

WNY WOMEN'S FUND

Investing In Our Community

The Western New York Women's Fund has invested over \$425,000 in programs that focus on systematic change by building assets for women and girls. Several key programs are summarized below.

Economic Self Sufficiency Calculator for Erie County

The calculator is a web based tool used at FREE tax sites that determines eligibility for benefit income supports that help move low income families out of poverty and achieve economic self sufficiency.

RESULT Over 5,000 families have used this tool resulting in \$1.5 million in new income support since 2003.

GRANTEE Economic Self Sufficiency Coalition

Free Tax Preparation Marketing Campaign

Low-income women and families in Erie County are eligible for significant federal and state tax credits. Many were unaware that this free service exists and how to access the funds.

RESULT Funding the marketing for the program increased usage 160% the first year. This resulted in more than 21,000 tax returns completed in 2005 and 2006 providing \$26M in tax refunds and credits for those WNY women and families who have the greatest need.

GRANTEE The Child Care Coalition and the Homeless Alliance of WNY

Individual Development Accounts (IDA)

Women will provide \$1,000 of their own money which will be matched 4:1 by the federal government, the WNY Women's Fund and other local funders.

RESULT Through saving and sacrifice over a three-year period, 60 women will have accumulated \$5,000 in a 4:1 matching savings account to purchase a home.

GRANTEE Creating Assets, Savings and Hope (CASH) Coalition

Financial Literacy—CASH Coaches

Addresses the specific concerns of financially fragile women through one-on-one financial coaching that takes place over 5-8 months. The program also expands the use of currently available financial assistance organizations by providing client referrals.

RESULT More than 100 women will receive one-on-one financial coaching to assist them in improving their financial management skills

GRANTEE Creating Assets, Savings and Hope (CASH) Coalition

Pathways to Progress

Baseline information, policy insights and strategic recommendations will address five priority areas for women and girls: (1) economic security, (2) education, (3) health and well being, (4) violence and safety, and (5) leadership and political participation. This initiative of the Women's Fund is supported by the Community Health Foundation of Western & Central New York, Joy Family Foundation, James H. Cummings Foundation, the Robert J. and Martha B. Fierle Foundation, the John R. Oishei Foundation and the Patrick P. Lee Foundation.

RESULT The initiative will forge stronger outcomes for women and girls by identifying opportunities for innovative and impactful investments and policy action for the Women's Fund and the broader community. A set of fifteen to twenty indicators will establish baseline performance against which progress will be tracked at regular intervals. Findings and recommendations will be released in January 2010.

GRANTEE University at Buffalo Regional Institute

WNY Women's Fund Structures in Science

Future earning potential for girls is tied to strong analytical skills. This summer program provided a unique learning opportunity for girls at the Charles R. Drew Science Magnet School. The girls learned about science and math through curricula, hands-on activities, and student presentations.

RESULT Over 30 middle school girls were given the opportunity to explore careers in science and math.

GRANTEE Buffalo Public Schools, The Buffalo Museum of Science, and University at Buffalo

Girl Power Program

Tutoring, life skills and mentoring were provided during the academic year to participating middle school girls at the Herman Badillo School in Buffalo.

RESULT More than 100 girls participated over four academic years, resulting in improved academics, school engagement and positive self esteem.

GRANTEE Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers Inc, Buffalo State College and the Buffalo Public School