

About The Women's Giving Circle

The WGC is a diverse group of 80+ women who share an interest in building a better community.

- We are experienced – and emerging – community volunteers and philanthropists.
- We are career women – artists, educators, public servants, business and nonprofit professionals.
- We are daughters, mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers.

The WGC is a dynamic and generous group of women engaged in an exciting venture in strategic philanthropy.

- We are learning about challenges we face as a community.
- We are researching opportunities that hold the promise to create real change.
- Since 2003, we have invested more than \$400,000 to help shape the future of our community.

Membership programs throughout the year focus on our community investment priorities. WGC Study Groups give members the opportunity to research issues in-depth and recommend investment opportunities.

Through our affiliation with York County Community Foundation, the WGC receives administrative and staff services so that we can focus on education and grantmaking. Being connected with the Foundation also opens doors that, in turn, inform and support our work. The WGC is proud to partner with the Foundation in community building and grantmaking.



This display at the gift fair attracted shoppers interested in helping Martin Library purchase children's books.

Helping HOLIDAY SHOPPERS... AND THE COMMUNITY

A unique gift fair hosted by the WGC raised more than \$15,000 for 23 community nonprofit organizations during the 2010 holiday season.

The WGC's first Gifts That Give Hope holiday gift fair offered shoppers the opportunity to choose "gifts" for friends and family while helping others. Shoppers purchased gift certificates to support programs and services of special interest to them at an event at the Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center or on-line throughout the holiday season.

"Gifts That Give Hope was an opportunity to give meaningful gifts to friends who have everything they need and a wonderful way to introduce young shoppers to the joy of giving to others," said Mary Lou Alsentzer, gift fair chair.



WGC membership meetings are held at venues throughout the community related to WGC investment priorities. These WGC members are off on a bus tour to learn about downtown York revitalization projects.

Mission

The Women's Giving Circle of York County Community Foundation is building a community of thoughtful, effective philanthropists. We aspire to advance York County's social capital through the Circle's community leadership, charitable investments, and course of study. We are committed to forging new relationships among women of diverse ages, interests, and backgrounds.

Join Us!

For information on membership in the Women's Giving Circle please contact Sue Krebs at 846-0418 or sueknows2@comcast.net or Carolyn Steinhauser at 854-2844 or csteinhauser@yccf.org.

WGC LEADERSHIP 2010

- Sue Krebs, *Chair*
- Joanne Gerlach and Caroline Morris, *Education Co-Chairs*
- Tracy DePasquale and Carolyn Warman, *Membership Co-Chairs*
- Judy Blakey, *Liaison to York County Community Foundation Board*
- Judy Simpson and Lise Levin, *Chairs Emeriti*
- Carolyn Steinhauser, *Program Consultant*



Learning and giving together to build a better community.

ANNUAL REPORT

2010

Women's Giving Circle

of York County Community Foundation

Learning and giving together to build a better community



Improving Safety IN CITY NEIGHBORHOODS

Several years ago a WGC project in a York City neighborhood included the installation of several dozen gates to secure the narrow alleyways between row homes.

When a WGC study group asked York City Police Chief Wes Kahley to recommend new investments in city safety, more gates topped his list. "The gates not only reduce loitering and criminal activity, they also limit the ability of criminals to escape when being chased, enabling us to apprehend them more easily," he said.

It was a big ask with a big price tag, requiring months of planning, multiple partners and "staging" over time.

A Community Policing Unit stepped forward to work with neighborhoods selected for a pilot project. Kinsley Construction agreed to fabricate 300 gates and train volunteers to install them. A project coordinator was identified to oversee the project, and the WGC asked York County Community Foundation to help fund it.

In March 2011, Phase I of the Gates Project in the City's West End was launched with an \$85,800 grant to the City of York. Funding included \$70,000 from the WGC and \$15,800 from the Community Foundation's Fund For York County.

A "How To" manual developed as part of the project will provide a template for extending the project to other neighborhoods. Chief Kahley believes that before-and-after crime data collected by the Police Department will enable it to attract future funding.



Left to right: Wes Kahley, York City Police Chief; Lise Levin, WGC Gates Project Chair; Delaine Toerper, Gates Project Coordinator; Joanne Borders, York City Community Mobilizer.

Strategic Philanthropy In Action

Strategic philanthropy is at the heart of the Women's Giving Circle mission...and powers the WGC's community investments.

Strategic philanthropy bridges "what is" and "what can be." Its characteristics are education...collaboration...innovation...venture capital...and impact!

