



WASHINGTON AREA WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

2024 COMMUNITY INVESTMENT REPORT

INTRODUCTION

For more than 27 years, Washington Area Women's Foundation has stood in partnership with women and girls across our region, investing in their leadership, amplifying their voices, and resourcing the solutions they bring forward.



Since our founding, we've awarded **over \$17 million in grants** to **more than 215 local organizations** that share our commitment to gender, racial, and economic justice. At the heart of our work is a clear belief: those closest to the challenges are also closest to the solutions.

In a philanthropic landscape where **less than 2% of funding** goes to women and girls—and even less to women and girls of color—we're focused on closing that gap. We fund with trust, remove barriers, follow community guidance, and invest in transformation from the ground up.

In **2024**, our programs demonstrated the full depth of that commitment. We:

- Laid the foundation for a new maternal health and birth equity program
- Protected early educator pay and expanded child care access
- Invested in youth-led projects and organizing efforts in Washington, D.C., and Prince George's County, Maryland
- Supported Black women nonprofit leaders to shift power and reimagine systems

This report reflects what we achieved together. Thank you for standing with us!

ABOUT

WHAT WE DO

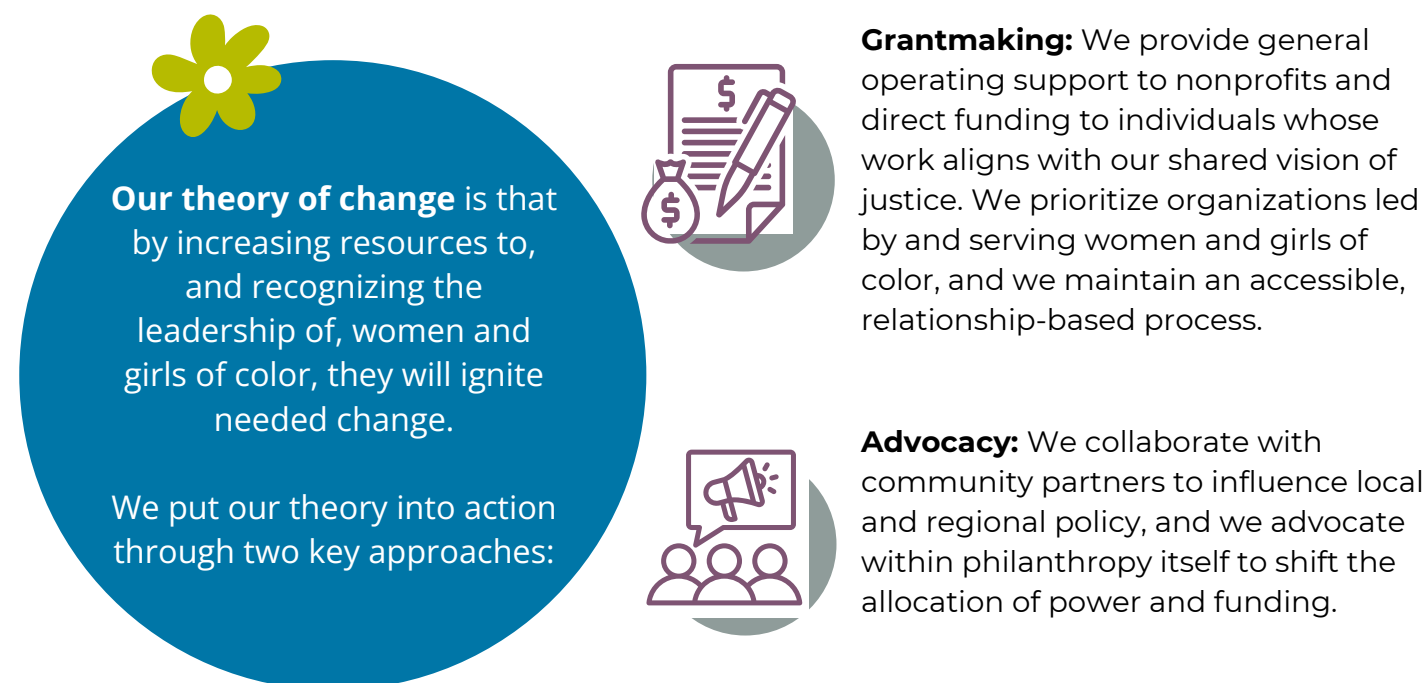
We operate at the intersection of community voice, grantmaking, and policy advocacy to advance gender, racial, and economic justice.

