



**SUMMER 2020**

*BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF THOUGHTFUL, EFFECTIVE WOMEN PHILANTHROPISTS ONE WOMAN AT A TIME.*

## Grantee Update

Diana Scott, Chair of Grant Review Committee

In 2019, nine grants were funded for various amounts by the Women's Giving Circle with start dates of January 2, 2020. Many of these grants relied on participation and interactions with schools and other large gatherings of people. Unfortunately, or maybe fortunately, the Govern-

nor of West Virginia closed schools and large gatherings on March 23, 2020 thus impacting the projects of many of our grantees. On April 14, 2020 a personal letter was written to every grantee to inquire whether they had finished the project or perhaps needed additional time to complete their project. Much to my delight, each individual grantee responded within a few days and

suggested the following responses to my questions.

Three projects were completed before March 23 when schools were closed and two projects successfully used online aids to complete their projects. Christian Help received \$1000 from the WGC to host a Seminar for Personal Finance for their clients. As stated in their application "Financial literacy is essential for economic empowerment as well as mental well-being," They anticipated having 30-50 registrants to attend the seminar, mainly women. The seminar was held on January 16 and both leaders of the seminar and attendees felt was useful to their future.

Girls on the Run funded at \$3000 had stated in their application that the mon-

*(Continued on page 3)*

## How did Women's Issues Fare during the 2020 WV Legislative Session?

By Delegate Barbara Evans Fleischauer

Bills relating to women's issues passed, were killed (some thankfully) and

most commonly, were ignored. That should not be terribly surprising since women's percentage in the WV Legislature is only 13.4% of both

Houses (women hold 18 of 134 seats). And we're going in the wrong direction - in 1991, women held 28 seats.

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Inside this issue:

Grantee Update	1
Legislative Update	1
Grantee Update	3, 5
Legislative Update	2, 4
New Member Feature	6
Contact	7

## 2020 WV Legislative Session

(Continued from page 1)

(Source: [https://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/state\\_fact\\_sheets/wv](https://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/state_fact_sheets/wv).) Below are several categories of legislative proposals introduced this year. On [the Legislature's Bill Status page](#), you can look up bills by number, do searches by sponsor and look at the history of a bill.

**Civil Rights** - Bills to fight pay discrimination, named after two of the three women in "Hidden Figures," both with ties to West Virginia (and Morgantown) failed to pass again this year. Named the Katherine Johnson and Dorothy Vaughan Fair Pay Act of 2020, [House Bill \(HB\) 4885](#) and [Senate Bill \(SB\) 62](#) would prohibit retaliation against employees who discuss their wages or inquire about the wages of other employees. Wage discrimination is perpetuated when employers have policies forbidding discussion of wages. When neither bill moved out of assigned Committees, attempts to require votes on the House and Senate Floor (via Motions to Discharge the bills directly to the Chamber floors) were made on the day Ms. Johnson died, but sadly, both attempts failed.

### Reproductive Health -

There was a lot of action in this area. With respect to contraception, three bills passed that expand women's options. [HB 4198](#) requires insurers covered by state law to allow women to obtain a 12-month supply of birth control. [SB 288](#) provides easier access to long acting, reversible contraception. And [SB 716](#) eliminates a 30-day waiting period after birth for women to voluntarily obtain a tubal ligation. Unfortunately, [HB 4416](#), a bill to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage from 60 days to 12 months, stalled, despite being recommended by the Special Committee on Substance Abuse and Prevention.

Many bills were introduced relating to Menstrual Equity. Although none passed, proposals to distribute period supplies in middle and high schools ([SB 22](#), [SB 166](#) and [HB 2464](#)), in prisons ([SB 484](#), [HB 4903](#)) and to eliminate sales taxes on feminine hygiene products ([SB 663](#), [HB 4629](#)) received a lot of media attention. Hopefully they can be taken up next year. Every year, bills to limit a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy and punish health care

(Continued on page 4)

## Grantee Update

*(Continued from page 1)*

ies received would provide scholarships for 55 girls in grades 3-8 who would benefit from the program ‘which creatively integrates running’. This project had completed half of their program in six weeks before schools were closed. At that time the staff prepared two lessons each week for the girls to do at home for the following six weeks. The WGC felt that the 55 girls had received the scholarships as requested in the grant application and had completed the 12-week program.

Monongalia County Youth Services funded by the WGC for \$926 also completed their planned project. Life skills and coping skills are an important part of the Voices curriculum used by MAYSP. When schools were closed, they provided services and support via distance methods.

One grant to Monongalia County Child Advocacy Center for \$3000 had planned “to provide child sexual abuse prevention education in Monongalia County in partnership with schools”. The grant had focused on 12 at-risk girls in Skyview Elementary school. The project had not been completed when schools

were closed on March 23. The leader of the project had requested that leftover funds from the grant be used to help pay clinical services for traumatized children. The board and membership approved this request.

The remaining five grants requested additional time in the fall to complete their projects assuming schools start in the fall. The purpose of each grant will be summarized and their intentions for the fall stated. The deadline for each grant was extended until December 20, 2020 and approved by the membership as the date to complete the projects.

Bartlett Housing Solutions received \$1500 and proposed 12 training sessions focused on art work for women residents and their children who are homeless and have experienced domestic or other gender-based violence. Homeless women and men are known to suffer from physical and mental health disabilities including substance abuse. One solution to their healthy emotional well-being may be using Art to express their emotions on which the training sessions will focus, as was true for Vincent Van Gogh! In the spring an exhibition of artwork by the participants is planned at the MAC. This project was not completed before March 23 and hence they hope to complete it in the fall with a new scheduled art show in the following spring.

