



# Vision & Hope

Project SAFE | Children's SAFE Place | Pathfinder Center | Mita Maske' Tiki



*50 to 80 percent of identified trafficking victims are, or have been involved with child welfare services at some point in their lives.*

## *Pathfinder to Open*

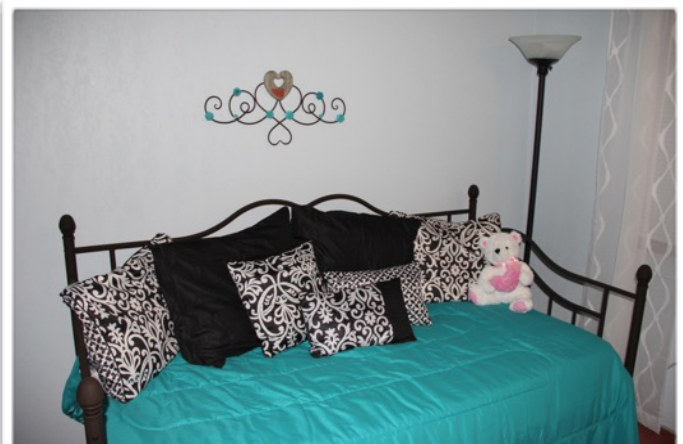
The Pathfinder Center, the first human trafficking facility in South Dakota, is set to officially open in August 2016. The center will provide refuge for women and children who are suffering from the effects of human trafficking. The Pathfinder Center will promote spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical growth through empowerment and healing.

Offered will be culturally competent addiction services. In addition, life and communication skills, behavioral health, safety, clothing and food, career support, and educational support will be provided. Pathfinder Center will serve victims throughout South Dakota. Cases of human trafficking in South Dakota are

drastically on the rise. Native American women and children have been increasingly targeted and account for a high number of sex trafficking cases in South Dakota and across the United States.

Part of restoring dignity to women who have been victims of trafficking is offering them private space to heal and reclaim their inherent worth. It is our intention to create bedrooms that reflect a loving, respectful and homelike environment. With the help of many organizations, this has been made possible. We are actively seeking donations, which will allow Pathfinder Center to keep doors open! Check out our GoFundMe page to make donations at: [www.gofundme.com/standwithourowmen](http://www.gofundme.com/standwithourowmen)

For more information on the Pathfinder Center, our services, or to inquire about donating or volunteering, please contact Lisa Heth at 605.245.2471. Find us on Facebook under "Pathfinder Center" or check out our website at [www.pathfindercenter.org](http://www.pathfindercenter.org).



## *First Annual Clothed in Strength, Honor, & Beauty*



In September 2015, the First Annual "Clothed in Strength, Honor, & Beauty" was held at the Ramkota Inn & Convention Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The event created awareness about human trafficking, in addition to promoting the importance of confidence, inner beauty, and strength within Native American girls and women. The event was hosted over a three-day time frame, where those attendees were able to learn about human trafficking and the impact across Indian Country, South Dakota, and nationally. They were able to meet with and learn from fashion designers from all over the world about modeling. During the actual runway show, the models carried signs that read, "Stop Human Trafficking", "Our bodies aren't commodities", and "Pornography is an open door for trafficking".

*"Human trafficking is not allowed because it's not part of Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota way. Our women and young girls shouldn't be a part of human trafficking; They don't deserve it and they didn't ask for it".*

*- Madison Wells, 7th Grade Student*



Sponsors of this event were: Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc, Native Women's Society of the Great Plains, Still Smoking Designs, Call to Freedom Tapestry, and First Nations Women's Alliance.

The second-annual event will tentatively September 2016. More information will come in the near future; however, if you are interested in being a sponsor, or you would like to inquire more about this event, please contact Lisa Heth at 605.245.2471.



*The average age of minors sex trafficked are between the ages of 12-14. Often times, these victims are runaway girls who have experienced child sexual abuse previous to being trafficked.*



## *One Designer's Vision - By: Regina Still Smoking*

In September of 2015, the first-annual conference and fashion show was beyond successful. The presenters, planning team, attendees, volunteers, and everyone came together to make this a memorable and powerful event. The mission to bring awareness to human trafficking and violence towards women was met. Seeing the transformation of the youth and young adults on the runway to conclude the conference was inspiring. Pride and self-esteem was built for the models and designers when their clothing was showcased, while signs were carried, stating "Our bodies are sacred".

