As a trusted expert in the community, we identify critical issues, fund innovative solutions and influence dynamic change. Since our beginning in 1990, the Women’s Fund has supported local agencies with nearly $11 million in grants for programs that address the most pressing issues as identified by our research, and we have established our own programs to meet unaddressed needs.

Our Mission
The Women’s Fund of Omaha examines issues and conducts research to provide informed support for initiatives that improve the lives of metropolitan area women and girls.

Our Vision
A community where every woman and girl has the opportunity to reach her full potential.

Who We Are

WOMEN’S FUND 2015 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Cheri Duryea, President
Duryea Marketing Strategies
Renee Black, Vice President
plantomaha, Inc.
Andrea Gansen, Secretary
Union Pacific
Patty Keairnes, Treasurer
Mutual of Omaha
Renaisa Anthony
University of Nebraska Medical Center
Diane Battisti
Douglas County
Barbara Bauer
American National Bank
Lorraine Chang
Strategic Leadership Consultant
Gail DeBoer
SAC Federal Credit Union
Renee Fry
OpenSky Policy Institute
Cynthia K. Gooch
Metropolitan Community College
Tracy Johnson
TJK Compliance Consulting
Sue Korth
Methodist Women’s Hospital
Divá Mejias
Liberty Tax
Melanie Morrissey Clark
Clark Creative Group
JoAnn Quinif
Weitz Investment Management

Jane Rips
Community Volunteer
Gretchen Twigg
BlueCross BlueShield of Nebraska
Jessica Warren-Teamer
United Way of the Midlands
Makayla Wesley-McMorris
KETV
Legacy Liaison
Debbie Fraser
Methodist Health System
Circles Liaison
Moniki Cannon
Gunn & Cannon Empowerment Group

WOMEN’S FUND 2015 CIRCLES STEERING COMMITTEE
Moniki Cannon
Gunn & Cannon Empowerment Group
Jessica Charlsen
Omaha Steaks
Wendy Hamilton
Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska
Kasey Hesse
QA Technologies
Lauren Huber
Clark Creative Group
Anne Meysemburg
Omaha Community Foundation
Katie Torpy
Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities

WOMEN’S FUND 2015 CIRCLES MEMBERS
Emily Andres
Samantha Antes
Allison Balus
Emily Bannick
Hillary Bobys
Melissa Breazile
Ravan Charles
Trisha Clark
Angela Cooper
Meg Davies
Amanda DeBoer
Audrey Dobbe
Joy Dobravec
Lizzy Gilbert
Melissa Glenn
Krissy Hamm
Sara Hanlon
Nicole Hanson
Nicole Hawkins
Caryn Hohndolt
Amy Holmes
Kristine Hull
Sheena Kennedy
Diane Kortus
Angela Lennon
Marjorie Maas
Jordan Maddex
Teresa Mardesen
Whitney Mastin
Tracy McTavish Mlady
Hannah Mirmiran
Jessica Moore
Beth Morrisette
Jennifer Patten Benson
Ferial Pearson
Jina Picarella
Sierra Pinayi
Emily Poeschl
Tunette Powell
Alysia Radicia

WOMEN’S FUND 2015 STAFF
Michelle Zych
Executive Director
Brenda Council
Adolescent Health Project Coordinator
Meghan Malik
Trafficking Response Coordinator
Erin McArthur
Director of Operations
Becky Scherbring
Jennifer Shukert
Elizabeth Simon
Sarah Sjolie
Ashlei Spivey
Julie Strzyz
Jodi Teal
Kimberly Thomas
Meggan Thomas
Melissa Tibbits
Wendy Towley
Katie Triplett
Nichole Turgeson
Kristin Walsh
Kendra Whitlock Ingram
Paige Winkler
London Woolman
Megan Wright
Sakura Yodogawa-Campbell

Emily Scotto
Weitz Fellow
Becky Scherbring
Jennifer Shukert
Elizabeth Simon
Sarah Sjolie
Ashlei Spivey
Julie Strzyz
Jodi Teal
Kimberly Thomas
Meggan Thomas
Melissa Tibbits
Wendy Towley
Katie Triplett
Nichole Turgeson
Kristin Walsh
Kendra Whitlock Ingram
Paige Winkler
London Woolman
Megan Wright
Sakura Yodogawa-Campbell
Dear Friend,

In 2015, the Women’s Fund of Omaha celebrated our 25th Anniversary of improving the lives of women and girls in our community. We dedicated the year to building through research, grants, and advocacy. Here are the highlights of what we accomplished:

1. **Identifying Issues**

   The cornerstone of our mission is to seek relevant, credible information concerning the status of women and girls in our community. Through surveys and in-depth research, we are able to identify major issues that impact their lives. We completed the following research:

   - **Human Trafficking Capacity and Needs Assessment** of the current services landscape in Nebraska shows that 84% of service providers across the state did not believe they were adequately meeting the needs of sex trafficking victims.
   - **Women in Leadership Research** was completed through 80 interviews with Omaha’s top influential leaders in Omaha’s corporate, non-profit, academic, governmental, and medical sectors.

2. **Funding Solutions**

   Investing in innovative solutions to address the needs we identify through our research underscores how the Women’s Fund can influence change for women and girls in our community. We awarded $250,000 to 14 organizations in our priority areas of economic self-sufficiency, leadership, sexual literacy, and violence against women.

   Highlights of what this funding means for women and girls in our community include:

   - **Nebraska Children’s Home Society, Teen Chat program** offers youth educational classes and supports focusing on STD education, sexual literacy, and pregnancy prevention while developing a healthy sense of personal well-being.
   - **Notre Dame Sisters, Hotel/Motel Education program** trains hotel and motel staff within a 50 mile radius of Omaha to identify and report sex trafficking in their facilities.
   - **Nebraskans for Civic Reform, CIRCLES programs** trains young women to advocate through various mediums by partnering them with coaches to teach them how to engage with policymakers to strengthen collaborations with law enforcement agencies and service providers on best practices when working with immigrant victims of domestic violence.

3. **Leading Change**

   Providing education and awareness opportunities for our community to learn more about the critical issues facing women and girls is integral to our mission to improve their lives. In addition to building our capacity to engage in public policy, the Women’s Fund led change through:

   - A record crowd of 1,400 business and community leaders heard the star of ABC’s “Shark Tank,” Barbara Corcoran, give her very best advice for starting, growing, expanding, and investing in businesses, and converting ideas and “dreams” into fortunes during her keynote address at our 25th Anniversary “Lead the Change” celebration.
   - 35 women participated in four sessions of “Ready to Run” that prepared them to run for elected office.
   - **Our Women’s Fund Circles group offered opportunities for 65 young professional women to network, interact with established professional women and learn about philanthropy.**

Thank you for your continued commitment to the important work of the Women’s Fund and our vision of a community where every woman and girl has the ability and opportunity to reach her full potential!

Sincerely,

Michelle Zych                                 Cheri Duryea, 2014-15 President
Executive Director                         Board of Directors

**Grant Spotlight**

The Excellence in Service to Women Grant is intended to recognize and encourage excellence in programming for women that aims to achieve our shared vision of a community where every woman and girl can reach her full potential.

In 2015, we awarded $25,000 to Justice for our Neighbors—Nebraska, for their Domestic Violence Access to Justice program, a program that aims to strengthen collaborations with law enforcement agencies and service providers on best practices when working with immigrant victims of domestic violence.

“The 2015 Excellence in Service to Women Award is extremely meaningful to Justice For Our Neighbors—Nebraska. Internally, the award energized the entire staff with its very positive message of support for the important work we do every day. Most important, the grant allowed us to reach a greater number of immigrant victims of domestic abuse in our community. We used the funds to provide direct, high-quality immigration legal services and to effect systemic change by educating and connecting critical stakeholders in the justice system.”

- Emiliano Lerda, J.D., LL.M., Executive Director
  Justice For Our Neighbors—Nebraska (JFON-NE)
primary champion of informed and innovative change for the female gender? According to Yanney and Heng-Braun, it comes down to leadership and focus. “The dedication of a consistently solid board of directors—led with a crystal clear mission—deserve the credit,” Heng-Braun says. “I don’t believe this organization has ever really lost focus.”

Dianne Lozier, who served on the board in its earliest years, agrees. “This was not just any group of women, nor was it a wholly homogeneous group. They were older and younger; Christian, non-Christian and atheist, white, black and Latino; Republicans, Democrats, a-politicals; doctors, lawyers, educators, business professionals, retirees and stay-at-home moms.”

This diversity was intentional, Lozier says, yet “diversity of membership, while truly valuable, always make for a comfortable process. In the early years the group frequently had to agree to disagree on particular topics—some of which were controversial—in order to move forward.”

