



## **Women's Giving Alliance Grants A Record \$595,000 To Break the Cycle of Female Poverty**

*WGA Members have invested more than \$7 Million in Women & Girls since 2002*

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Jacksonville, FL—May 20, 2020—The Women's Giving Alliance (WGA), an initiative of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, today announced a record \$595,000 in grants to eight nonprofit organizations in Northeast Florida to help them lift women from poverty. More than 150 WGA members attended this week's first ever Virtual Member Forum and voted overwhelmingly to ratify the 2020 grants, which represent the 18<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of grantmaking and the fourth round of annual funding since WGA began its focus on 'Breaking the Cycle of Female Poverty: Intervention & Prevention.'

"We have channeled more than \$2.2 million toward our focus on Female Poverty in less than four years, and more than \$7 million to 50+ nonprofit organizations benefitting women and girls in NE Florida since inception," said Mary Pietan, president of WGA. "This is a remarkable testimony to the power of collective giving built on research and strategic grantmaking."

Funding for grants is made available through the annual membership dues, earnings from WGA's endowment fund, and from other donor-directed contributions. For this grantmaking year, 'other donor-directed contributions' were spurred on by WGA member Barb Wenger, who promised to match additional contributions up to \$20,000—resulting in fifty additional contributions totaling \$83,000 to benefit the grant pool.

WGA's grant process is research-based and designed to create sustainable and impactful programs in a five-county service area: Duval, Nassau, St. Johns, Clay, and Baker counties. All WGA members contribute to the grantmaking pool of funds, and nearly one quarter of WGA's membership participated directly in the decision process for evaluating and awarding grants.

Each of the grants awarded this week is for a two-year period. The 2020 grantees include:

- **Barnabas Center, Inc.: Hope Builders for Women 2.0, \$60,000 (Nassau County)**  
Barnabas Center provides comprehensive services to address the complex needs of women living in poverty. Expanding upon a previous WGA grant, Hope Builders for Women 2.0 will offer individualized life skills training such as career and education planning, health and wellness coaching, and financial literacy. The program will also provide direct financial assistance for housing, transportation and childcare, as well as a savings match program of up to \$1,000 for each woman in the program.
- **BEAM (Beaches Emergency Assistance Ministry): Single Parent Program, \$80,000 (Duval and St. Johns County)**  
BEAM's Single Parent Program began in 2014 with a previous grant from WGA. This 3-year program helps women find a path to economic stability and includes intensive case management,



financial literacy training, career support, and access to mental health services. Women in the program achieve a variety of career and financial goals including completing higher education degrees, increasing net income and savings, reducing debt and becoming first time homeowners. This grant from WGA will support 60 new women on their path to economic stability.

- **Boys & Girls Clubs of Nassau County\*: SMART Girls Initiative, \$46,000 (Nassau County)**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Nassau County is an outcome-driven youth development organization, providing exceptional afterschool programs and services. This grant from WGA will fund the implementation of their SMART Girls curriculum which provides age and gender specific programming for girls aged 11-18. This comprehensive curriculum focuses on academic achievement, healthy choices, and career readiness and incorporates both adult mentorship and peer support to create a safe supportive environment for learning.

- **Delta Research and Educational Foundation\*: Dr. Betty Shabazz Academy/Growing and Empowering Myself Successfully (BSA/GEMS), \$10,000 (Duval County)**

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is an international organization comprised of college-educated women who provide scholarship and service to underserved and underprivileged individuals in our communities. This grant will fund programs that will engage 200 African American girls, aged 11-18, in activities that promote their interest and motivation to complete college or obtain a vocation and become more fiscally responsible. In addition to monthly trainings in financial wellness, the program will include career evaluations and field trips to a local college, a CPA, and the Federal Reserve.

- **Girl Scouts of Gateway Council: Community Development Troops, \$100,000 (Duval, St. Johns, & Clay Counties)**

Community Development Troops bring traditional Girl Scouting to low-income, high crime communities that desperately need safe, positive youth development programs. The curriculum focuses on life skills including financial literacy and includes a variety of field trips, community service projects, camping experiences, and leadership opportunities. This grant from WGA will help provide programming for approximately 1200 at-risk girls in our community.

- **MaliVai Washington Kids Foundation, Inc.\*: Girl Power!, \$100,000 (Duval County)**

The MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation provides afterschool and summer development programs for youth in our community. This grant from WGA will fund the implementation of the Overcoming Obstacles Curriculum. This curriculum will provide classes for middle and high school girls focused on subjects such as goal setting, problem solving, conflict resolution, and financial literacy. Additional services will include academic support, mentoring, and access to mental health services.



- **Rethreaded Inc.: Survivor Development Program, \$110,000 (All Northeast Florida Counties)**  
Rethreaded works directly with survivors of human trafficking to provide mental health services, long-term career training, and employment. Employees work at Rethreaded an average of two to five years while they rebuild their lives, gain marketable job skills, and build their resumes. The Survivor Development Program provides each woman with access to trauma-specific counseling, weekly life skills classes, and other career development opportunities. This grant from WGA will allow Rethreaded to expand their programming to include the use of a peer support model and individualized case management.
- **Year Up Jacksonville\*: Workforce Development Program, \$80,000 (Duval County)**  
Year Up Jacksonville, in partnership with FSCJ, provides women with professional training for livable wage jobs in high growth sectors. The Workforce Development Program includes six-months of classroom-based and professional training in Information Technology and Sales/Customer Support. Following this training, women then earn a six-month internship with one of the agencies corporate partners. This experience allows women to immediately apply and enhance their skills, preparing them for professional careers. The program also provides wraparound support, including weekly stipends, access to professional clothing, mentorships and assistance with childcare, housing, healthcare, and other challenges. This grant from WGA will provide training and support for approximately 160 women.

(\* Denotes first time WGA grantee)

In addition to the grants above, the Women's Giving Alliance was able to make a \$9,000 grant to Feeding Northeast Florida in direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic. WGA's grant was directed to help provide food to senior homebound women in need.

WGA President Mary Pietan presided over the virtual meeting, noting that WGA's commissioned research from The Institute of Women's Policy Research (IWPR) has guided WGA grantmaking since 2016. Pietan added that growth in WGA membership is key toward increasing impact in the WGA focus area.

#### **About Women's Giving Alliance (WGA)**

WGA, an initiative of The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, is a dynamic group of diverse women who pool their philanthropic giving to make a lasting impact on the lives of women and girls in Northeast Florida. Since 2001, hundreds of women in the region have become WGA members and each makes an annual contribution of \$1,500. With these contributions, WGA has made grants totaling more than \$7 million to more than 50 non-profit organizations to support critical services for women and girls. WGA has also built an endowment in excess of \$4 million. For more information: [www.wganefl.org](http://www.wganefl.org).

#### **About The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida**



**WOMEN'S GIVING**  
**A L L I A N C E**  
THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida ([www.jaxcf.org](http://www.jaxcf.org)), Florida's oldest and largest community foundation, works to stimulate philanthropy to build a better community. The Foundation helps donors invest their philanthropic gifts wisely, helps nonprofits serve the region effectively, and helps people come together to make the community a better place. Now in its 56th year, the Foundation has assets of \$482 million and has made grants of more than \$550 million since 1964.

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