In 2014, I approached Lisa Heth of Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. after having a vision of models on the runway carrying signs with powerful sayings letting the world know their bodies are sacred and not for sale as a response to learning more about missing and murdered indigenous women and human trafficking. Immediately the two of us sat for hours brainstorming a conference and fashion show. Combining Lisa's line of work and my own as a new clothing designer, mentor of up-and-coming talent, and event producer we were able to correlate the modeling industry with human trafficking. I was seeing that the models I was mentoring were being targeted via social media and my reaction was to bring awareness through what I knew best and that was event planning.

Thankfully through prayer, faith, bringing in our networks and other organizations, we were able to build a team to make the event a successful and a reality. Now that we have the experience as a team, we are looking forward to creating a second event and have continued faith we are on the right path.



## *Sand Tray Therapy; Healing Through Storytelling*

Over the last year, Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. has incorporated sand tray therapy into healing and therapeutic practice while working with men, women, and children. This type of therapy allows individuals to heal through the art of story telling, which supports and promotes traditional and Native American culture.

Sand tray therapy has allowed clients of all ages to explore the problems in their lives, in a safe, non-threatening environment.

Advocates and therapists at Project Safe and Children's SAFE Place have been trained by a professional, licensed therapist to work with clients and help them identify and discover solutions to their problems and needs through this type of therapy. This tool is one more way that Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. is striving to offer more diverse and healing services to those we serve!

## Project Safe Provides Variety of Services in 2015

Project Safe served over 300 men, women, and children between the months of January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015 who had experienced domestic violence. Services provided include shelter, crisis counseling, on-site behavioral health counseling, transportation, legal and medical advocacy, personal advocacy, and follow-up services. The total number of adult (ages 18 and over) shelter days in 2015 was 1132. The number of children (ages 17 and under) shelter days in 2015 was 1554. These numbers are comparable to those in 2014. Shelter Coordinator Kasey Fleury stated that there has been an influx of individuals coming in for services that have non-domestic violence related needs.

"We have been able to refer people out to agencies and organizations that are able to better serve them to meet their needs. I believe the increase in referrals has much to do with the strengthened relationships that have come from our advocates partnering with other local, state, and federal organizations. It creates more unity and allows us to better serve people," Fleury stated.

At this time, the shelter has four bedrooms, several beds, and can house up to 20 people at a time if needed; comfortably 12-14. In addition, advocate hours have changed to better serve the community and often times, there are advocates at the shelter from 8am until 12am. Clients and community members are encouraged to utilize the 24 hour crisis line if they are seeking help.

In addition, many services, outreach events, and community awareness activities are hosted throughout the community, such as training law enforcement and, hospital staff on how to best serve victims, awareness and informational booths for children and adults in Lower Brule, Fort Thompson, and Stephan South Dakota, Multi-Disciplinary Team Meetings (MDT), Child Protection Team Meetings (CPT), Men's Talking Circle, "Lunch and Learn", Interagency meetings in the community, and Warrior's and Winyan's in Wellness.



## Volunteers Contribute 789 Hours in 2015

Without the help and dedication of our volunteers, many events, activities, and opportunities wouldn't be possible! **114 volunteers contributed 789 volunteer hours in 2015.** We appreciate all the individuals who have helped us coordinate and set up community events, transport the clients we serve, and for those who have been a part of the Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. team.

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering for our organization, please contact Shaynna at 605.245.2471.

## Second Annual Four Directions Prayer Walk Held



The second annual "Four Directions" walk was hosted in Fort Thompson in October, in conjunction with Domestic Violence Awareness month. This initial idea was presented by Crow Creek Sioux Tribe Chairwoman Roxanne Sazue. She posed the idea of having a walk that would allow the community members to come together as a whole, while walking from all-four directions and meeting at one central location. This inspired Project Safe to come up with the idea to combine this walk with the Domestic Violence Awareness Walk. "We have been doing the Domestic Violence Awareness Walk

for over 25 years; however, this is the second year that we have combined our walk with the Four Directions Walk. It has been extremely successful.", shared Lisa Heth, Executive Director of Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc.

