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## Circle Leadership Opportunities

The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee is now working to identify Circle members to serve as **Steering Committee Officers** and **Committee Co-Chairs** beginning in June 2022.

BWGC officers serve two-year terms and require full Circle approval. In 2022, the following officer positions will be filled:

### **CIRCLE CO-CHAIRS**

*(two Circle co-chairs will serve concurrent two-year terms)*

### **ASSISTANT TREASURER**

*(will automatically serve as Treasurer beginning in June 2023)*

### **ARCHIVIST**

*(will automatically serve as Secretary beginning in June 2023)*

Committee co-chairs serve staggered two-year terms. They also serve on the Steering Committee. In 2022, one co-chair will be appointed for each of the following committees:

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **GRANTS**

### **EDUCATION**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

### **GRANTEE CONNECT**

### **POST-GRANTS**

Your input is important. We encourage you to nominate yourself and/or other strong leaders for these positions.

Please send your suggestions to [nominating@thebwgc.org](mailto:nominating@thebwgc.org) by January 24, 2022.

## Like us?

We'd 'like' some volunteers to post for us on Facebook (FB). If you are looking to try something new, or if you're new to the Circle and want to get to know us better, this could be a great opportunity! We also have accounts on Instagram, YouTube, and will be soon on LinkedIn. If you'd 'like' to join the team, please contact: [communications@theBWGC.org](mailto:communications@theBWGC.org).

## Message from the Co-Chairs

The past year and a half has tested our ability to adapt and work together. This is a time of year to take a break and reflect on the many wonderful gifts this year has brought the Circle.

The Circle has flourished with many wonderful learning opportunities. We delved into educational offerings dealing with health care disparities. What fascinating speakers we've heard, and the year is just beginning!

The Post-Grants Committee completed its process, and the grant recipients are doing well. All survived, pivoted as necessary, and showed impressive accomplishments in challenging times. Modalities and processes were quickly changed, and all grantees used BWGC funds to accomplish their stated missions.

Membership has flourished, with 32 new members in FY 2022. Truly amazing! The Circle's goal is to reach 500 members by the end of 2022.

The Steering Committee and the other committee chairs continue to dedicate themselves to the success of the Circle.

We sincerely appreciate your support and the pride you demonstrate in being part of a group of women who have creatively enhanced our organization's ability to help our community.



*Martha & Susan*

## Grantee Connect Committee Virtual Fall Forum



**“Learning to Pivot: Adapting to the New Normal” was the topic for the Grantee Connect Committee’s November 30th virtual fall forum.**

Baltimore Community Foundation Vice President for Strategy Laurie Latuda Kinkel set the tone for the extended breakout conversations. These sessions – facilitated by grantees, with Grantee Connect members in a “listen and learn” mode – covered more effective ways to serve clients, switching staff roles, and validating similar problem-solving strategies in the “new normal” world.

Participants tell us they: “learned new ways to incorporate technology in this age of COVID”; appreciated “knowing that other organizations have similar issues to ours and hearing about services they provide”; loved taking a pause from the day-to-day, stepping back, and thinking about the big picture and

strategic planning.” They all agreed that even in these difficult times, there is great work being accomplished by small non-profits.

Grantee Connect hosts two forums a year for current and past grantees. Grantees have the opportunity to both hear from individuals involved in philanthropy and organizational management, as well as network, strengthen their skills, and learn from each other. Members of the Grantee Connect Committee have the opportunity to collaborate as “learning partners”, to understand grantees’ challenges, and build on their successes. Please join us by contacting: [granteeconnect@theBWGC.org](mailto:granteeconnect@theBWGC.org).

## EDUCATION

### Full Circle Meeting



Redonda Miller, MD, MPH, President of Johns Hopkins Hospital, was the speaker for the BWGC December 8th Full Circle meeting. Her focus was on the social determinants of health. She shared her humble beginnings and the reason she became a physician, including experiences within her family. Redonda began her medical school training at Johns Hopkins and has never left.

One of the hospital's many interesting programs involves hiring ex-offenders for mainly entry-level jobs in food service, janitorial services, and housekeeping. Each employee is assigned a mentor. Employees tend to do exceptionally well in their positions, allowing them to achieve promotions and to have careers.

Another program helps employees buy homes so they can live near their work. Hopkins provides grants up to \$14,500 toward a down payment in designated areas for those who qualify.

### Education Committee



Lauren Shaivitz, Executive Director of Chana, spoke at the Education Committee's December 9th meeting. Chana was created by women for women in 1995, originally to provide services for observant Jewish women who were suffering abuse but were reluctant to go to the House of Ruth. While Chana operates out of Associated Jewish Charities, it does not restrict its services to individuals of the Jewish community.

