



WOMEN'S FUND
OF GREATER MILWAUKEE

UPDATE



You are the most essential part of our community.

The Power of One

Whether you know it or not, you are a vital part of our community. And our community is a strong one, with its roots stretching the length of our city, our suburbs and our urban areas. You have the power to help the Women's Fund achieve our vision: to create a world that is just and fair for women and girls.

The Power of Many

As women, we know better than anyone the issues we face, and we have the wisdom to understand that

the bond between all women is a powerful one: it transcends zip codes, income levels and politics. With that knowledge, we are working to improve our world.

To that end, we continually strive to be the voice for underrepresented women throughout Greater Milwaukee. We work to create positive outcomes in our community through investment in women-inspired strategies that result in sustainable, long-lasting social change and a more prosperous city.

Using our four guiding principles of inclusion, leadership, equity and sustainability, the Women's Fund supports women-led solutions through its two primary channels: Grantmaking Programs, which provide the financial backing for social change, and Capacity Building Programs, which provide leadership and training for those working toward social change.

The Women's Fund will continue to grow, working to empower women and girls in our community. ■

Grantmaking Programs Support Female Athletes through IOU Sports

With almost 40 years since the passage of Title IX — which opened the door for girls to participate in high school and college athletics — the question of how sports make a positive difference in girls' and women's lives has been emphatically answered.

In fact, according to **Images of Us (IOU) Sports** — an organization that works to empower girls using sports as an avenue to instill discipline, teamwork and physical fitness — the benefits associated with sports participation for young women include: lower teenage pregnancy rates, better grades and higher self-esteem. And as women, participation in sports at a younger age equals higher rates of education and employment, and lower rates of obesity.

For all those reasons, and because there are still significant barriers to girls participating in sports, the Women's Fund was proud to support IOU Sports through its grantmaking programs last year, contributing more than \$13,000 in total.

That funding supported IOU Sports' series of Girls Basketball Combine



Girls Basketball Combine Camps participant Ella Ugland with Bernell Hooker, CEO of Images Of Us Sports

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Camps for girls from all over the city of Milwaukee — a camp designed specifically to teach life skills through court skills. One participant's mom, Melissa Ugland, spoke at length about the way the girls learned to be assertive and competitive in a healthy way, while also being able to respect and bond with one another as athletes.

"My daughter walked away with some significant new athletic skills," said

Melissa. "But she also came away with something even more important: the assertiveness and self-confidence she learned will help her achieve her own dreams for the future. She knows she can believe in her own abilities as an individual."

Bernell Hooker, CEO & Founder of IOU Sports, couldn't agree more. "One of the best things about my job is that I get to watch these girls transform," she said. "We work to develop the qualities that make a successful and well-rounded athlete, from nutrition to classroom skills, in order to ultimately help them be more successful in life."

We think IOU Sports has "got game," and we're proud to be playing alongside them. •

Capacity Building Initiatives Strive to Reduce Black Infant Mortality

Infant mortality statistics for African Americans in the city of Milwaukee are heartbreaking: Milwaukee's rate of black infant mortality has risen higher than the rate in 56 other countries, including Jamaica, Ukraine, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Malaysia. The leading cause is premature birth or low birth weight.



The October 7 Social Change Exchange brought several Grant Partners and nearly one hundred audience members together for a compelling conversation on Milwaukee's Black Infant Mortality Crisis.

As a facet of its capacity building strategy, the Women's Fund is proud to announce its part in a new coalition — the **Milwaukee Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families** (LIHF). The Lifecourse framework takes into account the multiple factors that determine the health of the family and community.

Elaine Maly, executive director of the Women's Fund, summarized the issue as follows: "Milwaukee neighborhoods with the highest rates of black infant mortality are

characterized by hyper-segregation, unemployment, economic hardship, and inadequate housing. This is far more than an 'access to healthcare' issue."

Working alongside the more than 60 local organizations that make up LIHF, the Women's Fund will be facilitating the action planning process that will jump-start the coalition's goals, which include improving access to maternal and child health resources, strengthening African American families, and creating an action plan specific to Milwaukee. The goals are:

- improving access to maternal and child health resources
- building a strong social-economic infrastructure for the African American community
- strengthening African American families and communities

"Working with this coalition will allow the Women's Fund to address one of the greatest injustices affecting African American women in Milwaukee today," said Elaine. ▀

The **Milwaukee Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families** (LIHF) was awarded a grant of \$250,000 from the **Oversight and Advisory Committee of the UW School of Medicine and Public Health**, part of a \$10 million overall commitment to address infant mortality among African Americans in Wisconsin. The group, including more than 60 local organizations, will take part in an action planning process facilitated by the Women's Fund and the **Planning Council for Health and Human Services**.

2010 Women & Public Policy Luncheon

Thanks to all who made it a success!

619 people attended

\$154,859 raised

"I couldn't think of a better fit for your mission."

"...Jennifer Buffett, actually made progress seem not only possible but inevitable..."

"Milwaukee is fortunate to have so many gifted women to move our community into a possibility-focused future."

"Phenomenal, powerful event!"

58

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Featured speaker Jennifer Buffett



Event co-chairs Sue Hickey and Robin Reese



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Social change begins with you!

Help us create a world that is just and fair for women and girls. Show your support by making a secure donation online at womensfund.com or call 290-7350 to make a contribution over the phone.