

The Women's Fund grants \$101,000 in two years to help women and girls

We're growing! Since 2006, The Women's Fund has granted \$101,000 to programs that fulfill our mission of financial independence for women and greater opportunities for girls. The programs range from helping domestic violence survivors support their families, to helping women become licensed child care providers. Such work has been made possible by the ever-growing number of Women's Fund donors, including 210 Founding Five Hundred members (see page 4 for the Founders list). Through the collective power of The Women's Fund, we are making a difference!

Invest in Her Future

Thank you to everyone who participated in focus groups or an email survey about The Women's Fund messaging during the past six months. Your response resulted in the Fund's new logo (at right) and tag line: **Invest in Her Future**. Thank you also to the Marketing Message Sub-committee for their hard work on this project — we hope you'll agree that the new marketing effectively communicates what we are, together, accomplishing in our community.



Helping women become financially independent: a Women's Fund investment success

One program awarded a 2008 Women's Fund grant is a Career Development Program for Underemployed Women run by CareerLinks, Albany Community Action Partnership and other partners. (See page 3 for details about the program.) Below is the story of one formerly underemployed woman, Donna Rains, who is succeeding due to CareerLinks.

Donna Rains (left in above photo; on right is CareerLinks Director Marsha Lazarus) has been a client of CareerLinks since April 2007. When she started attending CareerLinks programs, she was already a student at Bryant and Stratton working on a degree in medical assisting. Although her studies were demanding, Donna also wanted and needed a job. "My son is the reason I do what I do. It's all about being determined not to go the route of welfare," she said.

CareerLinks coached Donna on job skills, including business social skills, like how to interact with co-workers and clients, and how to be interviewed. Donna said, "During the interview training, whenever I started to get off track with my answer, my counselor said, 'That's enough, Donna. Stay focused.'" After Donna had her interview at Albany Medical Center (AMC), her counselor advised her to stay in touch with them and show an interest in the job. Donna explained, "That little crack in the door can make a difference." It did — Donna has been working at AMC as a patient support associate since August 2007.

Her counselor also looks after Donna at school by keeping in touch, keeping track of her grades, and

checking if Donna needs a tutor. Donna is proud to be nearly finished with her certificate program, and looking forward to graduating in May 2009, when she will be qualified to work as a medical assistant. She hopes to work in a surgeon's office, where her responsibilities might include taking vital signs, recording patient medical history and doing lab work.

In addition, Donna is considering continuing on in school, perhaps in social work "since I can let people know there is a way out," or in pediatric nursing.

**"My son is the reason
I do what I do.**

**It's all about being
determined not to go
the route of welfare."**

*-Donna Rains,
CareerLinks client*

CareerLinks has helped Donna beyond job and school support. When money was tight, CareerLinks gave Donna a bus pass she needed to go to work.

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THE WOMEN'S FUND
of the CAPITAL REGION

THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION & UNITED WAY

Join other supporters on a Women's Fund committee

The annual Trailblazers' luncheon is organized by a dedicated committee of Women's Fund volunteers, one of five committees that make The Women's Fund successful. Would you like to join us? Volunteers are always sought for the committees listed below; contact Megan Allen at mallen@unitedwaygcr.org or 456-2200, ext. 126 to learn more.

- **Grants Committee:**

Solicits grant applications and recommends projects for funding; monthly meetings at noon in Albany.

- **Marketing Committee:**

Splits into the events and communications sub-committees as needed; coordinates all marketing materials and plans all events; monthly meetings at 9 a.m. or lunch-time in Albany.

- **Resource Development Committee:**

Raises funds to support The Women's Fund; monthly meetings at 8:30 a.m. via teleconference or in Albany.

- **Volunteer Committee:**

Organizes volunteer opportunities that support The Women's Fund mission; monthly meetings at 7 a.m.

Record 300 attend 2008 Trailblazers' Luncheon

Five grant recipients and three Trailblazers recognized at annual event

Almost 300 people attended the June 3 Trailblazers' Luncheon at the Desmond Hotel and Conference Center to honor three outstanding women who received The Women's Fund of the Capital Region 2008 Trailblazer Award: **Sister Constance Casey, snjm**; **Jane Golub**; and **Candace King Weir**. Benita Zahn of WNYT NewsChannel 13 served as emcee.

The Trailblazers shared stories about their personal challenges and strong belief in the importance of supporting community efforts on behalf of women and girls in our community. (See next page for more information.)