Chana is involved in: crisis intervention, assessing for danger and safety planning; providing supportive counseling, deeper counseling, and group therapy; and offering emergency and temporary shelter. Chana also addresses a myriad of legal issues for its clients, and is involved in legislative advocacy as well as educating students and addressing sexual abuse of children.

Chana constantly assesses what it hears, and then seeks funding to address a trend. Recently Chana applied for a grant for abused elders to have home health aides, so they do not have to depend on their abusers.

## *Can you give two hours to the Circle?*

We're looking for someone to help with emailing. If you are comfortable working with computers, detail-oriented, enjoy writing, have two free hours a week, and would like to help, please contact [communications@theBWGC.org](mailto:communications@theBWGC.org)

## REDI Workgroup



**The BWGC Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (REDI) Workgroup met on November 29th with Sarah Hemminger.** She reflected on her experience learning how to understand and use a racial equity perspective as CEO and co-founder of Thread. With humility and vulnerability, she shared the lessons learned by their many mistakes and blind spots during the past 18 years. Successful concepts such as co-creation vs. inclusion, equity in relationships, bi-directional goal setting and qualitative vs. quantitative measurements struck a strong chord with many of us.

The Workgroup will continue to discuss these ideas and learn more about how they relate to the Circle and any possible blind spots that we may discover. We look forward to more conversations in our group and with other Circle members.

## 2021 Giving Circle Gathering

***“We’re all in this Together!”***



**On December 2nd, Maryland Philanthropy Network sponsored an opportunity for members of nine regional giving circles to gather virtually to hear Sara Lomelin speak.** Sara is the head of Philanthropy Together, a global initiative whose mission is to democratize and diversify philanthropy through the power of giving circles.

Using the information presented, the attendees broke into smaller sessions to discuss 1) incorporating an “equity lens in grantmaking”; 2) diversifying your circle: What does that mean? To what end?; 3) technology and communications; 4) member engagement, recruitment and retention during COVID; and 5) educating

circle members and the public.

The BWGC was well represented in each of the breakout sessions, and members took away many lessons learned by other collective groups. The main takeaways are that we are truly “all in this together”, it is hard, slow work, and we should celebrate our small successes!

## Grants Committee

***It’s not too late to join!***

**Being a grant reader is a great way to learn about the nonprofit organizations doing amazing work to make Baltimore a better place for women and families to live and grow.** In addition, it is a wonderful way to meet fellow Circle members – a talented, dedicated, and fun group.

Our committee will begin its work later in January. This year we are hoping to have a hybrid approach with some in-person meetings and some Zoom meetings. We understand that some members may feel uncomfortable with in-person meetings or may have work or travel schedules that make in-person meetings difficult. Therefore, all meetings will have a virtual option. If you have any questions, please contact us at [grants@thebwgc.org](mailto:grants@thebwgc.org).

## GRANTEE PROFILE

## Building Our Nation's Daughters (BOND)

*Mother's Love, Daughter's Need, Nation's Strength*



**Building our Nation's Daughters (BOND) mentors, counsels, and builds community with black single mothers and their daughters in Baltimore.** Its goal is to cultivate positive mother-daughter relationships, strengthen single-mother families, and increase economic mobility for both generations.

BOND was founded in 2016 by Ateira Griffin, the daughter of a single mother. As dean of students at the Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women, Griffin recognized the disconnect between low-income single mothers and their daughters and the need to offer support to both mothers and daughters.

Griffin was recently selected as a semifinalist for the Baltimore Hometown Hero Awards through Baltimore Homecoming.

BOND works by cultivating positive mother-daughter relationships, strengthening single-mother families, and leading advocacy efforts to ensure single mother households have access to opportunities. It does this through health and wellness and crisis management support services, as well as mother and daughter quarterly programming, and connections to local and statewide resources.

As one mother said: "BOND has had a tremendous effect on the relationship with my daughter. We are able to have more open dialogues and have meaningful conversations." And from a daughter: "BOND has helped us grow closer. I feel more comfortable talking with my mother more frequently."

In 2020 BOND expanded its school community partners to include three schools, Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women, Lillie Mae Carroll Jackson Charter School, and Booker T. Washington Middle School.

The Circle grant is being used in part to help pay for a program coordinator. BOND currently has 66 participants and expects to add 20-30 participants in the coming year.

## *Read more about us!*

The Circle was recently featured in the Fall/Winter issue of the Baltimore Community Foundation's Intersection magazine as well as in Baltimore Magazine.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

## Circle Connectors Host New Members at the BMA



**On December 9th, the Circle Connectors of the Membership Committee hosted an event at the Baltimore Museum of Art for all new members who joined in 2020 or 2021.** Thirty-six new members and connectors toured the BMA's current exhibit "A Modern Influence: Henri Matisse, Etta Cone and Baltimore" and then gathered downstairs at Gertrude's for a little socializing. Circle Co-Chairs Martha Cukor and Susan Perl were on hand to welcome the new

members, while Jane Berkow, the co-chair of the Grants Committee explained the upcoming grants process. New members introduced themselves and shared stories about how and why they joined The Circle.

