

Wny

WNY Women's Fund

Investing in Women & Girls



Promoting nothing less than significant transformation in the lives of women and girls

grants

WNY Women's Fund Grants – Your Contributions At Work

To date, the WNY Women's Fund has raised over \$1.7 million and is continuing to work to further build our endowment and to make grants to important programs for women and girls. In just seven years, the Fund has provided over **\$300,000** to programs that are making a real and lasting difference in the lives of women and girls in our community. The Advisory Board and staff members of the Fund are dedicated to supporting programs and initiatives that focus on economic self-sufficiency and economic justice. The following programs have been awarded grants over the last six months.

Summer Camp Scholarships – \$8,000

According to a recent study done by Johns Hopkins University, low income students lose 2.6 months of grade level equivalency in math and 3.0 months in reading during their summer recess from school. This new Woman's Fund initiative is part of our continuing efforts to promote success in school, with the ultimate goal of higher high school graduation rates among girls in our community. This particular effort provided scholarships to low income, middle-school aged girls so they are able to attend various summer camps offered through Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart, Buffalo Seminary, Holy Angels Academy and Mount St. Mary's Academy. The expected outcome of the summer camp scholarship program is that the grantees will experience the advantages that a structured camp experience offers, such as strengthening academic skills, and providing athletic, social and cultural experiences that they would otherwise not receive.



Scholarship recipients from Holy Angels Soaring High Summer Program display puppets that they created as a charity project for at-risk children.

News Bulletin Summer/Fall 2008

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS
FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS**
Please contact our office at
887-2621 or Heidi.henzler@uwbec.org
for ticket information

Football 101

Monday, September 15, 2008
5:30 p.m.
Ralph Wilson Stadium
(see the event page for more details)

Fall in Fashion

Friday, November 7, 2008
11:30 a.m.
Buffalo Club
(see the event page for more details)

Make a Special Gift

If you are looking for a unique gifting opportunity, please consider making a contribution to the WNY Women's Fund in honor of someone you admire. It is a special way to pay tribute to family and friends.

If you would like to receive our newsletter electronically, please send an email to heidi.henzler@uwbec.org.

WNY Women's Fund
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Buffalo, New York 14209
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wnywomensfund.org

CASH (Creating Assets, Savings and Hope) – \$58,650

Leveraging 2:1 Matched Individual Savings Accounts (IDAs) for Women

Based on the success of the Asset Building Conference funded by the WNY Women's Fund in 2007, the Fund has committed \$58,650 for women-owned Individual Development Accounts (IDAs). These funds are part of CASH's program that secured \$148,000 in local funds to match \$148,000 in federal funds for the establishment of IDA accounts in Western New York. Under the program, accounts are established by individual low-income women and their savings are matched 2:1 by these local and federal funds. The money in IDA accounts can be used to further a woman's education, buy a house or start a business. The IDA concept has been used successfully throughout the country. These programs grew out of the realization that income transfers, the primary mechanism of 40 years of welfare policy, had done much to ease the hardships of the poor but little to help the poor become more economically self-sufficient. As a result, several scholars introduced this alternative, asset-based strategy to promote both the accumulation of assets (including home and business ownership and post-secondary education), as well as a number of socially positive behaviors.

CASH Coaches – \$29,360

Coaches for Personalized Financial Education for Women

Launched this year, CASH Coaches is a program that links families with a mentor to assist them in improving their financial management skills. Cash Coaches addresses specific financial concerns of high-need women through a personal, one-on-one approach. The coaches meet with their clients to identify three to five individual outcomes which are then tracked through the program. Examples of the individual outcomes range from opening a personal checking account and maintaining a household budget to learning to read, review, and improve a credit report. This unique program will have an initial direct impact on up to 140 women in our community.