Before the walk, all in attendance have a chance to speak out about against the problems and issues they see within the community, while suggesting solutions and seeking support. During the actual walk, there are four total stops, which allow those participating to pray. This year, several members of the community spoke up about their thoughts, beliefs, and how to make the community better, while many people walked, prayed, and joined in on this important awareness day.

## *Meet and Greet Creates Connection and Rapport*

Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc., hosted two "Meet and Greet" events this past year with law enforcement and local agencies within the community. This particular event allowed for open, honest communication between various agencies, with the goal and hope of strengthening coverage of services and bridging any gaps that may occur. Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc., offers a meal and refreshments, prepared by staff, while having a "round-table" discussion about the identified problems and needs. "It has helped the advocates and the officers build rapport with one another, while unifying organizations and striving for common goals," Kasey Fleury, Shelter Coordinator and Educational Outreach Specialist shared.

This is the fourth "Meet and Greet" that Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc., has hosted and there will be more to come in 2016.







*"Receiving this award was a humbling experience; it was an honor. This award is not just for me; It's for the staff, advocates, and the many victims that we have the privilege of serving."*

## *An Honor for One is an Honor for the Whole Crow Creek Tribe*

Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. Executive Director, Lisa Heth was recognized at the national-level with a prestigious award by the Department of Justice. She was nominated and awarded the "National Crime Victims Rights" Award. Heth accepted this honor in Washington DC and was selected out of hundreds of nominees. "Receiving this award was a humbling experience; it was an honor. This award is not just for me; It's for the staff, advocates, and the many victims that we have the privilege of serving", shared Heth.

On arrival back to South Dakota, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe Chairwoman, Roxanne Sazue, recognized and honored the accomplishments of Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. and Heth's dedication to the agency and the community. Heth received recognition and was honored with a beautiful blanket Chairwoman Sazue shared that recognizing Heth represents "all" people within the community who advocate against violence.

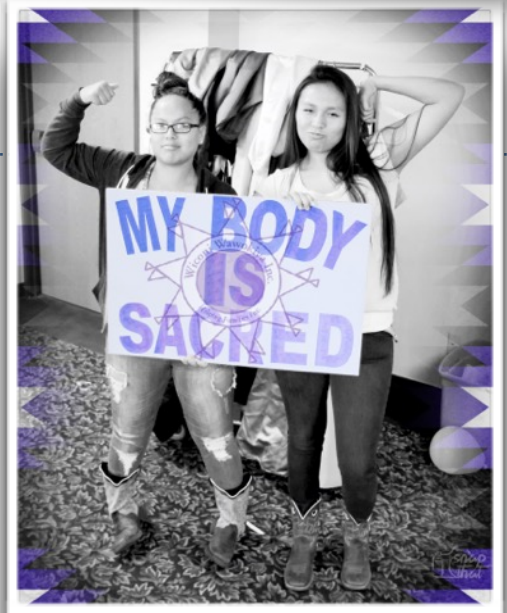
## *Project SAFE Staff Focuses on Awareness and Education With Youth*

For the past six years, Project SAFE staff have created awareness and provided violence education at the Crow Creek Tribal School. Originally, staff were connecting with the middle school students, but over the past six years, outreach has been provided to high school students and more recently, the fifth grade students are gaining resources and learning.

Shelter Coordinator and Project SAFE Educational Specialist Kasey Fleury stated, "Youth in our community have come to accept and tolerate violence. The challenge for us at Project Safe is to help them recognize that what they see as normal, is not always a part of our tradition and values".

Kasey has been one of the driving forces in providing thorough and consistent education and awareness to the students at Crow Creek School in Stephan, South Dakota. Kasey has presented information about a variety of subject matter, such as positive body image, bullying, teen violence and dating, human trafficking, healthy relationships, internet safety, life goals, and conflict resolution. "My favorite part is when we initially go up to the school and meet the students. They will test us; feel us out. When they start to trust us, they get excited for us to come up and they actively and willingly participate", stated Fleury. Fleury shared that her future plan would be to start an after-school program to focus on violence awareness and education for children ages 10 and older on the Crow Creek Indian Reservation through Project SAFE.

