

## *2010 Tribute to Women Honoree – Ellen Wright*



As a professional volunteer, Ellen Wright's contributions are extraordinary. Currently she works as a grant writer directly with individual agencies to match need with grants and in providing agencies with long range planning in this area.

Wright has served in key director positions: For the Terry K. Wantanabe Charitable Trust and for 21 years and for the Arthritis Foundation, Nebraska Chapter. As a leader of women she encourages and empowers them to take charge. Demonstrating this, she is developing an informal mentoring and succession plan for young women to learn how to run large galas and events as successful fundraisers.

Her list of volunteer and fundraising activities since 1979, are numerous. She has received honors as the 2007 Fundraising Volunteer of the Year from the American Red Cross and the 2005 The Rik Bonness Volunteer of the Year Award from the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International.

Wright was raised in a family that always gave back to the community; volunteering was just part of their everyday lives. When she first moved to Nebraska from the east coast, feeling somewhat lost, her mother encouraged her to get involved with the community to find her way. Getting involved in the community proved to be exactly what she needed to find a sense of belonging and what she was missing in her life.

Wright does not like recognition for what she does; a simple thank you is sufficient. She says she believes that there has been nothing in life that she has done totally on her own, but feels very blessed to be surrounded by loving family and some of the most extraordinary women she has ever known. Their accomplishments never cease to amaze her. Her privilege is in having some of our community's most talented female mentors to follow; she hopes that someday she will have left the same impression on the young women of today.

Wright says that when you have been blessed you need to be a blessing to others, but she truly feels that she has been given so much more in return from the community that she has given herself.