Co-chairs kick off campaign to raise $2.013 million by 2013

Before the Women’s Endowment Fund could embark on a $2.013 million endowment campaign for its 20th anniversary, it needed a champion: someone who could get people excited about helping women and girls forever.

It didn’t take long before two incredible women stepped forward. Board members Karen Lefton and Dianne Newman volunteered to co-chair the “For Women, Forever” campaign, and it sprung to life.

“I knew the need was there, and I knew we could do it,” Dianne said. “I felt like it was going to have an amazing impact.”

As an attorney, Dianne has spent her career supporting the growth, independence and health of local women. She is a past recipient of the Women’s History Project Woman of the Year Award, as well as an award from the Ohio Legal Aid Association for her advocacy for children.

As a lifelong promoter of women and girls, Dianne was outraged when the YWCA closed its doors in 2005.

“It just seemed so wrong that the YWCA and its wonderful programs didn’t flourish in this community,” she said. “Nobody was focusing on women and girls.”

Soon after, Dianne found the Women’s Endowment Fund. She was particularly excited about the fund’s goal of helping women become financially empowered because she had seen so many women struggling to support their families.

“Educating women about financial literacy is the key to everything else,” she said. “When a woman knows how to use her money, she can plan for the future.”

Dianne sees this campaign as a way to make sure future generations of women can stand on their own two feet. “It’s absolutely vital that we grow our fund and address these needs,” she said. “It’s the difference between giving a person a fish and teaching them to fish.”

Permanency is one of the biggest advantages of giving to an endowment fund, Karen said. “This type of fund is so important because we are leaving money for generations to come,” she explained. “We’re not feeding a family or educating a woman just for today. We are educating, feeding and keeping people safe forever.”

Karen, a partner at Brouse McDowell, said she is especially interested in protecting children from domestic violence. “This campaign is an opportunity to make a difference for girls who are growing up in a home with violence – for young women who don’t know how to provide a safe place for their children,” she said. “This is an opportunity to change lives. And I believe if we can change one generation, then we’re breaking the cycle forever.”

Both Karen and Dianne expressed their gratitude toward community members who have contributed to the campaign in its early stages, including each of the fund’s board members, as well as sup-

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“This is an opportunity to change lives. And I believe if we can change one generation, then we’re breaking the cycle forever.” – Karen Lefton, co-chair, “For Women, Forever” campaign
In February, the Women’s Endowment Fund achieved a significant milestone in our 19-year history when we marked $500,000 in grants to causes that support women and girls. Through the years, WEF has helped women become financially empowered; provided resources for women in violent relationships; and invested in initiatives that help women and their families stay healthy.

We are enthusiastic about our success, but we recognize there is so much more we can do for women in this community. The challenging economic environment has caused many women and their families to suffer from poverty, violent situations and poor health. The numbers are alarming, and last year, we recognized the need to dramatically increase our grant funding.

This newsletter is the culmination of a year spent building a formal endowment campaign. Our goal: to raise $2.013 million by 2013, the 20th anniversary of the Women’s Endowment Fund. With a total endowment of $3 million, the fund would be able to grant approximately $150,000 every year – tripling our impact in the community.

I want to introduce you to the people who have championed this campaign from the beginning. Each of WEF’s founding mothers and board members have played a significant role in the planning efforts. Serving as honorary chair is Kathryn Hunter, retired president of Valley Savings Bank. Our co-chairs are board members Dianne Newman, of Shifrin Newman Smith Inc., and Karen Lefton, of Brouse McDowell. We are also grateful for longtime WEF supporters Roger and Judy Read, who helped ignite the campaign with a significant gift.

Collectively, we have already raised an amazing $1.1 million toward our goal. I’ve said from the beginning, “Go big, or go home,” and that’s what we’re doing with this campaign. We’re stretching and challenging ourselves for a cause we believe is so important for this community.

Long after all of us are gone, our gifts will continue to help women think for themselves, provide for themselves and protect themselves.

As you read this newsletter, I urge you to think about how you can contribute. Whether you choose to make a planned gift (page 3), or a gift in honor of a special woman in your life (pages 4 and 5), you have the ability to permanently impact the women and girls in our community.