If you are interested in learning more about the community awareness events that Kasey provides, please contact her at 605.245.2471.



## Recap: Youth Awareness in 2015

### January 2015: Stalking Awareness Month

Youth Outreach: 5th Grade, Middle School, and High School: 9 days at the school and a "Purple Shawl Skit" Awareness Against Teen Dating Violence; **383 contacts with youth**. Topics: Sexual Assault Awareness; Domestic Violence Awareness; Gender Roles in Dakota Culture; and Inter-Personal Violence

### February 2015: Love without Fear; Teen Dating Awareness Month

Youth Outreach: 5th Grade, Middle School, and High School: 8 days at the school; **292 contacts with youth**. Topics: Bullying; Healthy Relationships; Sexual Assault Awareness; Domestic Violence Awareness; Teen Dating; Peer Pressure; Valentine's Fundraising and Awareness Throughout the Community

### March 2015

Youth Outreach: 5th Grade, Middle School, High School, and Alternative School: 10 days at the school; **255 contacts with youth**. Topics: Teen Dating Violence; Healthy Relationships; Life Goals; Body Image/Self-Esteem; Drug Abuse; Child Abuse Awareness; and Inter-Personal Violence

### April 2015: Child Abuse & Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Youth Outreach: Parent Involvement with an Awareness Booth for Children and Parents, 5th Grade, Dream Divas: 4 days at the school; **76 contacts with youth**. A Community Child Abuse & Sexual Assault Awareness Walk

### May 2015: Career Day

Youth Outreach: 5th Grade and Middle School: 3 days at the school; **66 contacts with youth**. Topics: Life Decisions and Choices, Self-Esteem and Confidence, and Domestic Violence Awareness

### June 2015: Youth Outreach: Dakota Youth Camp; 8 contacts with youth.

### July 2015: Youth Outreach: Isnati Preparation and Dakota Male Youth Meeting; 51 contacts with youth.

Topics: Making Moccasins; Healthy Relationships; Internet Safety; Art 4 Heart Painting; and Bow Making

### August 2015: Youth Outreach: Fort Thompson Wacipi Art 4 Heart: Healing Through Painting; 150 contacts with youth.

Community Awareness Booth at Fort Thompson and Lower Brule Wacipi's

### September 2015: Lower Brule Cancer Health Fair; Community Awareness Booth

Youth Outreach: 45

### October 2015: Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Youth Outreach: Crow Creek High School Football Team, 5th Grade, Middle School, and High School: 11 days at the school; **392 total contacts with youth**. Topics: School Presentation by Talon Ducheneaux: Healing through Music; Domestic Violence Awareness; Positive Self-Awareness; and Inner-Personal Violence; Winyan & Warriors Wellness Days

### November 2015: Youth Outreach: 5th Grade and Middle School: 4 days at the school; 61 contacts with youth.

Topics: Domestic Violence Awareness; Healthy Relationships; Inter-Personal Violence; Healthy Body Concepts

### December 2015: Youth Outreach: Middle School: 13 days at the school; 88 contacts with youth.

Topics: Domestic Violence Awareness; Child Abuse Awareness; Self-development; and Inter-Personal Violence

## *Three-Day Dakota Cultural Camp Held for Young Men*

A three-day Dakota Youth Culture Camp for males ages 12-18 was hosted by Peter Lengkeek, Program Coordinator/Prevention Specialist at Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. through a grant received by the Department of Justice titled, "Engaging Boys and Men as Allies to End Violence Against Women".

This camp was held near Big Bend on the Crow Creek Sioux Reservation in the summers of 2014-2015, with each camp hosting between 10 -12 young men per year. The youth involved lived in a tipi for three days and night, where the young men learned how to put up and take down a tipi, and all the teachings that come with it. The camp consisted of Dakota teachings of the horse nation, traditional drum and song, oral history, traditional games, ceremony, bow and arrow making, teachings of the plant nation, Dakota language and customs and teachings of the star nation, the Dakota philosophy of Mitakuye Owansin, and how all this relates to ending violence against women in Indian Country. The camp focused on healthy masculinity as a Dakota warrior, and the respect of women in Indian Country.

