Grant brings hope to mothers battling depression

It’s 2 p.m. and Amanda is just waking up. She’s been sleeping a lot lately – sometimes 12 or more hours a day – and she can’t seem to find the energy to care for her young children.

She knows she needs help, but it isn’t until a home visitor from Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority’s Early Childhood Initiative comes to her door that Amanda realizes she’s been struggling with maternal depression.

“Maternal depression is very common for moms in poverty,” said Katie Collard, AMHA community partnerships coordinator. “When you’re not sure where your next meal is coming from or if you’ll be able to keep your utilities on, it becomes a really vulnerable time.”

In fact, more than 40 percent of mothers screened in AMHA housing communities show signs of depression, she said. That’s the primary reason AMHA teamed up with Child Guidance & Family Solutions to create a program for women struggling to balance new motherhood with the demands of everyday life.

The program, which received a $10,000 grant from the Women’s Endowment Fund this year, includes home screenings for depression and monthly support groups where women can build healthy relationships with other moms.

The Mom-ME Time support groups draw a wide variety of women, from grandmothers caring for young children to teen moms. Some of the mothers are continuing a cycle of multi-generational poverty while others ended up in AMHA housing after suffering a serious illness or losing a job. All of them are grateful for the chance to find light at the end of the tunnel.

“I never even knew how happy I could be until I started going to Mom-ME Time,” said one mother.

Topics range from self-care and time management to budgeting and parenting. Moms are encouraged to start a journal to organize their thoughts and plan their day. According to Collard, even something as simple as learning to make a grocery list can go a long way in helping mothers with depression make breakfast and get their kids to school.

“It has been really eye-opening to these moms to realize that when they can take care of themselves, they are able to parent better,” she said.

That’s exactly what the Women’s Endowment Fund aims to do by funding programs that support the mental and physical health of women and girls. By focusing on the well-being of mothers, the whole family – and community – benefits.

“When moms don’t have the energy or strength or desire to bond with their babies, they’re not making that initial attachment, which is so crucial to a child’s mental, physical and emotional development,” Collard said. “We need to address the depression so there’s not a trickle-down effect on these children.”

Read more stories about how WEF is helping local women and girls at www.akroncf.org/WEFstories.
Save the Date

March 13
For Women, Forever Annual Dinner
5:30 p.m. Sponsor Reception
6:15 p.m. Registration
7 p.m. Dinner & Program

Join the Women’s Endowment Fund in celebrating 20 years of philanthropy for women and girls at our annual dinner featuring Oprah-approved author and Pulitzer Prize-nominated journalist Fawn Germer. Tickets start at $75 per person. Individuals and organizations that purchase tickets at or above the $225 level will be invited to a special reception before the event to meet Fawn Germer.

To become a sponsor or to register, call 330-376-8522 or visit www.regonline.com/forwomenforever.

Oct. 3
Women’s Endowment Fund Forum

You’re invited to participate in a discussion about the most pressing issues facing women and girls in our community. Panels of experts in health and wellness, economic empowerment, safety from violence, and the arts will talk about the needs they are seeing in these critical areas. Forum conversations will help shape the Women’s Endowment Fund’s future grant-making priorities.

For more information, contact Laurel Held, development and donor services officer, at 330-436-5612 or lheld@akroncf.org.

As we celebrate Women’s History Month in March, it’s important to look back at our own histories and the women who helped shape us. For me, it was my grandmothers and mother. These women practiced great faith and family values, and they were passionate about uplifting other women. Those are qualities they instilled in me at an early age.

My grandmothers were from an era where women didn’t have as many opportunities as we do today. Still, they focused their energy on raising me to be a strong woman with a heart for others. They made incredible sacrifices for me, and because of that, I feel compelled to sacrifice part of me to make sure other women and girls benefit.

Both then and now, women serve as the backbone of our community. They have weaved our city together with age-old wisdom, family recipes and stories, and strength in the face of adversity. All of our mothers and grandmothers are great women who served great roles. They sacrificed so we could be more, do more and give more.

