



# Community Update

The Passion • The People • The Promise • The Power of Giving Together

## Luncheon Generates Powerful Wave of Philanthropy \$650,000 Raised Will Support Women and Girls

A powerful wave of philanthropy swept through the Independence Ballroom of the Grand Hyatt Hotel Oct. 11 when Washington Area Women's Foundation President Anne Mosle made an unexpected announcement toward the end of the organization's annual luncheon. Washington 100 donor Charlotte Perret, while unable to attend the luncheon, offered to match any contribution made to the Foundation before Nov. 1, up to \$50,000.

By the conclusion of the luncheon, \$13,000 had been committed; within a week, pledges totaled \$46,663. As this newsletter goes to press, we are pleased to report that our donors rose to the occasion, matching Perret's pledge, dollar for dollar. This was on top of the \$580,000 contributed in advance of the annual event.

Mosle's announcement capped a day filled with electric moments including a rare public conversation between two premier leaders in the corporate and philanthropic sector: Ann M. Fudge, CEO of Young & Rubican Brands, and Patty Stonesifer, Chief Executive Officer of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Journalist Judy Woodruff moderated the discussion between the two powerful and inspirational leaders.

In her introductory remarks, Woodruff said, "Here and around the globe, if you care about inequity, you care about women. If you focus on strengthening households, you focus on women."

In discussing women "the single word that is still needed is audacity," said Stonesifer. Women need to set goals that are "really high, and risk failure. We need a culture of high expectations in schools, in homes, in churches, in the community," she said.

Fudge, a native Washingtonian, talked about her current position as a senior executive with a major corporation which develops marketing campaigns around such important global issues as child abuse and domestic violence. "Women are moving beyond the stage of asking what we can do to a position of changing lives," she told the audience.

Both speakers emphasized the need to reach girls and women early on in their lives. It is up to "everyone in this room to touch a young woman" said Fudge. "We owe that to our girls. Be their role models. Tell them what is possible, no matter what field you are in."



**Pictured from left, moderator Judy Woodruff, Board Chair Donna Callejon and speakers Patty Stonesifer and Ann M. Fudge at The Women's Foundation's annual Leadership Luncheon**

Stonesifer discussed the significant role the Gates Foundation has played in addressing the global AIDS epidemic saying, "If you want to protect an entire family, you have to start with women. You need to empower women with the tools that will save their and those of their families. Everywhere I've gone, I've seen women as the educators."

The luncheon drew more than 1,200 community leaders who support The Women's Foundation's investments in programs that benefit women and girls in the Greater Washington, D.C., region.

Earlier in the day, the Foundation hosted a community briefing to update supporters and partners on the organization's work with local non-profits through Stepping Stones — the Foundation's comprehensive initiative to help the region's low-income women-headed families build long-term, economic security. Among the panelists

## From the President



"Never walk backwards." These words, spoken by Kimberly Brooks at our Oct. 11 community briefing, refer to important safety advice she received while participating in a local training program for women entering the nontraditional field of construction. Read another way, the same words serve as a powerful rallying cry for the thousands of women who struggle every day to put food on their tables, to earn a living wage, to become home owners, to educate their children. Never walk backwards.

We at The Women's Foundation are moving forward as well. In the past year we have made tremendous strides:

- Our Grantee Partners' collective services combined with our outreach have touched the lives of 30,000 women and girls in our local community.
- Our flagship Stepping Stones initiative has taken full flight and is fast becoming recognized as an innovative national model of social change philanthropy.
- A network of our Grantee Partners has helped their clients earn and save an additional \$5.5 million and increase low-income women's home ownership equity by \$3.5 million.
- More than 120 new partnerships were sparked last year through the networkings sponsored by The Women's Foundation.
- We are working to build women's philanthropy through innovative new efforts such as our two giving circles which combined have raised \$300,000 to support non-profit organizations serving young women and girls and the work of the Foundation.

We refuse to rest on our laurels. In the coming year we will continue to build the economic security of low-income women and their families. We are in this for the long haul. We reintroduced our signature Leadership Awards, which will focus on health and safety. Our newest award encourages and supports strong board-staff partnerships. Through our new "Ask Us How" advertising campaign, we hope to raise awareness to meet the most critical needs of women and girls.

We continue to be overwhelmed by the response to our 2006 Leadership Luncheon. Special thanks go out to the many women and men who joined us at that celebratory event, and to all the donors who have made 2006 a banner year for Washington Area Women's Foundation.

Anne B. Mosle  
President



## Washington Area Women's Foundation

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Founded in 1998, Washington Area Women's Foundation is dedicated to making empowerment, economic security and self-reliance a reality for low-income, women-headed families in the Washington Metropolitan Area. Our mission is to foster a powerful wave of philanthropy to improve the lives of all women and girls through:

- Engaging women in philanthropy
- Offering grants and operational resources, and
- Serving as a regional voice for women and girls.