"We as Dakota people have adopted the social norms and values of the dominant, western society. This makes becoming a man and being a man more difficult than what it really is. Through the ancient teachings of the Dakota people, young men are able to see and experience what being a healthy man was before European contact".

Another camp and activities are scheduled during June of 2016.





## Annual Child Abuse & Sexual Assault Awareness Walk

Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. hosted their annual walk to honor victims and create awareness for child abuse and sexual assault. In addition to the walk, a community rummage and lunch sale and a "potato salad" contest were held. Children at Crow Creek School were able to participate in a poster and poetry contest to showcase their thoughts and feelings about child abuse. Community members spent much of the day looking at the poems and posters and voting for their favorites. Awards were given to the contest winners. The event was successful and many community members and affiliated organizations participated throughout the day!



- According to the Department of Justice, it is estimated that almost 99 percent of Native American's will experience sexual violence sometime in their life.
- Every 9 seconds, a woman is assaulted or beaten in the United States.
- Between 21 and 60 percent of victims of domestic violence lose their jobs due to reasons stemming from the abuse

## Vision 21 Grant

The Office for Victims of Crime through the Department of Justice awarded the "Vision 21: Tribal Community Wellness Center" grant to three tribes in the United States. Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc., located on the Crow Creek Reservation received one of those coveted awards.

The Wicozani Waste (Good Health) Community Wellness Center will provide individualized, long-term support to victims and their families to foster safety, stability, and well-being. Project SAFE Shelter, which has been the main stop for victims seeking services and safety, will now be able to stop at Wicozani Waste Community Wellness Center as their first stop. Services will then be streamlined to the appropriate staff and building depending upon the victim's needs.

The first step in the grant process was a strategic planning meeting held on September 1-3, 2015. This allowed and welcomed community members and services providers to attend. This meeting allowed individuals throughout the community to give voice to the identified problems, needs, strengthens and weaknesses.

The Wicozani Waste Community Wellness Center building is located in the heart of Fort Thompson, South Dakota. The building is nearing the end of the renovation process, which took place to create sufficient office space and a conference room, which will be used for groups, meetings, training and activities. Once the renovations are complete, the public will be invited to attend our grand opening.

The renovations have been done through the work of volunteers. We have a great local volunteer base in addition to those coming from in and out of state. It has been a community effort to get the building ready to occupy.

The tentative move in date will be August 2016.

## *The Story of Pathfinder Center - By: Lisa Heth, Executive Director*

In late March 2015, I received a phone call from a man who was asking about a particular building in Central South Dakota; he thought our agency owned it and was looking for more information. While visiting, he proceeded to talk about a motel that he currently owned. My spiritual ears perked up; however, I thought to myself, "Why would I consider going to see a motel?"

I found myself making an appointment to look at this motel the following day at 10am. As I thought about this, the ideas ran through my mind. Maybe it could be transitional housing for victims of domestic violence. Later that evening, I went to a church service. I spoke to Pastor about the meeting at the motel the following day. We prayed and left it to God as I wasn't sure yet why I was taking the time to seek out this motel; however, I knew God had put this on my heart. I asked Pastor if he would come with me to look at the motel. He agreed.

The next day, I drove to the motel, praying to God the entire drive. I shared my concerns with God. I pleaded, "God we don't have any funds for another building. Please help me understand why you have me doing this today". I asked for God to "show me his plan and to have his way with me". Pastor and I met with the owner and we followed him to the motel. We had a complete tour of each bedroom. From the top to the bottom, I was able to see almost every inch of the motel. When we got to the last motel room, I had a thought; "What about serving human trafficking survivors?"

*"When we got to the last motel room, I had a thought; What about serving human trafficking survivors?"*

There are not many human trafficking refuges in the United States. South Dakota doesn't have one and most domestic violence shelters have a 30 day stay limit. Most victims of human trafficking relocate for safety reasons; they try to move away from the person or people who they were trafficked by. These victims often need long term housing and an array of services to help them remove layers of trauma and to start the healing process.

Pastor and I sat down and asked for God's direction. As Pastor began to pray, a number amount flashed in my mind. I heard God's voice; "Ask him how much he wants for the motel". I proceeded to ask. The owner shared that he wasn't sure the amount that he would ask for the motel as it wasn't for sale. He eventually came up with a dollar amount. I had two weeks to make a decision.

