

THE NEW YORK WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

THE FIRST 25 YEARS

TRANSFORMING PHILANTHROPY: SOLUTIONS BY & FOR ALL WOMEN



The New York Women's Foundation is a voice for women and a force for change. We are a cross-cultural alliance of women catalyzing partnerships and leveraging human and financial capital to achieve sustained economic security and justice for women and girls. With fierce determination, we mobilize hearts, minds and resources to create an equitable and just future for women, families and communities in New York City.

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The New York Women's Foundation commissioned Susan Leicher in honor of our 25th anniversary. We are extremely grateful for her dedication and support and the opportunity to share the stories of those who have contributed to this legacy.

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Women's 'Cross-Class Alliance' Starts Foundation

By KATHLEEN TELTSCH

One wealthy director gave \$250,000 and another director scraped together a \$10 gift. They helped create the New York Women's Foundation, a new philanthropy that says proudly it represents a "cross-class alliance of women from all over the city."

The foundation, temporarily housed in rent-free space in an East Side town house, made its first public appearance last Wednesday to introduce its directors and announce its mission: "To meet the unmet needs of New York City women."

As its first act of business, the foundation gave away \$50,000 in grants to four local organizations that help battered women and the homeless and train disabled girls to become self-sufficient.

The money for these grants came from the 24 board directors whose ranks include lawyers, sociologists and corporate executives, but also women who organize financially fragile tenant groups and self-help neighborhood associations.

'No Distinction Among Us'

"All board members contribute to the foundation and there is no distinction among us about the size of gifts," said Helen Hunt, the foundation's president, who is a daughter of the Texas oil magnate H. L. Hunt. For almost a decade, she has worked with low-income and community groups in Dallas and in New York where she heads the Hunt Alternative Fund.

The group resembles similar philanthropies started by women in Philadelphia, San Francisco, Minneapolis and other cities, which also were initiated by wealthy women from privileged families, who sought out women from poor communities to join them in forging new coalitions. Many, including the New York Foundation, adopted the slogan, "Women helping women."

There are now 37 such groups loosely affiliated with members of the Na-



The New York Times/Carrie Boretz

Helen Hunt, center, head of New York Women's Foundation, during a meeting with members. The Foundation, a new philanthropy group, says its mission is "to meet the unmet needs of New York City women."

A goal is to raise \$1 million by the end of the year.

versation in La Guardia Airport with a woman holding a baby. The stranger said out to be a

Columbia University and became a community leader in Puerto Rican circles in the city.

Virginia Day, who has graduate degrees in urban affairs and economics from Princeton and Harvard was brought in as an unpaid consultant to determine if there was a genuine need for the new philanthropy and stayed "because I was hooked and I have not stopped working."

How far the group's founders reached was suggested by their first public meeting, held at the Eastside Society in Manhattan.

He remarked that double discrimination frequently faced disabled women from minorities and added: "We're too often excluded from women's coalitions because our issues are seen as health issues, not civil rights issues and we're appreciative of the chance given us to make our statement."

The other awards went to the Center for the Elimination of Violence in the Family, Sanctuary for Families and the Women's Housing Coalition. Board members visited 80 projects before selecting winners.

All contributions go directly into the Foundation's endowment, said Ms. Hunt. "There is no charge for its use and

The New York Women's Foundation was featured in this New York Times article in June, 1988.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report could not have been completed without the 66 women, NYWF past and present board and staff members, supporters and grantee partners, who were interviewed. All were generous with their time, knowledge, memories and insights. Several “founding mothers” shared precious original papers; and many grantee partners and staff members provided vital supporting documents. It was not possible to include direct input from every one of these women, but they all were incredibly inspiring and enriched my understanding of The Foundation. This is truly your report.

The document also benefited from the guidance, questions, and suggestions of NYWF staff and consultants who read and discussed its early drafts. Each of you made powerful contributions for which I am grateful.

Researching and writing about The Foundation – and working with those who support and carry out its mission – has given me the deepest respect for NYWF’s goals, culture, and achievements. We, the women of New York City, are truly lucky to have this wonderful institution on our side.

Susan Leicher
Thompson & Columbus, Inc.
May 2012

LEFT The New York Women’s Foundation Grant Allocations Committee (GAC), 2000.

CENTER Members of Non-Traditional Employment for Women, one of NYWF’s earliest Grantee Partners (1989, 2000-2003).

RIGHT Grantee Partners partaking in the first NYWF Management Leadership Institute (MLI) in 2000.

PREFACE

In the quarter century since The New York Women’s Foundation (NYWF) was launched by a small group of visionary women, it has matured into a significant, effective, and influential institution. Once an early entrant into a limited group of women’s philanthropic organizations, it has grown into the largest U.S.-based member of a robust international network of 166 women’s funds. Once a new face on New York City’s well-established funding scene, it has emerged as a forceful leader with a transformative approach to philanthropy and a respected imprimatur.

NYWF’S EFFORTS:

- **Enable some 125,000 individual women a year to build economic strength; achieve greater safety; improve reproductive health; and assume leadership roles. Since The Foundation was launched, 5.4 million low-income women and girls from the city’s most under-resourced communities have improved their chances and changed their lives.**
- **Identify the city’s best women-focused and women-led organizations – and offer them the holistic assistance required to evolve from kitchen table dream to long-term viability. Over the years, The Foundation’s support has ensured the growth and survival of fully 216 grassroots partners whose solutions and programs authentically derive from and benefit the women and girls of their communities.**
- **Advance policy efforts that remove barriers, provide better options, and secure vital protections for all women; and expand public and individual awareness of the issues that underlie and exacerbate inequality and injustice.**
- **Provide volunteer activists and contributors a meaningful and significant channel for building and sustaining women’s progress.**

While daunting core challenges like poverty, and race and gender-based biases continue to diminish opportunities and undermine women’s well-being – The Foundation’s work has permanently changed the terms of the struggle. At a time when very few funders took interest in women’s challenges, NYWF was a pioneer in promoting their causes. As circumstances have changed, it has remained at the forefront of this field by partnering with the city’s leading women-led organizations to support the victories of women and girls in low-income neighborhoods across the city.

As NYWF’s *Celebrating Women® Breakfast* annually honors the actions of women heroes, we take the opportunity of this milestone anniversary to celebrate what The Foundation and its partners and supporters have accomplished – and what it has pledged to continue achieving.

THE PORTRAIT OF NYWF PRESENTED IN THESE PAGES IS BASED ON:

- more than 25 years of Foundation documents – including a range of early founding papers, *Celebrating Women® Breakfast* albums, and grantee reports;
- official studies of relevant issues (e.g., poverty, economic justice, domestic violence) at the time of NYWF’s founding and in the present; and
- in-depth interviews with 66 women who are a part of The Foundation as board alumnae, current board members, staff, supporters and grantee partners.

The words and stories of the on-the-ground leaders who shaped and who continue to carry out The Foundation’s mission were invaluable to the overall research – lending vitality, immediacy and substance to the written accounts. These “experts in the field” also offered vital insights into the factors that have undergirded these achievements, from the practice of building a cross-cultural alliance, to their willingness to provide flexible and holistic support, to a commitment to building active partnerships rather than providing top-down charity.

THE FINDINGS DERIVED FROM ALL THESE STAKEHOLDERS AND SOURCES ARE ORGANIZED AS FOLLOWS:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New York Women's Foundation was launched by a small group of dynamic women in 1987, and since then it has matured into a significant, effective, and influential institution. Its work has led to greater economic security, safety, reproductive health, and leadership opportunities for more than 5.4 million women and girls. It has identified and fortified a network of women-led grassroots grantee partners whose approaches reflect the best thinking of their communities and whose efforts address those communities' core issues. It has promoted policies, knowledge, and attitude shifts that have concretely advanced women's progress. This report examines the early thinking behind The Foundation; presents its achievements; analyzes the factors that have contributed to its success; and discusses its vision for the future.

Setting the Stage: Early History, Decisions and Actions

THE COMPELLING CONTEXT

The mid-to-late 1980's, when NYWF was first conceived, was a time of both enormous challenge and fertile potential for NYC's women. Faced with a range of harsh, new poverty-driven hardships, women living in low-income communities began creating innovative strategies to address them. At the same time, women of means, both those shattering long-standing professional barriers and those coming into personal wealth, began leveraging their assets and connections to promote social justice.

THE POWERFUL RESPONSE

Motivated by the energies around them, two far-sighted individuals – Helen LaKelly Hunt and Gloria Milliken –

decided to create a vehicle that would harness women's minds and resources for the benefit of other women. They galvanized a diverse group of 40 like-minded women and spent 18 intense months laying out the parameters of an appropriate philanthropic entity. The group agreed on four initial principles:

- Decision-making leadership for the new Foundation should be drawn from a diverse alliance comprising women of wealth, professional women, and community leaders of all backgrounds.
- Guidance for grantmaking should come directly from the communities to be supported; and grantmaking should principally be carried out by volunteer activists.
- Foundation support should reinforce the efforts of organizations seeking viable solutions for individual, community, and broad-based challenges.

- Foundation grants should primarily support women-led, grassroots organizations working on the core economic – and other related – issues of the city’s most under-served women and girls.

The first round of Foundation grantmaking took place in the spring of 1988, following a period of extensive outreach – and the vetting of more than 100 proposals. The grants awards ceremony was held in a midtown church, in front of an audience of 250 “members of the general public, city administrators, judges, and a sprinkling of male supporters.” Four women’s organizations were awarded grants totaling \$50,000. Representatives from each of the organizations spoke – and their first-hand accounts of what they were accomplishing and why they needed more support “melted the audience members’ hearts.”

NYWF’s initial grantmaking process and ceremony successfully set the tone and direction for the next quarter century of work. The Foundation has remained loyal to the core mission and approach set in its first months. The bold, clairvoyant and wise thinking of a small group of “founding mothers” created an innovative, powerful and enduring new philanthropic vehicle – and ushered in a whole new epoch of leadership and progress for New York City’s women.

Making a Difference: Analysis of Foundation Impact

By following its founders’ principles, NYWF has achieved a tremendous amount in 25 short years. Its efforts have: (1) addressed the economic security and related safety and health needs of 5.4 million disempowered women and girls; (2) helped establish a vibrant, solution-oriented network of 216 grassroots, women-led organizations; and (3) advanced critically-needed policies and galvanized individual and public awareness about key women’s issues.

ADDRESSING ECONOMIC AND RELATED NEEDS OF UNDER-SERVED POPULATIONS

NYWF is committed to addressing the core economic – and related safety and health – needs of NYC’s most under-served communities. It has an unparalleled track record for identifying and focusing on these groups long before they appear on most other funders’ radar screens, and for sticking with them long after other attention has dissipated. Since 1988, it has taken the lead in supporting – and changing the lives of 5.4 million women and girls from a range of under-resourced populations, including:

- **Immigrant Women** – who entered New York City in virtually unprecedented numbers between 1990 and 2000 to take on the hardest, lowest-paying, least-regulated jobs without appropriate protections against exploitation and abuse.

- **Women Involved in the Criminal Justice System** – whose numbers increased nearly six-fold¹ following passage of a set of harsh new drug laws in 1973, and their almost total lack of resources upon re-entry have taken both economic and social tolls on themselves and on their children.
- **Girls** – particularly low-income girls of color – whose specific needs, concerns, and potential have been historically ignored, despite their high rates of dropping out of school, teen pregnancy, and their vulnerability to forced participation in the sex trafficking industry.
- **Low-Income Women Workers and Entrepreneurs** – whose pivotal role in the local economy and within their own families is often overlooked, and whose severe workplace challenges and lack of access to the critical supports of child care, training, and capital attract minimal public attention.
- **Women and Girls Infected and Affected by HIV/AIDS** – whose soaring numbers and severe economic, social, and sexual challenges were unrecognized at the height of the epidemic and continue to be downplayed.
- **Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth and Adults** – whose serious gender-related economic and health problems are almost never on the agenda of policy makers and funders.

INVESTING IN THE BEST SOLUTIONS

The Foundation's early leaders were convinced that the best solutions to community challenges came from within, so they committed themselves to identifying and supporting the organizations that had the understanding and influence to implement the most comprehensive solutions. Most of these organizations have been small, nascent, and rooted in very low-income communities – typically the group of nonprofits most likely to fail. Despite these challenges, 216 (81%) of all of NYWF's grantee partners since 1988 are still advancing successful approaches and providing critical support systems for their communities. This sturdy network of partner organizations consistently cited four core Foundation practices that have contributed to this impressive accomplishment:

- **Asking the Right Questions.** Partner organizations across the board remarked on the keen interest and astute attention demonstrated by NYWF's Grants Advisory Committee (GAC). They characterized the grants application process as a thoughtful exercise in self-examination that flags weaknesses and leads to improvements in planning, management, and fundraising. Their observations corroborate what experience suggests – namely that NYWF's grantmaking methods identify the best grantee partners and ensure that those partners have the tools to succeed.
- **Trusting Grantee Partners Approaches.** Grantee partners praised the fact that – once NYWF determines that their work aligns with overall Foundation mission and

that their core infrastructures are sound – it steps back and lets them craft their own programmatic approaches. They stressed that by trusting partners to know what they want to achieve and what they need in order to achieve it, NYWF not only ensures that the best solutions are pursued – it frees partner organizations from having to go off course for the sake of a grant.

- **Accelerating Individual into Collective Strength.**

A number of grantee partners praised NYWF's commitment to building a resilient and mutually-reinforcing network of like-minded organizations. They said that by both expecting and enabling grantee partners to share knowledge, best practices and resources, The Foundation goes beyond strengthening individual capacities to advance a collective agenda.

- **Providing More than Money.** All the grantee partners stressed that what The Foundation provides is far more important than a simple, one-time infusion of grant dollars. They praised its capacity-building grants, its technical assistance, and its support of their own leadership capacities. They noted the value of its workshops and other learning opportunities; its guidance in tapping other funding streams; and its willingness to provide grants over a five-year period – and to augment and extend support in times of emergency.

ADVANCING SYSTEMS CHANGE

To promote systems change, The Foundation engages in three main, interrelated strategies – each addressing

a different level of transformation. It directly funds organizations to carry out community organizing and advocacy efforts. It expands and refines public understanding of key policy issues by sponsoring trainings, forums, conferences, and publications. And it models behavior and practices that demonstrate the benefits of justice and diversity.

- **Supporting Community Organizing and Advocacy.**

Most NYWF grantee partners engage in some form of leadership training, community organizing, or advocacy activities. Whether by organizing African immigrants to work against female genital cutting, galvanizing domestic workers to achieve passage of a bill of rights, or by supporting female ex-offenders' efforts to revoke unjust prison practices, they encourage and equip community members to accelerate individual achievement into broader systems change.

- **Educating Key Audiences.** NYWF also advances broad progress by educating key audiences about women's issues, struggles and triumphs. It hosts conferences and forums where community leaders and other experts in the field talk about key policy and demographic issues, and other research sponsored by The Foundation.

- **Modeling Behavior and Practices.** Finally, NYWF uses a range of core internal practices – e.g., building a cross-cultural base of leaders, supporters and volunteer activists; publicly celebrating the courage, tenacity, and

brilliance of partner organizations and the communities that they serve – to illuminate the power of equality and inclusion. Less “formal” than community organizing or public education, this strategy has nonetheless been pivotally effective in influencing individual perceptions, attitudes, and actions.

Building Women’s Philanthropy

Since 1987, NYWF evolved from a small, passionate enterprise into a major philanthropic force, supported by a generous and expanding group of women. From a total grants portfolio of \$50,000, it now distributes more than \$5 million a year to 80 organizations. From harnessing a handful of contributors in pursuit of a compelling idea, it now draws support from more than 15,000 sources. From galvanizing an initial group of 40 dedicated volunteer activists, it now engages nearly 850. From being a new entrant into a limited women’s funding movement, it is now the largest U.S.-based member of an international network of 166 women’s funds.

The past two decades of growth in women’s giving, nationally and internationally, has inspired a range of studies on “what makes women donate.” Experts in the field identify three major factors as being key motivators of women’s philanthropy: (1) empathy for and solidarity with the people whose causes are being supported; (2) the shared values of friends; and (3) the opportunity to take an active role in promoting change.

