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### **Baird & Warner – Day at the Races Benefits WINGS**

Over \$16,000 was raised during the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Baird & Warner “Day at the Races” benefiting WINGS (Women In Need Growing Stronger) on July 29<sup>th</sup> at Arlington Park. According to Shaunna Burhop, the event co-chair, “We are so proud to have been able to create an event that raises both financial support and awareness for local victims of domestic violence. Being able to make a difference in the lives of these women and children is both our passion and our purpose with this event.”

This year’s event began with a poignant message from a WINGS graduate who shared the moments leading up to her life changing decision to join the program. “As my husband was hitting me, my 3-year old son said “Hit her again Daddy, she’s being naughty”. As the victim, she was concerned as much about her own safety, as she was about breaking the cycle of violence in the lives of her 3 young boys. “They had to know the abuse I was suffering at home was not normal”.

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As is typical with WINGS, they found a solution for this mother and her children providing them with both shelter and safety.

WINGS receives over 1,000 calls each year for assistance. The importance of finding a way for these women and children to escape their violent home life led WINGS to construct a 15,000 square foot Safe House which was opened to victims of domestic violence on January 3, 2005. When full, it can provide shelter for up to 45 women and children each night. Due to the fact that funding promised from the State has not yet been released, the facility is limited to serving only 25 individuals each night.

“Community involvement, including fundraising, is critical to WINGS’ ability to continue their mission” Burhop said. “We are so thankful for the support of our generous sponsors, raffle donors, advertisers, and attendees. In addition, a group of agents from Baird & Warner’s local Arlington Heights office donated countless hours to plan and staff the event. We all feel giving back to the community is the right thing to do”, she said.

This year’s sponsors include: /AXA Advisors, Building Specs, Allegra Print & Imaging, Arlington Park and attorney, John Kukankos. Key volunteers include Shaunna Burhop, Tammie Benyk, Peggy Kukankos, Diane Zielinski, and Kim Pape from Baird & Warner and Rebecca Darr and Jennifer Djordjevic from WINGS.

Baird & Warner – Arlington Heights supports WINGS as part of its Good Will Network. As one of Chicagoland’s oldest and most recognized companies, Baird & Warner has long valued the goodwill of the people and communities it serves and is celebrating 150 years of Good Will.

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**WINGS** is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 community agency with the mission to provide a continuum of integrated services in an effort to end domestic violence and homelessness one family at a time. In addition to the Safe House, they currently operate 3 homes and 21 apartments that serve as transitional living. Other services offered to women and children in need include career and family counseling, homeless prevention counseling, housing assistance, and graduate follow-up.

If you are interested in attending or sponsoring next year's event or other Good Will Network events, please contact Shaunna Burhop or Tammie Benyk of Baird & Warner at 847-392-1855. The Arlington Heights office has served the community since 1954, expanding and moving into its current facility in 2003.

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