After leaving and while driving back to Fort Thompson, I prayed. Suddenly, God reminded me that I had prayed a few weeks earlier. I was in my living room, praying and I asked God "What next do you have for me, Lord?" I heard God's voice as he softly stated, "This is what's next". I began to weep. I kept saying, "This is huge! God would you trust me with something this huge?" God showed me how much he cares for victims of human trafficking. I could feel God's love for victims of human trafficking and felt the grief that God is feeling.

Creator God truly needs people to be a vessel to serve those who are less fortunate; those who are lost; those who are wounded; those who are broken; and those who have been victimized. While praying that day, I said to the Lord, "If you want this to be your will, I will need money and grant funding".

## *Continued: The Story of Pathfinder Center*

*"Every child has dreams of what they want to be when they grow up and Pathfinder will assist women to heal, grow and become who God created them to be and find their destiny. Pathfinder Center will be a place of refuge..."*

When I returned to the office that very afternoon, I sat down at my desk feeling humbled. When I sat down to check my email, I got a notice about grant funding that would serve victims of human trafficking.

Wow! Another sign from God.

After applying for the grant and waiting patiently, our agency was blessed to receive the funding. As the two week point was getting closer and closer to make a decision on the motel, I moved forward to talk to a loan

officer at the bank. We needed to put 25 percent towards the motel. When I got off the phone, I said to my assistant, "We need a miracle". I grabbed a piece of paper and wrote down the amount we needed. I realized that this was exact amount that God flashed into my mind when Pastor and I were at the hotel.

I spoke with the owner of the motel the following day over the phone. I made him aware that the bank wanted 25 percent down. "We don't have that kind of money, but I know that somehow, God will come up with the funds", I shared. The owner told me that he already spoke with the bank and that he would be willing to put up the 25 percent needed down and that we could work out a payment plan.

When I got off the phone I started to shake and cry. I said, "God, this is scaring me and it's moving faster than I had expected". On May 28th, 2015, Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. signed off on the loan for the motel.

The motel now called Pathfinder Center. The name "Pathfinder" came from the Creator God, not me. All the glory goes to him. The Creator showed me that we would help women find their path, become self-sufficient, and find their destiny. Every child has dreams of what they want to be when they grow up and Pathfinder will assist women to heal, grow and become who God created them to be and find their destiny. Pathfinder Center will be a place of refuge where women can stay up to a year and the process of removing the layers of trauma that they have endured can begin healing.

Pathfinder Center will serve women and their children who have been victims of human trafficking throughout South Dakota. Won't you please consider making a donation to a much needed worthy cause and let victims of human trafficking know that there are people out there like you and me who care about them and their future?





## *How Can You Continue to Support Us!*

Your continued support of Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. is irreplaceable. Our organization and the people that we are able to serve are gracious for your thoughtfulness.

There are many ways you can continue to support us. Here's how you can help:

- *Donating finances, time, prayers, and clothing for those we serve.*
- *Volunteering your time.*
- *Sharing our information on social media, such as agency videos, photos, and posts to create awareness.*
- *Referring our services to those in the community who may need shelter, counseling, and overall support.*

At this time, we have a deadline to raise \$60,000 before June 1, 2016 in order keep the doors of the Pathfinder Center open to human trafficking victims. Any financial contribution is appreciated. No amount is too small, or large.

Here's how you can donate! Through our GoFundMe page at: [www.gofundme.com/standwithourwomen](http://www.gofundme.com/standwithourwomen). You can also visit our website, [www.pathfindercenter.org](http://www.pathfindercenter.org) and make a donation by clicking on the "donate" button.

Please contact Nikii or Jae with questions, or comments and Shaynna to learn more about volunteering for our agency at 605.245.2471

### **Executive Director: Lisa Heth**

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Facebook: Pathfinder Center-A Program of Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc

Wiconi Wawokiya, INC (Helping Families)

Mita Maske Ti Ki

Websites: [www.pathfindercenter.org](http://www.pathfindercenter.org)

[www.wiconiwawokiya.org](http://www.wiconiwawokiya.org)

*\*Please refer all media calls to Lisa Heth*