



Annual Conference on Women's Health and the Environment

Problem and Strategic Goals: In 1996, Teresa Heinz Kerry, Chairman of the Heinz Family Philanthropies, wanted to hold a national conference in Boston to encourage women to take an active and responsible role in decision-making about the interrelationship between their health and the environment, lifestyle choices and economic futures. For ten years, RVA has organized this conference series that has explored the links between women's health and unregulated chemicals, women's health in the workplace, health risks from the cultural environment, and women's economic and mental health.

Event Planning: RVA works with the Heinz Family Philanthropies to provide all support services for this event, including: program concept and development, site selection, all printed and web materials (Save the Date card, registration brochure, display ads, event materials and signage), web registration, arranging for public access accommodations (including a CART reporter). RVA makes all arrangements for speakers (travel and lodging, honoraria and reimbursement) as well as coordinating all of the outside vendors (catering, audio/visual, printing). RVA also publicizes the event through database development, display ads and web marketing.

Conference: RVA provides all on-site coordination and staffing for the event, including: registration, VIP escort, audio visual coordination, live video, and staffing the question and answer portions of the program.

Evaluation: In collaboration with the client, RVA develops an evaluation form that is distributed to all conference attendees. This form can be completed and turned in at the event or mailed (with a pre-addressed envelope) later. Attendees are asked to rate the speakers and conference features. They are also asked to give their insights about possible future topics. RVA then compiles the results in a report form given to the client to shape and strengthen future events.

Results: The conference series has become a touchstone for women's health and the environment, reporting current research, providing helpful information for women and their families and advancing interest in this vital topic. Over the years, more than 10,000 women have participated in the events and thousands more have seen the conference summary videos on cable television. Many participants now subscribe to Mrs. Heinz Kerry's electronic newsletter, which supplements and follows up on conference topics.