



March 31, 2011

Media Contact

Robyn Williams/HKA, Inc.

(714) 426-0444

robyn@hkamarcom.com

**WHW Honors Christine Walker of
Farmers & Merchants Bank at First-Ever Gala**

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif., Mar. 31, 2011 – [Farmers & Merchants Bank \(F&M\)](#) Vice President Christine Walker will be honored at “The Star Within”-- Women Helping Women’s (WHW) first-ever evening gala on Friday, April 1, at the Newport Beach Marriott.

The WHW event, previously held as a luncheon, presents the organization’s 7th annual Models of Success program designed to raise awareness and funds for WHW. Also new this year is the decision to showcase and honor corporate partners who are making a difference.

“Farmers & Merchants Bank has been a consistent partner of WHW and we are grateful for the company’s commitment and dedication, which has been a driving force behind the life transformation of so many individuals who have gone through our program,” said WHW Executive Director Janie Wolicki. A second corporate partner to be honored this year is The Decorative Arts Society.

Walker will be applauded for her activism and leadership in the community and her exemplary skills as a female executive in the banking industry.

“I care deeply about the growth of individuals, especially the empowerment of women,” said Walker. “I respect the work WHW is doing to continually equip women in overcoming physical, emotional and financial barriers to step back into society and start a new life and career. All of us at F&M Bank are honored to have the opportunity to give back through WHW.”

In addition to being a supporter of WHW, Walker also serves on the board of directors for Memorial Medical Center Foundation.

“Christine Walker is a model for so many women who come through our doors,” says Brateil Aghasi, Associate Director for WHW. “We appreciate her commitment to empowering women and dedication to making a difference, she is truly an inspiration.”

Walker was introduced to the organization by F&M Bank Tustin Branch Manager, Marcia Evans, who has served on the WHW board for more than two years. Evans’ passion and investment in the WHW organization has played an instrumental role in F&M’s continued support and contributions.

A fifth-generation banking executive, Walker began learning her family’s business after graduating from college, working on the frontlines as a teller. Today, Walker serves the Farmers & Merchants organization in leadership roles. In addition to being Vice President of the Bank, Walker is Chief Risk Officer at the Trust Company, and additionally plays a management role with the Walker family holdings involving commercial leasing and real estate development.

WHW originally started as a non-profit organization to help women prepare for the workplace after escaping abusive relationships in 1993. The organization now located in Santa Ana offers a range of services for Orange County women and men (through the [Men2Work program](#)) designed to help them move into jobs that can offer growth, advancement and a future.

About Farmers & Merchants Bank of Long Beach

Founded in Long Beach in 1907 by C.J. Walker, Farmers & Merchants Bank of Long Beach has 22 branches in L.A. and Orange counties. The Bank specializes in commercial and small business banking along with business loan programs up to \$35 million. Farmers & Merchants Bank of Long Beach is a California state chartered bank with deposits insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (“FDIC”). For more information about F&M, please call the media contacts listed above or visit the website, www.fmb.com.

###