The WGC's commitment to strategic philanthropy begins with educating ourselves. This may mean identifying promising opportunities through a competitive grant program...researching successful models which can be replicated...or enlisting partners for an experimental approach to a problem or opportunity.

It may mean providing seed money to get something started...then leveraging additional funding needed. Often it means joining with public and private funders to provide venture capital for a major community initiative.

In all cases, it means asking important questions. Is the project or program well informed and designed? Are the budget and expected outcomes realistic? Is the leadership capable of executing the project or program successfully? How will it be sustained?

This report is about strategic investments by a group of women committed to effecting real community change.

WOMEN'S GIVING CIRCLE GRANTS AT WORK

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

WGC investment priorities focus on strengthening connections among people and institutions throughout York County—building “social capital” – informed by major themes of the YorkCounts vision. Current priorities are:

- Revitalizing York’s urban core, with particular interest in healthy neighborhoods and a vibrant cultural and commercial center
- Improving educational priorities, especially for those at-risk
- Encouraging a diverse community of people living in harmony with one another.



Keeping KIDS IN SCHOOL

In 2009, the WGC stepped forward with initial funding for staff support for a community coalition led by Judge John Uhler to reduce the alarming incidence of truancy in our schools. The case for staffing was compelling. Research by United Way’s Stay In School initiative confirmed national studies that truancy is a major factor in York County’s school dropout rates. And while much good work had been accomplished over the past 10 years by the all-volunteer coalition of over 45 stakeholders, even more effort was needed to identify at-risk students and provide early intervention services.

With a WGC grant in hand, the coalition attracted additional funders and a commitment from the York County Bar Foundation to sponsor the program. Now the York County Truancy Prevention Initiative is implementing an ambitious Blueprint for Change plan, informed by hundreds of stakeholders who attended a Truancy Prevention Summit (Fall 2010). As part of that plan, York County’s Office of Children, Youth and Families has made truancy a high priority by providing caseworkers throughout York County schools. “Early intervention is the key,” said Leigh Dalton, Director, York County Truancy Prevention Initiative.



Encouraging CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

Helping city neighborhoods build on their strengths, mitigate weaknesses and capitalize on opportunities is what the Resources for Urban Neighborhoods (RUN) Project is all about. Now in its second year, RUN provides technical assistance, access to resources, and training to help residents build neighborhood organizations and develop action plans for neighborhood improvements.

The program is the result of intensive research several years ago by the WGC, informed by neighborhood leaders and successful models elsewhere. It is administered by the YMCA of York and York County and supported by over \$150,000 in funding from the WGC and York County Community Foundation’s Fund for York County.



Check out the RUN website at www.runyork.org



NEW INVESTMENTS

Creating A VIBRANT URBAN CENTER

- WGC is proud to be a partner in the Moving Plans Into Action project, convened by York County Community Foundation with technical assistance from the York College Center for Community Engagement. The project has brought together public and private partners in an effort to identify common themes in plans to revitalize York’s urban center, identify opportunities and facilitate collaboration to move them forward. The WGC has committed \$7,500 to the project.
- A WGC grant of up to \$30,000 is helping the Cultural Alliance of York County spearhead development of a public art program. This vibrant art program is intended to energize our public spaces, and is a common theme throughout an array of community revitalization plans. Community interest in public art was further tested – and confirmed – in the recent

Launching A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Charged with developing a “world class” educational opportunity that will bring together a diverse group of students, a YorkCounts committee resurrected research done by a WGC study group on the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum.

Reentering the picture in 2009, the WGC partnered with York County Community Foundation to fund preparation of the application for the York Academy Regional Charter School with an IB curriculum. With the charter now in hand, teachers are being recruited and building renovations are underway. The school will open with students in grades K-2, with an additional grade added each year.

When the new York Academy Regional Charter School opens in August 2011, it will be one of only 20 IB schools in Pennsylvania and the only charter school in the Commonwealth to combine students from the three different chartering school districts (York City, Central York and York Suburban).



Kathleen Eshbach, the Academy's Chief Academic Officer

Community Cultural Plan spearheaded by the Cultural Alliance. WGC funding includes support for technical assistance from nationally-known public art experts.

- The WGC is helping promote downtown York as an attractive place for young professionals to live, work and play with a \$20,720 grant to Downtown Inc. In addition to the publication and widespread distribution of a new Downtown Destination Guide, Downtown Inc. will utilize social networks and other online marketing and communications tools to reach this special audience.