Before the idea of women’s philanthropy became the subject of academic study, NYWF possessed an astute innate understanding of what moves women of means to passionate commitment. Outreach strategies involving the three key motivators have been part of The Foundation’s core appeal from the outset:

- **Empathy and Solidarity.** By continually honoring the wisdom, achievements and victories of grantee partners and communities rather than portraying them as downtrodden people in need of assistance, NYWF has inspired donors’ feelings of solidarity, commonality and respect – and has galvanized their generosity.
- **Shared Values Among Friends.** The NYWF family has grown from the powerful feeling of shared values and “common cause”. Supporters bring friends to the Celebrating Women (insert symbol) Breakfast and volunteers who serve NYWF universally voice appreciation for the meaningful connections and sense of community that they gain through that service.
- **Opportunities for Active Involvement.** Every supporter interviewed stressed the profound benefits of participating in the NYWF board, Grants Advisory Committee (GAC), or other Committees. They mentioned the skills they developed, the passions they ignited, and the power of being “part of the change that they wish to see.”

Vision for the Future: Expanding Influence, Impact and Support

During its first 25 years, The New York Women’s Foundation has put forth a vision of philanthropy that has been new in concept, radical in approach and outstandingly successful in execution. An early exponent of the nascent idea of “philanthropy by women for women” it has gone a step further by making it “philanthropy by and for New York City’s full, rich diversity of women.”

The Foundation has earned an impressive reputation through innovative grantmaking priorities and methods, including:

- Vigorous cross-cultural leadership.
- Active partnership with grantee organizations.
- The use of volunteer activists to review grants requests.
- A focus on the city’s most under-resourced populations.
- A primary concentration on economic issues.
- A willingness to go beyond funding individual service programs to promote systemic change.

As it begins moving into its next 25 years, NYWF has a Strategic Plan in place that proposes four interrelated areas of activity that will take these achievements to an even higher level – put The Foundation squarely on the map as a major voice for all women, a major player in the policy arena, and a major catalyst for transforming women’s and girls’ lives. In particular, it plans to:

- **Sustain and build on its bold and successful grant-making approach** – maintaining a grants portfolio of at least \$5 million a year, and refining its evaluation techniques so as to promote greater understanding of the community approaches that are making a concrete and vital difference in women’s lives.
- **Mobilize larger and more inclusive circles of New Yorkers** as supporters, volunteer activists, and “friends” at different levels of engagement.
- **Assume a larger role as thought leader** on the major issues affecting the progress of New York City’s women.
- **Expand resources** from both high-end and more modest donors, to generate the financial reserves required for ongoing effectiveness and growth.

“The New York Women’s Foundation was on the front lines from the beginning – long before it was fashionable to talk about women’s issues or to strengthen and broaden women’s leadership,” observes NYWF President and CEO, Ana Oliveira. “We have been on a steady path of transforming women’s philanthropy from an act of charity to a highly participatory and broadly influential engine for social change. We aren’t fully there yet, but we are committed to continually and critically re-examining our approach; to further diversifying our reach; to increasing the number and scope of our partners and supporters; and to building our impact. We will continue to grow and we will – of course – continue to evolve with the times. But we will always maintain our vital core mission. And we are here to stay.”

GLORIA MILLIKEN AND HELEN LAKELLY HUNT

The New York Women's Foundation was catapulted from idea to reality through the generosity, the persistence, and the rolled-up-sleeves hard work of a small group of far-sighted women led by Gloria Milliken and Helen LaKelly Hunt.

Gloria Milliken began her career by taking on the New York City's housing bureaucracy to help East Harlem residents and founded six separate housing improvement organizations. She was motivated to action by seeing the grit and resilience of the tenants with whom she worked, despite the injustices, and the hardships that they faced. Helen LaKelly Hunt was a philanthropic pioneer whose support of the emerging field of women's philanthropy equipped and inspired her to keep pushing the boundaries of what a Foundation could be.

"The New York Women's Foundation was actually all Gloria's idea," recalls Hunt. "She had this incredible mix of qualities. She was a delightful, high-spirited woman. She was an activist; she ran nonprofits of her own. She had passion, knowledge, tenacity, vision, and resources including a Rolodex packed with phone numbers of high-net-worth women in New York City. Gloria came to me because she knew I had planted the seed and helped start the Dallas Women's Foundation, and said: 'Let's start a women's foundation here, Helen!' I was excited, of course, but one thing gave me pause. I was a newcomer to the city; I didn't have the contacts that I did in Dallas. I said: 'Gloria, I wouldn't begin to know whom to call.' Gloria then leaned forward, looked over her glasses and said: 'Yes, but I know everyone.' "

Gloria Milliken, sadly, did not live to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the wonderful institution that she helped create. Her legacy is reflected, however, in The Foundation's every achievement; and her vivid presence shines through in the affectionate recollections of her contemporaries.



Joan Warburg, Helen LaKelly Hunt, Millie Chan and Betty Terrell-Cruz celebrate with Century Tribute awardee Gloria Milliken (center) after the 2002 *Celebrating Women® Breakfast*.

Things were snapping, and NYWF founders seized the moment and ran with it.

BARBARA DOBKIN
LONG-TIME NYWF SUPPORTER

SETTING THE STAGE:

EARLY HISTORY, DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

THE COMPELLING CONTEXT

In the communal memory of Foundation’s early supporters, the mid-late 1980s were defining years for New York City’s women – years in which powerful challenges and fertile possibilities collided in bold relief.

A set of harsh new, interrelated factors had begun challenging the lives of low-income women in communities across the city. A shrinking supply of affordable housing and a serious economic recession were driving unprecedented numbers of mothers and young children into homelessness; by 1988, some 4,000 female-headed families were living in improvised City shelters – including a number of highly visible midtown hotels.² A growing percentage of women of color were beginning to suffer the deadly effects of HIV infection, despite this disease’s initial reputation as solely affecting men.³ Strict new drug laws were fueling a massive expansion of women prisoners; the number of female inmates in New York prisons rose by fully 580% between 1973 and 2009 – with most of that growth taking place during the 1980s.⁴ Annual Incident Reports of domestic violence – the “tip of the iceberg” for a crime that was just beginning to be tracked by the NYPD – were nearing 20,000; 60 out

of every 100 women seeking safety within the City’s domestic violence shelter system were being turned away for lack of space.⁵ The cumulative effect of all these blows was a frightening spike in child welfare placements. The number of children in NYC’s foster care system rose from 16,000 to a full 50,000 between 1985 and 1990.⁶

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We had already funded our fathers’ colleges and our husbands’ colleges. Now we wanted to give our money to something that we, ourselves, cared about passionately.

AGNES GUND, LONG-TIME NYWF SUPPORTER

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Galvanized by the seriousness of the situation and frustrated by the inadequate responses of mainstream providers, a range of pioneering community women began taking matters into their own hands. They rallied tenants to create grassroots housing corporations; arranged safe houses and counseling for women fleeing violence; and founded organizations to address the particular, unique health and social needs of women dealing with substance abuse, incarceration, and HIV/AIDS.

SETTING THE STAGE

Meanwhile, in other parts of the city, a small but significant number of women were beginning to enter high-paid, traditionally “male” professions – particularly, business, finance, and law. As these new arrivals negotiated the tough challenges of glass ceilings and institutional marginalization, they also began contemplating how to apply their new positions and resources towards the greater good. “When I started on Wall Street, there were no other women there,” observes NYWF board alumna and former interim Executive Director, Sandra Lamb. “And when I left, there were still almost no women. We few lone wolves were finding our way in a man’s world; we were hyper-aware of how far women still had to go; we wanted a channel to help other women and their causes.”

At the same time, a core group of women of inherited wealth began to think about what they might do differently with their considerable resources – about how they could leverage their assets and their collective voice towards promoting issues that they believed in. “We had already funded our fathers’ colleges and our husbands’ colleges,” notes long-time NYWF supporter Agnes Gund. “Now we wanted to give our money to something that we, ourselves, cared about passionately.”

Change was in the air on all fronts; and dramatic action was appropriate, possible, and – perhaps – inevitable.

THE POWERFUL RESPONSE

In late 1986, New York activists Helen LaKelly Hunt and Gloria Milliken “seized the moment.” They culled their joint contacts to pull together a group of 40 women determined to make a difference. They formed a set of committees, and – in an 18-month stint of three- and four-times-a-week meetings – created the parameters for a philanthropic vehicle through which women could support women-centered and women-driven change.

The group deliberated every aspect of this new institution. They debated whether to target funding efforts towards launching brand-new or strengthening established grantees – and whether to focus primarily on support service programs or on advocacy efforts. They considered the merits of different substantive

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They went out across the five boroughs to speak with community organizations, to see issues and conditions first hand, and to ask community residents: What do you need? Who serves you well? Who serves you poorly?
.....

areas and of different grant review approaches. They discussed the degree to which overall operations should be managed by volunteers or by professionals. They brainstormed about who should be on the board and how best to conduct outreach and gain publicity.

They went out across the five boroughs to speak with community organizations, to see issues and conditions first hand, and to ask community residents: “What do you need? Who serves you well? Who serves you poorly?”

“We really mined the city to find out what was happening; we didn’t want to re-invent the wheel,” explains board alumna Kathryn Weill. “We invited

luminaries like Helen LaKelly Hunt and Joan Warburg – who went on to contribute many years as a NYWF board member, president, and honorary chair, and who was honored with The Foundation’s “Vision Award” in 1993. They also included Rosita Romero – a Washington Heights activist, founder of the Dominican Women’s Development Center and later recipient of The Foundation’s “Celebrating Women” Award; Idelisse Malave – an attorney with the Puerto Rican Defense

There was only one thing of which we were certain, right from the beginning. And that was that we needed a mix of women – professionals, women of wealth, and community activists – in decision-making positions.

GINNY DAY, NYWF FOUNDER

leaders from other women’s funds to tell us about their experience in other parts of the country. We went to appropriate NYC foundations to ask what they were funding, and why they were funding those things, and how they were making their decisions, and where the gaps were. And we made many site visits. Some of us observed family court and had lunches with judges. Some went to drug abuse programs and child health care programs, and family day care programs. Some went to prisons and talked to guards, administrators, and prisoners.”

Most importantly, the group immediately incorporated a richly diverse mix of women into leadership positions. Early planners included established philanthropic

Fund; Alice Cardona – a powerful activist for women’s rights in the Puerto Rican and other communities; and Betty Terrell-Cruz – whose career as a leading housing advocate and, eventually, Assistant Commissioner of the City’s Department of Housing Preservation and Development was initially launched through tenant organizing in the South Bronx.

“There was only one thing of which we were certain, right from the beginning,” recounts founding board member Ginny Day. “And that was that we needed a mix of women – professionals, women of wealth, and community activists – in decision-making positions. The first group off of Gloria’s Rolodex didn’t necessarily know much about the issues. But at least we knew that

SETTING THE STAGE

we didn't know. And so we turned for our blueprint of action to the women who were actually out in the communities, addressing those issues and finding solutions. A willingness to listen to community voices may not seem like such a big thing today. Or maybe it still does. But it absolutely was a big thing in those days. Ultimately, it was the awareness that we needed to listen and learn that assured our success. And it was

The people we've supported have always been more than just grantees – they have been our partners and our teachers.

MARION KAPLAN, NYWF FOUNDER

the intent to build leadership across race and class and perspective that helped us avoid some of the pitfalls of so much traditional philanthropy.”

By early 1988, The Foundation had selected a board, achieved tax exempt status, rented an office through a generous grant from the Henry Luce Foundation, hired two staff members, sent out an RFP to 200 organizations, and received its first 100 proposals. A Grants Advisory Committee – led by Betty Terrell-Cruz, Marion Kaplan, and Idelisse Malave – visited the finalists and made recommendations for grants awards totaling \$50,000 to four grassroots organizations.

The awards were made at a breakfast ceremony in a midtown church, in front of a group of 250 people – including what an early account of that occasion called: “the general public, city administrators, judges, and a sprinkling of male supporters.” All the grantees spoke and – in Helen LaKelly Hunt’s words – they “melted the audience members’ hearts.”

The first grantmaking process was iconic – setting The Foundation’s overall tone and direction for the next 25 years. In particular, it crystallized The Foundation’s commitment to: (1) diverse leadership; (2) an innovative grantmaking process in which teams of educated volunteer activists listen to and fund the ideas and the approaches that community leaders propose; and (3) a focus on new, grass roots organizations providing individual services and promoting broader systems change.

“We supported community leaders because we knew they knew best,” explains founding board member Marion Kaplan. “The people we’ve supported have always been more than just grantees – they have been our partners and our teachers.”

SANCTUARY FOR FAMILIES

Sanctuary for Families – an organization dedicated to supporting survivors of domestic violence – was one of those first four grantee partners receiving awards. It was given a \$5,000 grant to launch a legal clinic that would complement and reinforce its core housing and counseling services.

“Every aspect of that grantmaking transaction was groundbreaking,” recounts Alisa Del Tufo, Sanctuary’s founder and first Executive Director. “Here we were, this tiny, three-year-old organization, focused on an issue that was getting little or no attention from most funders and policy makers. And even within that brand-new field, we were suggesting a radical new approach. Up till then, domestic violence survivors fleeing their abusers had been viewed – at best – as victims needing protection; and – at worst – as home-wreckers. We, on the other hand, viewed them as strong women with legitimate legal rights. And, here was NYWF – this embryonic philanthropic entity that used volunteer activists instead of program officers to do grants vetting – willing to listen to and fund us, despite our newness, our radical mission, and our radical approach. As it turned out, both Sanctuary and NYWF were onto something really big.”

While the Sanctuary grant was singularly tiny, it positioned the organization to begin securing other funding – including the first-ever domestic violence-focused legal services grant provided by IOLA (the New York State Interest on Lawyer Account Fund); and the first grants made available when the federal government passed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994.

Sanctuary has since grown to be one of the leading providers and advocates in the field of domestic violence – offering integrated shelter, safety planning, counseling, referral and legal services to more than 8,000 women and children every year; educating thousands of leaders about the needs and the strengths of DV survivors; and carrying out policy work that has fueled systems change at local, state, national, and international levels. With 23 full-time staff attorneys, the Legal Center launched with that seminal \$5,000 NYWF grant is now the largest of its kind in the country.

BETTY TERRELL-CRUZ

“Betty saw hope everywhere,” recounts one early *Celebrating Women® Breakfast* album. “Hope that a poor neighborhood could have its own health facility. Hope that a burned-out pizza parlor storefront could become the meeting place for people to found a tenant organization. She took the time to help us understand all these issues – and to feel the hope ourselves...”

Terrell-Cruz brought a depth of experience in the complex field of NYC housing development to her early leadership of The Foundation. She had started as a neighborhood organizer for a housing corporation in the South Bronx and gone on to become its Executive Director. She then became the Executive Director of the city-wide Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development and eventually assumed the position of Assistant Commissioner for the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development – where she was serving when she got that first call from Gloria Milliken. As part of the initial Foundation planning group – and later as a founding board member – Terrell-Cruz used her in-depth knowledge of the city’s low-income neighborhoods, of the challenges of nonprofit management, and of public sector issues to help shape a solid framework for The Foundation’s grantmaking.

“I knew only too well how hard it was to run a small, start-up non-profit,” Terrell-Cruz recalls. “You have the knowledge and ability to do the job, but you can’t gain the funding you need without a track record. And you can’t build the track record without having received that initial funding! I explained all that to the other early NYWF leaders, and we came up with the innovative grantmaking strategy of not holding the lack of a track record against an organization, as long as the organization had the ideas and the credibility. We came up with the idea of giving community organizations a chance.”

Terrell-Cruz credits NYWF’s “founding mothers” with a willingness to listen and learn – and with a genuine and deep commitment to making things happen. “When I arrived at that first meeting, and they said: ‘Tell us what is needed and tell us how we can help,’ I thought I had died and gone to heaven,” Terrell-Cruz recounts. “Some of the women at that meeting had never set foot in a community organization or had never even really spoken with someone poor. But when I began talking about some of the issues, they ‘got it.’ And everything fell into place after that. I have such love and respect for The Foundation and for its founding members. I am so proud of what we made and so honored to feel that I was a part of it.”



Betty Terrell-Cruz speaks at the first Grant Awards Ceremony in 1988.

