Obama assistant talks progress on women’s policy with WEF

Last fall, the nation’s vehicle crash test system underwent a major overhaul after the Department of Transportation was alerted to an important truth: All their ratings were based on a test that used only male dummies. This all changed in October, when federal safety officials introduced a new ratings system that includes anatomically correct female dummies in their tests to more accurately predict the effects of a crash on a woman.

At the top of the list of people celebrating the change was Tina Tchen, executive director of the White House Council on Women and Girls, assistant to the president, and chief of staff to the first lady. Tchen and her council were instrumental in bringing this disparity to the attention of federal officials.

This is just one example she shared during a special Women’s Endowment Fund event last fall to show how policies are being shaped at the national level to better consider the needs of women and girls.

Tchen, a northeast Ohio native, spoke to a group of approximately 25 Women’s Endowment Fund supporters in November about the work she’s doing in Washington to help women and girls everywhere, including Summit County. One of her primary roles is to ensure agencies are addressing the unique needs of females in their policies and legislation.

“We’re changing the DNA of how the federal government works,” Tchen said. She and her staff have brought national attention to issues of women’s economic security, workplace flexibility, violence and STEM education, among many others. “Those are things we have identified as reaching across agency barriers and want to lift up as priorities,” she said.

The Women’s Endowment Fund echoes much of Tchen’s work locally, granting approximately $240,000 to Summit County nonprofits that empower women economically and prevent violence against them.

“A lot of change occurs at the local level,” said Women’s Endowment Fund President Tracy Carter. “We take pride in serving as a catalyst for change, and we’ll continue to do that.”

Carter said she hopes the Women’s Endowment Fund will serve as an ongoing resource to Tchen about local women’s issues and needs. Tchen welcomed this suggestion and said she was especially interested in interacting with young women connected to the fund.

One of those young women, Charletta Richardson, attended the discussion and had the opportunity to ask Tchen about ways girls can make a difference in local and national issues.

“I think it’s important for (government officials) to understand the viewpoint of young girls so they can make better decisions to help girls in our community,” said Richardson, a freshman at Firestone High School. “Having girls at the table will allow us to spread the word to our peers, and together, change lives.”

Tchen concluded by encouraging women to keep giving back to their communities. “I really am such a believer in the power of women’s philanthropy,” she said. “It’s something I feel passionate about, and I thank you for everything you’re doing.”

Mark your calendar for this year’s For Women, Forever event
Wednesday, March 23, at the Hilton Akron/Fairlawn.

Details on page 3

High school student Charletta Richardson spoke to Tina Tchen, assistant to President Obama, about how young women can get involved in national issues during WEF’s event.
The Women’s Endowment Fund is gearing up for an exciting spring season, which will kick off on March 23 with our “For Women, Forever” annual dinner at the Hilton Akron/Fairlawn. This dinner is our signature event, where we highlight the vital role women and philanthropy play in building a vibrant community. Co-chairs Dianne Newman and Eve Belfance did a fantastic job of securing Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Connie Schultz as this year’s keynote speaker.

As part of our celebration, we will also take time to recognize our 2011 grant recipients, which are described on page 3. For the first time, the Women’s Endowment Fund expanded its grant-making priorities to include women’s health and wellness, and we look forward to positively impacting the mental and physical health of women and girls in greater Akron.

This spring, we will also unveil a new design for our annual Mother’s Day card campaign. The Women’s Endowment Fund invited local high school girls to submit original artwork for our cards. Under the direction of Brenda Cummins, director of community engagement for the Summa Foundation, and Suzie Graham, coordinator of arts and children’s programs for the City of Akron, two stand-out young artists were chosen as finalists.

Paige Heinle of Firestone High School submitted a stunning floral print design, while Claire Marks, also a student at Firestone, submitted a breathtaking bird design. The board was amazed by these young women’s talent and ultimately chose to use Ms. Heinle’s design for the Mother’s Day cards. The campaign will be officially launched at our annual dinner and will run through the end of April.

If you want to join us for our annual dinner event or send a Mother’s Day card in honor of a special woman in your life, please contact Akron Community Foundation at 330-376-8522. We are grateful for your ongoing support of the Women’s Endowment Fund; your gifts help change the lives of thousands of women and girls in our community.