That’s what the Women’s Endowment Fund is all about. We’re giving and stretching to make sure our own daughters and granddaughters are protected, strengthened and promoted. We don’t know what the future holds, but we do know that there will always be challenges in life. Women will struggle to pay their bills, and violence will still happen in the middle of the night.

But that’s why this fund will always be relevant. Long after you and I are gone, the gifts and sacrifices we’ve made will continue to multiply, blessing the lives of thousands of women and girls in need. It gives me great energy and joy to know we have the power to change the course of future generations.

Throughout this issue, you’ll find many examples of the special relationship shared by mothers and their daughters. I hope you’ll stop to think about the women in your own life who made you who you are today – those women who believed in you, inspired you and challenged you. Whether it was your mother, grandmother, aunt or friend, I encourage you to honor her and thank her this spring.

One way you can do that is with a gift to the Women’s Endowment Fund. We’re on the verge of reaching our goal of raising $2.013 million by 2013. By giving in honor or memory of those special people in your life, you can help us create a brighter future for thousands of women and girls in our community.

I know my grandmothers would be proud to know their legacy is living on through this fund. All of the life lessons they poured into me are being passed on to a new generation of women through grants that help girls think for themselves, provide for themselves and protect themselves.

You can do the same for the influential women in your life. They’re worth investing in – and so are we.

Tracy L. Carter
Advisory board president
Women’s Endowment Fund
Kathryn Hunter’s legacy lives on through WEF

In December, the Women’s Endowment Fund said goodbye to an extraordinary pioneer. Kathryn Hunter, honorary chair of the fund's endowment campaign, passed away after a lifetime of advocacy and philanthropy that impacted the lives of hundreds of women.

Born just one day after Independence Day in 1925, Kathryn was the poster child for the success of independent women. Throughout her life, she flawlessly juggled the demands of home and career, simultaneously serving as a teacher, innovator, businesswoman, mother, wife, volunteer and philanthropist.

Kathryn was the editor and publisher of three weekly newspapers. Under her leadership, they won more awards than any other paper in Ohio. After her husband, John, passed away, Kathryn became president of First Akron Corporation. She also served as honorary chairwoman of Valley Savings Bank.

But perhaps her most important role was that of an educator and mentor. After reading “The Feminine Mystique” — a ground-breaking book that ignited the contemporary women’s movement — Kathryn was inspired to design a series of classes at the University of Akron to help women entering the workforce.

“It just struck me that it was very important to help women get back into school or the job market,” Kathryn said in 2010. “I thought there should be a course to help them, so I started one.”

Her first class, “Women: Plan for the Second Half of Your Life,” showed women how to translate their skills as wives and mothers into a successful career outside the home. Hundreds of women in her courses learned how to write a resume and become financially independent — critical skills the Women’s Endowment Fund continues to support today.

Kathryn was a founding donor of the Women’s Endowment Fund, and one of her last acts as a philanthropist was a gift to the fund’s endowment campaign.

“Mrs. Hunter’s legacy will live forever in the grants made possible through her generosity,” wrote campaign co-chair Karen Lefton in a tribute to Kathryn.

In Memory

Special giving opportunity: Support WEF with your IRA

Are you over 70 ½ and want to be tax smart with your IRA? With a charitable rollover, you can avoid paying unnecessary taxes while supporting the causes you love, including the Women’s Endowment Fund.

The Charitable IRA Rollover is a provision that allows individuals age 70 ½ and older to donate up to $100,000 each year from their Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) to public charities without counting the distributions as taxable income.

Recently, Congress extended the rollover for tax year 2013, which means that through Dec. 31, you can transfer up to $100,000 to the Women's Endowment Fund and avoid paying income tax on it.

Unlike a one-time gift to a single charity, your tax-free charitable rollover to the Women’s Endowment Fund will leave a lasting legacy in the community. Your gift can even be directed to the endowment campaign, enriching the lives of women and girls for generations to come.

