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Message from the Co-Chairs

It's finally March! After a winter that was long and hard in so many ways, we are seeing signs of spring.

For the Circle, it means that the grants cycle is well under way, with teams of readers busy evaluating potential grantee applications.

We also have two spring Full Circle meetings – the one that was just on March 16, and the one coming up on May 17, so please mark your calendars. The May Full Circle will be a hybrid (virtual and “in-person”) event at Chizuk Amuno synagogue followed by an outdoor reception (under an open sided-tent). The 2022 grants will be announced, along with the new Circle co-chairs, officers, and committee co-chairs.

There are 43 new members this year, one of whom is 15 years old and joined to learn about philanthropy alongside her mother, a current member!

The Post-Grants Committee has established relationships with the grantees and has reported being amazed by their accomplishments.

Thank you for being part of the Circle and its work.

Maitha & Susan



Member Spotlight: Janice Bowie



I was introduced to BWGC by my former colleague and friend, Kay Dickersin, and was encouraged to join because she felt that the BWGC could benefit from having a more diverse membership, in particular, women of color.

I also joined because of the immense opportunity to serve the community of Baltimore. Many of BWGC's grants are awarded to Black and Brown communities and organizations that work to promote health and social equity and well-being.

Since joining BWGC in 2019, I have unfortunately not been able to participate fully, because after taking a new role at my institution, COVID emerged and I have been working remotely from my home in Virginia.

While I desire to see a greater membership of Black women, I recognize that there are many other spaces where our/their participation and giving occurs. More importantly, the needs of our communities require all hands on deck to overcome the persistent inequities and injustices — something in which I feel BWGC is capable of taking a leading role, as well as collaborating with other local organizations to address.

Two Generations, One Commitment



The BWGC's youngest member is 15. That happened when Kirsten Sandberg, a member since 2013, signed up daughter Kiera Caffrey, a student at St. Timothy's. Mother and daughter have a similar outlook. "I joined the BWGC because I wanted to learn more about how I could make an impact in my community," says Kirsten, who works in finance. "The BWGC has expanded my understanding the areas of need and has exposed me to the amazing not-for-profit organizations and people who work day-in and day-out to respond to those needs."

"Generosity, service, and giving back are important to me, and I am hoping the BWGC can broaden my horizons about ways I can contribute to improving the lives of others. The idea of collectively making a bigger impact together through a giving circle is exciting to me," says Kiera, who participates in an entrepreneurship club, Model UN and riding, squash and lacrosse at St. Tim's.

Meeting and learning from women from a variety of backgrounds is important to both. Kirsten: "One of the things I value most about the BWGC is the opportunity to meet wise women from diverse backgrounds who have such a variety of skills and perspectives." And Kiera: "At St. Timothy's, I have enjoyed meeting friends from all over the world."



Grantee Profile: Caroline Center



Anatomy Class

Caroline Center provides a comprehensive education and career skills program for under- and unemployed women in Baltimore to prepare them for meaningful careers in healthcare. From its website: “We believe that when you change a woman’s life, you change families, communities, cities, and, ultimately, the world.” Caroline Center was founded in 1996 by the School Sisters of Notre Dame and celebrated its 25th year of service in 2021, when it was named “Best Nonprofit” by *Baltimore Sun* readers. Caroline Center has trained more than 3,300 women, and currently offers a 15-week program that prepares

women to obtain a license as a Certified Nursing Assistant or Pharmacy Technician, two careers in high demand. “Baltimore has so many anchor healthcare institutions that it would be impossible to meet the need for staff,” explained Executive Director Lynn Selby. According to Certified Nursing Assistant graduate Ann-Marie Eli, there’s far more to the program: “Besides learning the lessons, this program builds our character and assists in social challenges a student may encounter, which makes it very gratifying. ...Although we are of different backgrounds and have our own stories, we hold each other accountable as a team to successfully complete the program.”

Caroline Center received a \$25,000 BWGC grant in 2021 for general operating expenses and to help develop a new strategic plan for future programming, facilities, and financing.

Post-Grants

The Post-Grants Committee met on January 19, and 30 liaisons reported on their progress visits to the 23 grant recipients. While visits remain largely virtual, it was exciting for liaisons to hear from grantees that, almost without exception, their programs are proceeding and funds are being spent as planned and on schedule! While liaisons reported some leadership changes and alterations in daily operations and process due to COVID, only one organization reported challenges that could lead to changing the program or returning grant funds.

