



Cheryl Howe, Cindy Abbott Letro, John Hurley

Linda Deni, Nina Lakin, Anna Turecki, Susan Matos

Yvonne Minor-Ragan and Phil Ragan

Inaugural Signature Event

On June 3, 2009, the WNY Women's Fund held its Inaugural Signature Event at Kleinhans Music Hall. More than 450 guests enjoyed a reception of hors d'oeuvres and cocktails, followed by a moving address from keynote speaker and Academy Award winning actress, Olympia Dukakis. Those who purchased tickets were asked to submit a tribute prior to the event honoring or remembering a special woman, group of women or a girl in their life. Five were videotaped and played during the event. The remaining tributes were published in the event program booklet distributed that evening. A special thank you to our event sponsors, without whom this successful event would not have been possible:

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Signature Event Committee

The Fund would like to thank the Signature Event Committee for their hard-work and dedication. Work is well underway for next year's event. If you are interested in joining the Committee, please contact the Fund's Office at 716.887.2621.

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Please contact the Fund's Office at 716.887.2621 if you are interested in receiving sponsorship information or would like to be placed on the mailing list.



Ellen E. Grant, Co-Chair, Olympia Dukakis, Brigid Doherty, Executive Director and Melissa Nowak, Co-Chair



742 Delaware Ave.,
Buffalo, NY 14209

The mission of the WNY Women's Fund is to be a leader in identifying, communicating and funding innovative, effective solutions that improve the lives of women and girls in Western New York.

The Fund is a collaborative effort between the United Way of Buffalo & Erie County and the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo.

Volunteer Spotlight

Bonnie Cywinski recently joined the Fund's newly formed Donor Outreach Committee because she "sees our community craving strong, female support". She remarks that she finds what separates the Women's Fund from other organizations is its focus and strategic thinking. "All community organizations have a desire to make a difference that draws like-minded volunteers. However, not many have the intellectual backing, relevant experience and pure dedication that I have seen in the women involved with the Fund."



Bonnie L. Cywinski

Bonnie was introduced to the WNY Women's Fund at the Signature Event on June 3rd. She was invited as a guest by event sponsor, R&P Oak Hill and, while mingling in the lobby of Kleinhans Music Hall, realized she had several friends who were active Fund supporters. This experience drove her to volunteer for the Fund. A professional in the Information Technology Sales and Management field, Bonnie says, "my dream for the women and girls in Western New York is for them to have every opportunity available for success, as well as the lifetime support of a committed community. That support may be taken in the form of a guide, leader or simply just a friend, but it will be consistent and continual." If you would like to join Bonnie and the dozens of other dedicated Women's Fund volunteers, please contact us at 716.887.2621 or e-mail heidi.henzler@uwbec.org.

IDA Success Story

Submitted by Belmont Housing Resources for WNY

Like so many low-to-moderate-income families, Tammy Baughman and her two daughters had lived in rented apartments all their lives. Having moved more often than she liked, she wanted more than anything to give her girls stability – the kind that comes with having a permanent place to call home.

Baughman realized that being a homeowner required having many different pieces in place. "I started looking for answers," she says, "not knowing if I was even asking the right questions." That changed dramatically in 2008, she recalls, when she became part of the matched savings program sponsored by the WNY Women's Fund and coordinated by Belmont Housing Resources for WNY on behalf of the CASH Coalition.

As Tammy describes, this was "where the CASH Coalition and Belmont really helped me focus on what was important." Priority #1 became improving her credit score, which even with the income from her fulltime job was only 500. With the help of Belmont's counseling team, she got to work and, after acquiring financial management skills through a series of financial education workshops, was able to raise it to 640 within just a year.

"The classes were awesome," Baughman adds. "They taught me how to save... how to budget... how to do everything!" She has since combined her stronger credit standing with more than \$20,000 that she was able to save while participating in matched savings homeownership program to fulfill her dream of buying a home, putting in place one of the key pieces of a brighter future for her family.



