



December, 2020

**Building a community of thoughtful, effective women Philanthropists one woman at a time.**

## GRANTEE UPDATE

As we draw the year to a close we are thrilled with how our grantees were able to be creative and adapt their programs; taking into consideration new guidelines for health and safety. We are looking forward to what our grantees will bring to the 2020-2021 grant cycle. The Women's Giving Circle has awarded seven grants this coming year for a total of \$17,193.

**Girls on the Run (GOTR) of North Central West Virginia** was awarded \$3,000. GOTR is a physical activity based, positive youth development program for girls in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The organization's mission is "to inspire girls to be joyful, healthy, and confident using a fun, experienced based curriculum which creatively integrates running." The goal of the program is to unleash confidence through accomplishment while establishing a lifetime of healthy habits and active living. The grant project will focus on providing scholarship funding and GOTR journals for the spring 2021 season. GOTR's proven, research-based curriculum has been adapted to be delivered in a hybrid form, moving seamlessly from in-person practices to the virtual environment.



**Pantry Plus More, Inc.** was awarded \$3,000. Pantry Plus More's mission is to work to prevent hunger and other issues that impact a child's ability to be successful in school. The Pantry is a total volunteer group which has been a 501c3 organization since 2017. It has free school pantries in 12 of the 19 schools in Monongalia County.

In addition to maintaining the pantries, it provides free monthly



distributions in various locations and plans and executes community projects to provide food and other essentials to families with children in county schools. Since schools closed mid-March, the Pantry modified their process to provide food and other essentials to families by staffing weekly county distributions. Grant funds will be spent to purchase hygiene products, feminine hygiene products, and clothing for school-aged girls. As stated, "We have learned that there is a great need for new clothing such as underwear, socks, gym shoes, and gym clothes to allow girls to participate in gym and other school activities.

We had anecdotal reports of girls missing gym because they lacked appropriate shoes and clothing." Pantry Plus More will be building a closet of new clothes to outfit children as needs are identified.

**West Virginia Botanic Garden (WVBG)** was awarded \$2,300. The WVBG seeks to continue last year's successful program that encourages Monongalia County girls, ages 9-12, to embrace healthy lifestyle choices, connect to the transformative power of nature, and learn the values of giving back to their environment and their community.

The 2021 format will be changed from a series of week night classes to a one-day weekend event. This new format will allow the WVBG to reach more girls, reduce the total time commitment on the part of the girls, parents, and staff, and reduce the likelihood of girls having to miss out due to a schedule conflict.



The 4-hour event will include six activity stations, each led by an area expert, that will teach girls about living a healthy lifestyle, the benefit of outdoor activities and recreation, and how to respect and appreciate each other and the planet. Up to 60 girls will visit each station in small groups on a rotating schedule.



Lunch will be provided. Girls will receive targeted information from coaches, a water bottle, journal, and small potted seeds to tend at home.

**WVU Extension / Monongalia County 4-H** was awarded \$1,593. Relatively new 4-H club types are SPIN clubs (SPecial INterest). Rather than having a broad focus, SPIN clubs are targeted to educate youth in a particular area in a specified amount of time. This SPIN club's target population is teenage girls. The curricula, programs, and activities will be geared toward subject matter that is relevant and interesting to them. This group will meet six times and each lesson will focus on content areas including healthy relationships, health and fitness, financial literacy, STEM,



leadership, service, and career exploration. Utilizing local experts in content areas, the group will feature guest speakers who will empower and educate young girls in these topic areas. The 2021 groups will be conducted with eight young people based on WVU Extension's COVID rules.

**Mountaineer Area RoboticS (MARS)** was awarded \$1,300. MARS is a high school robotics team that works to further STEM in North Central West Virginia through outreach and by sustaining elementary and middle school robotics programs. The objective of this project is to expand upon the STEM skills of young women in MARS, promote targeted outreach through enhanced digital marketing, and encourage a diverse community team. The grant request was for a milling machine and a camera.

MARS's female lead fabrication team uses milling machines to make important robot parts including angle brackets, bumper angles, and pneumatic mounts. From STEM fairs to parades, MARS does outreach, bringing attention to and encouraging participation in the program. "Being able to effectively document these events is not only important for the accolades MARS competes for on the international level, but for promoting our team and for media advertisements. It's critical that these media and



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advertising efforts are as flawless as possible to continue outreach and to continue to get more students involved with STEM across North Central West Virginia.

**Libera, Inc. and the SHIELD Task Force, Inc.** are collaborating on their projects. Each was awarded a grant of \$3,000 for a total of \$6,000.



**Libera** is a community of mentors who listen and provide women and teens small group connection and a safe space to be seen, leading to self-love and transformed lives. **SHIELD** is a 501c3 impact agency that works to protect West Virginia children from abuse, sexual assault, and exploitation by uniting cultural institutions that directly and indirectly advocate for the safety of West Virginia minors. This is accomplished via a trauma-informed approach that centers on education and informed activism. SHIELD focuses equally on prevention, intervention, and recovery.