To learn more about transferring IRA assets, visit www.akroncf.org/IRA.

Other ways to give

While it has always made sense to donate your highest-taxed assets to charity, it makes even more sense with the recent passage of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012.

Estate taxes have risen from 35 to 40 percent, and capital gains taxes have increased to 23.8 percent for individuals earning $400,000 and couples earning $450,000 or more: all this while deduction limits have gone down.

Find out how you can benefit: Call Akron Community Foundation Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Steve Schloenbach at 330-436-5621. Or, see all the ways you can give at www.akroncf.org/WEFwaystogive.
Record grant total boosts women’s, girls’ causes

The Women’s Endowment Fund recently awarded $95,000 to 11 Summit County nonprofit organizations that improve life for women and girls. This is the largest amount awarded in a single year in the fund’s 20-year history.

Among the funding priorities were health and wellness, safety from violence, and economic empowerment for women and girls. Nearly one-third of the grants will support mentoring programs for teen girls, including a $13,900 grant to Kent State University Foundation for the Sisters United Now program. The program, which focuses on stress and anxiety management, was created after research showed 20 percent of African-American adolescent girls in urban Ohio experience clinical levels of anxiety.

“As adolescents, black girls take on multiple roles, and for some girls, the combination of racism and sexism can lead to more severe stress and anxiety,” said Dr. Angela Neal-Barnett, director of Kent State’s Program for Research on Anxiety Disorders Among African Americans. “Our program teaches them to take care of their mental health from a very early age.”

The following is a full list of organizations receiving grants:

- **Building for Tomorrow**, to raise awareness about maternal depression, and to provide early diagnoses and support to mothers in Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority neighborhoods, $10,000
- **Children’s Hospital Medical Center of Akron**, to support Respect, a teen dating violence and sexual assault prevention program, $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, $10,000
- **Girls on the Run of Greater Summit, Jewish Community Center of Akron**, to mentor girls in high-poverty neighborhoods through a program that combines fitness training with discussions about personal values and self-worth, $5,000
- **H.M. Life Opportunity Services**, to support the Mobile Moms program, which provides used cars to women transitioning out of homelessness, $20,000
- **Kent State University Foundation**, for Sisters United Now, which teaches African-American girls in the Project GRAD Akron program healthy coping strategies for dealing with stress and anxiety, $13,900
- **Mental Health America of Summit County Inc.**, for mental health and stress management workshops for adolescent girls living in AMHA neighborhoods, $6,000
- **Mustard Seed Development Center**, for a financial counseling and case management program that helps women secure stable housing, rebuild their credit and get out of debt, $5,100
- **Opportunity Parish Ecumenical Neighborhood Ministry**, for Diamond Ladies, a mentoring program for adolescent girls that focuses on career exploration, community service and healthy behaviors, $4,000
- **Project GRAD Akron**, for a college readiness summer program at Buchtel High School that teaches girls about healthy relationships, positive decision-making, nutrition and goal setting, $6,000
- **Victim Assistance Program**, to prevent recurring violence against women by helping victims navigate the judicial system and file protection orders, $10,000

A $5,000 grant to Girls on the Run will help girls in high-poverty neighborhoods learn healthy behaviors and increase their self-esteem. This program concludes in a 5K run, during which girls “run, walk and skip their way across the finish line believing in their self-worth,” said Girls on the Run Executive Director Robyn Cutler.
Best-selling author Fawn Germer has written entire books filled with wisdom from some of the world’s most successful women. But of all the lessons she learned, the most inspiring came from her mom.

“My mom was the strongest woman I have ever met. Nobody intimidated her. She had incredible power within her,” Fawn said.

Fawn credits her career success to her mother’s lessons on financial independence. “She is the only person I have ever known who actually read insurance policies. Car salesmen ran from her trembling. Nothing slipped by my mom,” Fawn said. “I often wonder what she would have done if she’d had the same opportunities women have today.”