Our approach is rooted in trust. We invest in women, girls, and gender-expansive people of color not only because they have been historically excluded from funding, but because they are already working to transform their communities.

We fund community-led organizations, amplify their work, and follow their guidance. We know that solutions already exist in our communities. Our role is to direct resources to where they're needed most and eliminate barriers that impede progress.

OUR MODEL

We believe that women and girls of color are powerful agents of change. Despite often being unrecognized, their efforts have consistently advanced human rights and gender, racial, and economic justice in our communities for decades.



Our values—**adaptability, honesty, diversity, and kindness**—shape everything we do. They influence how we build relationships, how we make decisions, and how we engage in coalitions.

2024 IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

17

total # of organizations supported

\$487,500

total amount granted

58.8%

of grants awarded were allocated to organizations with operating budgets of \$1M or less

76.5%

of grants awarded were allocated to organizations led by Executive Director of Color

100%

of grants awarded were allocated to organizations with women or gender-expansive leaders of color at the helm

29.4%

of grants awarded were first-time grantee partners

NUMBER OF GRANTEE PARTNERS SERVED



12

in Washington, D.C.



7

in Maryland



4

in Virginia

ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS



We partnered with grantee partners to influence 23 local and state policies, positively impacting women, girls, and their families.

The Women's Foundation has been an unwavering advocate for women and girls in the #DMV. From economic security to policy, no other organization centers its work in such a unique and powerful way.
- Donna Callejon, Past Board Chair and WAWF Donor

OUR PROGRAMS

MATERNAL HEALTH AND BIRTH EQUITY

In 2024, we established the groundwork for a new initiative aimed at improving maternal health outcomes for Black women and birthing individuals in our region.

We began by listening. Through a months-long landscape analysis focused on Washington, D.C., and Prince George's County, Maryland, we engaged nearly 20 community stakeholders—midwives, doulas, birth advocates, nonprofit leaders, and clinicians. Together, they painted a clear picture of what's broken and what's possible. [Learn More.](#)

In Washington, D.C.

1 in 4 birthing people lack access to adequate prenatal care.

In Prince George's County

that number rises to 1 in 2.

Black D.C. residents

account for half of all births but 90% of pregnancy-related deaths.



While the findings were shocking, the solutions were evident. Community leaders advocated for increased investment in trusted birth workers, culturally rooted care models, and maternal mental health resources. They stressed the need for systems that uphold the dignity of birthing individuals and their families.

This work culminated in the development of our **Maternal Health and Birth Equity Program**, which officially launched in 2025. It reflects what we heard and is grounded in the lived experiences of those closest to the issue.

Our Priorities:

- Provide unrestricted grants to community-based maternal health organizations
- Elevate the leadership of Black and Brown birth workers
- Address maternal mental health and other social determinants of health
- Improve conditions for healthy pregnancies, safe births, and postpartum recovery

As we embark on this urgent work, our new program reallocates resources to where community members said they are most needed. Thank you to our partners: Boldly Go Philanthropy, A. James and Alice B. Clark Foundation, Greater Washington Community Foundation's Developing Families Maternal Health Fund, and the Meyer Foundation.

