

## WomenGive celebrates philanthropist of year

BY SARA B. HANSEN • SARAHANSEN@COLORADOAN.COM • FEBRUARY 19, 2010

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Paula Edwards compared giving back to make the community a better place to creating a quilt.

"Both are done by many - usually by women," she said Thursday after being named WomenGive 2010 Philanthropist of the Year.

Nominees for the award also included Marcia Donnan, Myra Powers, Jane Sullivan and Katie Zwegig.

The women were honored Thursday at the fourth annual WomenGive membership luncheon at the Drake Centre.

WomenGive, an initiative of United Way of Larimer County, provides scholarships to single parents to help cover child-care costs so parents can pursue higher education. In the past three years, 21 single parents have been able to graduate from college with the help of WomenGive scholarships.

Edwards, a member of WomenGive, has provided her time and financial support for numerous Larimer County and statewide organizations.

She is the chairwoman of the programs committee for the Women's Foundation of Colorado and the chairwoman-elect for the entire foundation for 2011. Edwards also has volunteered for the Fort Collins Museum of Contemporary Art, Fort Collins Lincoln Center, Showstoppers Advisory Council and Visual Arts Citizen's Advisory Council.

She also has been a member of the Colorado State University College of Liberal Arts Development Council and is member of the Campaign Cabinet for the new Fort Collins Discovery Science Center.

Judith Aranow, the 2009 WomenGive Philanthropist of the Year, introduced Edwards and called her "a tireless advocate for women and philanthropy."

"Paula doesn't put limits on herself for what she'll do for others," Aranow said. "She is a true friend and she is a friend to many."

Before WomenGive leaders urged the 300 audience members to either join the program or renew their annual memberships, Kelly Devine, a WomenGive recipient, shared how the program helped her achieve her goal of becoming a nurse.

Devine graduated from the University of Northern Colorado's nursing program in December and now works as a registered nurse at Poudre Valley Hospital.

Devine credited Women-Give with giving her strength, stability and confidence. But most importantly, the program showed her she wasn't alone.

"I've learned that I'm strong enough to create a life for my daughter and myself that we want to live," she said.