ALICE CARDONA

Alice Cardona, one of the founders of The New York Women's Foundation, was born in East Harlem, raised in the Bronx, and made major contributions wherever she stood. While Deputy Director of the Women's Division of New York she was a fierce campaigner against domestic violence and a forceful advocate for services to address the impact of AIDS in the Latino community. Her life as an activist began in 1970 in ASPIRA of New York – an organization that is dedicated to the education and leadership development of young Latinos. She went on to help lead the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women – and to travel alongside then First Lady Hillary Clinton to Beijing China for the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Cardona was a powerful contributor to NYWF's early development and a fierce and fearless individual who – according to one early *Celebrating Women® Breakfast* album account – used to beat up the boys in her neighborhood, just to make sure that everyone knew "who was who and what was what."

She was a forceful advocate for going beyond simply supporting individual service programs to embrace the idea of advancing broader systems change. For her pivotal role in The Foundation's vision and work, she received its Lifetime Achievement Award in 2011.

Alice Cardona passed away this year. However, like Gloria Milliken, her words and thoughts literally jumped off the page of the early documents; and her contributions were admiringly recalled by everyone who was privileged enough to have known her.



Joan Warburg, Alice Cardona, Helen LaKelly Hunt, and Gloria Milliken at the 20th Anniversary *Celebrating Women® Breakfast* in 2007.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE:

ANALYSIS OF FOUNDATION IMPACT

Who could have imagined that a domestic worker new to this country, with very little English would be helping organize domestic workers all across New York? At Adhikaar, learning by doing, I built up confidence and improved my English so that I could use my experience and skills as a human rights activist in Nepal to help others who are also struggling. I did it for myself, but – even more importantly – I did it for my sisters. NYWF provided the foundation stone that supported me and that is helping Adhikaar build its strong base of workers.

**NARBADA CHHETRI, SENIOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZER,
ADHIKAAR FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Over the past 25 years, NYWF has more than fulfilled its founding mothers' most ambitious aims. Its efforts have:

- Undergirded life-changing improvements – greater economic security, safety, and empowerment – for more than 5.4 million individual women and girls from some of the city's most under-resourced communities.
- Successfully identified and helped expand and sustain a group of small, grassroots, women-led partner organizations whose vision for their communities – and whose approaches and solutions to core community challenges – have proven enduring, powerful and effective.
- Promoted systems changes that have reduced obstacles, increased protections and expanded options for generations of women and girls to come.

ELBA MONTALVO

Elba Montalvo is the founder, President and CEO of *The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families (CHCF)* – one of New York City’s premier Latino service and advocacy organizations. She is former Director of the New York Council on Adoptable Children; and a nationally recognized expert on child welfare and child care. Montalvo first became acquainted with The Foundation in 1990, when she applied for support for CHCF. After working through that grant request process, she was invited to join the NYWF board, where she served during the pivotal early years from 1991–1994.

“I’ve had many occasions to feel proud of my association with The Foundation,” Montalvo relates. “But the moment of which I felt proudest took place right after 9/11. In those initial shell-shocked days, the media, the foundation world – almost everyone – was focused on the First Responders and on the people from the well-known firms at the Twin Towers. But, on the weekend right after the attack, I received a call from Channel 41 Univision about the other, less-publicized individuals – the ones who may never have made the headlines but whose lives also changed forever on that tragic day. The immigrant women who cleaned the WTC offices every evening after everyone else had gone home. The men who mopped the corridors. The people who sold cigarettes and newspapers and flowers in the lobby. All the silent workers without whom the whole complex could not have functioned, and who also lost their livelihoods or their lives.”

Montalvo put in a call to NYWF “and no sooner had I hung up,” than the board invited representatives of those immigrant groups to come talk about the situation. “And then, without fuss or delay, The Foundation allocated the funds to help those groups. It took most other philanthropic sources weeks – months – to begin focusing on all those ‘invisible’ victims. But NYWF makes it its business to focus on the heroic New York women who are neither appreciated for their contributions nor supported in their struggles. And they know all the organizations on the ground that can help them. That’s the way NYWF works.”

NYWF makes it its business to focus on the heroic New York women who are neither appreciated for their contributions nor supported in their struggles. And they know all the organizations on the ground that can help them.

**ELBA MONTALVO, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT
& CEO OF THE COMMITTEE FOR HISPANIC
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

Addressing Economic and Related Needs of Under-Served Populations

Since its beginnings, NYWF has consistently partnered with and supported those whose economic challenges are most widely ignored and whose circumstances are most overlooked e.g., new immigrant women taking on the most grueling, lowest-paid, least regulated jobs in the city; women re-entering the city and the world of employment after serving a prison sentence; girls overlooked, harassed, or forced into sex trafficking; women affected by HIV/AIDS; women workers and entrepreneurs whose economically pivotal roles are discounted and whose opportunities for progress are minimal; transgender individuals seeking basic protections and civil rights. Through Foundation's efforts, more than 5.4 million women from these groups have gained economic traction, greater safety, reproductive health protections, and opportunities for empowerment. They have become leaders in their communities and obtained greater recognition for their contributions.

NEW IMMIGRANTS

Between 1990 and 2000, New York City experienced a surge in rates of immigration greater than any since the turn of the twentieth century. The city absorbed fully one-million new residents – including a huge cadre of low-income people from non-English-speaking countries

that had not previously sent large numbers of people to our shores.⁷

As these new waves of immigrant women arrived, they filled critical gaps in the economy – taking on some of the city's hardest, lowest-paying, least-regulated jobs. They worked as domestic workers, nail salon workers, piece-workers in garment factories, or back-room employees in dry cleaning stores, so as to secure a better life for their children and to send money home to their families. And, at the same time, they struggled against discriminatory practices and attitudes; endured exploitation by employers and longer-established immigrant groups; and dealt with the all-too-frequent abuse of the men in their lives.

As leaders from these communities began forging programs to address these issues, NYWF listened to their stories and funded their work. It was one of the first foundations to specifically focus on immigrant-run programs. And it remains the *only* foundation specifically funding immigrant women-led organizations. Over the years, it has provided a host of grants and a range of technical assistance in support of economic justice, leadership training, legal, housing, mentoring, and anti-violence efforts by and for women from South, East, and South-East Asia; from Arab countries; from South and Central America; from Afghanistan; from Nepal; and from a range of African nations.

KOREAN AMERICAN FAMILY SERVICE CENTER (KAFSC)

In 1989, a handful of Korean-American women, led by activist Kwanghee Kim, decided to “do something radical” about domestic violence. Up to that point, the Korean-American community had largely accepted spousal abuse as a “fact of life.” The stigma and shame of fleeing from – or taking action against – a husband was keeping battered women from speaking out or seeking help. Seeing both the need and the challenges, Kim and her small team of activists created an organization that could provide the confidential, respectful, culturally- and linguistically-competent assistance required to promote Korean-American women’s self-protection.

“KAFSC started out with nothing more than a desk, a phone, and a pad of paper in the basement of a Korean Methodist church in Manhattan,” recalls Kim. “It was completely run by volunteers.” At first this arrangement worked, but within a year – as community awareness grew – requests for assistance started pouring in.

“I knew we needed to expand, but I didn’t know where to turn for help,” explains Kim. “And then I heard there was a Foundation that truly cared about women, and I applied for a grant. My hand was shaking when I wrote to NYWF; and it was shaking even more when I opened the envelope with the grant award. I had no idea that women who were so powerful – socially, intellectually, financially – would be willing to listen to the problems of a small, immigrant community. But we all just clicked! They told us: ‘We like your passion and energy!’ And I liked theirs! NYWF was our first funder, and then they stuck by us for years. They were like mothers gently watching a baby grow up.”

Today, the KAFSC is a flourishing program, providing thousands of Korean-American women a year with counseling, support groups, legal services, transitional shelter and a 24-hour hotline. It also operates an after-school program for children who witness or experience family violence. It has nurtured the development of dozens of new, powerful community leaders and successfully advocated for service improvements with local and national policy-makers. It has received federal recognition for its achievements; and now draws support from hundreds of individuals, and multiple public and private funders.

Kwanghee Kim joined the NYWF board in 1996 and was given NYWF’s “Helen LaKelly Hunt Neighborhood Leadership Award” in 1997. She received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Fall 2011 Queens Neighborhood Dinner in Long Island City. While her formal board membership has ended, Kim remains a beloved advisor to NYWF, and a friend to all its efforts.

HOUR CHILDREN

“When a woman goes to prison, she loses everything,” explains Johanna Flores, Program Director for the *Hour Working Women’s Program* of Hour Children – an organization serving women involved in the correctional system. “Her home. Her kids. Everything. And when she comes out – when she has finished paying her debt to society – she leaves with nothing but a paper bag full of clothes, a Metrocard, and a prison-issued ID that immediately stigmatizes her in the eyes of any potential employer or landlord. How is she going to take care of herself and her children? Who is going to stand by her?”

Sister Teresa Fitzgerald (Sister Tesa), the dynamic nun who founded Hour Children, realized early on that women in re-entry need a full range of assistance to successfully re-connect with their children. They need housing, they need a “starter” income, and – most importantly – they need the education and employment to support those children in the long-run. Sister Tesa set about methodically creating the necessary set of services. She created a supportive housing program with on-site or near-by child care services. She helped women access the temporary safety net of public assistance. She designed a comprehensive employment program and began seeking funders.

“I got a tip that NYWF believed in ‘our type’ of woman,” she explains. “And they certainly do! They understood that the best route to self-sufficiency for a woman leaving prison isn’t accepting the first low-paying job – that what she needs is to rebuild skills and confidence, to learn the ways of the workplace. And that while she is gaining skills, she needs stipends to buy appropriate clothes, and to take her kids on the occasional trip, and feel she is a part of the world again. NYWF worked with us to build the *Hour Working Woman’s Program* to address all those needs.”

A decade later, Hour Children is successfully helping several hundred women a year to re-assume the responsibilities of raising their children. It provides supportive housing, mentoring, counseling and child care; and – through the *Hour Working Woman’s Program* – it offers educational supports, job training and preparation, financial literacy classes, and help finding gainful employment. Almost all participants enter college or find living-wage jobs by the time they reach *Program’s* three-month deadline. And, once they graduate, many return to Hour Children to contribute back to the organization from their new positions of strength. They mentor newer participants and volunteer in the day care center or provide informal baby-sitting. They join the staff, when appropriate. They take part in advocacy efforts to improve prison conditions.

“That’s what I’m doing, after all,” Flores concludes. “I, too, was once involved in the correctional system, you see; and I got the help I needed to start afresh. And now, here I am, directing a program for mothers who have gone through what I did. NYWF’s core belief is that women should help one another. That it is appropriate. That it is rewarding. That it transforms lives – both your life and the life of the woman you’ve helped. And that is Hour Children’s core belief, as well.”

Other grants in the field of immigrant rights and progress have included:

- Two grants (1991 and 1992) to the **Chinese Staff & Workers Association** for organizing, educational and leadership development services for immigrant women garment workers.
- Eight grants, from 1991 to 2011, to **Sakhi for South Asian Women**, for work addressing domestic violence.
- Grants from 2006 to 2010 to **Tamkeen: The Center for Arab-American Empowerment**, for its work providing culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health services – including help coping with acculturation and with residual 9/11 backlash issues – for women and girls from Arab countries.

WOMEN IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

According to the **Correctional Association** – an NYWF grantee partner and one of the nation’s premier advocacy organizations for prisoners and ex-offenders – New York State’s passage of a set of harsh new drug laws in 1973 ignited a 580% spike in the number of women entering prison over the following nearly four decades. As of January 2009, 2,618 women were incarcerated in New York Prisons and an additional 29,240 were on parole or probation. More than 83% of these women had been convicted of non-violent offenses related to drug use; two-thirds were women of

color – despite the fact that women of color comprise only 30% of New York’s total female population.

The surge in women’s incarceration rates has had devastating multiplier effects on communities and families. A full 75% of all female inmates are mothers. Most forfeit all forms of meaningful contact with their children once they are sent Upstate. And all face huge barriers re-uniting with, supporting, and housing those children once they finish their prison term.⁸

NYWF has remained a vital funder in the area of women and the correctional system. Other grants have included:

- A 1993 grant to **Life Force: Women Fighting AIDS, Inc.** to train Latina and African-American women as HIV/AIDS peer educators for incarcerated women at Bayview and other correctional facilities.
- A 1995 grant to **JusticeWorks** Community for a peer support group for women prisoners on work release and ex-offenders to help one another conduct job searches.
- Five years of funding (from 2004-2008) to **College and Community Fellowship** for its work supporting formerly incarcerated women’s access to college educations.



GIRLS

Over the course of the dozen years since it first provided support to Grand Street's *Girls and Young Women Initiative*, NYWF has evolved into one of the city's major and most innovative funders of programs and organizations advancing girls' development and success. It hosts an annual city-wide *Girls' Leadership Day* that brings together girls from all its girl-focused grantee partners, to make connections, share views, and be celebrated for their achievements. It provides strategic funding for a host of efforts that open new worlds – science and math, ice-skating, competitive rowing, organizing and advocacy

NYWF Grantee Partner
Figure Skating in Harlem
(2007-2011)

efforts – to girls who have historically been excluded or discouraged from participating in those activities. And it supports efforts that recognize and nurture the strength of young women whose profound life challenges have historically been downplayed, or exploited. Grants to girl-centered programs have included:

- Grants from 2005-2009 to **GEMS**, which helps girls and young women, ages 12 – 24, who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation and domestic trafficking.
- Grants from 2002-2006 to **Ifetayo Cultural Arts Facility** for a program supporting the creative, educational and vocational development of girls of African descent.
- Grants from 2007–2011 to **Figure Skating in Harlem**, for an intensive, integrated, academic and physical education that prepares low-income girls to take part in competitive figure skating, to become youth leaders, and to graduate high school and go to college.

LOW-INCOME WOMEN WORKERS AND ENTREPRENEURS

From its earliest days, NYWF has maintained a central substantive focus on the crushing economic challenges – the unjust pay differentials; the lack of key child care, education, and training supports; the lack of access to capital; the oppressive working conditions – that limit the overall progress of low-income NYC women. The theme of economic disempowerment threads across the stories of all the demographic



Margarita Rosa at the 2010 *Celebrating Women*[®] Breakfast, where she was honored with the Celebrating Women[®] Award.

GRAND ST. SETTLEMENT: GIRL'S AND YOUNG WOMEN'S INITIATIVE (GYWI)

In 1995, at a time when few organizations – and even fewer funders – were specifically focused on the needs and aspirations of girls, Margarita Rosa, Executive Director of Grand St. Settlement and recipient of the 2010 NYWF Celebrating Women[®] Award, was determined to take the lead on this issue.

“I knew that something major – something bold – had to be done to promote the confidence and success of low-income girls of color,” she explains. “These girls needed a place of their own; a place in which they could develop strategies for fighting marginalization, disrespect, and abuse; a place in which to internalize the fact that they needn’t sacrifice academic achievement in order to be popular; a place to learn to lead.” So Grand St. Settlement launched the Girl’s and Young Women’s Initiative (GYWI) – one of the city’s first leadership training programs tailored to the particular issues and preferences of girls.

NYWF was, itself, only beginning to fund programming for girls and young women at that time. And, in fact, Rosa notes, “it took The Foundation several years of reading our proposals to actually make us a grant.” But once The Foundation was on board, GYWI “really took off. We involved our girls in science projects, and arts projects, and leadership development workshops. Participation was huge; school performance went up; pride went up. A scene, based on our girls’ program, appeared in a film featuring Jennifer Aniston, and – after that – girls began marching around Grand St. Settlement like they owned it. I knew we were on to something, when one of the boys came to me and said: ‘Hey, we want a program just like the girls have! They’ve gotten their act together – how about us?’”

Over time, Rosa took the boys’ cue and expanded the scope of her youth services. A separate boys’ leadership program was launched, and then one for LGBTQ youth. And then – having seen tremendous progress on all fronts within these separate programs – Rosa opted to combine them all within a single youth leadership effort.

“It’s not that we don’t still believe that girls need their own space,” explains Rosa. “It’s that we’ve learned how to support girls within a co-ed context. We make sure they receive the training to speak up for themselves. And we still provide certain activities for them alone. But we’ve been able to promote real cohesion and respect and shared leadership within the mixed group. The boys support the girls, and vice versa. And everyone respects and supports the LGBTQ kids. It’s not impossible to do. But it *is* impossible if you don’t first empower the girls.”