Yet the organization’s mission was also solidified during that time: to identify issues through research, to fund solutions through grant giving, and to lead change through advocacy. In an effort to further the mission’s reach, the Women’s Fund founded Today’s Omaha Women’s Fund in 1999. About 10 years after the organization’s inception—after Heng-Braun had retired and the organization struggled briefly to find a new leader—Eddie Archer was hired as executive director. Under her 11-year tenure, the Women’s Fund published 11 research studies, grew the endowment from $1.6 million to more than $6 million, and started providing funding for a Pet’s, the Town, Circles, and Ready to Serve.

According to Yanney and Heng-Braun, the Women’s Fund has awarded 100-plus local women- and girls-serving agencies $4.5 million in grants. Its endowment has grown to nearly $10 million, and it will release its 21st research report in 2016. But the real question is, has it improved the lives of women and girls in the Omaha community, as originally intended? According to its founders and community leaders, the answer is a resounding yes.

“When we used to go talk to CEOs about the Women’s Fund or women’s issues, they didn’t take us seriously,” Yanney says. “I think they do now.”

The Women’s Fund has established itself as a credible leader, educator, and advocate on issues facing women and girls, Lozier says. “Many elements played a role in its growth and development—grit, perseverance, even plain old stubbornness—but we always focused on the overwhelming desire to make a difference, to make a difference.”

The dedication of our founders, we are able to stand on their shoulders to keep responding to the needs of women and girls in our community,” she says.

The future looks bright, Zych says, because the Women’s Fund continues to seek bold solutions to the tough issues that impact the ability of women and girls to reach their full potential. “Our strength lies in our ability to convey partners to develop and implement collective strategies that actually improve the lives of women and girls. We will continue to rely on research to ensure that our solutions are best practice-informed and culturally competent. We will continue to fund organizations that work directly with women and girls. We will use our position as a respected institution to advocate for policy solutions. And we will build the next generation of leaders to ensure that this important work continues.”

Twenty-five years ago, the landscape in Omaha was very different for women and girls. Sure, there were some nonprofits serving these groups—the YWCA, Girls Club and Girl Scouts among them. But for women in particular, no one was really moving the needle on the larger, more long-term issues they were facing: Domestic Violence, Pay Equity, Leadership Training, Economic Self-Sufficiency, Work-Family Balance. And a need to recognize both the need for—and the potential power of—an organization focused exclusively on a wide range of women’s issues. They began raising money to match the $150,000 Ford grant, and succeeded in establishing the Women’s Fund. The organization’s first research report, “How Are Women Doing in Omaha?” was published in 1994. It would be the first of 20 research reports conducted over the next 25 years. Yet Heng-Braun says that at first, reception to the idea of starting a Women’s Fund was lukewarm in some circles. “It was a struggle initially,” she says. “Our efforts were seen by some nonprofits as competition, because women’s organizations at that time were inherently underfunded. Resources were scarce.” Of course, within a few short years, the Women’s Fund would help to not only “increase the size of the pie,” Heng-Braun says, but also support other women- and girl-serving nonprofits both financially through grants, and with reliable research to validate their important work.

How did this organization—which was initially housed with the Omaha Community Foundation and began with the simple mission of improving the lives of women and girls—grow to become the local collective voice and
2015 Donors