Libera received \$2000 from the WGC to lead teen groups of 6-10 girls from 4 counties in Northern West Virginia. The groups will cover the Libera model over 6 weeks using the Libera teen workbooks. At the end of each group the advisors will meet with each individual girl to help her cope with barriers and lies that she faces. Libera had planned to continue meeting with groups of teen-aged girls but after March 23 the possibility of meet-

*(Continued on page 5)*

## ...2020 WV Legislative highlights

*(Continued from page 2)*

providers who perform them are introduced. This year, [HB 4007](#), the so-called Born Alive bill, was signed into law by the Governor. The behavior it wishes to prohibit is already covered by criminal law, and there is no evidence it has ever occurred in our state.

Domestic Relations - All marriages begin with good intentions. When they end, unless both parents can reach an agreement, there are often disputes about finances (two households are necessarily more expensive), and time spent with children. This year's so-called "Parenting Fairness Act" ([HB 4648](#)) sounds good in principle, but you have to ask, fairness to whom? Instead of "the best interest of the child" being the standard, the bill specifically removed language requiring the Court to consider what parenting arrangements would cause the "least amount of disruption to the emotional stability of the child," and a review of which parent performed the majority of caretaking functions relating to the child's daily needs in the preceding year. It was opposed by the Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Although it did not pass, some form of it will surely

return.

Criminal Law - Two bills passed relating to crimes against women. Expediting the processing and eliminating the backlog of rape kits at state laboratories was the goal of [HB 4476](#). West Virginia's own "me too" bill was [HB 4559](#). The statute of limitations for pursuing lawsuits on behalf of underage victims of sexual assault or sexual abuse was dramatically extended. Victims will now be able to sue their perpetrators *18 years* after reaching the age of majority, or within four years after the discovery of the abuse or assault, whichever is longer.

Paid Family Leave - The coronavirus crisis has demonstrated several ways that our least well-off citizens are disadvantaged. Take sick leave - over 250,000 West Virginians, nearly half of the state's private sector workers, do not have any sick leave as a work benefit. None of us are safe from communicable disease if some people must choose between staying home when they are sick or their livelihood. Several bills to provide or expand medical and family leave were introduced this year: [SB 65](#), [HB 4189](#) and [HB 4385](#). The only bill that moved, HB 4189, applied only to public employees (which was nevertheless positive). It passed out of House Judiciary but stalled in the House Finance Committee.

## Grantee Update

*(Continued from page 3)*

ing in groups was banned due to social distancing. The leader wrote to me that they would appreciate additional time to finish the project as it would be a rush to finish sooner. Some of the money has been used to meet other student needs when school was out.

Adventurous Girls Program by Monongalia County Starting Points Family Resources Center of The Shack Neighborhood House received \$3000 from the WGC. This project will continue the two year program that targeted high risk girls in the 4th and 5th grades. These girls have continued the program in 2017 in the 6th grade and last year 2018 in the 7th grade. They plan to recruit 20-25 girls from the 5th grade hoping to retain 14 girls in the following year. This program has been on hold due to restrictions because of COVID-19. The funding for this program will be utilized as outlined in the grant and will follow the Monongalia County Schools scheduling for the upcoming year.

Pantry Plus More received funding of \$2500 from the WGC to stock feminine hygiene products or other products such as shampoo and deodorant in a place where girls can go confidentially to obtain what they need. The grantee states that they know anecdotally that the number of missed school days has decreased as these hygiene products have become available to

these girls. The grantee wrote that they have spent half of their funds until now and plan to spend the remainder on their Back to School Bash in August including items of feminine hygiene for female students.

The West Virginia Botanic Garden received \$2000 from the WGC to encourage girls ages 9-12 to connect them to the power of nature and learn values of giving back to their environment and their community. The Natural Wellness for Girls program scheduled from March 31 to May 19 was cancelled and rescheduled for August/September. The grantee is very grateful for the extension to December 23 as the extra time may allow them to complete the project.



Grantee's Tea Fall 2019

## WGC, SUMMER 2020

Becky Mattern's interview with Sarah Balcik

I attended my first Women's Giving Circle meeting as a guest of former member Kathy Brooks. At that meeting, one of the WGC grantees presented an update on their use of the grant funds. The guest spoke about the success of having feminine hygiene products available in schools for students to use when needed. They also shared that often students would stay home during their time of the month because they didn't have products available to them at home. Growing up, I couldn't imagine not going to school because I didn't have feminine hygiene products available to me. This story motivated me to join the WGC in order to help support local women here in WV.

I also was interested in joining the WGC because you can choose how much you want to be involved. Last year, I met with Shelly Duncan and Mavis Grant-Lilley to help them with the Nominating Committee. I wanted to help out where I could but with being new to the WGC and not knowing a lot of members I felt this wasn't the best fit for me. Discussing my concern with Shelly she suggested maybe being a part of the Membership Committee. I have a passion for meeting and event planning. However, due to Covid 19 our events and meetings have been postponed. But, I do look forward to working with Janet Scarcelli and others to make the WGC even better.



**WOMEN'S GIVING CIRCLE OF  
NORTHCENTRAL WEST VIRGINIA**

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PHILANTHROPISTS ONE WOMAN AT A TIME.*

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Please visit

[http://womensgivingcircleofncwv.org/  
membership.html](http://womensgivingcircleofncwv.org/membership.html) to join and or make your dona-  
tion for the upcoming grant year.

The health and safety of our Members and Grant-  
ees is of the upmost importance. For the time be-  
ing, our typical social events and meetings are on  
hold. Please watch for updates coming to your  
email and follow us on Facebook.

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