BROOKLYN YOUNG MOTHERS COLLECTIVE

“There is no lack of public attention on pregnant and parenting teens,” explains Benita Miller, the founder and Executive Director of the Brooklyn Young Mothers Collective – an organization that supports pregnant and mothering young women, ages 13–21. “But their focus is not on the core issue – which is how are these young mothers going to support their kids? There are lots of pregnancy prevention programs and parenting programs and counseling programs. But aren’t they missing the point? The bottom line is: those girls are parents with responsibilities – paying rent and medical bills and clothing. If all you give them is birth control information, parenting classes, and counseling, what do you end up with? Well-adjusted babies living in poverty!”

Brooklyn Young Mothers Collective focuses directly on teen mothers’ employability. At any given time, it helps some 265 pregnant and parenting girls stay in school, apply to college, and get good jobs. It also organizes participants to advocate for appropriate educational policies. In 2007, this advocacy achieved the elimination of the NYC Department of Education’s long-standing practice of placing pregnant and parenting girls in segregated – generally not very demanding – schools.

“We expect our participants to attend regular high schools with rigorous curricula,” Miller asserts. “We give them the support they need – but we also give them the straight statistics on what will happen if they try to slide by, or give up, or drop out. We say: ‘If you don’t take care of your education now, you will be poor forever. Wake up!’”

Miller applauds NYWF for understanding her strategy. “NYWF is unique in that it truly cares about strengthening women – and particularly, about building their economic power. We used to call our organization the ‘Brooklyn Child Care Collective,’ but the girls themselves changed the name to reflect that what we do is build their strength. We might have attracted more funders with the old name, but that’s not what we’re about. And it isn’t what NYWF is about, either. Sure, we also work on the child care issue. We work with ACS9, so our girls get the child care support they need to stay in school and to hold down jobs. And only 2% get pregnant a second time. But our main aim is preparing our participant for economic survival. Almost every one finishes high school, goes on to college, and finds decent employment.”

On May 25, 2007, following her NYC DOE policy victory, Miller provided a pithy interview – and the Quote of the Day – for the *New York Times*. “I told them to write: ‘Your brain does not die when you get pregnant!’” Miller remarks, with a grin. “And they wrote it out, just like that! Who would have predicted it? Well, it probably didn’t come as such a big surprise for NYWF. They believed in us from the get-go; they equipped us with funding, with connections, with technical assistance, and with confidence. The Foundation’s support is the gift that keeps in giving. I hope it is very proud that the hard-earned dollars that it gave us changed policy – and improved the life trajectory – for hundreds and hundreds of teen mothers!”



groups supported by The Foundation – whether immigrant women exploited in their positions as domestic workers, or women returning from the criminal justice system to face employer discrimination, or girls whose lack of education slashes their ability to support their children, or women who cannot flee their batterers because they do not earn enough to pay their own rent. All acknowledge that women’s earning power is critical to their wellbeing, increasingly critical for their families and extended families and pivotal to the economy of the city as a whole.

Given this reality, almost all the partner organizations funded by The Foundation include pursuit of economic security as a major component of their programming – and an increasing number are completely focused on this goal.

Other programs with direct and full focus on promoting economic security include:

**NYWF Grantee Partner
Brooklyn Young Mothers
Collective (2007-2011)**

- The **Center for Family Life in Sunset Park**, which received funding from 2006-2010 to provide job training, skills-building, employment and entrepreneurial development services as well as innovative cooperative development initiative helping low-income immigrant women become successful entrepreneurs.
- **Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York**, which received grants from 2006 through 2010 to offer job training, sexual harassment prevention training and organizing against workplace gender discrimination.
- The **Urban Justice Center’s** Homelessness Outreach and Prevention Project, which has been funded since 2008 to ensure that single mothers enrolled at Hostos Community College receive public benefits so as to complete their education and obtain living-wage jobs.

WOMEN AND GIRLS INFECTED AND AFFECTED BY HIV/AIDS

“When Love Heals was founded in 1992, little to no attention was focused on HIV/AIDS’ impact on women,” recounts Jasmine Nielsen, Executive Director of Love Heals, a longtime NYWF partner in the women’s HIV/AIDS field. “The dialogue was still focused on ‘risk groups’ such as gay men and heroin users. It took a

while to recognize that HIV/AIDS could affect anyone, and that its physical effects on women were markedly different, leading to delays in diagnosis and treatment. The epidemic was also taking a huge emotional toll on women in communities affected by HIV/AIDS. But their grief, shame, fears about what would happen to their children and the complexities of negotiating safer sex were almost totally off the public radar screen. Fortunately, NYWF was attuned and receptive to these issues and has remained active in the women's HIV/AIDS movement. Today, one in every three people infected with HIV is female, with young women of color leading the pack. We cannot afford to lose vigilance."

NYWF has made an array of grants in the field of HIV/AIDS and women since the late 1980s. The partner organizations that it has supported have included:

- The ***Morris Heights Health Center*** in the Bronx, which received a grant in 1989 to provide social support services for women and girls affected by or at risk for infection.
- The ***Haitian Women's Program***, which received a grant in 1993 to coordinate provision of HIV-related services to Haitian women refugees from Guantanamo Bay.
- The ***Bruised Reed Ministry***, which received a grant in 1995 to pilot a citywide self-help program for Latinas

widowed or orphaned by AIDS, and to develop a cadre of HIV/AIDS peer educators and advocates to work with at-risk women and girls.

TRANSGENDER AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING YOUTH AND ADULTS

Transgender people – particularly low-income transgender young people of color – contend with a range of serious challenges and impediments. They are subjected to ongoing harassment and violence from peers and are often rejected and banned from their homes. They face discrimination in obtaining health care, education, housing, and employment. They frequently end up living on the streets. They often have no way to support themselves except through sex work or drug dealing. And – once in that line of work – they put themselves in the direct path of a whole slew of crushing challenges, including HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C, increased violence, arrest and imprisonment.

For the past five years, NYWF has been an ally of a population group whose gender-related marginalization and abuse is rarely a priority cause for funders. It has provided several years of coordinated, targeted support to five of the most cutting-edge transgender-focused organizations in the city – helping them to address the interrelated factors that contribute to their community members' high rates of poor health, homelessness, poverty, and incarceration.¹⁰

YOUNG WOMEN OF COLOR HIV/AIDS COALITION

The Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition is a leadership training program that is headed by two Co-Directors – Kymsha Henry and Claire Simon, Co-Founder – and is dedicated to addressing the expanding risk of HIV infection among the specific population of young women of color, ages 13–24. Launched because of “the lack of public response, strategies and follow-up” to the pressing reproductive health concerns of this vital group of New Yorkers, the Coalition works with a range of youth-centered organizations to promote prevention strategies based on the needs and preferences of the young women themselves.

Each year, the Coalition equips a cadre of 25 young women to become city-wide peer educators. They take part in a range of activities including financial literacy classes, mentoring, and weekly discussion groups; they receive guidance and practice in public speaking; and they then go out into schools and community organizations to talk with other young women about safe sex, healthy relationships, and self-empowerment. The Coalition also arranges safe, confidential HIV tests for young people across the city; and engages them in a range of advocacy efforts promoting appropriate HIV/AIDS programming, policies, and funding priorities. Thus far, 5,100 youth have benefited from the Coalition’s education outreach efforts; and more than 2,300 have been tested and have received counseling and referrals, as appropriate.

The Coalition was formed in 2006, and NYWF was one of its first and most generous supporters. “Our mission strongly meshed with NYWF’s priorities,” remarks Henry. “The Grants Advisory Committee immediately ‘got it’ that young women of color need to know as much as they can about HIV/AIDS. And that they make the best educators for their peers. And that giving them the skills to protect themselves has all sorts of other collateral effects – like letting them know that they have a future – that they need to stay in school; that they can go on to college; that they can make a difference in the world. Which almost all our participants do, by the way. NYWF has been a leader in the women’s HIV/AIDS field for a long time. It knows what it is doing. And it is our true ally.”



NYWF Grantee Partner Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition (2007-2011)

SYLVIA RIVERA LAW PROJECT (SRLP)

The Sylvia Rivera Law Project (SRLP) was launched in 2002, by a transgender activist and lawyer, Dean Spade, to provide and improve legal services for transgender individuals. Since then – thanks to early funding from NYWF and a select group of other foundations – it has grown into an effective and well-respected organization that annually provides legal services to more than a thousand transgender individuals; educates service providers, lawyers, and advocates about transgender health and service issues; and engages in a range of lawsuits and advocacy efforts fighting discrimination on the basis of gender identity, gender expression, or intersex conditions. SRLP recently won major victories in establishing the illegality of discrimination in the New York foster care and juvenile justice systems; in preventing transgender name change applicants from being held to a higher evidentiary standard than others; and in securing transgender individuals’ right to visit their children. SRLP is currently working to challenge the NYC Department of Correction’s policies and practices for interacting with transgender individuals.



“Prior to funding us, NYWF had not been known for work with the LGBTQ population,” recounts Pooja Gehi, SRLP’s Director of Litigation and Advocacy. “So when we first applied to them, in 2006, we had no idea whether they would be responsive. But I knew they had a knack for thinking about issues in innovative ways. So that gave me confidence. When the Grants Advisory Committee members came to see us, the visit was extremely engaging. We did a lot of education about the ways in which transgender struggles are part of a broader feminist justice movement. Most of the women knew very little about transgender issues and some were even a little skeptical. But it did us a lot of good to have to build a shared analysis. We ended up articulating a view of gender and reproductive justice that helped expand NYWF’s vision and that has moved a lot of other people, since. So it was educational for everyone!”

NYWF Grantee
Partner The Sylvia
Rivera Law Project
(2007-2011)

That first NYWF grant to SRLP was followed by several others – as well as by concurrent grants to several other organizations in this small, tight-knit field.

“Once NYWF got it, they really got it,” notes Gehi. “They became amazing supporters, not just of SRLP, but of the larger movement of social, economic and gender liberation. They immediately understood that we can’t do it alone – that we need to build a coalition of like-minded organizations and supporters, if we are to achieve our goals. And that ability to listen, to learn, to entertain new ideas, to take those ideas views to their logical conclusion is the hallmark of The Foundation – and its greatest strength.”

Other grantees in this field have included:

- The **Callen-Lorde Community Health Project**, which received a grant in 2011 towards its targeted, sensitive medical care coordination services for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals
- **FIERCE** and the **Audre Lorde Project** which each received grants from 2007-2011 for their organizing and leadership development work with low-income transgender, lesbian, gay, bisexual, two-spirit, queer and questioning youth of color – including, particularly, transgender youth who are homeless.
- **Queers for Economic Justice**, funded from 2007–2011 to mobilize lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender people living on public assistance to take leadership roles in the anti-poverty movement.

Investing in the Best Solutions

As noted in previous sections, early in its strategic planning process, NYWF decided to target most of its funding towards supporting efforts by grassroots, women-led, women-centered organizations. It was convinced that the best solutions to the challenges of low-income women would come from within those communities themselves. Of course, with only a very small percent of the nation’s total philanthropic money focused on women’s programs – and only a relatively small cohort of organizations specifically focused on women’s needs – the decision to stick with small, new grassroots providers was often as much a matter of necessity as of choice.¹¹ Most of the grantee partners that sent proposals to The Foundation in that early period, after all, were tiny and pioneering; most had been launched not long before NYWF itself.

The New York Women’s Foundation is an example of venture capitalism at its best. It is marvelous to see our partner organizations fearlessly taking risks – finding effective solutions because they are willing to think out of the box. And it is great that The Foundation’s own willingness to take risks provides those efforts with critical support.

DIANA TAYLOR, NYWF BOARD CHAIR

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Twenty-five years later, organizations specifically serving women and girls – particularly low-income women and girls – still remain a minute fraction of NYC’s nearly 15,000 nonprofits. Most are still grassroots in nature; most are still very small; most are relatively new. And NYWF continues to believe that those small, bold, nascent community-rooted groups are the ones that best understand their communities’ needs and that have the greatest stakes in advancing viable solutions to those communities’ problems. And thus, The Foundation continues to focus its primary attention on those providers. Almost every

A full 216 (81%) of all the grantee partners ever funded by The Foundation are still in business – robustly supporting population groups that were barely on the city’s philanthropic agenda when NYWF itself was first launched.

one of the 22 grantee partner organizations interviewed in connection with this report started out at someone’s kitchen table. Almost all noted that NYWF was their first – or one of their first – institutional funders. That its support allowed them to move into their first real office or pay for their first program director. That it helped them launch their signature effort.

New York is a place in which a significant number of small new nonprofits close their doors shortly after opening. And small, start-up nonprofits based within low-income

communities tend to have the highest failure rates of all.¹² And yet – despite all the risks involved in concentrating on the city’s most vulnerable segment of providers – The Foundation’s strategy of seeking out the best approaches, regardless of the odds, has proven to be remarkably successful. A comprehensive 2007 evaluation of past NYWF grantee partners found that 80% were still in business as much as twenty years after receiving their first NYWF grant.¹³ And a 2012 update of that survey reveals that the trend has continued – and even increased. *A full 216 (81%) of all the grantee partners ever funded by The Foundation are still in business* – robustly supporting population groups that were barely on the city’s philanthropic agenda when NYWF itself was first launched.

What is the reason for NYWF’s extraordinary success rate? How has The Foundation been able to consistently pick out the organizations with the strongest approaches and the strongest odds of survival and to provide them with the support they need not just to survive but to thrive, grow and succeed?

When asked to consider the reasons behind this extraordinary achievement, NYWF grantee partners had strong and consistent opinions. In particular, they ascribed their success and resiliency to four main Foundation practices:

- ***Providing truly in-depth, up-front due diligence*** – asking the “right” probing questions; flagging and addressing potential weaknesses; and offering astute guidance towards addressing those weaknesses.

HOT BREAD KITCHEN

“I knew that bread was, yes, a universal food – that it was basic, good, important,” recounts Jessamyn Rodriguez, founder and Chief Executive Officer of Hot Bread Kitchen – a nonprofit bakery and grantee partner of The New York Women’s Foundation. “I knew that I wanted to spend my days baking it. And I also knew that I wanted to help immigrant women earn good salaries, in good jobs, with a future. So I had this idea that I would create a bakery specializing in authentic, traditional breads from many countries – staffed by women from those countries.” At the same time, Rodriguez continues, “I knew that despite being an avid at-home baker, I knew little about running a commercial bakery; and that failure rates for new social enterprise businesses are huge. So all in all, it was a total leap of faith.”

To get the training that she needed, Rodriguez went back to school. After graduating, she apprenticed herself at Daniel Boulud’s flagship restaurant, Daniel. She began Hot Bread Kitchen in her home kitchen, but quickly outgrew the space and moved into a food business incubator in Queens. She then began looking for investors and funders.

“I looked up other women’s micro-enterprise programs to see who was funding them,” she recalls. “And all the successful programs were supported by the NYWF. I wrote a proposal and had no idea what to expect. But when the women from the Grants Advisory Committee walked in, they all smiled; and I thought: ‘this is going to be okay.’ I explained what I was planning; and somehow – somehow – they saw it exactly the way I did. They saw the possibility. They saw the dream. They were as excited as I was. And they said: ‘we want to give you a chance!’”

Today, just three years after that very first foundation grant, Hot Bread Kitchen is a flourishing social enterprise, housed in its own beautiful space and producing an array of breads – tortillas and challah and bialys and ciabatta and Armenian crackers – for farmers’ markets and specialty stores. A full 80% of its budget derives from sales. It employs 14 women from seven different countries – most of whom had never baked before; most of whom had never earned a living wage. It provides rigorous on-the-job baking training, pays market-rate salaries and offers paid English fluency classes and customer service training. After participating in the program for 9-12 months, bakers graduate and are either placed in management-track positions in the baking industry or transitioned into Hot Bread Kitchen’s culinary business incubator program.

“NYWF not only gave us our first chance, it not only really understood what we were trying to do – it really, really wanted to see us succeed,” states Rodriguez. “That’s what the Foundation is after – women succeeding. And to achieve that goal, it is willing to take that incredible leap of faith – right alongside of its grantee partners.”