Committee Co-Chairs Take Stock at Midterm



COMMUNICATIONS: PEGGY SPARR

I've been so inspired this year by our talented and dedicated committee that keeps the membership engaged on Circle activities. My primary goal has been to use Communications to support recruitment and retention of members, and enhance use of our social media, publications, and website toward that end. Think it's going pretty well!

EDUCATION: SUSAN MANEKIN

The Education Committee had a tough nut to crack this past year. Since subcommittees were combined into Circle Study meetings with the exception of Circle Reads, we needed to make sure that each subcommittee had plenty of time to present its data. The overall response has been positive because it cut down on meetings.



GRANTEE CONNECT: SILVIA GOLOMBEK

My primary goal was to learn both the management logistics, and, as importantly, the cultural norms and interpersonal communications style that helped GC be as successful as it is. I also sought to make more use of technology tools to increase the efficiency of our work. So far, so good!

GRANTS: JANE BERKOW

Serving as the Grants co-chair has given me a glimpse of and greater appreciation for the inner workings of the Circle's core work. Our efforts to streamline the grant application yielded more compelling applicant narratives. Our Grant Reader training that focused on our biases facilitated more thoughtful team deliberations. A very satisfying term!



MEMBERSHIP: JENNIFER BEDFORD

I am thrilled to serve as membership co-chair with the amazing Salli Ward, a tremendous mentor and partner. Together we lead an energetic committee committed to serving current members while also growing membership. We spearheaded an initiative to offer an optional reduced membership for women 45 and under, and it's now a reality. We have many other ambitious ideas we hope to realize!

Committee Co-Chairs Take Stock (Con't)

NOMINATING & LEADERSHIP: PENNY WALD

A notable accomplishment was the creation of Pathways to Leadership, a discussion of the Circle's leadership structure and suggestions for how members can become future leaders. Our systematic rotation of leaders keeps the Circle fresh and encourages member engagement in the running of the Circle. This orientation will be a regular offering of the NLDC in years to come.



POST-GRANTS: ROBIN KAPLAN

I was hoping that all of our liaison teams would work out and that they would be compatible and be able to have meaningful contact with their grantees. I think we've met those goals. I also hoped to get to know our Post-Grant Committee members; unfortunately, that's been harder to accomplish.

Barbara Portnoy Spector, A Perspective

When the COVID pandemic began in March 2020, I was co-chair of the Communications Committee. Our earliest Steering Committee pandemic conversations centered around postponing activities for a few months. As time passed, it became obvious that the impact of the virus would be much more substantial. We developed Zoom programs, reached out to our grantees frequently and got creative with outdoor gatherings. Since my responsibilities included coordinating the Circle newsletters and the Year in Review for 2020 and 2021, I was in close contact with many other Circle members and was amazed at how many events continued to take place in one form or another.

Since passing the baton as the Communications co-chair, I've taken a leadership role on the board of one of our past grantees and I'm excited to represent that grantee, Weekend Backpacks, on Grantee Connect. I look forward to opportunities for cross-pollination between our organizations and between our grantees.

I believe that the best way to stay connected with the Circle is to serve on a committee or otherwise actively volunteer. There are many ways to offer new ideas and leadership and find roles that match your interests and availability.



Expanding Connections

... ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Short on time but want to make a difference? Join us as a BWGC Social Media Ambassador! It's a great way to support our mission without a significant time commitment. Social Media Ambassadors engage with our social media on their own schedule, at their convenience. To learn more, email or text Maria: socialmedia@theBWGC.org.

... THROUGH GRANTEE CONNECT

To encourage communication among grantees, Grantee Connect has established a Google Group. This is a listserv that will include grantees' emails and will be a vehicle through which grantees can easily communicate with each other, exchange resources, ask questions, and initiate collaborations. Already, grantees have started using this vehicle to provide input that will shape the May forum. This listserv is the first step to a more formalized Grantee Alumni Network.

... IN YOUR OWN WORDS, A BWGC 'ELEVATOR SPEECH'

Please help spread the word about the Baltimore Women's Giving Circle by having a two-minute description of why you joined/support our Circle. How is BWGC important to YOU? What have you learned about our area and the amazing programs helping women and their families? How has being a member affected you? Telling YOUR story will help introduce more women to BWGC and encourage them to check us out and hopefully JOIN US!