## Joining Connectors

**Care to share your enthusiasm and knowledge about the Circle with a new member? It's easy!** Just call, text, email, write a letter—only kidding!—to welcome her—share your contacts, maybe meet for a walk or a talk, or just be a resource. Occasionally you might be asked to share info such as an upcoming event and, when we meet in person again, introduce her to other members. Help the Circle meet the needs of new members by personalizing their experience. With our goal of reaching 500 members this year, we need YOU to be a connector. If you have questions, contact: [membership@thebwgc.org](mailto:membership@thebwgc.org).

## Prospective Member Event

**The Membership Committee held a prospective member event November 30th.** Three of the prospective members joined within 24 hours! If you know someone who would like to know more about the Circle, she can watch the video [here](#). Michelle Sin's presentation at that event can be found [here](#).

*New members:*

Denie Dulin

Rhona Fisher

Leanne Gabriel

Parenthania Gibson

Kelli Gress

Rebecca Murphy

Susan F. Payne

Marie Razulis

Elisabeth Reading

Elenor Reid

Jacyn Varenkamp

Susan Weis-Bohlen

## Circle Works Thanksgiving Donation Project



**The Circle Works Subcommittee provided 80 Thanksgiving food baskets to the families served by the Club at Collington Square - Strong City Baltimore.** This after-school and summer mentorship program serves 80-90 children (pre-K to age 13) in East Baltimore a few blocks from Johns Hopkins Hospital. The committee partnered with Morgan State University's student group Women in Computer Science (WiCS) in all phases of the project. WiCS also provided the center with snacks and dessert mixes for future birthday and holiday celebrations. Each food basket contained a bag of flour, a bag of sugar, two boxes of stuffing, two boxes of mashed potatoes, pumpkin bread mix, and cans of cranberries, peaches, pineapple, sauerkraut, pumpkin, corn, green beans, sweet potatoes, and turkey gravy. Club director Vanessa Williams gave the Circle Works delivery team a tour of the facility and explained the wonderful work its members do.

## Sozosei Foundation

**In response to a request made by the Baltimore Community Foundation (BCF) on behalf of an unnamed donor, our Giving Circle recently shared the names of all of this past year's unfunded applicants, and one applicant who was funded partially with remaining funds.** These applicants had been recommended by grant teams but not awarded a grant. We are grateful to the Sozosei Foundation (the philanthropic arm of Otsuka American Pharmaceutical) for allowing us the flexibility to assist with their grantmaking and suggest nonprofits that align with their mission of making grants to organizations that are creative in their approach to creating healthier communities. BCF received a portion of Sozosei's \$247,300 Resilient Communities Program, which focuses on "diverse, under-resourced communities" within a 50-mile radius of its parent's U.S. offices. What a tribute to the quality and integrity of our grants process! We are grateful that the following grants were awarded:

• Foreign-born Information and Referral Network (Recently renamed Luminus Network for New Americans)	\$10,000
• Friendly Loving Opportunities	\$10,000
• Fusion Intercultural Counseling Center	\$20,000
• Helping-up Mission	\$10,000
• Shepherd's Clinic	\$10,000
• World Relief	\$10,000

## Philanos Finalist



**Dawna Cobb was one of five finalists for Philanos' Willoughby Award, which honors "visionary women leaders in philanthropy".** Dawna, a former circle co-chair, is on the REDI committee. She is also active in other organizations, including the Baltimore City Ethics Board and the BlueWater Baltimore board. Philanos is a national network of women's philanthropic and grant-making organizations. The BWGC also nominated a 2020 grantee, Black Women Build, for a Spotlight Award, which recognizes high-impact grantees.

## Goodbye, Anita Pomerantz



**Anita Pomerantz has moved to Salt Lake City, and we're going to miss her!** A tireless volunteer, Anita joined the Circle in 2012, was Grants Committee Co-Chair (2015-2017) and served as Chair of the Strategic Marketing ad hoc committee in 2017-2018. She has assisted the Circle with many technology advances, especially helping set up FOUNDANT, our grants management system, writing all the Team Leader and Grants reader training manuals for FOUNDANT, and serving as the grants tech help desk for years. Most recently, she has served as the lead for MemberLeap, our member management system, and trained numerous committee co-chairs on use of the system.



*Chef Iman from Mera Kitchen Collective (a former grantee) who catered Anita's farewell dinner.*

## Thank you to our contributors:

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Mary Jo Wiese

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