WNY Women's Fund In the Community

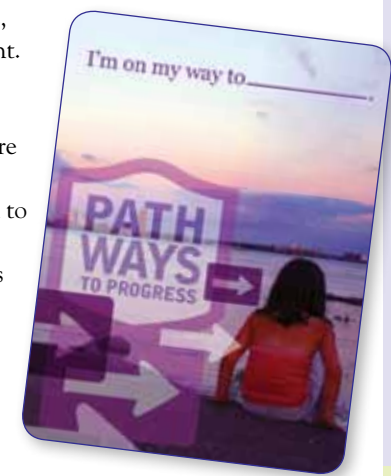
Pathways to Progress

Pathways to Progress is an initiative of the Women's Fund conducted by the UB Regional Institute. It is the first step to making meaningful, measureable differences in the status of women and girls in Western New York. The project will: (1) build a baseline of information on key issues (2) engage women and girls and (3) guide investment and policy action. The findings, which will be announced in January 2010, will be used to continue a community-wide dialogue on the issues facing women and girls and the possible solutions.

After an initial research and examination phase, the UB Regional Institute spent the summer engaging women and girls and related stakeholders (service providers and experts) on an important dialogue about the status of women and girls, their support needs and opportunities for impactful investment. Specifically, the conversations have:

- validated and vetted key issues affecting women and girls, including what we know so far from data analysis, literature and initial interviews;
- determined if women and girls are getting what they need to reach stronger futures; and
- shown how the region can better support women and girls on their way.

In addition to funding from the WNY Women's Fund, *Pathways to Progress* has received valuable support from key foundations across Erie and Niagara Counties, including the Community Health Foundation of Western & Central New York, The James H. Cummings Foundation, Robert J. & Martha B. Fierle Foundation, Joy Family Foundation, Patrick P. Lee Foundation, and The John R. Oishei Foundation. Underwriting is being provided by the University at Buffalo.



Request for Proposal Task Force

A new Request for Proposal (RFP) process will be announced at the same time as the findings of Pathways to Progress in January 2010. A Task Force of community leaders with deep expertise in the grants processes has been assembled. The Task Force is examining best practice processes from Women's Funds across the country as well as leading local foundations.

- RFP Task Force**
Barbara Watson
Mary Jo Hunt
Arlene Kaukus
Catharine Miles
Ann Monroe
Margery Nobel
Wendy Pierce

Summer/Fall 2009

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THIS UPCOMING EVENT

Fall in Fashion
Friday, November 6, 2009
11:30 a.m.
Buffalo Club

Fall In Fashion offers a fabulous luncheon and the chiciest raffle in town, featuring high-fashion clothing and accessories from some of the world's most celebrated designers. Funds raised through this unique event go specifically to the WNY Women's Fund's grant programs. This year's event is co-chaired by Kate Foley, Lisa Friedman, and Jody Ulrich. Fall In Fashion is by invitation only and attendance is limited.

For additional information or to make reservations for this event, please contact our office at 716.887.2621 or heidi.henzler@uwbec.org.

Make a Special Gift

If you are looking for a unique gifting opportunity, please consider making a contribution to the WNY Women's Fund in honor or remembrance of someone you admire. It is a special way to pay tribute to family and friends. You can now donate on-line by accessing our website at www.wnywomensfund.org.

If you would like to receive our new monthly e-newsletter electronically, please send an email with your contact information to heidi.henzler@uwbec.org.

Structures in Science

During the summer of 2009, the WNY Women's Fund provided grant dollars to support a new program for rising 7th and 8th grade girls at the Charles R. Drew Magnet School entitled, *Structures in Science*. A collaborative effort between Buffalo Public Schools, the University at Buffalo and the Buffalo Museum of Science, the program brought "science to life" through a hands-on curriculum, lab work, field trips and student presentations. **The mission of the program is to honor, sustain, and encourage female interest in the sciences.** Each of the four weeks was organized as a thematic module within the general theme of Structures in Science. Classroom instruction was provided by certified science teachers, as well as graduate students and faculty from the University at Buffalo.

Research has shown that students can lose up to two months of learning if not stimulated during the summer months. When framed within alarming dropout rates and low student achievement, the summer becomes an important opportunity for academic intervention as well as acceleration.