We don’t know what needs will arise in the future, but we do know that the Women’s Endowment Fund will be here to meet them. That’s something to get excited about – and something to invest in.

With deep appreciation for your support,

Tracy Carter, president
Women’s Endowment Fund

2011-2012 Women’s Endowment Fund Advisory Board

Left to Right: Charlene Reed; Debra Shifrin; Tracy Carter, president; Diane Bray, secretary; Karen Lefton; Dianne Newman; Eloise Mackus; Barb Greene; Capt. Sylvia Trundle; Ruthie George; Brittany Zaehringer; Kathy Booth, vice president; Sandy Auburn; Katie Smucker; Angelina Milo, treasurer; Anita Davis

Not Pictured: Judge Eve Belfance; Diane Evans; Cindy Johnson; Jackie McDermott
Campaign gifts anyone can afford

Did you know you can make a gift to support the Women’s Endowment Fund that will cost you nothing during your lifetime – or even give you a permanent source of income?

By making a planned gift such as a bequest, charitable gift annuity or life insurance policy, you can leave a significant legacy at very little cost to you.

Often, these alternative giving options allow you to contribute far more than you ever could through outright gifts of cash or stock, said Marie Covington, one of WEF’s founding mothers. She and her husband, Harry, created a charitable gift annuity in December to support the endowment campaign.

In exchange for their gift, Harry and Marie will receive a lifetime stream of income, along with a current-rate partial tax deduction. Later, when they both have passed away, the remaining balance will support the Women’s Endowment Fund.

“We simply could not resist the idea of establishing an annuity that produces some income now and whose principal goes to the Women’s Endowment Fund at our passing,” Marie said. “As someone who has given cash gifts over the years, this new opportunity was appealing.”

Many charitable gift annuity donors are retired and want to increase their cash flow with the security of guaranteed payments. With a CGA, they get the satisfaction of making a significant gift that benefits them now, and the Women’s Endowment Fund later.

Another tax-advantaged option to consider is a gift of life insurance. If you are carrying more insurance coverage than your family needs, you can donate your paid-up policy to the Women’s Endowment Fund with a simple change of ownership form.

Alternatively, you could take out a new policy and name WEF as the owner and sole beneficiary, thus creating a future gift at a lower cost.

This is exactly what WEF President Tracy Carter did to support the campaign. “I wanted to do something bigger, bolder, more courageous in my giving,” she said. “I was already giving cash, but I wanted to know what else I could do. So I sat down with my financial counselor, looked at my priorities and my family situation, and saw that a gift of life insurance was the best choice for me.”

Tracy said she encourages people to learn about all their options for giving and find out how they, too, can make a big impact.

“We all have something to give,” she said. “With a little education, you will discover that you can benefit women and girls in ways you never could have imagined. You’ll start thinking, ‘I can do this.’”

For more information, or to make a gift to the endowment campaign, contact Laurel Held, administrative assistant for development and donor services, at 330-436-5612.

A charitable gift annuity may be right for you if:

• The interest rates on your CDs have declined and you want to increase your cash flow.
• You own appreciated stock or mutual fund shares and want to avoid paying capital gains tax.
• You want the security of payments that will never fluctuate.
• You want to provide financial assistance to an elderly family member in a tax-advantaged way.
• You like the idea of receiving supplemental income you can’t outlive.

A gift of life insurance may be right for you if:

• You are maintaining insurance coverage your family no longer needs.
• You are a younger donor who wants to give a substantial gift at a lower cost.
• You don’t have many appreciated securities and are looking for another way to give.
• You want to receive an income tax deduction each year equal to the policy’s annual premium.

Give now

Cash gifts, also payable by check or credit card, offer you the greatest and most immediate tax deductibility available under IRS law.

Stocks, bonds and mutual funds can translate to a charitable deduction for the current market value of your asset, even if you bought it for far less, and may help you avoid paying capital gains tax.

Real estate gifts of home, business or land offer powerful tax benefits, and the foundation’s separate LLC can handle your transaction simply and efficiently.