Kelly Klinger

"I decided to become a CASH Coach because I recently took control and ownership of my own finances, and I want to now help others experience the same sense of empowerment and control," Kelly Klinger, Assistant Supervisor of Internal Audit with M&T Bank

Women's Fund Launches Breakfast Series

The WNY Women's Fund launched our first-ever informational Breakfast Series on Thursday, May 8 at the Saturn Club in Buffalo. The event featured acclaimed national expert, Inger Giuffrida, who is a consultant focusing on financial literacy education and asset building strategies. Ms. Giuffrida addressed the group of nearly 20 women on the importance of asset development for low-income women as a building block for economic self-sufficiency. In addition to providing the rationale and basic principles of asset building, Ms. Giuffrida's discussion focused on value of Individual Development Accounts ("IDAs"). IDAs are a national program that provides a 2:1 match with a woman's savings. The match is provided by a federal program and through a local match. The WNY Women's Fund has recently granted nearly \$60,000 in support of local IDA accounts for women. For more information, see the Grants section of this publication.

Stay tuned to www.womensfund.org and future editions of this newsletter for announcements of future Breakfast Series speakers and topics.

Upcoming Events that Benefit the Fund

Football 101

Join us on Monday, September 15, 2008 from 5:30-9:00 p.m. at Ralph Wilson Stadium for a NFL experience like none other! This unique opportunity will take you behind the scenes with Buffalo Bills staff, alumni and players as they run through the X's and O's of America's beloved game. This time around we'll focus on the real nitty gritty as we split into teams and run actual plays, try out official NFL equipment and get an inside look at the players' game day rituals and routines. Sponsored by BlueCross BlueShield of WNY and the Buffalo Bills, all proceeds from the event benefit the WNY Women's Fund. The cost is \$100 per person and each participant will enjoy a delicious dinner and receive an official "playbook" to take home. **New this year – There will be a limited number of one-of-a-kind autographed Bills caps on sale for \$20 each.** For more event information, or to register, please contact the Fund at 887-2621 or visit our website at www.wnywomensfund.org.

Fall In Fashion

This stylish annual event is scheduled for Friday, November 7, 2008, at 11:30 a.m. at the Buffalo Club. Co-chaired by Shine Hassanali and Mindy Shine, the luncheon and raffle features fashion items and accessories from the world's most renowned designers. Funds raised through this fashionable event go specifically to programs that support economically disadvantaged girls in Western New York. Fall In Fashion is by invitation only and attendance is limited. Please call 887-2621 to be added to the mailing list.

We are grateful for the support of all of our event sponsors, chairs and committee members who help to make these events possible.

Letter from the Director

By Brigid Doherty

What a fantastic spring and summer here at the Women's Fund! In May, four board members and I attended the national conference of the Women's Funding Network in Washington D.C. Over 130 funds from around the globe sent representatives to the conference appropriately named, "Leadership for a Changing World". The conference gave us the opportunity to learn best practices and meet with federal legislators. Personally, I was inspired by the gifts and talents of so many women involved in women's funds and was honored to be a part of this memorable experience.

This momentum and insight was brought to our strategic planning process. The Advisory Board completed two full off-site days working with a national women's fund facilitator, Ellen Sprenger. This critical process combined what we learned at the conference with feedback from two focus groups we convened recently – one with Women's Fund donors and a second consisting of leadership from the area's largest non-profits focused on women and girls.

I am happy to announce that we have now completed a four-year strategic plan that follows the best national practices while taking advantage of the unique talents of the volunteers at the WNY Women's Fund and the needs within our community. Funding for the process was provided by the Women's Funding Network and the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo. I am very proud of this plan and ask you to take a moment to review the document entitled, **WNY Women's Fund Strategic Plan 2008-2011** to learn more about our strategic direction.

In addition, we launched our new website www.wnywomensfund.org. The website is updated on a regular basis and will provide you with current information about the Fund.

Thank you for your continued support. With the Fund's extraordinary volunteers and generous donors, there is endless potential on the impact we can have on the community. To learn more about the Fund, please visit our website at any time, or contact us at (716) 887-2621.