Fawn knows not everyone is fortunate enough to have had those valuable lessons imparted to them. That’s why she now travels the world encouraging women to take control of their own future. Her message is infused with her mother’s strength and wisdom — lessons that rival even those of the Olympic medalists, powerful CEOs and politicians Fawn has spent her career interviewing.

“I am determined to help women and girls get beyond their self-esteem issues and really take charge of their potential,” Fawn said. “I want to help them take risks and push their perceived limits.”

Fawn said she was drawn to the Women’s Endowment Fund because of its focus on empowering women now and forever.

“Every community should have this kind of endowment, but so few do,” she said.

“I love an endowment because it is enduring. It guarantees a powerful legacy.”

In January, Fawn’s mother passed away after a long battle with Alzheimer’s Disease. Her struggle revealed one more important piece of wisdom to Fawn: “No matter how bad it got, she lived a full, rich life,” Fawn said. “There’s quite a lesson there.”

At the Women’s Endowment Fund annual dinner, Fawn hopes to encourage women to create their own legacy, much like her mom: “She always told me to ‘face life.’ It means buck up. Get ‘er done. You live once, so live,” she said.


Celebrate Mother’s Day with WEF

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?

Your honoree will receive a beautiful Mother’s Day card designed by King Elementary School art teacher Brianna Hayes with students Phoebe Smucker and Brianna Johnson.

The card will inform your honoree that a gift was made in her name, though the amount of the gift will not be disclosed. Watch your mailbox for a card inviting you to participate, or call Akron Community Foundation at 330-376-8522.
Tribute gift pays homage to mother-daughter bond

When Maya Payne Smart became a mother, her entire perspective changed. Not only was she immediately in tune with her daughter’s every need, but she also saw with sharper clarity the needs of other girls in the community.

“I became more attuned to how vulnerable kids are – particularly girls – and how much need there is to support girls and women and mothers,” Maya said. “In 16 months, my daughter has already had a lot of advantages in life. All the love, care and attention she’s been showered with emphasized to me the things other girls her age don’t have.”

Maya’s heightened awareness to the needs of women and girls motivated her to find a way to give back in a meaningful way.

Fortunately, she didn’t have far to look: Her own mother, Margaret Ralston Payne, is a founding donor and former advisory board president of the Women’s Endowment Fund.

In fact, it was Margaret who taught Maya about the importance of taking care of others.

“My mom is an extraordinary example of someone who does a number of small things with great love and sincerity,” Maya said. “She believes we all have unique gifts that can be given, and when we pool all of those things together, it can have a large impact.”

To honor her mother’s passion for helping women in need, Maya made a gift to the Women’s Endowment Fund campaign last June. Combined with the gifts of others, including Margaret herself, Maya’s contribution will increase the fund’s grant-making to causes that improve life for local women and girls.

This gift was extra special for Margaret, who sees it as a fitting tribute to the values she raised her daughter with.

“Maya’s gift meant a lot to me because it meant that she shared the notion that we all have to give back. That’s something I tried to instill in her when she was growing up and something I hope to pass on to my granddaughter,” Margaret said.

Both Margaret and Maya said they were attracted to the idea of supporting women forever through the endowment campaign and would encourage others to do the same. The “For Women, Forever” campaign will touch multiple generations of women and girls – girls like Maya’s daughter, Zora, and even Zora’s future daughters and granddaughters.

Margaret said her granddaughter is a daily reminder that women and girls need to feel valuable.

“As I look around the community, there are so many girls and young women out there that don’t have the kind of support they need to make it into adulthood safely,” she said. “I think the Women’s Endowment Fund is even more important now than when it started.”

With her donation to the endowment campaign, Maya hopes to continue her mother’s legacy of giving and start a tradition her own daughter can be proud of.