NYWF Grantee Partner Hot Bread Kitchen
(2010-Present)

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- **Trusting that grantee partners have the best understanding of community issues, the best approaches, and the best solutions.** As long as grantee partners' overall organizational infrastructures are sound and their goals in alignment with Foundation mission, NYWF respects the way that they go about achieving their goals.
- **Going beyond supporting individual organizations** to create mutually-supportive, mutually-reinforcing grantee networks.
- **Providing more than money** – offering a well-rounded, flexible, holistic range of guidance, connections, capacity-building grants, technical assistance, organizational leadership development, and “sounding board” assistance to its grantee partners; as well as helping them to address their emergency needs.

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Across the board, grantee partners commented on the depth, rigor, and usefulness of NYWF's grants vetting methods. They remarked on the Grants Advisory Committee (GAC) members' keen interest, their probing analysis of organizational challenges – and their enthusiasm. They observed that NYWF's grant review process – rather than being a series of hurdles of uncertain purpose – is crafted as an important exercise in constructive self-examination. They stated that going through that process ensures that the organizations

selected have what it takes for success – and that it often leads to vital improvements in those organizations' planning, management and fundraising capacities.

“Applying to NYWF – fielding all those questions from that team of eager, inquisitive women – was really tough,” comments one grantee partner. “They asked about our financial practices, our personnel practices, our board, our fundraising. The works. But I never, ever got the impression that their aim was to trip us up. They simply wanted to make an effective grant. And once we addressed their issues – once they were satisfied that our house was in order – it was like getting the ‘Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval’. We knew that if we could live up to their standards, we would be able to make it. Which we have.”

“We’ve gone through a few NYWF grant applications processes, each with a different Grant Advisory Committee,” recounts another. “Each one has taught us something – suggested something that made our work better. One Committee kept saying that our board was too homogeneous – that we needed people with a wider range of resources and perspectives and backgrounds. They weren’t being picky or trying to discourage us – they just wanted us to succeed. And it was clearly not *pro forma* – it was because they really believed in the value of that kind of leadership. After all, they were a pretty diverse group themselves. So it was honest advice, offered for our own benefit, and we took it very seriously. And, in fact, creating a more diverse board has been really, really helpful for us.”

Of course, the rigor of the grants vetting process not only benefits The Foundation’s grantee partners – it helps ensure that The Foundation finds and funds the right grantee partners. It eliminates those whose goals are not in alignment with The Foundation’s mission; those whose leadership or overall infrastructure structure appear too weak to be sustainable, given the available resources; and those whose core approaches do not, in fact, appear to be sound or promising. It helps ensure that – once The Foundation has made a commitment to its partner organizations – those partner organizations, no matter how initially small or new, have a good chance of long-term success.

TRUSTING GRANTEE PARTNERS APPROACHES

Partner organizations also universally praised NYWF’s practice of respecting their ability to know their communities, to know their challenges and strengths, and to figure out the best approaches for addressing the challenges. They stated that – once NYWF is convinced that an organization’s infrastructure is sound and that its overall goals are in line with The Foundation’s mission – it basically leaves the choice of specific programmatic methods to that organization. They pointed out that by trusting grantee partners, NYWF essentially ensures that every penny of its grants monies goes towards building capacity and program, rather than towards pushing partners off course.

“Our community has big social service needs,” explains one grantee partner. “It has huge health issues. Issues

By trusting grantee partners, NYWF essentially ensures that every penny of its grants monies goes towards building capacity and program, rather than towards pushing partners off course.

of homelessness. Issues of hunger. When we first started applying to foundations, it probably would have been easier to get grants for social services than for organizing and advocacy. Most donors would rather hear that you are going to feed someone than that you are going to hold rallies, and build a movement, and change things. But our goal is to give community members a voice; to involve them in fighting for their rights. And NYWF ‘got’ that immediately and funded us for what we wanted to do. Now that our leadership training program is in place, we have – in fact – begun applying to other funders to provide all those other things – counseling and referrals and access to job banks. But if we’d done that to begin with, we wouldn’t have gotten on the path to our real goal, which is empowerment.”



**NYWF Grantee Partner
FIERCE (2007-2011)**

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

“I’ve learned not to waste my time applying for money for activities that are ‘sort of like’ what we want to do – just because the money is available,” adds another. “NYWF says: ‘tell us what you want to achieve and let us know what you need in order to do it.’ They ask a million questions, they make you make your case in excruciating detail, and they send comments and suggestions right back at you. But that’s all to the good. You feel like you are building something together. You are pooling your expertise. You’re building a better program. You’re not wasting your energies – and their money – doing something that you didn’t really want to do in the first place.”

The Foundation, in short, has not only been true to its initial instincts regarding where to look for the best solutions, it has ensured that those solutions are effectively implemented by their originators.

ACCELERATING INDIVIDUAL INTO COLLECTIVE STRENGTH

A number of grantee partners praised NYWF’s practice of finding and supporting cohorts of like-minded organizations – and then encouraging and enabling them to share knowledge, learn from one another, and collaborate. They stressed that The Foundation’s expectation that they act like “genuine partners” – i.e., that they give back to one another and to the group – results in far deeper impact than if it only supported individual organizations.

“The thing about NYWF is that they truly believe in partnership,” explains one Executive Director. “They acknowledge that they couldn’t carry out their mission without us. And they also make it very clear that this is a ‘give-and-take’ relationship. This means, of course, that they aren’t shy about asking for our help. We’ve worked with them for years, making presentations to donors, or helping to run their *Girls’ Leadership Day* – which is a huge amount of work for us. But, of course, when we do that, we help a whole range of other girls’ organizations. This helps the movement as a whole.”

“The Foundation doesn’t fund individual organizations. It funds networks of organizations,” comments another. “We aren’t the only grantee partner working for domestic workers’ rights – there is a whole cohort of us working in different communities. And The Foundation does more than simply fund each one of us; it links us, and brings us together, and helps us exchange information and resources. And so now we have this whole strong network whose joint efforts have produced statewide policy victories. NYWF understands that every individual woman’s victory is important – and that every individual organization’s work is important. But most of all, it understands that the more we all work together, the stronger we all are.”

PROVIDING MORE THAN MONEY

All the grantee partners interviewed stressed that The Foundation does far, far more than just “provide a bit of grant money and then sit back and expect results.”

They praised its genuine interest in building their capacities; its willingness to listen to their issues; and its ability to provide them with a holistic, flexible range of assistance. They called these practices “unparalleled in the funding world.” Each grantee partner reeled off a list of supports received above and beyond its initial grant – from astutely targeted technical assistance, to connections to other funders and programs, to advice about programmatic and organizational issues, to workshops and presentations and opportunities strengthening their own leadership capacities, to accommodations in the length of a funding period. All indicated that this generous and well-rounded grantmaking approach had contributed immeasurably to their organizations’ core strength.

“NYWF gave us a capacity-building grant to develop a ‘community-based participatory research’ approach,” recounts one organization Executive Director. “The model totally fit in with our core mission of grassroots input and leadership; and it put us on the map, nationally, for doing that kind of work. The Foundation also gave us a grant to build board and donor participation – that one literally saved our life during the recession. And it involved us in a self-evaluation project that identified some key organizational weaknesses and helped us figure out what to do about them. But the best part of all this is that The Foundation has never framed its capacity-building support as: ‘We’ve noticed that you have this problem, and you’d better fix it or else there goes our relationship!’ It has always been: ‘Do

you need anything? Can we be helpful?’ Because The Foundation takes that attitude, we aren’t ever afraid to say that we’re struggling with something. NYWF trusts its grantee partners. And we trust NYWF.”

“When other foundations were pulling back after the 2008 crash, NYWF increased our grant,” states another. “It INCREASED our grant. And on top of that, it gave us an additional year of funding! It knew that if the wealthy were hurting, we would be hurting even more. Who else does that?”

“I can’t tell you how many times that I’ve called NYWF for advice about finances, about proposal writing, about leveraging other support,” remarks a third. “Or that they’ve called us to say: ‘I think you should write a proposal to so-and-so’ and then they’ve called that funder and put in a good word for us. Being funded by NYWF is like having a big sister to call... or a mother who calls you. They are the ‘eat your vegetables’ Foundation. And they do it with such love!”

SAUTI YETU

“We literally started at a kitchen table – mine,” explains Zeinab Eyega, founder and Executive Director of Sauti Yetu – an immigrant organization that works with African Diaspora women and their families.

“It was all strictly a dream, at first – a dream that African immigrant women could become leaders and help one another, and protect themselves and their daughters from violence. Like so many dreamers, I didn’t have too many technical skills at first. At my initial meeting with NYWF, I told them I didn’t really know how to write a proposal. Of course, they’d read my proposal, so they already knew that. But they said: ‘No matter – your ideas are great – we can teach you to write a better proposal.’ And they sent me to a proposal-writing workshop. Then I told them: ‘I don’t know much about board development, or budgeting, or outsourcing.’ And they said: ‘No matter, we’ll send you to workshops for that, too.’ Which they did. And then I said: ‘We’re beginning to need more space.’ So, they put us in touch with a sister organization, DWA FAM, that was able to give us space. You’d think they’d get tired of us, or fed up with us, or tell us to go bother someone else. But instead they say: ‘You’re doing great. What else can we do for you?’”

Today, Sauti Yetu is a solid, stable, organization, operating out of an impressive office in the South Bronx. Its multi-lingual staff provides counseling, crisis intervention, home visits and parenting classes to more than 400 women, representing a host of African countries. It supports the educational achievement and transition into adulthood of nearly 100 African immigrant girls attending high schools in the Bronx and Brooklyn. It trains hundreds of clinicians, medical students, front-line child protection staff and family court judges about the particular cultural and linguistic needs of African immigrant families; and it provides prevention services to more than 100 families at risk of having their children placed in foster care. It is the only community-based organization in the United States mobilizing African immigrant and refugee women grassroots leaders to prevent Female Genital Cutting (FGC).

“Everything about NYWF promotes organizational strength,” observes Eyega. “From its initial openness to the long-range nature of its support. Five years of funding is a wonderful length of time – enough to really gain stability and begin leveraging other funders, and learn lessons, and adapt your methods to what works best. When NYWF has finished funding you, you are better off than you were. And I have the feeling that it is never really ‘finished’ with you...”



NYWF Grantee Partner
Sauti Yetu Center
for African Women
(2006-2010)

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When NYWF has finished funding you, you are better off than you were. And I have the feeling that it is never really ‘finished’ with you...

**ZEINAB EYEGA, FOUNDER
AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OF SAUTI YETU**

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Advancing Systems Change

When NYWF founders decided to include “systems change” within The Foundation’s goals, they indelibly set its long-range direction. For while The Foundation’s successes clearly include the 216 grassroots partner organizations that are now flourishing and the 5.4 million individual women who have benefited from those organizations’ interventions, its legacy will ultimately be measured by the extent to which it removes the conditions that created the need for those organizations and those interventions.

When all is said and done, the main purpose of The Foundation is not to help people one by one. It is to reshape the odds – to level the entire playing field – for every low income woman in the city.

MARIA TERESA ROJAS, NYWF BOARD ALUMNA

To advance systems change, The Foundation engages in three main, interrelated strategies – each promoting a different level of transformation. It directly funds organizations that carry out community organizing and advocacy efforts. It expands and refines public understanding of key policy issues through sponsorship of trainings, forums, conferences, and publications. And it models behaviors and practices that support the ideals of diversity, social and economic equality, and justice.

PROMOTING COMMUNITY ORGANIZING AND ADVOCACY

As demonstrated throughout the “snapshots” presented in previous sections, most NYWF grantee partners engage in some form of leadership training, community organizing, or advocacy activities. Whether by equipping young women of color to become HIV/AIDS peer educators; or by preparing pregnant and parenting teens to campaign for sounder NYC Department of Education policies; or by organizing African immigrants to work against female genital cutting, they encourage community members to drive individual progress towards achieving broader systems change.

Other systems-changing organizing efforts carried out by grantee partners have included:

- Ongoing efforts by participants in the Brooklyn-based **Girls for Gender Equality** to promote enforcement of Title IX – which guarantees equal opportunities and protections to girls and LGBTQ students – across the NYC public school system.
- A range of campaigns by the service women and female veterans from the **Service Woman’s Action Network (SWAN)** to: (1) enable survivors of military violence or domestic violence to sue the U.S. government for negligence; (2) change the Veterans Administration’s approach to processing sexual trauma claims; and (3) guarantee reproductive rights for service women. **SWAN**’s efforts were instrumental in achieving the recent victory on “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.”

ADHIKAAR FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

“Nepali-speaking women began entering this country in high numbers after the turn of the twenty-first century,” explains Luna Ranjit, Executive Director of Adhikaar For Human Rights and Social Justice, a Queens-based nonprofit that promotes workers’ and immigrant rights, access to affordable health care, and youth leadership within NYC’s Nepali-speaking community. “Ours community is largely working-age adults seeking a better life for themselves and their families back home. But since they don’t speak the language and are new to the country, it is very hard. Women in our community are generally hired as domestic workers or manicurists in nail salons. They work 70-80 hour weeks, for minimum pay, often under terrible conditions. We founded Adhikaar to give them the skills and courage to stand up for their individual rights and to improve conditions for the community as a whole.”

Adhikaar provides more than 500 women a year with English language classes that build confidence and give them information needed for daily living, including – particularly – employment-related vocabulary and phrases.

“We call it ‘English for Empowerment,’” explains Ranjit. The organization engages women in employment-related role play and equips them to speak up for their rights forcefully and consistently. “We teach about minimum wages and overtime – and how to say: ‘I’m not working for less than \$500 a week!’” Ranjit adds. “The more women who say that, the more the entire group benefits.”

Finally, Adhikaar provides legal assistance to those who have been wrongfully treated; and mobilizes groups of workers to bring their issues to lawmakers in Albany. Its advocacy work in collaboration with a cohort of other NYWF immigrant rights partner organizations – including Domestic Workers United, DAMAYAN, and CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities – contributed to the recent victorious passage of the New York State Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights.

“We first opened our doors in 2005 and by 2009 we were an official grantee partner of The New York Women’s Foundation,” recounts Ranjit. “As you probably know, very, very few new organizations were getting support at that time. Foundations across the city were tightening their belts; they were only funding very reliable, very well-known groups. And – what is more – only a limited number of foundations were interested in supporting community organizing. But NYWF saw the injustices that our community was enduring, saw the value of what we were doing, and decided to go with this brand-new, untested, community-organizing-focused organization. They are a bold foundation. That is what makes them so powerful.”



NYWF Grantee Partner Adhikaar for Human Rights and Social Justice (2008-present)

- The successful campaign by participants in the **Girls Educational and Mentoring Services (GEMS)** – an organization that serves girls and young women who have survived sex trafficking or sexual exploitation – to gain passage of the NYS “Safe Harbor for Exploited Youth Act.”

EDUCATING KEY AUDIENCES

As recounted in previous sections, one of the first steps taken by NYWF’s founding mothers was to ask community leaders for information and guidance around issues and policies of relevance to low-income women. In NYWF’s 25 ensuing years of work, “issues education” by community experts has remained a central activity – and a primary tool for sparking strategic policy action. The Foundation still brings in community leaders to educate new board members, GAC members, and other volunteer activists about social justice issues of top priority. And it sponsors an ongoing stream of research papers, conferences, and forums designed to spur action around those issues by the public at large.

Conferences, forums, presentations, and publications supported over the past few years have included:

- The **Young Women Responding to HIV/AIDS** conference in 2006
- The **Keeping Families Together: Women, Families and Incarceration** conference in 2007
- The **More than Income: Defining Poverty** conference in 2007
- The **Economic Status of Women in NY State** report in 2008
- The **Raising the Voice of Low-Income Women: Results of the Unheard Third** conference and report, 2009
- The **Critical Intersections: Reproductive and Economic Justice in NYC** conference and report, 2010
- The **Self-Sufficiency Standard for New York City** conference and report, 2010
- **Gender Budget Analysis**, 2011, 2012

MODELING BEHAVIOR AND PRACTICES

The third way that NYWF advances its policy agenda is by demonstrating the deep benefits of diversity and equality within its own internal practices – i.e., its partnership-based model of grantmaking; its broadly inclusive board and GAC; and its ongoing public celebration of women from all communities. Less “formal” than community organizing or public education forums, these strategies nonetheless affect the perceptions, attitudes and actions that undergird existing social “norms.”