Brigid Doherty

Heidi B. Henzler Joins WNY Women's Fund Staff

The WNY Women's Fund recently appointed Heidi B. Henzler to the position of Development Specialist. As Development Specialist, Heidi assists in creating and implementing the strategic direction of the WNY Women's Fund. Additionally, she implements the Fund's annual giving campaign and special event activities and provides data and information to the Fund's board and volunteers. She also supports the timely management of written materials; information storage, retrieval and follow-up; and assists the Fund's director with various organizational tasks.

A communications professional for more than 10 years, Mrs. Henzler's last position was as a Public Relations Specialist with CIPA Western New York IPA, Inc. (CIPA) in Buffalo. Prior to her work with CIPA, she served nearly seven years as Public Relations Coordinator and Marketing Manager for the Buffalo Zoo. She has also worked as the Branch Communication Coordinator for the YMCA of Greater Buffalo.

An avid sports fan, Heidi resides in Amherst, with her husband, Todd, and her three-year old daughter, Natalie.



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wnywomensfund.org

Springtime of Success



The WNY Women's Fund achieved a great deal of success as a result of two fundraisers earlier this year. Combined, the annual *Athena Awards* and newly-created *Hockey Night in Buffalo* brought in more than \$50,000 for the Fund. Special thanks to all of our board members, volunteers, sponsors and participants for your support!

Athena Award Ceremony

The 19th annual **Athena Award Ceremony** took place on April 29, 2008, at the Hyatt Regency Buffalo. The event, which is a collaboration between the WNY Women's Fund and the Buffalo Niagara Partnership, was co-chaired by Fund Advisory Board members, Ellen E. Grant, Ph.D. and Amy Habib-Rittling. Floral arrangements were provided courtesy of Jayne Rand, and the children at Gateway Longview helped volunteers create beautiful centerpieces. Each year, the Athena Awards honors an individual in our community who has attained and personifies the highest level of professional excellence, demonstrates support for the goals of professional women and provides significant and selfless assistance on their behalf. This award is dedicated to promoting and honoring the valuable contributions being made to advance the status of women in the Buffalo Niagara region. Twelve outstanding women were nominated for this prestigious honor. Each of these deserving women serves as a role model for young women and girls in our community.

The 2008 Athena Award was presented to Ann E. Evanko, who soon after receiving this award, became the President of the Hurwitz & Fine law firm. Ms. Evanko became Hurwitz & Fine's first female associate when she joined the firm in 1979. She was also a member of the Board of Directors of the Everywoman Opportunity Center, Inc., (2000-2007) and served as its Treasurer. She was a recipient of the Center's Award of Excellence in 1998 for providing a role model for women in Western New York. Additionally, Ms. Evanko is on the board of the YW-Housing Development Fund Inc. and previously served four consecutive terms as President of the Board of Directors of the YWCA of Western New York. She also serves on the Institutional Advancement Committee for the Buffalo Olmstead Parks Conservancy.



2008 Athena Award Winner, Ann E. Evanko

The WNY Women's Fund would like to thank the event's sponsors who recognize the vital role that women play in this community: The Buffalo Niagara Partnership, Buffalo State College, Buffalo Business First, Curtis Screw Company LLC, HSBC, Kaleida Health, Merchants Insurance Group, WIVB-News Channel 4 and WJYE 96.1 FM.



From left to Right Amy Habib Rittling, Athena 2008 Co-Chair and WNY Women's Fund Advisory Board Member, Brigid Doherty, WNY Women's Fund Director, Ellen E. Grant, Ph.D., Athena 2008 Co-Chair and WNY Women's Fund Advisory Board Member and Muriel Howard, Ph.D., 2006 Athena Award Winner and WNY Women's Fund Emeritus Advisory Board Member

Hockey Night in Buffalo – An evening for women and girls

On March 6, 2008, women and girls of all ages joined Buffalo Sabres forward Paul Gaustad at **Hockey Night in Buffalo – An evening for women and girls**. There were more than 125 individuals in attendance at the Harbour Club in the HSBC Arena for this special fundraiser. All of the attendees were inspired by Gaustad's discussion about his mother and the sacrifices she made to support his dreams of becoming a professional hockey player. He also stressed the importance of giving women and girls opportunities to reach their potential. Professional NHL scout Jon Christiano also spoke to the fact that he believes that women will soon become scouts in the NHL in the near future.