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

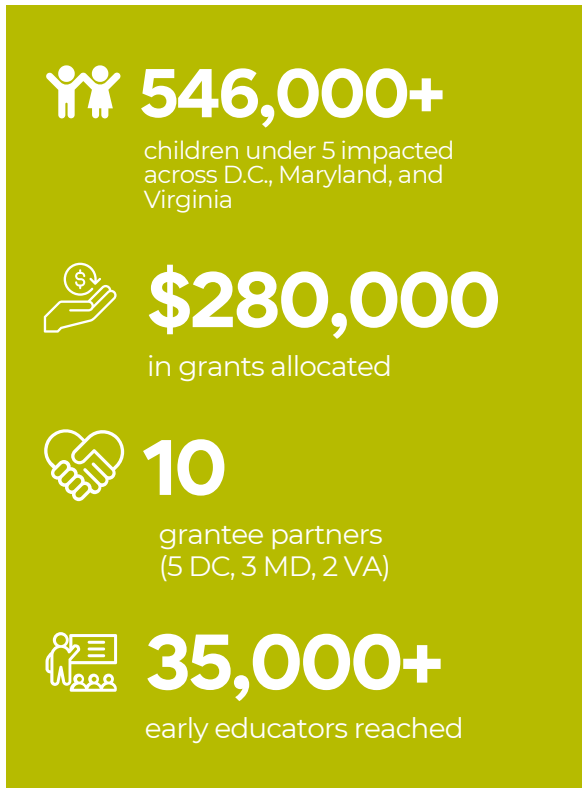
Early childhood education is a vital infrastructure, and the individuals who provide it are the backbone of our communities.

In 2024, **the Early Care and Education Funders Collaborative (ECEFC)**, housed at The Women’s Foundation, focused on transforming the systems that influence early learning. We prioritized funding for advocacy groups, grassroots organizers, and coalitions committed to ensuring that early educators—most of whom are women of color—receive the respect, compensation, and support they deserve.

Together, our grantee partners achieved significant policy wins, protected public funding, and advocated for changes that make the early education system more equitable for families, children, and providers alike. [Learn More](#).



IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS



“ I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to WAWF ECEFC for believing in MSFCCA's vision and investing in our efforts to strengthen the family childcare profession. Your partnership has not only enabled us to weather the storms of uncertainty but has also empowered us to emerge stronger and more resilient than ever before. - Ruby Daniels, President of MSFCCA ”

2024 POLICY WINS

Washington, D.C.

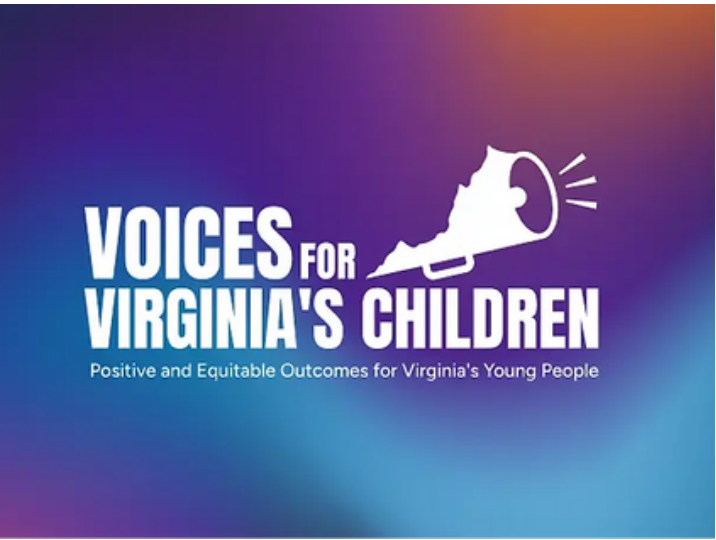
- Prevented salary cuts of **up to \$11,000** for over **3,600** early educators
- Preserved healthcare access for **4,000+** providers and families

Maryland

- **HB1441** created new certification pathways for Pre-K teachers, expanding workforce access
- **HB1139** extended funding for GOFCC, a no-cost program helping individuals—especially in high-poverty areas—become licensed child care providers

Virginia

- **HB281/SB13** allowed zoning flexibility for office-based child care, expanding provider supply
- **HB419/SB54** created a statewide funding model based on community need and demand, requiring annual reports on capacity and waitlists



PROVIDER SPOTLIGHT

Lola Pavlovic, a devoted mother and administrator of an early childhood center in Fairfax, Virginia, exemplifies both the challenges and the potential of our child care system. Starting her career as an educator, she now oversees a center that serves **71 children** and employs **20 staff members**.