“Putting grantee partners on the dais at the *Celebrating Women® Breakfast* – having them be the stars of the show – was a stroke of genius,” relates one grantee partner. “When our girls sat up there on the dais and were applauded by those 2,000 wealthy, influential women, it was a transformative, magic moment. There was – truly, authentically – such a sense of respect in that room! Sure, a one-day thing can’t erase centuries of inequality or remove every challenge that those girls will face. But

When women of different income levels and backgrounds are put into a situation in which they have to work together, they begin thinking less about differences and more about how everyone can contribute. Or they begin to see the rich differences among them as keys to great thinking and collaboration – that those differences actually expand the available pool of options and ideas. Or – at the very least – they see that they have to keep working to overcome those differences. Sure, it’s a work in progress. But I have yet to see anyone do it better.

LORRAINE CORTÉZ-VÁSQUEZ, NYWF BOARD MEMBER

each one of those girls will go forward buoyed by that vivid image – by the knowledge that they can have an important and recognized place in our world.”

“NYWF’s funding was crucial to the passage of the NYS Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights,” notes another. “But The Foundation did something even more amazing than provide that funding. It distributed sample employee-employer contracts at each table at the *Celebrating Women® Breakfast*, and asked every contributor to take one home and use it with her own domestic employees. It was a clear statement of solidarity with those employees – a clear statement that the systems changes that everyone was talking about will require lifestyle accommodations on the part of people of means. I suspect that it made some supporters begin thinking differently about their relationship with the women whom they left at home, cleaning their houses and minding their kids. And I know for sure that it impressed the domestic

workers up there on the dais. It gave us hope that things just might really begin to change on the ground level – where it really counts.”

“When you bring a diverse and inclusive group together it doesn’t solve everything,” observes long-time NYWF supporter Barbara Dobkin. “But it makes everyone in the room begin to think twice about their core presumptions and biases. It makes everyone think twice before speaking. That’s a major first step.”



Kim Donaldson and her mother Evan Donaldson

There is still a huge difference between talking about an issue – even taking political action about it – and hearing about it, first-hand, in a Board meeting, or in a Celebrating Women® Breakfast, from someone whose strength and passion come from personal experience.

KIM DONALDSON, NYWF BOARD ALUMNA

KIM DONALDSON

Kim Donaldson was invited onto the NYWF board as a very young woman, following the death of her mother, Evan Donaldson – one of the 40 original NYWF founders. Donaldson served on the board for five years, beginning in 2001. During that time, she made a pivotal contribution to The Foundation's ongoing sustainability by launching the Committee for the Future (CFF) – a committee of younger donors of wealth who plan Foundation events, carry out special projects, and spread the NYWF message to a continually expanding circle of their peers.

"My mother was transformed by The Foundation, and I watched it," Donaldson recounts. "I saw her open her mind and eyes to a world outside her own very particular sphere of wealth. She became a much more multi-dimensional person simply by coming into contact with women with other life experiences than her own. She grew to see the common needs, the common talents, the common strengths, the common struggles that bind all women, regardless of their backgrounds."

Working to create the CFF, Donaldson has seen other instances of the process taking place. "Women of my generation are, of course, much more politically aware than those in my mother's generation," she notes. "In those days, you couldn't even talk about domestic violence or human trafficking – it was considered in bad taste. Now we do. But there is still a huge difference between talking about an issue – even taking political action about it – and hearing about it, first-hand, in a Board meeting, or in a *Celebrating Women@ Breakfast*, from someone whose strength and passion come from personal experience. People who live outside poverty may have thought about those issues, but it often remains on an intellectual level. When you actually see the resilience and talent and strength of the people who are dealing with those challenging situations, it shakes up your preconceptions. You re-think what it means to come from a certain background or to have a certain economic status. It becomes something other than 'Lady Bountiful helping the poor.' It becomes a matter of respect and solidarity. It has individual impact. And – ultimately – it has societal impact. More than anything else – that is what NYWF is about."

BUILDING WOMEN'S PHILANTHROPY

When I first joined NYWF board, in 1993, I would go to meetings with other foundations and they would treat us as if we were quaint and quirky and adorable for saying that women could make a difference in philanthropy and that women's causes are important. Now, the phrase 'if you help a woman you help a community' is on every tongue, and NYWF is on the cutting edge of a robust and increasingly important women's fund movement.

ABIGAIL DISNEY, NYWF BOARD ALUMNA AND HONORARY CHAIR

Over the past 25 years, NYWF – like many of its grantee partners – has evolved from a small, passionate enterprise into a major philanthropic force, supported by a generous and expanding group of women. Its growth can be tracked in several concrete and impressive ways:

- **By the number, size and scope of its grants:** In its first round of grantmaking, NYWF distributed four grants totaling \$50,000. It now provides more than 75 annual grants, totaling \$5 million. In its early years, The Foundation limited programmatic and general support to a single 12-month period. It now provides as many as five years of support, with the option of additional years, when strategically important – plus supplementary capacity-building grants, as appropriate. Where grant size once

began at \$5,000 and never topped \$20,000, The Foundation now provides annual grants in the range of \$30,000 – \$75,000.

- **By its cadre of contributors:** From a handful of contributors taking a chance on a compelling idea, the cadre of Foundation supporters now includes more than 15,000 individuals, foundations, and corporate supporters of all sizes and dimensions. More than 90 donors have given more than \$100,000 (with nine giving more than \$1,000,000). And a full – and equally important – 27% of donors contribute amounts ranging from \$1 – \$99. Every year, The Foundation counts entirely on these generous supporters to renew the funds that fuel its grants. And every single year – even in the depths of the

recession that began in the fall of 2008 – these individuals have come through. In fact, the largest and most sustained expansion in total donations – from under \$3,000,000 to \$5,000,000 – took place during the years between 2008 and 2012.

- **By its cohort of volunteer activists:** From an initial core group of 40 dedicated volunteer activists, The Foundation has grown to engage nearly 850 dynamic volunteers in its work. Some 23 women serve on its board; as many as 70 on its Grants Advisory Committee; 200 within four specialized philanthropic and fundraising committees – the Committee for the Future, the Circle of Sisters for Social Change, the President's Council, and the Corporate Support Subcommittee; and as many as 130 in a range of other critical capacities.
- **By its position in the philanthropic field:** When NYWF was first founded, it was a minor new entrant into a small group of women's funding organizations. Today, there is a network of 166 national and international women's funds collectively raising and giving away more than \$165 million a year. NYWF is the largest U.S.-based member of that network.

In analyzing the reasons behind the impressive growth and success of The New York Women's Foundation, it is perhaps useful to look at what the experts in the field say about women's philanthropy in general. For, in fact, as women's earnings and wealth have risen among certain segments of the population, there has been

an understandable surge of interest – conferences at Harvard Divinity School, lead articles in philanthropic journals – in determining what will inspire women to donate. One such article written by researchers from Indiana University's Center of Philanthropy for Giving USA Spotlight¹⁴ proposes that female donors are chiefly motivated by:

- **Empathy for – and solidarity with** – those whose cause they are supporting.
- **Shared values among friends** – or the possibility of working with or developing new friendships within a group of like-minded women.
- **The opportunity for meaningful**, active involvement – to develop skills, to make decisions, to be “part of the change they wish to see.”

Clearly, more than two decades before “women's giving” became significant enough to warrant all this attention and analysis, the founders of NYWF had an astute, innate grasp of these principles – and wove them deep into their operational and fundraising methods. From stressing partnership over charity, to bringing supporters in friend by friend, to actively involving donors and volunteers in the grantmaking process, The Foundation's outreach strategies have been spot-on in terms of sparking women's imaginations, loyalties, and generosity.

EMPATHY AND SOLIDARITY

When the founding mothers first began bringing community experts into their decision-making circles – when they began having grantee partners talk about their achievements at awards ceremonies – they were doing more than just obtaining the best possible information. As described by Kim Donaldson, they were taking steps to change social perceptions; and they were moving the philanthropic process away from the “Lady Bountiful” paradigm to a model in which a group of strong, diverse women work together in solidarity, understanding, and mutual respect.

“We women aren’t hungering to hear that women are downtrodden and in need of assistance,” asserts Nicky Edlich, long-time NYWF supporter, board alumna, and central catalyst in the development of the current, hugely successful model for the *Celebrating Women® Breakfast*. “We are hungering to hear that we can triumph against the odds. And we are hungering to hear how we can all help to promote those ongoing victories. That’s why we join NYWF. That’s why NYWF works.”

“When you become involved in NYWF, you see that being a woman crosses so many artificial lines,” observes founder and board alumna Sarah Kovner. “You recognize that you have much in common with the woman sitting across from you that you might not have known before. And that includes other members and grantee partners as well... You can’t help but feel empowered.”

SHARED VALUES AMONG FRIENDS

From the moment that Gloria Milliken culled through her Rolodex to call all the people she knew, NYWF had largely been a “word of mouth” institution – its message spread among friends and continually deepened by the bonds and shared values of friendship. Almost every supporter interviewed for this report related that she had been introduced to NYWF “by a friend,” or that she had brought other friends to it, or that – upon joining The Foundation – she met a group of “friends for life.”

I looked around at those 2,000 strangers, all passionately caring, all finding ways to make things better, and I said to myself: I’ve found my tribe.

ANNE DELANEY, NYWF BOARD VICE CHAIR

“I was invited to the Breakfast by a friend and it ‘got’ me,” recounts NYWF board member Yvonne Quinn. “The Breakfast is The Foundation’s trademark event, and is an extraordinary one. The following year, I bought a table and began inviting friends, and women partners, and clients. You just feel like you have to let everyone know about this amazing institution. And now for 15 years I have been introducing new people to the breakfast and The Foundation.”



Rhonda Joy McLean

RHONDA JOY MCLEAN

Rhonda Joy McLean, former GAC member and board alumna, is the co-founder – with a few other board members – of the Circle of Sisters, a committee that draws its main membership from the networks of New York City's professional women of color.

"NYWF seeks to bring together the assets of women from all parts of the city so as to build a truly inclusive and powerful movement," McLean explains. "So I came up with the idea of launching the Circle of Sisters – the COS – to bring more professional women of color into the mix. The premise was very simple – that women like to bring their friends into things. So, all I had to do was get the ball rolling – reach out to a small group of women of color – and then leave it to them to continue the process. I contacted an initial circle of church women, touched base with professional associations, made a pitch to a few sorority women. And The Foundation hired a wonderful staff person, Madeline Lamour Holder, to do more or less the same thing. And then, just as we'd hoped, the word began to spread. There are now nearly three dozen COS members. It's like a club. The women get together to do things and discuss things and raise money. They've taken over responsibility for planning the Neighborhood Dinners through which The Foundation honors grantees in their home boroughs. And a few have gone on to join the NYWF board."

Of course, adds McLean. "Women of color don't only make friends with other women of color. So now we have expanded our Circle to be even more inclusive – all women are welcome. And that, too, is a wonderful thing. Friend to friend, community to community, The Foundation keeps building strength, making progress, crossing those lines, breaking those barriers. It is creating a truly diverse, resource-rich pipeline of support for all women."

NYWF seeks to bring together the assets of women from all parts of the city so as to build a truly inclusive and powerful movement.

**RHONDA JOY MCLEAN,
NYWF BOARD ALUMNA**

ROSE PIERRE-LOUIS

Rosemonde Pierre-Louis taught law at Fordham University and spent 20 years as a public interest and legal services attorney representing domestic violence survivors, low-income, and immigrant litigants before being appointed Manhattan Deputy Borough President, in 2005. She has received numerous awards – the Leon Borgues Award from the NYS Association of Black and Latino Legislators; the Women United in Philanthropy Award from the United Way of New York City; the Ellis Island Medal of Honor from the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations Foundation; and the Public Service and Leadership Award from the West Indian American Day Carnival Association.

Clearly at home in the top power structures of the city – and well-equipped to address complex issues of poverty and disenfranchisement – Pierre-Louis nonetheless credits her time on the NYWF board with having contributed profoundly to her personal and professional development.

"I began supporting NYWF because I went to a Breakfast – it's like that for most people," she explains. "The Breakfast was transformative enough – I was hooked after that. But my loyalty – my admiration – for The Foundation at that initial point was nothing compared to what it became once I started serving on its board. All the most important things I've learned about women's issues, about consensus-building, about taking risks, about fundraising – about being bold – I learned from my fellow board members. I honed my analytic and speaking skills in their company. When I needed to be challenged, they challenged me. And when I needed help, they drew in their ranks and helped me. The New York Women's Foundation has swagger. It is authentic. It is fearless. It does what is right and doesn't care what anybody else thinks. And it teaches you to be fearless, too. I would not be Deputy Borough President today, if I hadn't been prepped by The Foundation's mission and surrounded and coached by that incredible cohort of women. They reinforced my commitment to women and to public service. Whatever I have been able to contribute as a public servant in this city, they have helped me contribute."



Rosemonde Pierre-Louis

The New York Women's Foundation has swagger. It is authentic. It is fearless. It does what is right and doesn't care what anybody else thinks.

**ROSEMONDE PIERRE-LOUIS,
NYWF BOARD ALUMNA**

"A huge part of the appeal of NYWF is the friends that you make," says board alumna Barbara Wynne. "When I joined the board I met the most diverse, most talented women I've ever known. We still call ourselves the 'best class ever.' It was such a thrill to be part of – to become friends with – NYC's most remarkable women."

"When I went to my first Breakfast, I didn't know a single soul besides the person who had invited me," recalls board alumna Anne Delaney. "But I looked around at those 2,000 strangers, all passionately caring, all finding ways to make things better, and I said to myself: 'I've found my tribe.'"

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT

From the very outset, NYWF leaders have understood that the best way to build loyal and generous support is to involve supporters in planning, decision-making, and activism. The Foundation welcomes contributions of all levels – from the major donation to the modest one, from the woman who can only give very limited amounts of time to the one who steps in to help run things. And, regardless of level of involvement, it strives to provide all supporters with a meaningful experience. Volunteer opportunities on the board or the various Committees – even attendance at the *Celebrating Women® Breakfast* and *Neighborhood Dinners* – are all designed with an eye to widening

vistas, sparking ideas, stimulating personal growth, and providing enticements to do more.

"My time on the GAC was a period of total empowerment," observes Carol Schlitt, donor, GAC member and COS member. "I learned so much about the City! I thought I knew it. I didn't. I have now been in – felt part of – communities that I thought would be closed to me

Don't call us volunteers. We are activists!

HELEN LAKELLY HUNT, NYWF FOUNDER, CHAIR EMERITA

forever. I have made connections to a whole new range of people whom I care about, and admire, and with whom I have things in common. I have been a member of a team of women of incredible passion and intelligence. And I have gained real skills. I've learned how to read financials, to ask questions without leading or judging, and to argue my point of view in front of some of the most discerning people I'd ever met. I've learned how to promote consensus without anyone feeling that their views have been dismissed. Where else do you get opportunities like that?"

"I wanted to be on the GAC so much that I actually looked into getting a Masters in Social Work. I had this feeling GAC would change my life in some profound way," remarks Hyatt Bass, long-time supporter, CFF member, former GAC member and current board

member. "But I knew so many other women felt the same, I was afraid I wouldn't get the opportunity to serve if I didn't have an MSW or years of experience in the field. I didn't just want to write a check. I wanted a deeper experience. I wanted to be involved at that level. The GAC is so unique, and is so uniquely valued not only by its members but by the organizations that

testimony to the wisdom of making activist leaders and team-mates out of those who wish to give.

"There is a reason that NYWF *Celebrating Women*[®] Breakfast is so powerful," concludes NYWF board alumna Sayu Bhojwani. "And it is perfectly captured in the visual of all those hundreds and hundreds of

My time on the GAC was a period of total empowerment. I learned so much about the City! I thought I knew it. I didn't. I have now been in – felt part of – communities that I thought would be closed to me forever.

CAROL SCHLITT, GAC MEMBER

the GAC visits. Again and again, the grantee partners with whom we met said The New York Women's Foundation was the only grant maker whose site visits they truly looked forward to. It is wonderful to be part of something so innovative and so tremendously effective."