$10,000 - $2,499
ACCESSBank
Burlington Hotel
The Benevolence Community
Impact Fund
Bunny Rocks & Scout Petterson
Ross F. Black
Borsheims Fine Jewelry & Gifts
Boziz, Inc.
Mary Heng-Braun
Elizabeth Campbell
CenturyLink
Lorainne Chang
Deloitte
Diane Dunn
Farm Credit Services of America
Russo Fyry
Goodwill Industries
Steve Martin and Amy Haddad, PhD
Hyatt Hotels
ICAN
Jewish Federation of Omaha
Tracy & David Johnson
John and Wanda Kotsos
Kathy and Brian Mullatt
Giulio, Gottschald, Workman & Lipp, PC
McGlynn, LLP
MCC
Merrill Lynch
Metropolitan Community College
Metropolitan Utilities District
Morgan Stanley
National Pharmaceutical Services
Nebraska Children’s Home Society
Nebraska Medicine
Shari and Murray Newman
Omaha Integrative Care
Omaha World-Herald OPDD
Quality Living Inc.
Judith Kohokoza Ricketts
SAC Federal Credit Union
Stacy Johnson, LLC
Susanne Shore
Sturrty-Hurry Group at Merrill Lynch
Catherine Sasso
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Visitor’s Associate Society
Barbara and Wallace Weitz
Janina Wertheim
Renaisa Anthony, MD
Cindy & Mogens Bay
Catholic Charities
Charles Drew Health Center, Inc.
Melanie Morrissey Clark
Domestic Violence Council
Angela Dunne
Tom Hribal
Family Housing Authority Services
Burl Fitzgerald
John and Debbie Fraser
Gary Jenson and Judy Gale
Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce
Vicki & Associates, LLC
Pamela Alfred Hernandez
Jean Imray
Kendra Ingram
Chris Insignier
Mary & David Jones
Justice for Our Neighbors—Nebraska
Jennifer Jaassensen
Melanai Malik
Sara & James Masters
Diva R. Majais
Nebraska Partnership for Philanthropic Planning
Network Investment Club
Irricana Poppa Newcomb
Sy N. Nicholson
Jaine K. O’Keefe
Leslie Peterson
Stephanie Pritchett
Celia Quinn
Jo Ann Quinl & Cursin Reed
Jana Rips
Carol Russell
Polona Schliict
Shuart Student Center
Jesse Sullivan
Gayla & John Thul
University of Nebraska Foundation
Virgil & Associates
Debi Wians
Michelle Zydh

$250 - $499
Don & Ron’s CARSTAR
Barbara Else
Annette S. Fanan
FBC Service Corporation
Catherine and Terry Ferguson
Fire Protection Services
Jean Harnett
Frannie Hargis
Team Haase
Denise Hill
Lauren Huber
Kristine Hult
Shelia Johnson
Paityn Kaurnen
Patricia Kaurnen
Vicki and World Kreole
Pat and Louise Lambert
Patricia Lehman
Lorie Lewis
Carol and Roger Lewis
Linda Lovgren
Sunny Lundgren
Valerie L. Lust
Teresa Mardesen
Claudia Martin
Erin and Richard McArthur
Michael McGuana
Makalya-Wolsey McMorris
Shaua Morfeld
Jessica Moore
Tara M. Mur
R. J. Neary
Nebraska Title
Andrea Noon
Notre Dame Sisters
OLI Community
Barbara Person and Scott Burger
Laurie Pfan
Frank & Enid Rembert
Raphele Scharband
Barbara Schonitz
Gail Seaton
Bettina and Todd Simon
Dr. Judith K. Skem
Julie Strzyz
Toni and Stan Teutsch
Angelia M. Thomas
Jann and L. B. "Red" Thomas
Melissa Tipton
Gretchen Tipton
Urban League of Nebraska
Jessica Warren-Teamer
Sue Wielon-Doke
Jeanne C. Weiss
Katie Wetz, PhD
Diane Oliver-Wilson
Roberta Wilhein & Vic Gutman
Kristis Williams
Maggie Wood
London Woolman
Megan Sebastian Wright
Gail & Myron Yanni
Thomas Zük

FROM:
Laura Alley
Jailene Alimqut
Aja Anderson
Mary Dickens
Amanda Bogner
Krystal Boone
Susanne Brady
Jill Brudnick
Wendy C. Carroll
OBI Creative
Kathie Caliban
Isabella Mitchell
Joyce Davis
Gail Deboer
Judy Galbraith
Mary Kay Dolejs
Rachel Milligan
Sarah Nilette Roach
Rilla Ewton
Patricia Morsey
Menturn Holt
Laurie Pfan
Karen Russell
Katie Sockel
Tara Muir
Diane Battiato
Michelle Zahar
Jill Brudnick
Wendy C. Carroll
Jan Schonauer
Lucille Mix
Julie Strzyz
Toni and Stan Teutsch
Angelia M. Thomas
Jann and L. B. "Red" Thomas
Melissa Tipton
Gretchen Tipton
Urban League of Nebraska
Jessica Warren-Teamer
Sue Wielon-Doke
Jeanne C. Weiss
Katie Wetz, PhD
Diane Oliver-Wilson
Roberta Wilhein & Vic Gutman
Kristis Williams
Maggie Wood
London Woolman
Megan Sebastian Wright
Gail & Myron Yanni
Thomas Zük