The evening, which was chaired by Advisory Board member Melissa Nowak, also included dinner, hockey skills/equipment stations, an autograph session with Sabretooth and a popular basket raffle. The event, which raised over \$10,000, was sponsored by BlueCross Blue Shield of WNY, the Buffalo Sabres, Conesus Fest for Charity, Delaware North, Doran & Murphy and Summer Street Capital.

Additionally, the Sabres and New Era Hat Cap Co. sponsored a hat sale, proceeds of which benefitted the Fund. Before the March 10th Sabres game vs. the NY Rangers, 500 autographed, one-of-a-kind pink Sabres hats were sold in record time and an additional \$10,000 was raised.



Trying on Ryan Miller's equipment



WNY Women's Fund Strategic Plan

2008-2011

OUR VISION

A community where all women and girls have the opportunity to thrive

OUR MISSION

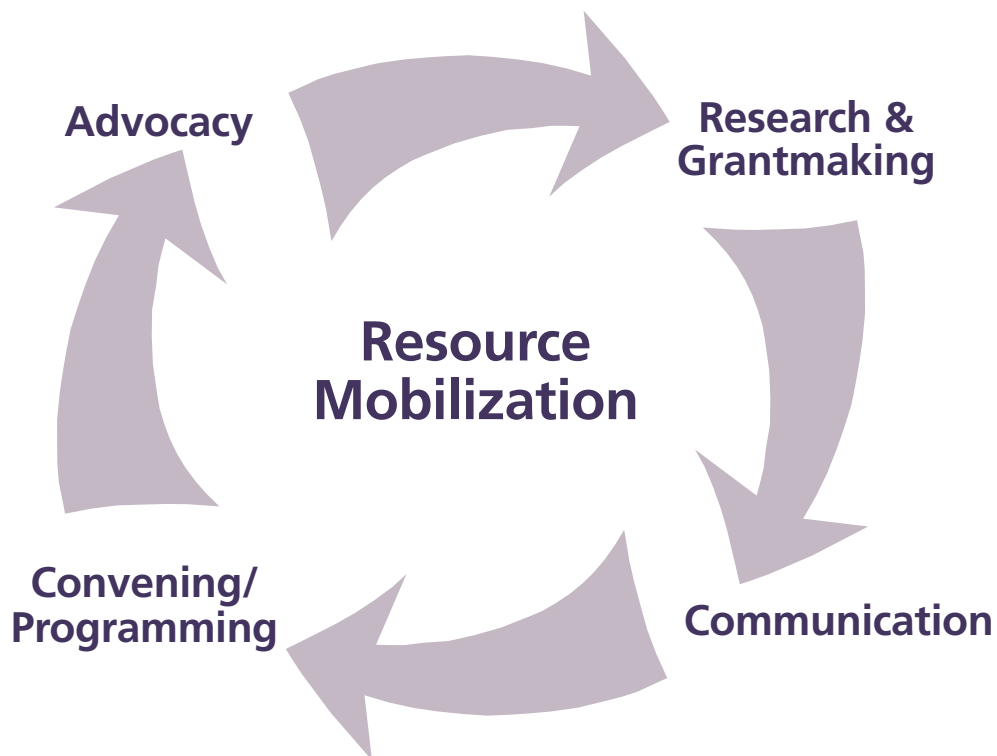
To be a leader in identifying, communicating and funding innovative, effective solutions that will improve the lives of women and girls in Western New York.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Integrity, Learning, Collaboration, and Respect

The WNY Women's Fund is a change agent acting as the only organization solely focused on investing in systemic change for the women and girls in Western New York. In order to effectively meet its mission, the WNY Women's Fund will play multiple roles in the community.