In 2024, she joined **over 100** parents and providers at the Virginia Promise Partnership Advocacy Day, where she met with **75 lawmakers** to address the urgent needs facing the child care community, especially regarding staffing shortages and the instability of public funding.

Her advocacy secured a historic **\$1.1 billion** investment in early childhood care and education. Lola’s story serves as a powerful reminder that when educators lead, systems change.

YOUNG WOMEN’S INITIATIVE

Young women and gender-expansive youth of color are leading movements, building community, and holding systems accountable. The **Young Women’s Initiative (YWI)** exists to ensure they have the resources, support, and recognition they deserve.

In 2024, we reached **over 1,400** young people through YWI, supporting their leadership, amplifying their advocacy, and investing in their ideas.

For the first time, we expanded into **Prince George’s County, Maryland**, partnering with **Community Youth Advance** to provide youth-led grantmaking and organizing opportunities to even more communities.

Through youth town halls, workshops, and other public convenings, young people shaped the conversation on safety, healing, opportunity, to name a few. [Learn More](#).

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Expanded YWI

into Prince George’s County, in partnership with Community Youth Advance

Youth Leaders

hosted a Mental Health and Drug Abuse Awareness Day to mobilize peers around wellness and prevention

Youth Leaders

in D.C. and Prince George’s County led the selection process for Rock Star Fund awardees

Youth Leaders

facilitated town halls, led workshops, and organized around community care and justice



ROCK STAR FUND

Launched in 2019, **the Rock Star Fund** provides direct support to young women and gender-expansive youth of color who are developing bold, community-rooted solutions. Each year, youth leaders receive **\$2,000 microgrants**, selected by their peers through a participatory grantmaking process, to bring their visions to life.

Last year, we awarded grants to **14 Rock Stars** across Washington, D.C., and Prince George’s County, Maryland. Their projects focused on mental health, healing spaces, storytelling, advocacy, creative expression, and more, each grounded in lived experience and a commitment to positively impact their communities.



ROCK STAR SPOTLIGHT

2024 Prince George’s County Rock Star, **Favour Gam**, utilized her Rock Star grant to create and publish a book titled *For Colored College Girls*—a project inspired by Ntozake Shange’s, *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide / When the Rainbow Is Enuf*. Her objective was to inspire young Black girls to engage with literature that reflects their experiences and centers marginalized voices.

Favour wrote and curated original stories, poems, and essays that explored identity, girlhood, and what it means to navigate college as a young Black woman.

“

The Rock Star Fund has been instrumental in bringing my vision to life. With its support, I was able to amplify the voices and experiences of young Black girls through my book, *To the Beautiful You*. This funding not only gave me the resources to move forward, it also gave me the confidence to believe that my story and the stories of girls like me, matter.

”

- Favour Gam, Rock Star Fund Awardee

BLACK WOMEN AND GENDER-EXPANSIVE LEADERSHIP PROJECT



Black women and gender-expansive leaders are driving change throughout our region, often while navigating systems that undervalue their leadership and deplete their resources.

Launched in response to our “Thrive As They Lead” report, the **Black Women’s Leadership Project** continues to tackle the structural barriers identified by Black leaders themselves.

In 2024, we convened more than **60 nonprofit leaders** to deepen this work.