Give later

Bequests left via will or trust can help you reduce your estate taxes while supporting your community in a permanent and public way.

Deferred gift annuities offer younger donors the charitable benefits of an immediate gift annuity while allowing time for retirement earnings to build before they begin taking payments.

Charitable remainder trusts are the most flexible life income vehicle, paying you income for life while offering you an immediate tax deduction for a portion of your gift. You can then make additional gifts to the trust as circumstances allow.

Retirement plans, when passed to an heir, are quickly depleted by double taxation. By naming WEF as the beneficiary of your plan, you can avoid taxes, leave more to your family, and preserve your hard-earned assets for the good of your community.

Please consult your financial advisor for more information. He or she can help you determine the best method of giving for you and your family.
One of the purposes of the Women’s Endowment Fund is to enrich the lives of women in our community – all of the mothers, daughters, sisters, grandmothers, aunts, nieces and friends who are woven into the fabric of our families.

By improving life for future generations of women, we honor the accomplishments and sacrifices of those who came before us. In November, WEF Vice President Kathy Booth honored one very special woman – her mother – by establishing a designated fund in her name that will support the Women’s Endowment Fund forever. Hear what the fund means to Kathy, in her own words:

“I established the Mary K. Booth Fund as a way to recognize my mother for all that she is and all that she has done for her family and her community. My mother’s life epitomizes all that the Women’s Endowment Fund is about, starting from the time she was a young woman who wanted a college education. Her father told her that educating women was the dumbest thing he had ever heard of. Fortunately, my mother received an inheritance from a great aunt and was able to complete her dream of a college education.

After college, she became a social worker and helped families throughout the area. She went on to raise six children and support a husband who was deeply involved in the community. With all of these responsibilities, she still found time to volunteer for organizations like the Girl Scouts and PTA.

My mother realizes that women are an essential part of the community and bear a significant part of the responsibility of raising subsequent generations. Without proper resources for women, we imperil future generations and the very health of our communities.

Her fund will be used to support the activities of the Women’s Endowment Fund, helping ensure that those resources are available for future generations.

I would like to think that the idea of establishing this fund would have come to me eventually, but I need to credit the Women’s Endowment Fund board. In preparing for our endowment campaign, they showed me ways I could contribute that would allow me to give far more than I ever thought possible.

I established the Mary K. Booth Fund with a multi-year pledge, combined with a planned gift that will add to the fund upon my death. The existence of the fund will also provide a vehicle for others to honor my mother in a way that gives her great pleasure.

“I am incredibly proud to be her daughter.”

– Kathy Booth, WEF Vice President

While growing up, we learned from both our parents the value and rewards of giving back to the community. As we grew older, Mom returned to her social-worker roots, finding children good families and later developing support groups to help women in all stages of life, from new parents to empty nesters.

After retiring, she continued her involvement in the community, serving food to the homeless, comforting children in the recovery room after surgery, and caring for those on their final journey in hospice. I am incredibly proud to be her daughter.

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Campaign gift honors family’s 6 granddaughters

When the Women’s Endowment Fund was established in 1993, people from all over the community pooled their gifts together to provide seed money for the endowment. Their reasons for giving varied: Some gave because they were passionate about a particular need; others, like Cheryl Venarge, used it as an opportunity to honor women in their family.

“We made a gift to the fund when it began in honor of each of our daughters, as well as our daughter-in-law,” Cheryl said. She and her husband, Akron Paint and Varnish Chairman David Venarge, have continued that tradition ever since. They often make gifts in memory or honor of the women in their family, including their young granddaughters.

So when Cheryl and David learned that the Women’s Endowment Fund was beginning a campaign to raise more than $2 million, they thought it was the perfect opportunity to make gifts for each of their six granddaughters, including the youngest, who is just a few months old.

“Now that the next generation has come along, we thought it would be fun to give to the Women’s Endowment Fund for them, too,” Cheryl said.

For Cheryl, having six granddaughters has reinforced the need to support programs that enrich the lives of women and girls in our community.

“So many women aren’t as fortunate as we have been,” she said. “There are women out there who are raising children and need help. They need some place to go.”