Roles of the WNY Women's Fund in Our Community



Strategic Plan

WNY Women's Fund Major Milestones

Research & Grantmaking

- Work with a research partner to provide baseline information, policy insights and strategic recommendations on specific areas affecting Western New York's women and girls
- Create a diverse advisory committee that will help shape the strategic recommendations
- Continue to invest in programs that effect systemic change by giving women and girls the opportunity to build assets

Communication

- Influence the community's investment in women and girls programming by creating a community dialogue around the strategic policy issues recommended in our research
- Be the "go to" resource on issues and solutions for women and girls in our community

Convening/Programming

- Bring together the largest organizations that work with women and girls in a forum that allows discussion on best practices, and share information and resources
- Lead the eight other women's funds in New York state in a two-day summit to look for opportunities to work together on state wide initiatives
- Educate our donors and stakeholders on specific issues relevant to women and girls in our community

Advocacy

- Continue to evaluate the role the Fund can play in advocating locally, regionally and at the state level for women and girls

This is the Fund's third strategic plan since its founding. The plan represents the culmination of two days of Board retreats, direction from the Strategic Planning Committee, and input from our national Women's Fund expert and facilitator. In addition, sessions were held to gain input from donors and the largest non-profits that work with women and girls. Funding for the process was provided by the Women's Funding Network and the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo.

Why is this important?

- Two out of three families living in poverty in Buffalo have a woman as the head of the household
- Approximately 1,000 children are born each year in Buffalo to mothers without a high school diploma
- In Erie County the median annual earnings for a full-time working woman are \$26,510. The median annual earnings for a full-time working man are \$38,703
- Women still only earn 76 cents for every dollar men earn, and for women of color the gap is even larger
- 25% of women in Erie County do not receive pre-natal care; the national average is 17%
- Yet, only 7% of funding nationally goes to programs focused on women and girls according to the Council on Foundations

Shaping the Future for Western New York's Women and Girls

Established in 1999, the WNY Women's Fund has given a voice to more than 125,000 women and girls living in Erie County. Since our first grants were distributed in 2001, the Fund has invested more than \$300,000 to promote positive social change in Western New York.

With funding from the WNY Women's Fund:

- Over 140 women will receive one-on-one financial coaching to assist them in improving their financial management skills
- More than 20,000 tax returns were completed in two years, resulting in \$26M in tax refunds and credits for those individuals and families in Western New York who are in the greatest need
- Academic tutoring and vital life skills mentoring were provided to more than 100 girls resulting in improved academics, school engagement and positive feelings
- Through saving and sacrifice over a three-year period, a number of women will have accumulated \$18,000 invested in an IDA account to further their education, buy a home or start a business. These women will provide \$6,000 of their own money which will be matched 2:1 by both the federal government and the WNY Women's Fund

For more on the WNY Women's Fund, please visit our website at www.wnywomensfund.org or call us at 716.887.2621.

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donors

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"I support the WNY Women's Fund because the most influential and empowering people in my life have been women. I know that not all women are as fortunate as I to have the encouragement and support I've had and this is one small way I can help women and girls in our community. I also believe that women can set the tone for the quality of life in a family and a community. By empowering women, giving them the opportunity, skills and tools, their lives and all those they touch will be improved."

Laurie Dann, WNY Women's Fund Donor and Grantmaking Committee Member

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WNY Women's Fund



Investing in women and girls

742 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14209

**Established in 1999,
the mission of the
WNY Women's Fund is to
be a leader in identifying
innovative, effective
solutions that improve the
lives of women and girls
in our community.**

The WNY Women's Fund raises money and makes grants to community programs that give women and girls the power to realize their full potential.

The Fund also promotes increased philanthropy by and for women and girls. The WNY Women's Fund is a collaborative effort between the United Way of Buffalo & Erie County and the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo.

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