HERSIDE

WOMAN'S MAGAZINE
JANUARY 2015

Bachelor Results

The Women's Fund

OPERATED BY WOMEN, FOR WOMEN

Woman of The Year

Stephanie Fish

PAGE 16

THE Women's Fund

OPERATED BY WOMEN, FOR WOMEN

Story by EMILY ROEBUCK
HerSide guest columnist

Breadwinner moms are becoming more and more prominent in our culture. A data brief released in 2010 by the Population Reference Bureau ,states that nearly one fourth of children under the age of 18 in the United States are living in a single-mother household.

While the number of women providing transportation, health care coverage and housing for their families continues to increase, only 7% of all philanthropic dollars raised in the United States are earmarked for women and girls.

For 36 years, the Wayne County Community Foundation has existed to promote and support charitable giving by assisting individuals, families and organizations in the creation of charitable funds; building resources to provide for unmet community needs; making grants to charitable causes and providing a platform for long-term development for non-profit organizations.

This year the Wayne County Community Foundation received a $100,000 challenge grant from The J.M. Smucker Company to establish The Women's Fund with a goal of raising $200,000 in additional funds before June 30, 2016. This fund will positively impact the lives of women and children in Wayne County by directing resources to organizations that support the education of women and empower change and self-sufficiency.

There was a highly collaborative decision making process carried out among a group of 20 women, selected by the Wayne County Community Foundation to act as the advisory committee. The decisions made by this group will impact the lives of women, children and families throughout Wayne County for years to come.

"We want to give more women opportunities to succeed," said Sara Patton, executive director of the Wayne County Community Foundation. "Our goal is to involve women in programs that will positively impact the strength of our communities now and in the future."

Going into the process for the first time has been a learning experience. Everything was brought together through the Wayne County Community Foundation website. All applicants met IRS guidelines and then sent copies of everything to committee members in order to give them time

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE WAYNE COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION/ PICTURED FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: (SITTING) MARION CROPP, CHERYL YVONNE WILLIAMS, SANDRA HULL, *(STANDING)* JUDY SEAMAN, CHRIS DAVIS, DEANNA TROUTMAN, ELIZABETH HOOKER, PRUE HOLTMAN, G

to go through the information prior to interviews. Members of the committee could then attend one or all of the interviews if they so desired.

The application process was finalized after the Board of Directors met to discuss the decision on where the grant would most clearly benefit the community by meeting the goals set in place by The Women's Fund.

"We're looking to make the most impact possible," said program manager, Lacie Neal. "We find out what will make the greatest difference for people and then we take a solid week to interview every non-profit applicant. We bring these groups before the board and then narrow it down through individual reviews and meetings."

In 2014 the first grant for $15,000 was awarded to The Wayne County Common Good, who also came to the table with additional money from The HOPE Fund to be given towards the project. Helping women prepare for employment is one of the main purposes of the grant awarded this year.

The Wayne County Common Good is a network of 13 community organizations and educational entities. Established in 1995, the Common Good works to reduce barriers to employment for unemployed or underemployed clients. The services provided by member organizations include mental health and addiction services, basic education and literacy, employment and training services, and technical skills development.

The new grant funded program will provide specific workshops, addressing the most common barriers to women. Participants will complete a skills assessment, voluntarily participate in drug and alcohol screenings, and enter into a job search or workplace readiness program through one of the Common Good partner agencies. It will serve as an educational experience for the women referred into the program. Participants will conclude the program with a "Job Readiness Certificate" and be launched to priority placement focus at the Wayne County Job Expo. Transportation, childcare, and certification testing will be provided as needed.

There is one grant cycle per year for The Women's Fund. The next grant will be awarded following a September 2015 deadline.

"So many people, men and women, have built in support systems which allow them to work full time," added Neal. "Just as an example, things like knowing how to maintain an emergency savings account or find resources that will allow you to have transportation to and from work and childcare, these are the things that not everyone has training for or access to."

> "WE WANT TO GIVE MORE WOMEN OPPORTUNITIES TO SUCCEED. OUR GOAL IS TO INVOLVE WOMEN IN PROGRAMS THAT WILL POSITIVELY IMPACT THE STRENGTH OF OUR COMMUNITIES NOW AND IN THE FUTURE."

In addition to $100,00 from The J.M. Smucker Company and the $200,000 goal which the Wayne County Community Foundation is working towards, The Noble Foundation gave $15,000 in order to provide the first grant in 2014.

Once the challenge is met, the permanently endowed fund will provide more than $10,000 each year to support women in Wayne County. Grants will continue to increase as the endowment continues to grow which is overseen by an advisory committee, operated by women, for women.

The Wayne County Community Foundation is well on their way to meeting their goal. For more information on The Women's Fund and other funds currently making an impact and strengthening our communities throughout Wayne County, visit www.waynecountycommunityfoundation.org or call 330-262-3877.

SHAPIRO, SALLY BERNHARDT, JENNI REUSSER, RACHEL RELLE, GAYLE NOBLE, KATHY LONG, DIANE GORDON, LENDA LEHMAN, CHERYL GOFF, PEGGY SCHMITZ, PAT BARE, *NOT PICTURED: MARIBETH BURNS*