

You Can Nominate a Woman of Worth



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Recently, at the 2009 National Conference on Volunteering & Service, Arianna and I both addressed the amazing crowd of 4,500 people who assembled to share, learn and celebrate the volunteering spirit that is growing in our country.

The theme of this year's conference, "Civic Energy. Generation," speaks to a new era of responsible citizenship. Throughout my life, many people have taught and reminded me about the power of volunteering and I now dedicate my time to organizations that utilize the power of art and

performance, groups like [V-day](#), [Americans for the Arts](#), [The People Speak](#), and [The Creative Coalition](#). And as one of the spokespersons for L'Oreal Paris, I am also active with their charitable programs, including a special initiative called Women of Worth.

The Women of Worth program is L'Oreal's annual grassroots initiative that recognizes and supports incredible women from all across the country who are organizing, volunteering and making a difference in their communities. I was at this year's Conference on Volunteering & Service to recognize one of last year's Women of Worth honorees -- Cindy Kerr who founded ConKerr Cancer, a not-for-profit organization that gives children fighting cancer hand-made, personalized pillowcases to brighten their hospital rooms. Cindy began designing pillowcases as a way to cheer up her son Ryan as he fought cancer, a fight he ultimately lost last year. But Cindy has continued to find inspiration from Ryan and 90,000 pillowcases later, she gives back to countless other children by gifting pillowcases to others who are courageously fighting their own battles. Her work is a moving example to me and to other artists of how we can use the arts and fine craftsmanship to create more kindness and hope in the world.

I am inspired by Cindy's story, and by all the women out there making a difference in the lives of others. As the deadline for nominating honorees approaches (July 23, 2009), I wanted to help get the word out. You can help determine this year's honorees by nominating someone whose volunteerism is an inspiration to you at www.womenofworth.com.

As First Lady Michelle Obama said at the Conference, we all need to be "ready to answer the call to serve". I encourage everyone to find your call to action and go to www.serve.gov to find an activity that best suits you. And if you believe, as I do, in the power of art to inspire and lift both our spirits and our communities, use the keyword 'ART'.