“When you give a gift that isn’t a material item, but a vote of support for a cause someone cares about, that means a lot,” Maya said. “It’s a sign that you have grown to love and care about the same things they do.”
Memorial gifts to the Women’s Endowment Fund for:

Emita Andreoli by
Rennick & Dee Andreoli

Joan S. Andreoli by
Rennick & Dee Andreoli

Becky Babcox by
Carolyn Reed Hodge
Herb & Dianne Newman

H. Peter Burg by
The Burg Family Charitable Fund
of Vanguard Charitable

Jacquelyn Burick by
Dianne R. Newman

Kathryn M. Hunter by
Elizabeth & Paul Anacki
Aurora Club in Silver Lake
Charles E. & Mary K. Booth
Ann & David Brennan

Eileen Burg
Marie & Harry Covington
Laura Culp
Ted & Carol Curtis
Susan L. Hunter
Marilyn K. Jacob
Karen Lefton
Eloise L. Mackus
Kathleen Downing Pownall
Roderick Linton
Beilance LLP
Tony Romano
Ilene & Robert Shapiro
Louise, Tom & Susy Spaulding
Valley Savings Bank
Marty & Ray Wernig
Bruce & Mary Helen Wright
Dianne Wright
Steven L. Zickefoose

Alan Robert Shifrin by
Laurel Held
Ilene & Robert Shapiro

Tribute gifts to the Women’s Endowment Fund for:

Daisy Alford-Smith by
Staff of TRIAD Communications/Next Level Interactive

Ron Allan by
Nick & Ruthie George

Brianna Bennett by
Suzelle & Bill Bennett

Megan Blakney by
Dr. Cynthia Rudick

Charles Booth by
Charles E. & Mary K. Booth

Tracy Carter by
Ruthie George

Carolyn Copeland by
Dr. Cynthia Rudick

Marie E. Covington by
Adam Covington

Bonnie L. Estep by
Dr. Ernest R. Estep

Laurel Held by
Tina Boyes
Kim Nott

Memorial gifts to the Women’s Endowment Fund for:

Sylvia D. Trundle

Kathie Kereckes by
Dr. Cynthia Rudick

Elena King by
Suzelle & Bill Bennett

Michele Koontz by
Dr. Cynthia Rudick

Karen Lefton by
Audrey Hoiles
Nancy McClagenah

Eloise L. Mackus by
Greg & Jackie McDermott

Sandra Pianalto by
Marie E. Covington

Dottie Pritt by
Dr. Cynthia Rudick

Manju Rastogi by
Norma Rist

Lindsay Ray-Wickersham by
Dr. Cynthia Rudick

Rylee Morgan Sands by
Bryan & Susan Kinnamon

Rebecca Strausser by
Dr. Cynthia Rudick

Patty Streb by
Dr. Cynthia Rudick

Monica Wilson by
Dr. Cynthia Rudick


Put the last bricks in our $2,013 million giving pyramid

Since the “For Women, Forever” endowment campaign kicked off in March 2012, more than 150 individuals, families and organizations have generously given more than $1.73 million to improve life for future generations of women and girls in our community.

Join them in making a permanent difference by giving now at www.akroncf.org/give/WEFcampaign. Or, make a pledge by calling Laurel Held at 330-436-5612.

You can also transfer gifts of stock, mutual funds or other appreciated assets by calling Steve Schloenbach at 330-436-5621.

*Denotes a variety of giving, including a planned gift.
Annual dinner to feature Oprah-approved author

You won’t want to miss this year’s “For Women, Forever” dinner as best-selling author and acclaimed former investigative journalist Fawn Germer joins the Women’s Endowment Fund in celebrating 20 years of helping women and girls. Germer is the author of seven books, including “Hard Won Wisdom,” which was recommended by Oprah. Her trademark blend of humor and grit will shine through as she shares the pearls of wisdom she has collected from the world’s most accomplished women.

WHAT:  “For Women, Forever” Annual Dinner

WHEN:  Wednesday, March 13, 2013
5:30 p.m. Sponsor Reception
6:15 p.m. Registration
7 p.m. Dinner & Program

WHERE:  Quaker Station at Quaker Square Inn
at the University of Akron

REGISTER:  Purchase tickets or become a sponsor at
www.regonline.com/forwomenforever or call
330-376-8522. Individual tickets start at $75.