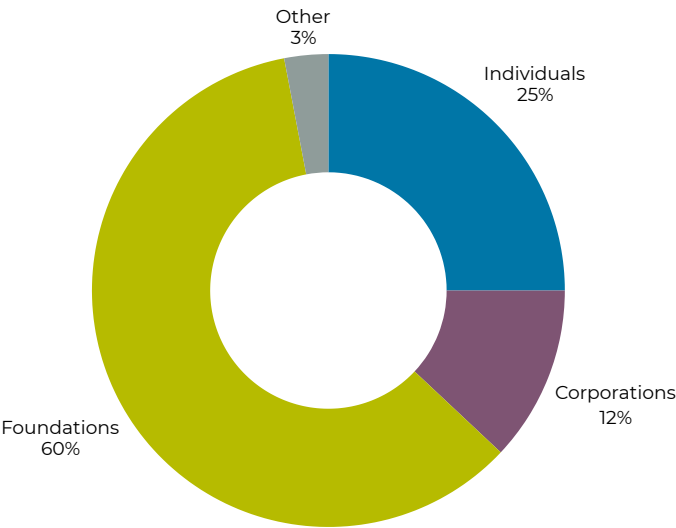
One theme emerged prominently: board governance. Participants stressed the importance of boards that share power, align with values, and create space for bold, authentic leadership. In response, we developed a board training program based on equity, healing, and accountability—shaped by Black leaders and informed by lived experience.

A special thank you to our partners, iF, a Foundation for Radical Possibility and the Meyer Foundation. [Learn More.](#)

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

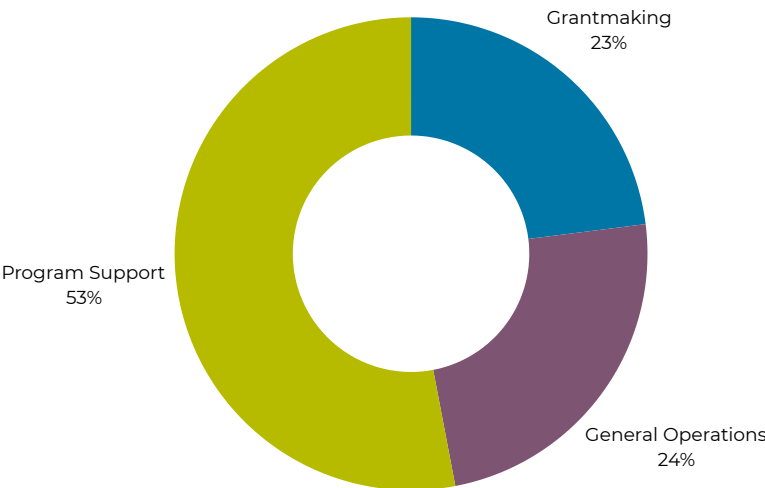
As of June 30, 2024

REVENUE



Total:
\$1,516,408

EXPENSES



Total:
\$1,791,986

“ By creating a platform that amplifies diverse voices and experiences, The Women's Foundation goes beyond merely addressing gender disparities; it actively works towards dismantling systemic barriers and promoting a society where every woman, regardless of race, background or circumstance, can access the opportunities and support needed to succeed. ”

- Beth Johnson, Leadership Council Member & WAWF Donor

MEET OUR...

2024 GRANTEE PARTNERS

Since our founding, we've partnered with more than 215 community-based organizations working to advance the well-being of women and girls across the region. Below are the organizations we funded in 2024:

- 14 Rock Star Fund Awardees
- Community Youth Advance
- DC Association for the Education of Young Children
- DC Family Child Care Association
- DC Fiscal Policy Institute
- DC Girls' Coalition
- Maryland State Family Child Care Association
- Montgomery County Children's Opportunity Alliance
- Northern Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children
- Prince George's Child Resource Center
- SPACES In Action Fiscally sponsored by Community Change
- The Multicultural Spanish Speaking Providers Association
- Voices for Virginia's Children

2024 EARLY CARE & EDUCATION FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE INVESTORS

We are deeply grateful for the generosity and commitment of our funding partners. Their support fuels our efforts to strengthen the early care and education workforce, expand access for families, and push for policy change that centers equity, fair compensation, and community needs.

- Bainum Family Foundation
- The Andrew and Julie Klingenstein Family Fund
- The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation
- The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation
- The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc.
- Richard E. and Nancy P. Marriott Foundation
- The World Bank Group
- Washington Area Women's Foundation

Learn more about The Women's Foundation, our ECEFC Funders, and Grantee Partners at thewomensfoundation.org!

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING US!

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