

# Voices

Nokomis has begun a reflective journey—a comprehensive strategic planning process that will provide us with a chance to *look back* at our impact over our first 15 years, to *look around* at new ideas and strategies in the field of philanthropy, and to *look ahead* to develop our renewed vision.

Starting in January 2005, and continuing through 2006, we are working with Stephanie Clohesy of Clohesy Consulting as we implement our unique renewal process — one that truly reflects the Nokomis Foundation philosophy and operating style.

Creating a stronger voice  
for women and girls.

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The  
Nokomis  
Foundation



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# Inside Story



## Nokomis Renewal . . .

The Nokomis renewal process is not really a revolution — it's more like an evolution! We've designed the process to help us learn about Nokomis in a new and fuller light, to help us improve future decisions and direction. Through our renewal process, we hope to:

- Better understand and claim Nokomis' achievements and legacy;
- Engage in evaluation and organizational development to grow as an effective organization;
- Share the benefits of effectiveness by engaging other funding partners in evaluation and organizational development components;
- Learn from others—throwing open the vision, mission, and strategic focus of Nokomis;
- Create a new plan and framework that will bring Nokomis into its next generation of vision, ideas, and peak performance.

With any evolution, there is always change! And while there will be changes at Nokomis during the renewal process, we will continue to support many of our current programs. (See details later in this newsletter.)

Perhaps the biggest change of all during the renewal process involves the Nokomis Foundation staff and internal operating structure. The Nokomis Foundation board deems the work of our renewal process to be so important—and such a priority for the Nokomis Foundation over the next 24 months—that, during the process, we will operate from a partnership model of leadership. Kym Mulhern and DeDe Esque will co-manage the Nokomis Foundation throughout the process. Kym will serve as the *Manager of Special Initiatives for Planning & Renewal* and will be responsible for all elements of the renewal process. DeDe will serve as the *Manager of Operations & Grantmaking* and will be responsible for managing the day-to-day activities of the Nokomis Foundation. We anticipate this staffing structure will better reflect our commitment of the renewal process—and will help us envision a “new” Nokomis Foundation.

The world is a different place than when Nokomis first began fifteen years ago. It seems more relevant and appropriate than ever to take this time to reflect and renew, preparing ourselves for change rather than remaining tethered to the status quo.

# Nokomis Vision



The Nokomis Foundation strives to make a difference in the lives of women and girls primarily by advocating for women-friendly policies, celebrating women's accomplishments, instilling economic self-sufficiency, promoting healthy choices, and seeking out new opportunities that advance our mission. We are proud to play a role in the worldwide effort to help women and girls achieve their personal goals and live their dreams.



# Nokomis Mission

The mission of the Nokomis Foundation is to create a stronger voice for women and girls. We carry out this mission by providing:

- Advocacy for the needs of women and girls
- Funding, expertise, and resources for organizations serving women and girls

# Nokomis Grants

For 2005 and 2006 the Nokomis Foundation will NOT be accepting unsolicited grant proposals.

## Discretionary Grants

During the renewal process, the Nokomis Foundation will provide a limited number of discretionary grants. To be considered for a discretionary grant in 2005, programs and projects must:

- be located within the geographic boundaries of Allegan, Kent, or Ottawa counties
- be in alignment with Nokomis Foundation mission and values;
- be requests of \$5,000 or less.

## Submitting a Request for a Discretionary Grant

Submit a brief (no more than 2 pages) letter describing your project or program and explaining how it aligns with the Nokomis Foundation mission and values. After we receive your letter, we may contact you for additional information or to answer any questions we may have.

## Awarding Discretionary Grants

The Nokomis Foundation has a limited pool of funds available for small grants during the renewal process. Grants will be awarded on a quarterly basis at the discretion of Nokomis Foundation staff, and based on:

- funds available at that time;
- relative to other requests submitted.

## The Timeline

You may submit a discretionary grant request at any time. Decisions will be made quarterly. During 2005, we anticipate announcing discretionary grant awards in March, June, September, and December.

## After the Grant

If your request is approved, funds will be disbursed within a week or two from the approval date. Grant recipients will be required to provide a brief summary report on the project funded, including a full accounting of all Nokomis funds.

Please visit the our website at [www.nokomisfoundation.org](http://www.nokomisfoundation.org) for more complete guidelines.