Through fostering this powerful wave of philanthropy and focusing the Power of Giving Together, we believe that every woman and every girl can have the tool she needs to reach her full potential.

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at the morning briefing was Judith Conti, co-founder and executive director of the D.C. Employment Justice Center, which received a Women's Foundation Leadership Award in 2001. Conti described how the award "raised us up. It gave us such a measure of credibility, introduced us to people and helped leverage our resources. Working in partnership with The Women's Foundation staff, and being a member of the family of Women's Foundation grantees, is amazing."

Conti updated the audience on the group's successful work in support of a living wage bill in the District. One highlight of both the briefing and luncheon was the participation of community activist Dorothy David who spoke of her role in advocating for a living wage. "It takes little folks like us to make things happen," said David. "We're big now," she said, to resounding applause.

***"Women are finding ways to empower themselves with knowledge and then share it. This room is an example of that."***

**Patty Stonesifer**

"This city is important because everything is here, including bright and skillful people. All we need is some training," said David. "Some people think low-income people don't want to work. Well, we get tired of working for pennies. We have families to look out for."

Conti concluded her presentation with a call for action. "We have a golden opportunity with a new administration coming into the District, with new Councilmembers coming in. We can do something about the public workforce development system."

Colleen Paletta, community collaboration coordinator for Goodwill of Greater Washington/WORC, discussed the groups' construction training program for women, which provides both construction and life skills. A graduate of the Prince George's County-based pre-apprenticeship readiness training program, Kimberly Brooks described her introduction to the world of construction. After being laid off from her job as a home health aide, Brooks turned to Goodwill for job counseling. Soon after, she enrolled in the second class of the pre-apprenticeship program.

"I didn't know anything about construction other than do-it-yourself projects at home," says Brooks. Today, she is employed by a construction and safety service, a position that allows her "to use the skills I have learned and to grow with the company." One of the most important safety lessons she learned, she said, "is never walk backwards."



**Anne Mosle speaks at the community briefing**

## **Leadership Awards Program Announced**

At the luncheon, Mosle announced the return of The Women's Foundation's signature Leadership Awards Program. (From 1998 to 2004, the awards honored 50 local organizations.) The 2007 awards will recognize community-based groups that help women, girls and their families achieve enhanced health, physical safety and well being. Eight non-profits will be honored in the first cycle, receiving \$10,000 in June 2007, with subsequent cycles each fall and spring. In addition, a new \$10,000 Leadership Award will go to a non-profit organization that has demonstrated effectiveness as a result of a strong board and senior staff partnership. Nomination materials will be available on The Women's Foundation website in January 2007.

## **Special Thanks**

The Women's Foundation extends its special thanks to Capital One, the lead underwriter of its annual luncheon; to its premier sponsors, AOL, Fannie Mae Foundation and FedEx Corporation; and to the hundreds of other individuals and organizations who contributed to the annual event. We are also grateful to The Women's Foundation Board member Carolyn Berkowitz, vice president of community affairs of Capital One, who served as luncheon chair; to the entire luncheon committee; to our media partners, EFX Media and RTRCM; and to Colella Photo.

## **Julie Jensen: Outstanding Philanthropist**

Washington Area Women's Foundation is proud to announce that Julie Jensen, honorary chair of Stepping Stones, was recently named "Outstanding Philanthropist" of 2006 by the Association of Fundraising Professionals/Washington DC Metro Area Chapter at its fifth annual National Capital Philanthropy Day. Jensen, who was nominated by The Women's Foundation, "is leading a new generation of women philanthropists," Anne Mosle wrote on the Foundation's website. "For years she has quietly and consistently helped to build key community institutions like the Latin American Youth Center. She gives her time, money, brains and heart."

## Donor Spotlight: Valda Crowder

A conversation at the gym led Valda Crowder to Washington Area Women's Foundation. While working out, Crowder struck up a conversation with Jane Fox-Johnson. Both were considering career changes. Fox-Johnson, who was also thinking about starting a women's giving circle, invited Crowder to her home to meet other interested women. The rest, as they say, is history, or "herstory," if you will.

That is how Crowder, who was in the process of transitioning from being an emergency medicine physician to a career in real estate, came to be one of the 25 inaugural members of the Foundation's African American Women's Giving Circle. The group's mission is to connect African American girls and women to opportunities for earning income, gaining financial literacy, appreciating entrepreneurial opportunity and building financial assets; understanding and using technology in the personal and collective interest; and networking within and outside the communities for beneficial exposure to successful women and girls.

Each giving circle member contributes \$5,000. The group meets monthly in members' homes to discuss how to invest their pooled funds in the community.

"I saw participation in the giving circle as a good way to get to know other women with a like-minded dedication to the community," says Crowder.

When she first moved to this area in 1997, Crowder was struck by the fact that there were neighborhoods in the nation's capital that seemed so removed, that were geographically isolated. "I didn't understand how there could be people who grew up here and yet had never heard of Howard University," she says. "There were people who lived a short distance from the Capitol building who didn't have telephones or computers."