Clearly, NYWF's outreach strategy has worked. By emphasizing inspiration, leadership, participation, and common cause – by harnessing and honing talents towards achieving the greater good – The Foundation has created an incredibly loyal, robust and continually expanding cadre of supporters. The 2,500 women who now come to the Breakfasts, the nearly 850 volunteers who line up for the chance to work on its events and grantmaking, the \$5 million raised each year, all provide

women, of all backgrounds, traveling upwards on those hotel escalators. For one critical stretch of time, we are all united, we are all participating, and we are all moving up together! Taken in conjunction with hearing all those amazing grantee partners on the dais – and seeing the signs proclaiming that the men's rooms are now all ours, and witnessing women brazenly ask one another to whip out their checkbooks – it is all so intoxicating. There isn't a woman alive who wouldn't want to be part of that! There is nothing like it anywhere else in philanthropy."

I could never have produced a film on the women heroes of Liberia, had I not first gone with NYWF to listen to the women heroes of Red Hook.

**ABIGAIL DISNEY, NYWF BOARD ALUMNA
AND HONORARY CHAIR**



Abigail Disney

ABIGAIL DISNEY

Abigail Disney is an accomplished and pioneering philanthropist, advocate, and film-maker. Founder and president of the Daphne Foundation – and major supporter of the White House Project, the Ms. Foundation for Women, and the Global Fund for Women – Disney has been pivotally involved in promoting women's causes for many years. Her 2008 documentary film, *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* – the profoundly inspirational story of the peace-making efforts of a group of extraordinarily courageous and determined Liberian women – has been screened in churches, living rooms, community spaces and public forums across the U.S. and abroad; and has reached more than twelve and a half million viewers. Her groundbreaking five-part series, *Women, War & Peace* – broadcast on PBS in the fall of 2011 – focuses on how women in war zones around the world are reworking our understanding of modern warfare.

Disney joined the board of The New York Women's Foundation in 1993 and has served on the board for more total years than any other single person except founder Helen LaKelly Hunt. She credits The Foundation with having developed her talents and honed her determination to promote the efforts and voices of courageous, un-heard women.

"I grew and matured in ways that I am only now beginning to understand through the loving care, encouragement, and nurturing of fellow board members," Disney states. "They were mothers and sisters and mentors to me. And I also learned more than I can say from all The Foundation's grantee partners. The NYWF experience shaped my world view, taught me that women are the prime movers in every community, and that it is only at the grassroots level that the 'genuine' happens. If I had gone to Liberia without that preliminary education, I might have barged in with the attitude that I could 'save' those women, rather than with the humility to listen to how they were saving their country. I could never have produced a film on the women heroes of Liberia, had I not first gone with NYWF to listen to the women heroes of Red Hook."

VISION FOR THE FUTURE: EXPANDING IMPACT, INFLUENCE AND SUPPORT

NYWF is, at its heart, an entrepreneurial institution. Women are by their very nature flexible, enterprising, resourceful, and risk takers. We've always had to think about issues in new ways and we are unafraid to turn traditional thinking upside down and to create new models for getting things done!

RHONDA JOY MCLEAN, NYWF BOARD ALUMNA

For the past 25 years, The New York Women's Foundation has put forth a vision of philanthropy that has been new in concept, radical in approach – and outstandingly successful in execution. An early exponent of the nascent idea of “philanthropy by women for women” it has gone a step further by making it “philanthropy by and for New York City's full, rich diversity of women.”

The Foundation has forged an impressive track record through innovative grantmaking priorities and methods, including:

- Vigorous cross-cultural leadership.
- Active partnership with grantee organizations.
- The use of volunteer activists to review grant requests.
- A focus on the city's most under-resourced populations.

- A primary concentration on economic issues.
- A willingness to go beyond funding individual service programs to promote systemic change.

As it begins moving into its next 25 years, NYWF has a Strategic Plan in place that proposes four interrelated areas of activity that will take these achievements to an even higher level – put The Foundation squarely on the map as a major voice for all women, a major player in the policy arena, and a major catalyst for transforming women's and girls' lives. In particular, it plans to:

- ***Sustain and build on its bold and successful grant-making approach*** – maintaining a grants portfolio of at least \$5 million a year, and refining its evaluation techniques to promote greater understanding

of the community approaches that are making a concrete and vital difference in women's lives.

- **Mobilize larger and more inclusive circles of New Yorkers** as supporters, volunteer activists, and "friends" at different levels of engagement.
- **Assume a greater role as thought leaders** on the major issues affecting the progress of New York City's women.
- **Expand resources** from both high-end and more modest donors, to generate the financial reserves required for ongoing effectiveness and growth.

SUSTAINING AND BUILDING ON ITS SUCCESSFUL GRANTMAKING APPROACH

As demonstrated in previous sections, The Foundation's grantmaking approach has been enormously successful in: (1) identifying and bringing a full 216 effective, grass-roots women-led organizations from kitchen table dream to resilient growth and achievement; and (2) reaching and supporting some 5.4 million individuals from the city's most under-funded communities. The robust \$5 million of grants and other supports that it is providing to 80 grantee partners this year will enable those organizations to change the lives of more than 125,000 women – and to promote an array of cutting-edge policy and community organizing initiatives.

For the next few years, The Foundation will work to sustain this impressive and effective level of support for similar numbers of grantee partners. In addition, it will begin promulgating a new and comprehensive evaluation approach designed to better communicate the impact of its grants to donors, to other foundations, to the city's leading policy makers, and back to the communities themselves. In particular, it is working intensively with its grantee partners to: (1) come to agreement on what constitutes an effective intervention and a project "success"; (2) calculate what data are needed to demonstrate that success; (3) create mechanisms to gather those data; and (4) strategize about amalgamating and presenting results in a meaningful way – across categories and across time.

This new evaluation approach will, of course take considerable time and resources to conceptualize and carry out – and will require ongoing re-assessment and modifications, as new programs are funded and new factors are considered. But the move to adopt this new methodology promises to provide vital information for internal and external use; and it resonates strongly with both current Foundation leadership and with the ideas of the founding mothers who first conceptualized the practice of inclusive and participatory grantmaking.

“We aren’t interested in ‘counting beans,’ or in imposing centrally-determined metrics on grantee performance,” explains NYWF President and CEO, Ana Oliveira. “We are aiming to build understanding of what works best at the individual and community level – and what works well across different communities. We are striving to integrate quantitative and qualitative data in ways that will demonstrate which intervention strategies have been effective, and why they are effective, and what we need to do to build on past success. We are seeking to put The Foundation and its partners ‘on the map’ in the field of participatory grants evaluation.”

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The NYWF should be a household word! We should have tens of thousands more supporters – Facebook friends in every community of the city! We are unique, we are important, and we should be much, much, much bigger!

MARJORIE CADOGAN, BOARD ALUMNA

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“The Foundation has always been good at gathering moving stories and personal testimonies,” observes founding board member Marion Kaplan. “Now it’s time to begin producing evaluations that will contribute to the overall discussion of what advances women’s progress.”

MOBILIZING LARGER AND MORE INCLUSIVE CIRCLES OF SUPPORTERS

Currently, The Foundation masterfully employs highly individualized methods to mobilize supporters, volunteer activists, and leadership. The result has been a tightly-knit, slowly growing circle of women who are familiar with and passionate about The Foundation’s work. To move to the next level of influence and support, The Foundation is planning to add new forms of marketing to its tool-kit of engagement strategies. In particular, it is working to tap the vast potential of mass electronic communication to build interest among those who may not have the time, resources, or contacts to be reached by “traditional” methods – but whose support is vital for The Foundation’s long-term sustainability and ongoing systems change work.

“For most of our history, we have primarily relied on a one-on-one, friend-to-friend system of outreach,” observes President and CEO, Ana Oliveira. “It has worked very well up to now, but it is time to add other less intimate marketing tools to the mix. We need to use social media more effectively; promote new interest through a website that offers vital information on women’s issues; utilize the print and electronic media to tell our story and to attract wider attention to our work. We will, of course, never abandon the core personal practices that have helped define our allure and our power – the practices that are part of our DNA. But we also need to pursue other approaches for broadening our visibility and our presence.”

Once again, the circle of founding mothers and board alumnae agree strongly with The Foundation's proposed new approach.

"NYWF should be a household word!" asserted one board alumna, Marjorie Cadogan. "We should have tens of thousands more supporters – Facebook friends in every community of the city! We are unique, we are important, and we should be much, much, much bigger!"

ASSUMING A LARGER ROLE AS THOUGHT LEADER ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

The third new strategy relates to The Foundation's role in promoting debate, discussion and consensus around broad issues of importance to women's progress. As noted in previous sections, The Foundation has always brought in community experts to orient its staff and volunteer activists about the issues and challenges of the communities that it serves. And it has periodically sponsored conferences and research on policy matters of broad public interest.

It is now considering ways to take these practices to the next level. In particular, it is formulating plans to hold regularly scheduled "neighborhood town hall meetings" in which representatives of grantee partner organizations, public institutions, faith organizations and the general public can discuss issues affecting the progress of women in their communities. It will then use the findings from those meetings to inform its own grantmaking practices; to conduct forums in

which key advocates, government officials, and public and private funders can debate potential policy and program improvements; and to keep supporters and potential supporters apprised of issues through regularly updated information on its website.

This new and expanded research, facilitation and convening direction is clearly in alignment with the founding mothers' desire to go beyond individual impact to achieve broader systems change; and it is eliciting wide support from board alumnae.

"NYWF has done really fine work on issues related to women's poverty. We need to do more of that," remarks board member Lorraine Cortéz-Vásquez. "When people need statistics on those issues, there is no single, major information source available. We should be the go-to place for those data!"

"NYWF should definitely be facilitating regular convenings to produce meaningful change," advises board alumna Pat White. "It should be bringing together leaders from across various sectors to create consensus around women's most pressing issues."

EXPANDING RESOURCES

All the above activities, will, of course, require annual fundraising activities that extend beyond even the impressive results of the past few years – but they will also provide the very tools required for that fundraising. The better known The Foundation becomes – the wider

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

its reach and the more flexible and democratic its communications methods – the more chance for generating broad-based support from a continually expanding circle of “friends.” And the more influential a thought leader it is – the more involved in the highest level policy debates and the better covered in the media – the greater the chance of generating the kind of top-level giving that can galvanize further expansion and impact.

Throughout its history, The New York Women’s Foundation has been visionary in scope and mission; brilliant in cultivating partnerships and support; fearless in forging new strategies – and scrupulously diligent in carrying them out. Thanks to its efforts, millions of women have improved their lives and hundreds of women-led organizations have changed the terms of the struggle in some of the most under-funded communities of the city. Like its grantee partners, NYWF has grown from kitchen table dream to powerful and influential force for women’s progress. And – in collaboration with an ever-expanding circle of partners, supporters and allies – it will continue transforming the landscape for women for generations to come.

“The New York Women’s Foundation was on the front lines from the beginning – long before it was fashionable to talk about women’s issues or to strengthen and broaden women’s leadership,” observes NYWF President and CEO Ana Oliveira. “We have been on a steady path of transforming

women’s philanthropy from an act of charity to a highly participatory, broadly influential engine for social change. We aren’t fully there yet, but we are committed to continually and critically re-examining our approach; to further diversifying our reach; and to building our impact. We will continue to grow and we will – of course – continue to evolve with the times. But we will always maintain our vital core mission and values. And we are here to stay.”

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Correctional Association, Women in Prison Project, **Women in Prison Fact Sheet**, NYC, 2009
- ² NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS) statistics.
- ³ Leicher, Susan, **HIV/AIDS in NYC: A Strategy for Improving Odds, Options and Quality of Life** (New York: United Way of New York City, 2002)
- ⁴ Correctional Association, Women in Prison Project, **Why Focus on Incarcerated Women?** NYC, 2006, **Women in Prison and Substance Abuse Fact Sheet**, NYC, 2008, **Women in Prison Fact Sheet**, NYC, 2009
- ⁵ Arias, Maria, "Lack of Housing for Domestic Violence Victims"; **New York Law Journal**, July 26, 1988.
- ⁶ Mayor's Commission for the Foster Care of Children, **Child Welfare at a Crossroads: Rethinking, Redirecting, Reinvesting**, NYC 1993.
- ⁷ New York City Department of City Planning Population Division, **The Newest New Yorkers: Immigrant New York in the New Millennium**, NYC, October 2004.
- ⁸ All the above is taken from the **Correctional Association**, op.cit.
- ⁹ The NYC Administration for Children's Services, which regulates and supports publicly-funded day care.
- ¹⁰ See Sylvia Rivera Law Project, **It's War in Here: A Report on the Treatment of Transgender and Intersex People in New York State's Men's Prisons**, NYC, 2007.
- ¹¹ When Helen LaKelly Hunt and Gloria Milliken first began planning The Foundation, Hunt calculated that only 4% of philanthropic dollars went to women and girls. More recent estimates (by the Sister Fund and the Third Wave Foundation) put the current percent at between 6-7%.
- ¹² See *NYC Nonprofit Project*, CUNY Graduate Center, 2003.
- ¹³ Sabo, Kim, **The Impact of The New York Women's Foundation on Women in New York City**, 1987 - 2007, Kim Sabo Consulting, April 2008.
- ¹⁴ Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, "Women as Philanthropists," **Giving USA Spotlight**, Glenview, Illinois, Issue 3, 2010

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APPENDIX B: LIST OF INTERVIEWS

1. Jennifer Arieta, Executive Director, Vamos Unidos
2. Hyatt Bass, NYWF Board Member
3. Anu Bhagwati, Executive Director, Service Women's Action Network
4. Sayu Bhojwani, NYWF Board Alumna
5. Marjorie Cadogan, NYWF Board Alumna
6. Narbada Chhetri, Senior Community Organizer, Adhikaar for Human Rights and Social Justice
7. Jan Cook, NYWF COS, GAC
8. Lorraine Cortéz-Vásquez, NYWF Board Member
9. Virginia Day, NYWF Board Alumna
10. Tuhina De O'Connor, NYWF Board Member, CWB
11. Anne Delaney, NYWF Board Member
12. Alisa Del Tufo, former Executive Director, Sanctuary for Families
13. Abigail Disney, NYWF Board Alumna, Honorary Chair, CWB
14. Barbara Dobkin, NYWF Donor, CWB
15. Kim Donaldson, NYWF Board Alumna, CFF Founder
16. Jai Dulani, Co-Director, FIERCE
17. Jacqueline Ebanks, NYWF Vice President of Programs
18. Nicky Edlich, NYWF Board Alumna, CWB
19. Zeinab Eyega, Executive Director, Sauti Yetu Center for African Women
20. Sister Theresa Fitzgerald, Executive Director, Hour Children
21. Johanna Flores, Director, Women's Working Program, Hour Children
22. Clementina Garcia, Organizer, Vamos Unidos
23. Pooja Gehi, Director of Litigation and Advocacy, Sylvia Rivera Law Project
24. Agnes Gund, NYWF Donor
25. Kymsha Henry, Co-Executive Director, Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition
26. Tracy Hobson, Executive Director, Center for Anti-Violence Education
27. Madeline Lamour Holder, NYWF Board Alumna; Director of Community Philanthropy
28. Helen LaKelly Hunt, NYWF Founder, Board Alumna, Chair Emerita
29. Marion Kaplan, NYWF Board Alumna, CWB
30. Kwanghee Kim, NYWF Board Alumna
31. Sarah Kovner, NYWF Board Alumna
32. Amanda Kraus, Executive Director, Row New York
33. Sandra Lamb, NYWF Board Alumna, Interim ED, CWB

34. Renee Landegger, NYWF Donor, CWB
35. Rosemonde Pierre-Louis, NYWF Board Alumna
36. Rhonda Joy McLean, NYWF Board Alumna, COS Founder
37. Benita Miller, Executive Director, Brooklyn Young Mothers' Collective
38. Elba Montalvo, NYWF Board Alumna
39. Jasmine Nielsen, Executive Director, Love Heals
40. Vivian Nixon, Executive Director, College and Community Fellowship
41. Ana Oliveira, NYWF President and CEO
42. Catherine O'Rourke, NYWF Board Alumna
43. Ai-jen Poo, Former Executive Director, Domestic Workers United
44. Krystal Portolatin, Co-Director, FIERCE
45. Yvonne Quinn, NYWF Board Member
46. Luna Ranjit, Executive Director, Adhikaar for Human Rights and Social Justice
47. Merble Reagon, Executive Director, Women's Center for Education and Career Advancement
48. Damaris Reyes, Executive Director, Good Old Lower East Side
49. Jessamyn Rodriguez, Executive Director, Hot Bread Kitchen
50. Maria Teresa Rojas, NYWF Board Alumna
51. Margarita Rosa, Executive Director, Grand Street Settlement
52. Rafael Samanez, Director of Organizing, Vamos Unidos
53. Carol Schlitt, NYWF GAC, YEA, COS
54. Elinor Seevak, NYWF Board Alumna, CWB
55. Claire Simon, Co-Executive Director, Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition
56. Joanne Smith, Executive Director, Girls for Gender Equity, Inc.
57. Diana Taylor, NYWF Board Chair
58. Betty Terrell-Cruz, NYWF Board Alumna
59. Melody Tulier, NYWF Associate Director for Evaluation and Strategic Learning
60. Jennifer Weidenbaum, Executive Director, Girls, Inc.
61. Kathryn Weill, NYWF Board Alumna
62. Vera Weintraub, NYWF Donor
63. Pat White, NYWF Board Alumna
64. Barbara Wynne, NYWF Board Alumna
65. Jungsook "Grace" Yoon, Executive Director, Korean-American Family and Children's Services
66. Rita Zimmer, Executive Director, Housing+ Solutions

APPENDIX C: LIST OF GRANTEE PARTNERS, 1988-2012

GRANTEE NAME

YEARS FUNDED ◆ = 6th year ★ = RISE-NYC!