Cheryl said giving to the Women’s Endowment Fund campaign is an ideal way to honor her granddaughters because it will help other girls have the same opportunities they do. In addition, it teaches them about the importance of giving to people in need – a lesson that Cheryl and David think is essential.

“Teaching them to help others is not just about the money,” David said. “It will also help develop their character so they can do other good things for people. That’s the kind of person I want my granddaughters to be.”

You, too, can support “For Women, Forever” in honor or memory of the women in your life. It’s a great way to recognize the impact made by your grandmother, or to celebrate the life of your daughter or sister. We will send a card telling that person you have made a gift in her name, but not the amount. To learn more, contact Laurel Held at 330-436-5612 or lheld@akron-communityfdn.org.

David and Cheryl Venarge made a gift to the Women’s Endowment Fund campaign in honor of each of their six granddaughters: Sydney, Alayna and Camryn (above) and Lauren, Natalie and Abigail (left).

“Teaching them to help others is not just about the money. It will also help develop their character ... that’s the kind of person I want my granddaughters to be.”

– David Venarge
Memorial gifts to the Women’s Endowment Fund for:
Ramona Ferguson by Jeriynn Ferguson
Theresa Brogan Kloska & Esther McDermott by Greg & Jackie McDermott
Teresa Milan by Dianne Winnen-Oldenburg, CFP
Agnes C. Smith by Bryan & Susan Kinnaman
Maxine Unk by Judy Joyce

Tribute gifts to the Women’s Endowment Fund for:
Suzanne Allen by Tracy Carter
Susan Edgar by Steve & Jane Schloenbach

Selena Eskinazi-Budge by Amy Jo Sutterluety
Bonnie L. Estep by Dr. Ernest R. Estep
Roberta Gifford by Mark & Jeannie Gifford
Bob & Melissa Kazar by Dynasty Transportation
Karla Klossner by Patricia Whalen
Karen Lefton by Audrey Hoiles
Christine Mayer by Ilene Shapiro
Judge Carla Moore by Betsy Bare Hartschuh & Julie Hall
Brittany Petures by Cindy and John T. Petures Jr. Family Fund
Norma Rist by Dr. Merle D. Griff

Ashlee Sands by Cindy and John T. Petures Jr. Family Fund

“For Women, Forever”
gifts and pledges:

Gold Level
$100,000 to $250,000
Kathryn M. Booth
Kimberly Haws Falasco
Dianne R. Newman
Roger & Judy Read
Sylvia & Mark Trundle
David & Cheryl Venarge

Emerald Level
$50,000 to $99,999
Tracy L. Carter
Harry & Marie Covington
Karen C. Lefton
Angelina L. Milo
Judge Elinore Marsh Stormer

Ruby Level
$10,000 to $24,999

Drs. Sandy & Mark Auburn
Judge Eve Belfance
Ruthie George
Kathryn M. Hunter
Jackie McDermott
Debra S. Shifrin
Laurie B. Zuckerman

Cornerstone Level
$5,000 to $9,999
Barbara A. Greene
Eloise L. Mackus

Diamond Level
$1,000 to $4,999
Ann Allan
Diane R. Bray
Anita L. Davis
Vanita B. Oelschalger

Friend Level
$1 to $999
Jody Bacon
Rita M. Johnson
Pamela J. Kiltau
Brittany Zaehringer

Celebrate Mother’s Day with the gift that keeps on giving

Is there a woman who has impacted your life in a very special way? Why not thank her with a gift to the Women’s Endowment Fund? Not only is it a unique way to pay tribute, it will help fund grants that improve life for women and girls throughout the community.

Your honoree will receive a beautiful Mother’s Day card designed by Paige Heinle, a student in Firestone High School’s Visual and Performing Arts program. The card will inform your honoree that a gift was made in her name, though the amount of the gift will not be disclosed.

“The Mother’s Day campaign is a great opportunity for individuals to honor a loved one with a beautifully decorated card while also supporting causes that uplift women and girls,” said Tracy Carter, president of the Women’s Endowment Fund.

Watch your mailbox for a card inviting you to participate, or call Akron Community Foundation at 330-376-8522.