Libera and SHIELD have been working collaboratively during the pandemic. Libera states "we are collaborating because we know child abuse, suicidal ideation, anxiety, and depression have skyrocketed since the beginning of COVID-19. Incidents of online predation are higher than ever. Girls are more likely to experience suicidal ideation and depression and are much more likely to experience abuse. Regional efforts and funding is going towards food, clothing, and material needs but very little is going to help with issues of abuse, social, emotional, and mental health. We desire to help fill that gap."

The collaboration between Libera and SHIELD will be to create professional grade educational videos to address existing and emerging needs among youth in West Virginia. Age appropriate videos, differing for elementary, middle, and high school students, will address depression, suicidal ideation, and abuse among children and young people. The videos will train students in abuse prevention, provide connection to hotlines and other resources, and will help students develop the skills to avoid and react appropriately to online predators. They will include segments on wellness, including ways to combat anxiety and depression. The videos will be timely and can be shown in-person or in a virtual classroom.



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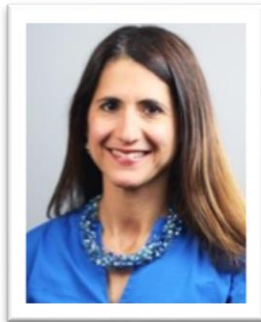
### MEET THE 2021 BOARD

#### Bessie R. Fooks, Chair



Bessie is the owner of a startup Life Coach Consulting Business. She has held various roles as Director, Educator, and Volunteer Leadership. Her passion is motivating people to be their best self. She is a graduate of the University Of South Carolina Upstate College Of Nursing with a graduate degree in Adult Education and Training from the University of Phoenix. She is married to Dr. Henry Fooks, Jr. Associate Program Director Urology Residency Program; Assistant Professor at West Virginia University. She has been blessed with three bonus daughters.

#### Laurie Abildso, Vice Chair



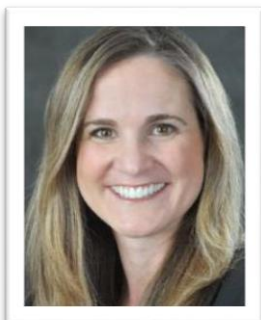
Laurie is Vice President at Your community Foundation of North Central West Virginia, overseeing the grants and scholarship programs. She has served in the role of Vice Chair for the Women's Giving Circle of North Central West Virginia beginning November 2019. In her spare time, you can find her running on the Mon River Trails or paddling the river on her stand-up paddleboard. She lives in Morgantown with her husband Christiaan, and children, Max and Tessa.

#### Becky Mattern, Secretary



Becky has served in the role of Secretary for the Women's Giving Circle of North Central West Virginia since 2018. She is currently retired after working in education for over 40 years. Her last assignment was Assistant Superintendent for Monongalia County Schools. Becky enjoys cooking, reading, golf, and all forms of exercise. She has three sons and five grandchildren.

#### Beth Fuller, Treasurer



Beth is VP & Private Banker at WesBanco. She is a founding member of the Women's Giving Circle and has been Chair and Immediate Past Chair on the Board since its inception. Beth has lived in the Morgantown community for 30 years with her husband Roger and has two daughters, Emma and Alayna.



### A MESSAGE FROM THE 2020 CHAIR



It has been a pleasure to serve as the Chair of the Women's Giving Circle of North Central West Virginia. 2020 has been an interesting and challenging year. We have had to search outside our comfort area in order to continue our mission and vision. Through Zoom we were able to hold our Membership Gala and Grants meeting and through the U.S. Postal Service we were able to vote on our Business needs. This experience has taught me the resiliency of our membership and grantees. It has highlighted the value that the WGC brings to the region and the importance of our programs.

We are continuously reviewing our processes and bi-laws and evolving them based on community needs. Since our inception in 2014, we have gifted over \$85,000. We currently have a solid balance in our endowment fund of \$99,391.62 and are able to award grants based on a 60%/40% ratio.

I value each of your ideas and commitment to the Women's Giving Circle and to creating strength in women and girls in NCWV. As we grow our organization, we are able to create more grant opportunities. Any assistance you are able to provide in getting the word out regarding our organization is important. We also are always looking for ideas, leadership, and committee members / chairs. Contact any of us if you are interested in being more involved, have a friend / colleague you would like us to talk to about membership, or of any ideas you have for advancing our group.

All the best for a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season. As we look to 2021, I look back humbly on 2020 with gratitude and blessings and look with wonder on what the future holds.

*Janet Scarcelli, Chair*

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**The Mission** is to build a community of thoughtful, effective women philanthropists and create a legacy to address the needs of women and girls in North Central West Virginia.

**The Goals** are to:

- Expand philanthropy and increase giving by local women,
- Increase the life skills of women and girls,
- Encourage the healthy development and personal authority of young girls,
- Sustain the Women's Giving Circle for future generations, and
- Build a permanent endowment fund.

**Women's Giving Circle of NCWV**  
PO Box 176  
Dellslow, WV 26531

The health and safety of our Members and Grantees is of the upmost importance. For the time being, our typical social events and meetings are being accomplished on the virtual platform. Please watch for updates coming to your email, follow up on Facebook, or check out our website.

For More Information: <http://womensgivingcircleofncwv.org>