The Women's Fund 2008 grant awardees also were announced at the luncheon. These included **Strengthening the Bond Between Mothers and Daughters** (partners: Girls Incorporated of the Capital Region, Bank of America, and The Sage Colleges); **Career Development Program for Underemployed Women** (partners: Albany Community Action Partnership, CareerLinks, Equinox Inc., and SEFCU); **Older Women's Stability & Independence** (partners: Jewish Family Support Services of Northeastern New York, Catholic Charities

Support Services, Community Caregivers, Bethlehem Senior Services, and the Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Community); **Project Hope and Power** (partners: Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Services of Saratoga County, and Soroptimists International of Saratoga County); and **St. Patrick's Home-Based Child Care Partnership** (partners: Catholic Charities, SEFCU, and Capital District Child Care Council).

The event raised more than \$30,000 to support The Women's Fund. One hundred fourteen people comprised the luncheon's Honorary Committee; and Academy of the Holy Names, Price Chopper's Golub Foundation, and C. L. King Inc., each sponsored a table at the event.



Above, 2008 Trailblazer Candace King Weir accepts her award.



Above, Founding Five Hundred members mingled at the reception immediately before the luncheon.



Above, Women's Fund Chair Susan Haigh Houpt (left) presents a grant check to St. Patrick's Home-Based Child Care Partnership, represented by Tamae Memole (center) and Emily Gilbert (right).

2008 Trailblazers lead the way for women and girls

Three outstanding Capital Region women were honored as Trailblazers at The Women's Fund for the Capital Region June 3 luncheon: **Sister Constance Casey, snjm, Jane Golub and Candace King Weir.** Each woman was selected because of her philanthropic leadership, which has inspired others to support efforts on behalf of women and children. Each has demonstrated a long commitment to community initiatives and is an outstanding role model.

Sister Constance Casey, snjm, is President and CEO of Academy of the Holy Names, a Catholic college-preparatory school for young women in grades pre-K-12. In her remarks, Sr. Connie described a trailblazer as a person who marks a trail through the wilderness. She said she believed she had been doing just the ordinary callings of life and responding to the needs she saw. She added that she tries to serve as a role model for young people and in particular for young women.

Jane Golub, Director of Vendor Marketing Programs, Price Chopper Supermarkets, taught in the Niskayuna elementary schools for 23 years. She worked with the Anti-Defamation League to bring "A World of Difference" — a prejudice reduction program — to public schools in the Capital District, and was selected by the NYS Department of Education to coordinate the development of the program in schools throughout the state. She also trained hundreds of local teachers on how best to use that curriculum in the classroom. She emphasized that her strong belief in teaching children about prejudice and how to counteract it has been an important part of her life.

Candace King Weir is President of C.L. King & Associates, Inc., an investment management



The 2008 Trailblazers are, from left: Candace King Weir, Sister Constance Casey, snjm, and Jane Golub.

company she founded more than 35 years ago. Her firm was one of the first women-owned security firms in the United States, and she spoke about how few women leaders there have been in the financial sector until very recently. Her accomplishments are proof of the power of women's determination to make their way in a male-dominated field.

Women's Fund invests in study on career counseling for low-income women

A Women's Fund grant awarded to the newly-formed Career Development Program for Underemployed Women in June is at work to make a real difference in the lives of women in the Capital Region. Kathy Cloutier, Executive Director of Albany Community Action Partnership (ACAP), and Marsha Lazarus, Director of ACAP's CareerLinks Program, are collaborating with two other partners to create an innovative program for women trying to climb out of poverty.

The Women's Fund grant award is helping guide these partners through the process of implementing an effective and sustainable career program. CareerLinks, a 9-year-old career counseling and employment program for low-income individuals, merged with ACAP in August to strengthen both programs and better utilize funding sources. It's the kind of collaboration The Women's Fund looks for in the grant review process, a collaboration of community agencies where each uses its strengths to best serve clients.

ACAP and CareerLinks are working to create a sustainable model that will focus resources where they will be most effective. A study will first help the organizations identify women most in need of services and determine who is providing other support services to these clients. This study is vitally important to the successful execution of the program. Ultimately the program developed from

this strategic planning will provide education, resources and expertise to women living in poverty so they can become employed and move beyond a survival lifestyle to financial independence. For women already employed, the Career Development Program will provide career counseling to help them move up the financial ladder and out of working poverty.