The mission of the Women’s Endowment Fund of Akron Community Foundation is to provide grant funding to organizations and programs in the greater Akron area that support women and girls; to serve as a catalyst for needed projects; and to assist women in their growth as philanthropists.
The Women’s Endowment Fund recently awarded $52,000 to nine Summit County nonprofit organizations that improve life for Summit County women and girls. That brings its cumulative grant-making total to $501,501.

Among this year’s funding priorities were health and wellness, safety from violence, and economic empowerment. Several funded programs address multiple issue areas, including Akron Public Schools’ Project RISE, which received $5,500 for an arts-based support group for women and children living at the Battered Women’s Shelter.

According to the district’s homeless education liaison, Debra Manteghi, the program helps break the cycle of abusive relationships among families living at the shelter. Women learn positive methods for communicating with and disciplining their children, as well as how to form healthy, stable relationships inside and outside the home.

“We strive to create an uplifting atmosphere for our moms, where they can share issues with each other and offer supportive suggestions,” Manteghi said. “The goal is to give them strategies they can use to help their children heal from the emotional effects of domestic violence.”

The following is a full list of 2012 grants:

**Battered Women’s Shelter**, for the Tina Project, which works to prevent teen dating violence by educating both boys and girls in schools and the juvenile court system, $5,000

**Community Legal Aid Services Inc.**, for the HEAL Program at Summa Women’s Health Center, which helps patients address non-medical barriers to health, including economic instability, insecure housing, threats to physical safety, and poor access to education, $8,000

**Greenleaf Family Center**, to teach parenting and life skills to young mothers, $2,000

**International Institute of Akron Inc.**, to provide direct health education to refugee women and to translate online medical information for their use, $5,000

**Legacy III Inc.**, to provide transitional housing and case management for homeless women recovering from addiction, $7,500

**Mental Health America of Summit County Inc.**, for mental health and stress management workshops for adolescent girls living in AMHA housing, $5,000

**Opportunity Parish Ecumenical Neighborhood Ministry**, for Diamond Ladies, a mentoring program for adolescent girls that focuses on career exploration, goal setting, community service and healthy behaviors, $4,000

**Project RISE**, Akron Public Schools, for a therapeutic arts-based support group for women and children living at the Battered Women’s Shelter, $5,500

**Victim Assistance Program**, 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, $10,000

A grant to OPEN M’s Diamond Ladies program will help local girls build self-esteem and take charge of their futures. Pictured above are the girls at a volunteer appreciation lunch.

As the size of the endowment grows, so does the fund’s ability to impact the community. A bigger endowment means increased funding – and more women and girls served each year. In the last 19 years, your gifts have made possible $112,199 in grants to programs that protect women from violence; $184,750 to programs that help women become financially empowered; and $34,733 to programs that improve the health of women and girls. Imagine how much more we could do if we raised $2.013 million by 2013.
Without the encouragement of the Reads and their ongoing involvement in the campaign, we wouldn’t be where we are today,” Dianne said. “Their gift really set the tone for the campaign, and we are so grateful for their leadership.”

Karen said she has been humbled by people’s generosity. “We know there are enormous needs, but we also have people with enormous hearts,” she said.

Both Karen and Dianne have made their own leadership gifts to the campaign. In December, Karen and her husband, Douglas, established the Karen C. Lefton Endowment Fund for Survivors of Domestic Violence of the Women’s Endowment Fund. This designated fund at Akron Community Foundation will provide a permanent stream of income for the Women’s Endowment Fund and increase the fund’s grants to programs that change the lives of women and girls affected by domestic violence.

“This was a great opportunity for me to earmark money for a cause that is very close to my heart – a cause I truly believe in,” Karen said. “Every child should be able to grow up without worrying about violence in the home.”

Karen’s fund, combined with the gifts of other campaign donors, will benefit women and girls forever.

“Giving to the Women’s Endowment Fund is like planting seeds,” Dianne concluded. “And from those seeds will grow beautiful flowers that will come back year after year.”

To learn how you can plant your own seeds, contact Dianne or Karen. Or call Akron Community Foundation at 330-376-8522.