With this in mind, she urged the group to focus its attention on the residents of southeast Washington, one of the most impoverished areas in the city. In their first round of grantmaking, the giving circle awarded \$30,000 to two local non-profits: Covenant House Washington and Facilitating Leadership in Youth (FLY).

***"I saw participation in the giving circle as a good way to get to know other women with a like-minded dedication to the community."***

**Valda Crowder**

The group includes both women who have a business background and those who come out of the non-profit world. This is not without its challenges, says Crowder, who works as the national marketing director for a real estate firm specializing in global realty marketing and



**Valda Crowder**

global equity lending. The women "literally speak different languages," she says. "Those from the non-profit community want consensus. Those of us from the business arena want to vote. They want to discuss which communities are deserving of our dollars. We want to talk about timelines and accountability. But at the end of the day, we do a good job of blending the two approaches, which could lead to a very effective model for delivering non-profit dollars."

Like many donors to The Women's Foundation, Crowder gives her time as well as her money. After meeting through the giving circle the director of the African American Women's Resource Center (one of The Women's Foundation's Grantee Partners) Crowder offered to lead a workshop that covered such topics as attaining home ownership, and careers in real estate. "When I joined the giving circle, I thought I'd participate, sign a check, decide where money goes and that was it.

Volunteering on behalf of the Foundation has made it a much more rewarding experience."

# Stepping Stones Update

Stepping Stones — the initiative launched by The Women's Foundation in 2004 to build the long-term financial independence and economic security of low-income, women-headed families in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area — has already made a difference in the lives of Washington area families. "In its first year-and-a-half of operation, Stepping Stones has established itself as a force in the community, not just because it is an important source of funding for projects aimed at low-income women but because the funding is helping create new programs, strengthening existing groups with organizational and leadership development training, and leveraging partnerships among those organizations," said Anne Mosle. "The result is increased capacity — more muscular organizations capable of reaching an ever-increasing share of the low-income community in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan community."



**Community briefing guest poses question to the panel.**

Guests at the Foundation's annual luncheon received a copy of the organization's new publication, "Stepping Stones 2006: Paving Women's Pathways to Economic Security," which reports on the results and impact the initiative is already having in the community, though it is only in its second year of operation. For instance, Stepping Stones has:

- Provided financial education and counseling to more than 5,500 women, prompting the women to shed a total of more than \$72,000 in personal debt, while saving a total of nearly \$3 million;
- Provided 1,500 job preparation and support services to women;
- Helped women accumulate an additional \$2.5 million in home equity; and
- Supported work that led to the adoption of a living wage standard for contractors of the Washington, D.C., government.

Through Stepping Stones, The Women's Foundation encourages its Grantee Partners to cooperate and collaborate, seeking creative and more efficient ways to serve women in the community. In its first year-and-a-half, Stepping Stones:

- Created more than 100 partnerships among non-profit organizations and businesses—all aimed at providing vital support services to women;
- Supported recruitment of more than 1,000 new advocates for women in the metropolitan area;
- Developed and adopted 39 new tools and resources to support services and advocacy for low-income women; and
- Prompted several of the largest non-profit organizations in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area to devise first-time projects approaching issues through a gender lens.

The report also provides examples of Grantee Partners who have already begun changing women's lives: Northern Virginia Family Service through its Training Futures program; Goodwill of Greater Washington and Workforce Organizations for Regional Collaboration who have developed a construction training program in Prince George's County aimed specifically at women; Capital Area Asset Building Corporation and Lydia's House who are partnering to provide Individual Development Accounts to low-income women in Washington, D.C.'s Ward 8; Marshall Heights Community Development Organization's Asset Building Pathway Program; and D.C. Employment Justice Center's work on a living wage campaign.



**Anne Morrison comments about the Stepping Stones initiative.**

Over the next several years, Stepping Stones will expand significantly with new programmatic work focused on child care and early education, and health and safety.

For a copy of the entire report, "Stepping Stones 2006: Paving Women's Pathways to Economic Security," visit: <http://thewomensfoundation.org/about/stepping-stones-initiative/>.

# New Website Debuts

If you haven't been online recently, be sure to visit The Women's Foundation's redesigned web site. Same address, [www.TheWomensFoundation.org](http://www.TheWomensFoundation.org), but a brand new look. Anne Mosle announced the launch of the new site at the Foundation's annual luncheon. The new site is easier to navigate and has many new features including:

- Interactive features including a blog devoted to topics near and dear to The Women's Foundation. Check out recent entries by Foundation staff and board members. Add your own inspiring words or comments.
- An online photo gallery including pictures from the annual luncheon.
- An online database to help community members connect with great non-profit organizations serving women and families.
- Stories of The Women's Foundation Grantee Partners and the women they've touched, told through text, photographs and video.
- A preview of The Women's Foundation's new advertising campaign featuring the tagline, "Ask Us How."
- Opportunities for involvement including information on giving options.



## Washington Area Women's Foundation

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