IN HONOR OF:
Mona Faith
Dr. Cynthia Gooch
Lesley Dean
All of the wonderful women in Omaha
Hinde Ibrahim
Jane Miller
Cindy Homak
Mary & David Jones
Kate Dodge
Gail Deboer
Judy Galbraith
Mary Kay Dolejs
Rachel Milligan
Sarah Nilette Roach
Rilla Ewton
Patricia Morsey
Menturn Holt
Laurie Pfan
Karen Russell
Katie Sockel
Tara Muir
Diane Battiato
Michelle Zahar
Jill Brudnick
Wendy C. Carroll
Jan Schonauer
Lucille Mix
Julie Strzyz
Toni and Stan Teutsch
Angelia M. Thomas
Jann and L. B. "Red" Thomas
Melissa Tipton
Gretchen Tipton
Urban League of Nebraska
Jessica Warren-Teamer
Sue Wielon-Doke
Jeanne C. Weiss
Katie Wetz, PhD
Diane Oliver-Wilson
Roberta Wilhein & Vic Gutman
Kristis Williams
Maggie Wood
London Woolman
Megan Sebastian Wright
Gail & Myron Yanni
Thomas Zük

2015 Gifts

FROM:
Christine Stolarisky .................................Alex Stolarisky
Julie Strzyz ............................................. Sue Michalek
Randy Thielen ....................................... Lauren and Kirsten Ashley Tholmlla
Isabella Tholmlla
Dennis and Sherry Thompson ..................Ellie Archer
Bianca Garza
Shelley Wedgerden ................................. Scarlet Wedgerden
Mary Frances Weed .................................. Ashley and Abigail Weed
Kristin Williams ....................................... Mary Hong-Braun
and Dianne Lozier
Melinda and Jim Witterscheid .................... Sadie Witterscheid

IN MEMORIAL OF:
Renaisa Anthony ................................... Christine Tenner
Traci Black .......................................... Casey Black
Lynne Boyer ......................................... Margie Durham
Cindy Clark .......................................... John Emert & Mary Clark
Noana Deines ....................................... Debi Deines
Melissa Glenn ....................................... Marilyn Ivers
Sandy Goetzinger-Conner ....................... Marylin Goetzinger
Debra Hansen ....................................... Marcie Hansen
Hernandez .......................................... JoAnn Alfrey
Mary Hewett ........................................ Lisa Keana
Andy Holland ....................................... Mary Holland
Mary Hueter ......................................... Theresa Hueter
Sally W. Hurt ......................................... Jim Hueter
Abby Jackson ....................................... Marc Boeker
Helen Keilorr ......................................... Georgiana Sanuk
Kathleen Huister .................................... Hontine Gangerens
Patricia A. Lenaghan ............................. Virginia Schneider
Cal G. Mix ............................................ Linda Hen
Darlene Mueller ..................................... Cindy Leifermann
Neal Obermayer ..................................... Susan Hallock
Jill O’Brien ............................................. Jodi Schmadermer
Sharon & Don Perry ............................... Delbert Schultz
Miiri Quinn ......................................... Rae Tripp
Barbara Robinson .................................. Violent Gladrater
J. Emmett & Fran Root ............................ Marian Ivers
Connie Rosebery .................................. Sue Gilbert
Kathryn Russell ..................................... Los Kizer
Polina Scholt ........................................ Maria Poluektova
Elizabeth A. Simon ............................... Mary Simon
Christine Stolarisky .........................Carolyn Stolarisky
Jenni Thompson .................................... Pat Johnston

2015 Tributes

The Women’s Fund thanks those who contributed to our annual Tribute Campaign. A full listing of 2015 Tributes are listed online at goo.gl/oGL34x.
2015 Financial Summary

**REVENUE**

- Grants: $4,117,880
- Contributions: $223,070
- Special Events: $217,325
- Non-cash Contribution: $20,939
- Program Fees: $1,470

Total: $4,580,684

**EXPENSES**

- Initiatives: $2,091,043
  - Grants: $327,164
  - Advocacy: $180,966
  - Management & General: $163,940
  - Research: $66,408
  - Fundraising: $41,821

Total: $2,871,342

Help Us Make an Even Bigger Impact!

- Support our work by making a [donation online](#), by mail (1111 N. 13th Street, Suite #106, Omaha, NE 68102) or by calling us at 402.827.9280
- Take advantage of employer matching gift options
- Include the Women’s Fund in your estate plans
- Visit our website at [www.OmahaWomensFund.org](http://www.OmahaWomensFund.org) to learn more about our work and how together we are making a difference
- Join the conversation on our social sites—Facebook, Twitter and YouTube