family Services
TMI Project
Grace Smith House
Healthcare is a Human Right
Mill Street Loft
Safe Homes of Orange County

Additional Organizations:

Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice
GirlTrek
Hollaback!
New Harlem Renaissance Work Group
Powerstories
School of Leadership, Afghanistan (SOLA)
Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls

For more information about Omega's annual Service Week event and the grant program, please contact Marta Szabo, at 845.266.4444, ext. 403, or by email at MartaS@omega.org.

For information about the Women Serving Women Summit or Omega Women's Leadership Center, please contact Sarah Urech, at 845.266.4444, ext. 412, or by email at SarahU@omega.org.

About Omega Institute for Holistic Studies

Founded in 1977, Omega Institute for Holistic Studies is the nation's most trusted source for wellness and personal growth. As a nonprofit organization, Omega offers diverse and innovative educational experiences that inspire an integrated approach to personal and social change. Located on 200 acres in the beautiful Hudson Valley, Omega welcomes more than 23,000 people to its workshops, conferences, and retreats in Rhinebeck, New York, and at exceptional locations around the world. eOmega.org

###