*All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter another.*

*Anatole France, French Novelist*

## Did You Know...

- The U.S. currently imprisons a higher percentage of its population than any other country in the world.
- Women make up the fastest growing subset of the entire prison population.
- As the number of women behind bars grows, the detrimental effects are felt by a whole generation of children. Eighty percent of women in prison are the mothers of children under 18.
- Because the most brutal methods of social control are directed at a society's most oppressed groups, the women most likely to be sent to jail (and prison) are poor and/or women of color.
- African American women are eight times more likely than white women to go to prison. Although a greater number of white women are arrested, small proportions are incarcerated.
- Those states with the highest degree of gender equality also have the lowest rate of homicide by females.
- Massive prison expansion is fueled not by an actual increase in crime rates, but by harsh drug laws and wholesale criminalization of people of color, poor people, and youth.

*Information provided by the Prison Activist Resource Center ([www.prisonactivist.org](http://www.prisonactivist.org)).*

# Renewal FAQ

For a complete FAQ, please visit the Nokomis website at [www.nokomisfoundation.org](http://www.nokomisfoundation.org).



## What programs will continue during the Nokomis renewal process?

- New Voices Initiative—including the *Prostitution Round Table* and the *Nurturing a New Start* programs
- Women's Technology Consortium
- Discretionary Funding Pool for grants of \$5,000 or less (see information within this issue of VOICES)

## What will change during the renewal process?

- Nokomis will NOT be accepting unsolicited grant proposals after December 1, 2004
- *The Taking Flight grants for girls* program will be suspended during 2005 and 2006
- The VOICES newsletter will not be published during 2005 and 2006 (after this issue)

## Why did the Nokomis Foundation decide to go through a renewal and strategic planning process?

Inspired by the Nokomis Foundation's upcoming 15-year anniversary, the Nokomis board decided that a comprehensive planning and renewal process would be a natural step in our organization's development. The world is a different place than when Nokomis first began 15 years ago. It seems more relevant and appropriate than ever to take this time to reflect and renew, preparing ourselves for change rather than remaining tethered to the status quo.

## What will the Nokomis Foundation do during the renewal process?

The Nokomis Foundation will be involved in a variety of activities throughout the renewal process, including: evaluating past programs and grants; creating an organizational history; performing organizational development activities; conducting research; exploring ideas and best practices from around the field of philanthropy; talking to many of our colleagues and partners; and culminating in strategic planning.

## When will the renewal process begin and end?

The process actually began in June 2004 with internal planning and program design. Renewal activities began in January 2005. We anticipate the process to be complete in mid-2006.

## Who is leading the Nokomis Foundation through the renewal process?

Nokomis will be working with Stephanie Clohesy of Clohesy Consulting throughout the renewal process. Stephanie, who is a creator of models and materials for helping women's funds to grow and thrive, was one of the founding consultants at Nokomis. We're excited that she is able to step back into the life of Nokomis to help us renew.

## Will Nokomis make grants during the renewal process?

The Nokomis Foundation will make grants during the renewal process; however, such grant awards will be limited to pre-selected funding partners. The Nokomis Foundation will NOT be accepting unsolicited grant proposals during the renewal process. The Nokomis Foundation has set aside a small pool of discretionary funds available to qualifying organizations during the renewal process.

## How can organizations access discretionary grants during the renewal process?

Funding for discretionary grants in 2005 are for programs and projects that:

- create social change for women and girls;
- are located within the geographic boundaries of Allegan, Kent and Ottawa counties;
- are in alignment with the Nokomis Foundation mission;
- are requested for \$5,000 or less.

This pool of funds is limited and, therefore, will be awarded on a quarterly basis at the discretion of Nokomis Foundation staff; based on funds available at that time; and relative to other requests submitted.

(Turn the page for more information about Nokomis discretionary grants and be sure to visit our website at [www.nokomisfoundation.org](http://www.nokomisfoundation.org) for a complete set of guidelines.)

## Who do we contact with questions or for more information?

- Check our website at [www.nokomisfoundation.org](http://www.nokomisfoundation.org) for a more complete FAQ listing and more detailed information about the renewal process.
- If you have questions about the renewal process and related activities, you may contact Kym Mulhern at [kmulhern@nokomisfoundation.org](mailto:kmulhern@nokomisfoundation.org).
- If you have questions about Nokomis grantmaking, program, or operational activities, you may contact DeDe Esque at [desque@nokomisfoundation.org](mailto:desque@nokomisfoundation.org).
- If you have questions about the New Voices Initiative, including the *Prostitution Round Table* and *Nurturing a New Start* programs, you may contact Dotti Clune ([dcclune@earthlink.net](mailto:dcclune@earthlink.net)) or Jeannie Hossey ([thossey2@earthlink.net](mailto:thossey2@earthlink.net)).