A.C.E. - OUT, Inc.	1992, 1994, 1995, 1997/1998
ACCION USA	2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009*, 2010*, 2011*
Action for Community Empowerment	1990, 1993
Adhikaar for Human Rights and Social Justice	2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
African Hope Committee	2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
African Peoples Council	1995
African Services Committee, Inc.	1998
Agenda for Children Tomorrow	2010, 2011
Alonzo Daughtry Family Life Services	1994
American Indian Community House, Inc.	1994
American Woman's Economic Development	2004
Amethyst Women's Project	2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006
Andolan Organizing South Asian Workers	2003, 2004, 2005
Arab-American Family Support Center, Inc.	1995, 1997, 2000/2001
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
Associations From Fordham to Burnside	1993
Astoria/Queens SHAREing and CAREing	1996
Audre Lorde Project, Inc.	2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Battered Women's Resource Center	2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006
Beit Shalom	2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006
Bethex Federal Credit Union	1998
Better Bronx for Youth	1998
Bridge the Gap Family Daycare Network	1992
Bronx Women Against Rape	1993
Brooklyn Workforce Innovations	2009*, 2010*, 2011*
Brooklyn Young Mothers' Collective	2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Brotherhood/Sister Sol	2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
Bruised Reed Ministry	1995
buildOn, Inc.	2010, 2011
Business Outreach Center Network	1998, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2010*, 2011*
CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities	1996, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002
Callen-Lorde Community Health Project	2011

GRANTEE NAME

YEARS FUNDED ◆ = 6th year ★ = RISE-NYC!

Casa Atabex Aché	2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005
Catholic Big Sisters and Big Brothers	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008
Center for Anti-Violence Education	1989, 1992, 1996, 1997/1998, 2000
Center for Family Life in Sunset Park	2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
Center for Immigrant Families	2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006
Center for Independence of the Disabled in New York, Inc.	1996
Center for New York City Neighborhoods	2009★, 2010★, 2011★
Center for the Elimination of Violence in the Family, Inc.	1988
Central Brooklyn Partnership	1994, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002
Central Harlem Partnership, Inc.	1996, 1997
CHANGER	2009★, 2010★, 2011★
Chica Luna Productions	2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
Child Care, Inc.	2002, 2003
Child Welfare Organizing Project	2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007
Chinese Staff & Workers' Association (W.E.P.& G.W.H.S. Project)	1991, 1992, 1998, 2000, 2001
Cidadão Global/Global Citizen	2011
Coalition for the Homeless	2003, 2005
Coalition of Battered Women's Advocates	1990, 1991, 1992
College and Community Fellowship	2004, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009
Committee for Hispanic Children and Families	1991, 1997, 1999, 2000
Committee for Humanitarian Assistance to Iranian Refugees, Inc. (C.H.A.I.R.)	1994, 1997
Community Advocates for Educational Excellence	1995
Community Development Project of the Urban Justice Center	2004, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
Community Voices Heard	1998, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003
Community Women's Network	1993
Community Works	1997, 1999
Concerned Citizens for Family Preservation, Inc.	2007, 2008, 2009
Coney Island United Services	1993
CONNECT, Inc.	2011
Correctional Association of New York	2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
Cush Campus, Inc.	1994
Cypress Hills Child Care Corporation	1994, 2002, 2008, 2009, 2010
DAMAYAN Migrant Workers Association	2004, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009

GRANTEE NAME

YEARS FUNDED ◆ = 6th year ★ = RISE-NYC!

Day One	2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
Dome Project, Inc./Starlings Collaboration	1999
Domestic Workers United	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
Dominican Women's Caucus	1996, 1997
Dominican Women's Development Center	1990, 1993, 1998/1999, 2006, 2007
Dorcas Home Ministry	1992
Dreams Into Action	1997
Dress for Success New York	1998
Dwa Fanm	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
East Brooklyn Congregations	1997
East River Development Alliance	2011★
East River Development Alliance	2011
Edwin Gould Services for Children	1998
El Barrio Popular Education Program	1992, 1993, 1995, 1996
El Centro de Hospitalidad	2003, 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009
ENTRENET	1994, 1996
Equality Now	2006, 2007
Esperanza del Barrio	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008
Families for Freedom	2010, 2011
Families United for Racial and Economic Equality	2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006
Family Learning Circle	1996, 1997
Family Violence Project of the Urban Justice Center	1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002
FIERCE	2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Figure Skating in Harlem	1999, 2000, 2010, 2011
Fire Safety Education Fund	1999
First Girls Congress Collaborative	2000
First Saturday in October	1996
Forest Hills Community House	1991, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005
Friends of the Island Academy	2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006
Girls Educational & Mentoring Services	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
Girls for Gender Equity, Inc.	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
Girls Incorporated of New York City	1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003
Good Old Lower East Side	2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Grace Outreach	2010, 2011

GRANTEE NAME

YEARS FUNDED ◆ = 6th year ★ = RISE-NYC!

Grameen America	2009★, 2010★, 2011★
Grand Street Settlement	2000, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2005
Greenhope Services for Women, Inc.	2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Greening of Harlem Coalition (Goddess Garden)	1993
Griot Circle	2003, 2004, 2005
Haitian American Women's Advocacy Network (HAWANET)	1994
Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees	1993, 1994, 1996
Haitian Women's Program	1993
HarlemLive	2001
HIV Foster Care Education and Advocacy Project	1996
HIV Law Project	1992, 1993, 2000, 2004, 2005
HIV/AIDS Technical Assistance Project	1999, 2000, 2001, 2002
Homelessness Outreach and Prevention Project of the Urban Justice Center	2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
HOPE Program	2002, 2003, 2004
Hot Bread Kitchen	2010, 2011
Hour Children	1999, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2009★, 2010★, 2011★
Housing + Solutions	2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Human Rights Project of the Urban Justice Center	2004
Hunts Point Economic Development Corporation	2011
Ifetayo Cultural Arts Facility	2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006
inMotion	2002
Institute for Labor & the Community (Girls Project)	1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2004
Interfaith Neighbors	1994, 1997, 1998, 2001
Iris House, Inc.	1994, 1997
Ivy League	1995, 1996
Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement House	1999, 2000, 2011
Jews for Racial and Economic Justice	2008
Joint Public Affairs Committee for Older Adults	1995
JusticeWorks Community	1995, 2007, 2008, 2009
Kianga House	1990
Korean American Family Service Center	1991, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2000
Korean Family Counseling & Research Center	1994
Latin American Integration Center	1995, 2005, 2006, 2007
Latin American Women's Network (LAWN)	1995

GRANTEE NAME

YEARS FUNDED ◆ = 6th year ★ = RISE-NYC!

Latina Reproductive Rights Initiative	1994
Latina Roundtable on Health & Reproductive Rights	1993, 1994, 1997, 1998
Learning Center for Women in Prison	2006, 2007
Legal Information for Families Today	2011
Legal Momentum	2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
Lexington Vocational Services	2011
Life Force: Women Fighting Against AIDS, Inc.	1993, 2001, 2002
Literacy Partners	2011
Little Shepherd Community Services, Inc.	1995, 1998
Living Hope Family Day Care Network, Inc.	1989, 1995
Local Development Corporation of East New York	2002, 2003, 2009★, 2010★, 2011★
Looking Toward Tomorrow, Inc.	1996
Love Heals, the Alison Gertz Foundation for AIDS Education	2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Lower East Side Worker's Center/Latino Workers' Center	1994
Lower Eastside Girls Club	1997, 1998, 1999, 2006, 2007
Make the Road by Walking	2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005
Make the Road New York	2009★, 2010★, 2011★
Maura Clarke-Ita Ford Center (MCIF)	1995, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2001/2002
Mercy Center	2000, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2010★, 2011★
Morris Heights Health Center	1989
Mother's Love Support Network	1992
Mothers On the Move	1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001
Mothers Together	2000, 2001
Mount Sinai Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Program	2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Mujeres en Pie (Women Arise!)	1990
Mujeres in Action	1992, 1994
Muslim Women's Institute for Research and Development	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
Narco Freedom, Inc. (Children and Families Together)	1992
National Mobilization Against Sweatshops	2002, 2003, 2010, 2011
Nazareth Housing, Inc.	1995
Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
Neighborhood Self-Help By Older Persons Project, Inc.	2004, 2005, 2006
Networking Project for Disabled Women and Girls	1988, 1992
New Destiny Housing Corporation	2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005

GRANTEE NAME

YEARS FUNDED ◆ = 6th year ★ = RISE-NYC!

New Settlement Apartments	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
New York Asian Women’s Center, Inc.	1989, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003
New York Black Women’s Health Project	1991
New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault	2004, 2011
New York City/Lesbian Health Fair Organization Committee	1996
New York Civil Liberties Union Foundation	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
New York Legal Assistance Group	2011★
New York SCORES	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008
Non-Traditional Employment for Women (NEW)	1989, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003
North Brooklyn Coalition Against Family Violence	2003
Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition	2000, 2001, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009◆
Opportunity Program for Women	1992
ParentJobNet, Inc.	2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Picture the Homeless	2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007
Polish-American Council for Children and Families, Inc.	1996
Project Greenhope: Services for Women, Inc.	1993, 1997
Project Harmony, Inc.	1995
Project Hospitality	2003, 2004
Project Superwoman Collaborative	2000
Project Teen Aid Family Services (formerly the Rose F. Kennedy Family Center)	1993, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999
Providence House, Inc.	1998, 1999, 2001
Queens Women’s Network	1991
Queers for Economic Justice	2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Rainbow Center	1995
Reap & Keep Educational Services	1993
Red Hook Initiative	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009◆
Rena Day Care Centers, Inc./Rena FDC Network	1999, 2000, 2001
Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York	2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council, Inc.	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009◆
RightRides for Women’s Safety	2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Riverside Church Youth Program	2000
Row New York	2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Sadie Nash Leadership Project	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009◆
Sakhi for South Asian Women	1991, 1994, 1995, 2001, 2003, 2009*, 2010*, 2011*

GRANTEE NAME

YEARS FUNDED ♦ = 6th year ★ = RISE-NYC!

Sanctuary for Families	1988, 2011
Sauti Yetu Center for African Women	2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
Service Women's Action Network	2010, 2011
Serving Our Selves (SOS)	1992
Sex Workers Project of the Urban Justice Center	2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007
Shalom Task Force	1995, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2001
Sinergia, Inc.	1993
Sista Il Sista	1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003
Sistas on the Rise	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
Sister Outsider	2002, 2004
Sisterhood Mobilized for AIDS/HIV Research and Treatment	2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
Society for the Preservation of Weeksville & Bedford-Stuyvesant History	1997
South Asian Youth Action (SAYA!), Inc.	1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002
South Brooklyn Local Development Corporation	1995, 1998
South Jamaica Services for Families and Children, Inc.	1994
SPARKS	2011
St. Francis Xavier's Action Youth	1995, 1996, 1998
St. Peter's Childcare Network	1991
St. Rita's Center	1994
St. Vincent's Services	2010, 2011
Star of the Sea, Inc.	1993, 1995
Staten Island Teen Pregnancy Network	1993
STEPS to End Family Violence	1993
STRIVE/East Harlem Employment Services	2011
Sylvia Rivera Law Project	2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
T.O.P.S. For You, Inc.	1991, 1996, 1998
Take Charge/Be Somebody Youth Network	1995
TAMKEEN: The Center for Arab American Empowerment	2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
The POINT Community Development Center	2011
Turning Point for Women and Families	2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Union Settlement Association	2011
University Neighborhood Housing Program	1999
Upwardly Global	2009★, 2010★, 2011★
VAMOS Unidos	2008, 2009, 2010, 2011

GRANTEE NAME

YEARS FUNDED ◆ = 6th year ★ = RISE-NYC!

Violence Intervention Program (VIP)	1990, 1993, 1995, 2000, 2010*, 2011*
Voces Latinas	2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Voice & Vision	1997
Voices UnBroken	2010, 2011
Welfare Rights Initiative	2000, 2001, 2002, 2003/2004, 2005
Westchester Square Partnership	2011
Women and AIDS Resource Network (WARN)	1990
Women and Work	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008
Women for Afghan Women	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009◆
Women for Economic and Educational Mobility (WEEM)	1994, 1995
Women In Steel, Inc.	1995
WomenCare, Inc.	1991, 1992, 1998, 1990
Women's Advocate Ministry, Inc.	1993, 1996, 1999/2000
Women's Center for Education and Career Advancement	2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009◆
Women's Health Education Project	1991, 1992, 1993
Women's HIV Collaborative of New York	2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010
Women's HIV Legal Advocacy Project	1992, 1993
Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDCo)	1999, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009*, 2010*, 2011*
Women's Housing Coalition	1988
Women's Information Network	2000
Women's Justice Alliance	1994
Women's Project of the Association for Union Democracy	1992
Workers' AWAAZ	1998
Year Up New York	2011
Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition	2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011
Youth Advocacy Center	1995
Youth At Risk, Inc. (f.k.a. New York Youth At Risk)	2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004
Youth Empowerment Mission	2001, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007
Youth Ministries for Peace & Justice	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009
YWCA of Queens	2009, 2010, 2011

BOARD ALUMNAE

Natalie Abatemarco
 Suzanne Ainslie
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 Traci M. Gibson
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 Susan Ginkel
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 Madeline L. Holder
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 Stacia Murphy
 Sharon A. Myrie
 Brenda Neal
 Sheila Nemazee
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 Karen A. Phillips
 Lisa L. Philp
 Rosemonde Pierre-Louis
 Suki T. Ports
 Linda E. Rappaport
 Lucille C. Renwick
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 Barbara B. Roberts
 Maria Teresa Rojas
 A. Stacey Rouse
 Yolanda Sanchez
 Sheri C. Sandler
 Heidi L. Schneider
 Sara L. Schupf
 Marian L. Schwarz
 Mary Carroll Scott

Elinor A. Seevak
 Maria E. Semidei-Otero
 Purvi Shah
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 Ann Short
 Barbara Smith
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 Brande Stellings
 Margaret L. Stevens
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 Betty Terrell-Cruz
 Myra L. Tobin
 Christina Toosie
 Catherine Tracy
 Mary J. Tully*
 Lola Van Wagenen
 Amy Vance*
 Helen Vanderbilt*
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 Vogelstein
 Sukey N. Wagner
 Myrle H. Wall
 Joan M. Warburg
 Charlotte C. Weber
 Sandra Weiksner
 Kathryn Weill
 Patricia A. White
 Dee Winokur
 Barbara Brizzi Wynne
 Barrie Zesiger

*deceased

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