Since 2007, the Buffalo Public Schools (BPS) has made a commitment to its students by providing an Extended Learning Opportunity Program (ELOP) through which students can receive an additional 20 days of instruction beyond the traditional school year. Structures in Science was developed to complement the ELOP and further foster the student's educational development.

PROGRAM UPDATES: Individual Development Accounts and CASH Coaches

Beginning last year, the Fund made a three-year commitment to support Individual Development Accounts (IDA). An IDA is a special savings account for low-income individuals that enables that person to receive matching funds for each dollar they deposit into their savings account. IDA savings and match money can be used to buy a house or start a small business. The Fund recently received word that three of the women holding IDAs locally purchased a house; one in the University District of Buffalo, one in North Tonawanda and one in Hamburg. We want to take this opportunity to congratulate the new homeowners and thank our donors for their generous support of this important program.

Additionally, the CASH program trained 80 new Coaches to serve as mentors in our community. These individuals will be working directly with victims of domestic violence. Once paired up with a client, the CASH Coaches provide important information regarding free tax preparation, financial education, homeownership, and small business start-up opportunities. Coaches and their clients create reasonable budgets and meet on a regular basis to execute financial plans.



Goals for the Structures in Science program:

- To engage participants in various facets of scientific inquiry in a manner that is fun and interesting
- To provide participants with knowledge and skills that are foundational to success in middle and high school learning and beyond
- To expose participants to career paths related to the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields
- To provide participants with opportunities to present and reflect on their learning

Letter from the Executive Director

I would like to take this opportunity to thank and recognize our donors and sponsors from the past fiscal year (April 1, 2008-March 31, 2009). This includes those that have made major gifts, annual fund contributions, and supported our events. The WNY Women's Fund deeply appreciates all gifts, and we take seriously our responsibility to steward those funds. **We know that by investing in women and girls, we are accelerating social change.** Your contributions give women and girls throughout our community the opportunities they deserve.

It's been an exciting summer at the Women's Fund, with several milestones:

- The Fund is on track to announce and publish findings from our year-long initiative entitled *Pathways to Progress* in January 2010
- Structures in Science truly engaged girls in the passion of science
- We completed our Inaugural Signature Event chaired by Ellen E. Grant and Melissa Nowak
- Our new Donor Outreach Committee is working to engage more women, men, girls and boys with several new initiatives including our new monthly e-newsletter

As part of our continued growth, we are looking for volunteers who would like to work on initiatives of the Fund. There are numerous opportunities for involvement. Please contact me (brigid.doherty@uwbec.org) if you are interested in volunteering, or would like to receive our monthly e-newsletter.

Ana Oliveira

On June 3, 2009, Ana Oliveira, President and CEO of the New York Women's Foundation, addressed a captivated group of the Fund's donors and board members. A member of the Board of the Women's Funding Network, Ms. Oliveira discussed the plight of women and girls in New York State and globally. She also encouraged the Fund to empower its volunteers, remarking that no idea is insignificant. One of the great advocates for solutions to issues facing women and girls, Ms. Oliveira applauded the WNY Women's Fund on our work in the community and for organizing the first-ever summit of New York State Women's Funds last fall.



Brigid Doherty



Ana Oliveira

WNY Women's Fund Donors

The Board and Staff of WNY Women's Fund would like to thank all of the individuals and organizations listed below. All annual fund and major gifts made during the 2008-9 fiscal year (April 1, 2008-March 31, 2009) are acknowledged here. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. If you notice any mistakes or omissions, please notify the Fund's Office. We are grateful to all of our donors for their continuing support and generosity.

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Athena Awards

April 29, 2008, Hyatt Regency Buffalo

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Shelby Wilcox
Marilyn Wilson
Kathleen Rizzo Young
Mary Ann Zielinski
Christine Ziemba
Mary Jane Zurowski



Board Members Sue Gardner, right, and, Barbara Warson, left, learn a three-point stance

Football 101

September 15, 2008, Ralph Wilson Stadium

Chair – Marcia O'Neil-White
Presenting Sponsors: BlueCross BlueShield of WNY and the Buffalo Bills
Underwritten By Susan and John Hoskins



Adam Lippes, Amy Bard, Gerald Lippes

Fall In Fashion

November 7, 2008, Buffalo Club

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