Enjoy the spring season,

Tracy Carter, president
Women’s Endowment Fund

Memorial & Tribute Giving

Memorial gifts to the Women’s Endowment Fund:
- Burton W. Greenwald by Gretchen March
- Dr. & Mrs. Walter Hoyt by W. Greenzalis
- Karin Newman by Tracy Carter
- Eileen Orr by Deborah Orr
- Peggy & John Roberts by Sarah Doncaster
- Alma Singer by Jamie Singer
- Maxine Unk by Judy Joyce

Tribute gifts to the Women’s Endowment Fund:
- Kathryn Booth by Martha Booth
- Mr. & Mrs. H.C. Bray by Dr. & Mrs. Blaise Congeni
- Andrew & Deborah Smith Cahan by Cynthia D. Rudick, Ph.D.
- Audrey Congeni by Dr. & Mrs. Blaise Congeni
- Francine Crist by Cynthia D. Rudick, Ph.D.
- Ruth Dean by Capt. Sylvia Trundle
- Bonnie L. Estep by Dr. Ernest R. Estep
- First Tuesday Book Club by Marie E. Cavington
- Robert A. Handelman by Genny Karder
- Michael & Kathy-Ann Karder
- Ilene & Robert Shapiro and Kim & John Mihevic
- Theresa Kloska by Jackie McDermott
- Knute & Jeanine Larson by

Dr. & Mrs. Ernest Estep
Dr. Lisa Lopez Levers by Cynthia D. Rudick, Ph.D.
Augie & Joan Napoli by Tracy Carter
Cindy Petures by Jane & Steve Schloenbach
Harvey & Debbie Smith by Cynthia D. Rudick, Ph.D.
Selma Smith by Cynthia D. Rudick, Ph.D.
Christina Tchen by Tracy Carter
Ellen Frances Wilson by Karen Wilson Kaufman

For gifts received Aug. 1, 2010, to Jan. 31, 2011
**Grants**

**WEF awards $51,500 for health, safety, finance programs**

The Women's Endowment Fund of Akron Community Foundation announced its latest round of grants in February, awarding $51,500 to local nonprofit organizations serving women and girls.

For the first time, the fund included women’s health and wellness in its funding priorities. It also continued to focus on programs that address women’s safety and economic empowerment.

The following is a full list of agencies selected to receive grants:

- **Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority**, to raise awareness among AMHA residents about maternal depression and provide early diagnoses and support to mothers living with it, $10,000
- **Children’s Hospital Medical Center of Akron**, to support Respect, a dating violence and sexual assault prevention program for teens, $3,000
- **H.M. Life Opportunity Services**, to support the Mobile Moms program, which provides used cars to women transitioning out of homelessness, $14,000
- **Jewish Community Center of Akron**, for Girls on the Run, a program for 8- to 12-year-old girls that combines a 5K training regimen with lessons to strengthen their social, emotional, physical and mental health, $2,000
- **Mustard Seed Development Center**, for Pathway Out of Poverty, a financial counseling and case management program that helps Summit County women and girls increase their financial stability and decrease their dependence on government subsidies, $7,500
- **Victim Assistance Program Inc.**, for the Child Victim Advocate program, which gives abused children and their families an advocate to guide them through the forensic examination and court process, $15,000

**Mark Mother’s Day with a gift that gives back**

This year, celebrate Mother’s Day in a memorable way: by making a tribute or memorial gift to the Women’s Endowment Fund in honor of the women who have impacted your life.

Each honoree will receive a beautiful Mother’s Day card designed by a young female artist. The card will inform your honoree that a gift was made in her honor, though the amount will not be disclosed. Last year’s campaign raised more than $10,000, a fitting tribute to the mothers, sisters, daughters and friends who shape us every day.

To honor the women you love, call Akron Community Foundation at 330-376-8522 and request a card. Please make your gift by April 30 to ensure your honorees receive their greetings before Mother’s Day.

**Acclaimed journalist to speak at March 23 event**

Plain Dealer columnist and 2005 Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Connie Schultz will be the keynote speaker for the Women’s Endowment Fund’s annual “For Women, Forever” event March 23. Connie uses her candid writing to shed light on women’s issues from the courtroom to the kitchen. She will share her experiences as a journalist, mother and senator’s wife.

The event will begin at 6 p.m. at the Hilton Akron/Fairlawn. Tickets start at $60, and sponsorships are still available. Call 330-376-8522 for more information.