

# The Women's Fund

of the Community Foundation for South Central New York

September 2017

## Writers, Builders and Farmers: Grants Help Women and Girls Gain Power

In its latest round of funding, the Women's Fund has granted \$24,000 to six organizations for programs that help and empower women and girls (see sidebar for complete list).

Some of that money, \$3,000, went to support the Fifth Annual Hobart Festival of Women Writers. Cheryl Clarke and Barbara Balliet founded the festival in 2013 to bring a new cultural opportunity to Delaware County and shine a spotlight on women writers.

"We know that the work of women writers is reviewed less in publications such as the *New York Review of Books* and the *New York Times*," says Clarke, a writer and educator. "Women's work suffers neglect because of this discrimination. As many women writers as we have, we still need to know about them, and we need to know about the ones we don't know about."

As the "Book Village of the Catskills," Hobart provides a natural setting for a literary

event. Its downtown is home to five bookstores. This year's festival, on September 8-10, featured 21 writers of fiction, nonfiction and poetry.

With \$5,000 from the Women's Fund, Volunteers Improving Neighborhood Environments (VINES) will conduct a Women's Build, teaching approximately 50 women and girls how to use saws, drills and other power tools. Held in partnership with the Triple Cities Makerspace, the day-long event will help participants develop new skills and gain confidence while constructing a series of raised beds for a new community garden in Broome County.

"Getting used to using those tools safely, and feeling confident about it, opens opportunities for people to realize what they can do on their own," says Amelia LoDolce, executive director at VINES. Organizers hope that the women and girls

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### 2017 Grants from the Women's Fund

**Broome County Humane Society** \$3,000 to provide safe keeping of animals owned by victims of domestic violence

**Catholic Charities Tompkins/Tioga, Tioga Outreach Center** \$3,000 for supplies to assist low income families in doing their laundry

**Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware County** \$3,500 for a 3-part agri-business marketing program in Sidney

**Hobart Community Foundation** \$3,000 for the 2017 annual three-day *Hobart Festival of Women Writers*

**Opportunities for Otsego** \$6,500 to purchase a vehicle for women and girls in crisis situations

**Volunteers Improving Neighborhood Environments (VINES)** \$5,000 for a "Women's Build" for a new community garden in Castle Gardens

**TOTAL AWARDED: \$24,000**

## Women's Fund Leadership

Whitney Racketta, *Chair*  
Betty Goodwin, *Vice Chair*  
Karen Bearsch  
Joan Eisch  
Kate Fitzgerald, *Esq.*

Amy Howard  
Cory Jacobs  
Sandra Johnson  
Ann Machlin  
Roberta Melville  
Merri Pell-Preus

Margherita Rossi  
Nicole Rouhanna  
Jennifer Small  
Amy Szostak  
Marcia J. Steinbrecher

# Women's Fund Launches Empowerment Society Campaign

The Women's Fund was established in 2002 as a special fund at the Community Foundation to address the serious issues that impact women and girls in our region, to build a permanent endowment that can be used to help women and girls in the future, and to provide an easy way to turn the power of donors' individual contributions into a collective philanthropic force.

We started with a \$100,000 fund raising challenge to the community, a challenge quickly met and exceeded. As the fund grew, and more organizations came to us for support, we set and met a target of raising \$500,000 by our 10th anniversary.

It is now time to look to the future and to set

a new goal: \$1 million by 2020. To that end, we are reaching out to our donors and friends to become members of The Empowerment Society and play a significant role in supporting, encouraging and helping women and girls.



the empowerment  
society

An Empowerment Society member supports the Women's Fund with a series of gifts totaling \$1,000 or more each calendar year. Just \$84 a month ensures membership in *The Empowerment Society*.

For more information on how to join, go to our website:

[donorswhocare.org/about-us/womens-fund.html](http://donorswhocare.org/about-us/womens-fund.html) and click on the Empowerment Society logo, or call the Community Foundation office at 772-6773.

## Grants

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will carry their new construction skills into other settings—whether that means working on projects at home or volunteering, for example, with Habitat for Humanity.

An award to Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Delaware County will support a three-part agribusiness marketing program for women.

“As agriculture changes in the region, many farmers are moving toward, or already involved in, direct marketing,” says Mariane Kiraly, resource educator at CCE of Delaware County. Most often, the responsibility for marketing falls to a woman.

Held in the Sidney Memorial Public Library, the course will be based on curriculum developed at the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management at Cornell. “They go over the three Cs – the customer, the company and the competition,” Kiraly says. “And then they go over the four Ps – product, price, place and promotion.”

Visiting experts will speak on topics such as how to use social media and the legal requirements for using terms such as “natural” and “organic.” The series will culminate on December 1 with a field trip to the Broome County Regional Farmers Market and several holiday markets.

We're excited to note the variety and reach of the programs the Women's Fund can support, thanks to our donors.

## Trudeau Talks 'Brain Health' at Annual Breakfast

Our largest audience ever—346 people—converged on Binghamton on June 22 for the Women's Fund's 13th Annual Breakfast.



The group came to hear a talk by Margaret Trudeau—former First Lady of Canada, mother of current Prime Minister Justin

Trudeau and a noted mental health advocate—and to learn about the fund's recent work on behalf of women and girls.

Trudeau, the author of four books, took guests on a journey through her life and her struggle with bipolar syndrome. She stressed the idea that this condition—like all health issues—arises when a part of the body doesn't function as it should. “It's an illness, like any other illness,” she said. “You *can* get over it.”

Attendees also heard about the Women's Fund's own work in the area of mental

health. Dr. Camelia Lawrence, returning to Binghamton for the breakfast, explained how the Women's Fund decided to focus all of its support in 2016 on creating a resource to connect women with mental health services. The result was a grant to the Mental Health Association of the Southern Tier (MHA-ST) to help develop its new online information clearinghouse, WeLinked. Keith Leahey, MHA-ST's executive director, introduced the site and encouraged attendees to spread the word.

Heartfelt thanks to the Special Events and Leadership Committees of the Women's Fund for all the thought and work they put into this memorable breakfast.