... WITH AN OPTIONAL REDUCED MEMBERSHIP RATE

Members 45 and under, new and current, now have the option to pay a reduced annual fee of \$600. See <https://www.thebwgc.org/new-membership-plan>.

REDI (Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) Workgroup

The REDI Workgroup is discussing how to address racial equities in the Circle's work and how to become more inclusive. In January, grant readers learned what it means to use a racial equity lens and the impact of biases, which we all have. As a result of these discussions, Grants Co-Chair Jane Berkow, was invited to speak to the REDI Workgroup about the meaning of a racial equity lens at its February 3 meeting.

Membership News

CIRCLE WORKS

Due to the continuing pandemic and limitations regarding interactive endeavors, the Circle Works subcommittee has selected three grantees to receive donations of nonperishable food items and mattress protectors. They are Caroline Center (workforce development), Marian House (housing and life skill training) and Alkimiah Community Meal Commitment (meals/soup kitchen). There will be a two-week collection period in late March followed by delivery of the items to the grantees during the first week of April. This is an excellent way for Circle members to provide additional support as these three grantees continue to weather the COVID-19 pandemic.

PROSPECTIVE MEMBER EVENT

The Membership Committee will host a "morning coffee" for prospective members on April 21 at 8:30 a.m. Details will be coming soon! The Committee is offering a variety of formats and times for prospective member events this year to reach as many women as possible. If you know of a woman who might be interested in attending, please send her contact information to: membership@thebwgc.org. A member of the committee is always willing to chat with a prospective member who cannot attend but is interested in learning more about the Circle!

CONNECTORS NEEDED

With the addition of 21 new members since November 1, the BWGC desperately needs Circle Connectors to welcome them and be a point of contact. This volunteer opportunity is a minimal commitment but is crucial to the retention of new members. If you are willing to be a Connector or want to learn more, please email membership@thebwgc.org.



Thank You, Patti Chandler

Circle member Patti Chandler is retiring as CFO of the Baltimore Community Foundation, where she's done an excellent job assisting many Circle treasurers and being the "go-to person" for questions we have about Circle projects. She also has played a key role in our grantmaking process by vetting the organizations we vote to fund. We will miss her expertise at the BCF. Thank you, Patti!

New Members:

Kiera Caffrey
Shirlene Cleveland
Rhona Fisher
Parthenia "Parsi" Gibson
Kelli Gress

Fritzi Hallock
Anna Harbom
Bryn Parchman
Sara Paranilam
Brittany Sherrill Pfister

Liz Pope
Katharine Reineman
Mary Sykes
Mary Bruce Webb
Henrietta "Rhetta" Wiley

Education

The Education Committee had two speakers in February to kick off 2022.

The first speaker was Ana Rodney, the founder of MOMCares, which provides emotional and educational support and services to mothers and families in the birthing journey using an anti-racist lens. These programs focus on Black women who have had experiences with the neonatal intensive care unit. In the past year, MOMCares has trained and certified 30 doulas, connected 20 mothers to doula services, distributed 2,000 diapers and 500 pounds of food to communities in need, and connected women to stable housing.

The second speaker was Jarrod Bolte. His organization, Improving Education, works toward getting children ready for school by increasing opportunities for education, reading, and support in communities and within families. *Bedtime in a Box* provides families books, educational bath toys, and healthy items such as toothbrushes and shampoo to encourage a stable bedtime routine. *All Children Ready* works with Head Start and Judy Center programs in low-income areas and with those who speak English as a second language to improve kindergarten readiness.

Calendar

APRIL 12
1 P.M.
Grants Committee Member Orientation on voting for Grants
(Zoom, registered members only)

APRIL 14
9:30 A.M.
Education Committee
(Zoom)
Dr. Nisa Maruthur, Diabetes and Obesity Healthcare Disparities

APRIL 21
8:30 A.M.
Prospective member "morning coffee,"
Location TBA

MAY 17
5 P.M.
Full Circle
Chizuk Amuno synagogue, 8100 Stevenson Rd., hybrid (virtual and "in person")

MAY
TBA
Grantee Connect event

Thank you to our contributors:

Jennifer Bedford	Robin Kaplan
Jane Berkow	Lauren Madsen
Janice Bowie	Susan Manekin
Kiera Caffrey	Susan Perl
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Beth Diehl	Barbara Portnoy
Barbara Epke	Spector
Silvia Golombek	Penny Wald
Mary Grossman	Salli Ward
Laura Hahn	