"The strength of The Women's Fund is that it's visionary, that it's not a traditional funding source," states Kathy Cloutier. Traditional sources often come with restrictions or artificial time limits not connected to the program objectives. "The Women's Fund grant is allowing us to come up with a plan to collaboratively support our clients and programs without those restrictions. It's innovative!" She is also grateful to The Women's Fund for feedback on their original proposal, which helped strengthen the program. "It reinforces how dedicated The Women's Fund is to improving the community."

The other two partners collaborating on the grant are Equinox Inc. and SEFCU. Equinox is working as a source of referrals and counseling and support for participants, and SEFCU contributes experts to provide skill-building (in budgeting and how to improve credit). Kathy Cloutier stresses the grant is helping all the partners learn to be more effective with limited resources. "We are using The Women's Fund grant to learn to impact more women with less money and do it well." Look for updates on this program in future newsletters.

"The strength of The Women's Fund is that it's visionary, that it's not a traditional funding source."

-Kathy Cloutier, ACAP

Nominate a Trailblazer

Do you know a woman who should be recognized as a Trailblazer? Trailblazing women provide leadership in philanthropy; contribute substantial time, money and vision to issues affecting women and girls; demonstrate a long-standing commitment and involvement in community initiatives and act as a mentor. To nominate a 2009 Trailblazer, visit www.womensfundcr.org. Deadline for nominations is December 1.

Looking for a unique and meaningful gift this holiday season?

Honor a special woman in your life during the holidays with a donation to The Women's Fund of the Capital Region. All recipients will receive a special card acknowledging your generosity in their honor. For donations



of \$500 or more, the recipient will also join the Founding Five Hundred and receive a sterling silver pin handcrafted by Michael Dunn. Complete the pledge form on page 4, visit our web site (www.womensfundcr.org), or call Amy Clinton at 456-2200, ext. 122 to

give a gift that will invest in the futures of Capital Region women and girls.

Do you have a few hours to volunteer?

The Women's Fund Volunteer Committee is working to organize and advertise one-day volunteer opportunities that meet The Women's Fund mission (such as Baskets of Hope, on page 6). Such opportunities are advertised via email, so be sure we have your current email address by joining our list on our web site, www.womensfundcr.org. Volunteer opportunities will be mailed quarterly.

LUNAFEST benefits The Women's Fund

LUNAFEST is a national film festival that began in 2001 and features short films by, for, or about women. The Festival came to the Capital Region in Spring 2008 at Siena College, with all proceeds benefiting The Women's Fund (85%) and the Breast Cancer Fund (15%). The

Women's Fund gratefully received \$2,083. Special thanks to The Bowman Center for Women at Siena College and The Women's Alliance of Merrill Lynch for hosting this spectacular event!



Pictured above, from left to right: Janice Goca, Siena Alumni Relations; Rachel Sloan, Merrill Lynch; Lisa Cardone O'Connor, Merrill Lynch; Ann Marie Franke, Merrill Lynch; Susan Haigh Houpt, Women's Fund Chair; Shannon O'Neill, Siena Bowman's Women's Center; Carrie Rashford, Merrill Lynch; Rachel Dorr, Merrill Lynch; and Georgia Kelly, Merrill Lynch.

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At Christmas, CareerLinks selected Donna for the Adopt-A-Family program. Donna said, "These meant a lot — they showed that my counselor thinks of me as an individual. She could have given these things to someone else, but she chose me." Knowing CareerLinks staff is there to talk helps reduce Donna's stress of being a single mom, working full-time and going to school.

Donna said, "It's always going to be hard. But there's always a light at the end of the tunnel. You just have to look for it. If you want something and the first way doesn't work, go on to the second way. Maybe the ninth way will be the one that works. I am determined."

The Women's Fund Steering Committee

Susan Haigh Houpt, *Chair*

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Thank you for giving to Baskets of Hope

Thank you to all the Trailblazers' Luncheon attendees who contributed toward Baskets of Hope, a collection of toiletries and school supplies to benefit survivors of domestic violence through Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Services of Saratoga County. Your generosity was amazing! At right, DVRC Executive Director Maggie Fronk (left) and Women's Fund Steering and Volunteer Committee member Ellie Alexander stand with all the donations.

As a followup to the collection, Women's Fund volunteers helped create baskets from the supplies with project organizer The Chamber of Southern Saratoga County's Women in Business Committee. Thank you to volunteers Leslie Kesner, Amy Clinton, Susan Houpt and Megan Allen for participating.



Visit us online at www.womensfundcr.org.



Invest in her future.

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