

Women's Foundation Luncheon attracts 2,000 people

By GLORY WEISBERG

The Women's Foundation "Raise Your Voices" Luncheon drew 2,000 people to its 21st edition and it ran like clockwork. The program was so exciting you could hear a pin drop throughout the agenda.

Wasting no time on tablemate conversation, the one course lunch was served as soon as everyone was seated and the program began right then, an excellent way to respect everyone's time, an example for other nonprofits to follow. This edition had the most corporate sponsors and revenue in those more than two decades.

Credit Women's Foundation President and CEO **Louise Atkinson** and her chairs **Navantara Ghosh**, **Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins** and **Sandy Stein**.

If you remember the TV show *Ugly Betty*, you know the name of its star, **America Ferrera**, who was luncheon keynote speaker.

Drawing from her experiences growing up as one of six children born to a single mother in Honduras, Ferrera was an example of what American women can achieve right here in Colorado.

"I don't see my story as a fairytale. I believe every young person should be free to dream a big dream to receive a terrific education," Ferrera said. "You are what you care about. Remember that all the diamonds on the red carpet are just borrowed."

She explained how her dream as a child was to be a movie star, a dream come true as she's also known now as the star of the movie, *Real Women Have Curves*.

The day's theme was Changing Young Women's Lives and to that point, Gov. **John Hickenlooper** noted that in Colorado 6,000 girls drop out of school and 500,000 women live in or near the poverty level.

"In the U.S., only 4 percent of Fortune 500 companies have a female CEO," he noted, but here in Colorado 40 percent of the state legislature is made up of women, the highest percentage in the U.S.

Colleen Dougherty and **Elaine Torres** were corporate chairs. **John Ikard**, president and CEO of FirstBank, was presenting sponsor and **Patrick Gaston**, president of the Western Union Foundation, offered to match funds generated at the luncheon.

Since 1987 the Women's Foundation has invested more than \$10.2 million with hundreds of agencies across Colorado, focusing on lifting women out of poverty, keeping girls in school and encouraging girls to enter careers in the science, technology, engineering and math fields.

The Women's Foundation began 26 years ago in the dank basement of a church in Capitol Hill and we were right there to witness it all. Little did any of a few founding women dream that in 2013 the foundation would have a nearly \$19 million endowment.

Visit www.wfco.org for information.

gloryweisberg@comcast.net



ABOVE: Foundation chair-elect Cathy Hart and Nechie Hall



John Ikard and Louise Atkinson



America Ferrera, keynote speaker
Photos by Glory Weisberg



Sandy Stein, Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins and Patrick Gaston with Navantara Ghosh



Colleen Dougherty, Maxine Fuselier and Tanya Frank

"I am passionate about helping people find the best solution for their hearing needs!"



(720) 251-2633 | YourEarDoc.com

9330 S. UNIVERSITY BLVD., SUITE 240, HIGHLANDS RANCH AND 15450 E. ORCHARD RD., CENTENNIAL



Dr. Julie Prutsman
Au.D., FAAA

Specializing in
Tinnitus "Ringing in the Ears"
and
Hearing Devices