Celebrating FIVE YEARS of Empowering Women, Girls, and their Families
A note from Scranton Area Community Foundation’s President and CEO Laura Ducceschi

It’s powerful to reflect back on the five years since we launched Women in Philanthropy and to see the life changes that collective philanthropy has brought to so many women and their families.

What started with a group of twelve women who knew that together we were stronger than we could ever be apart, has grown into a regional initiative that has truly transformed people’s lives.

Because you believed in Women in Philanthropy, tremendous growth has been possible. New storefronts and businesses are popping up on streets in Lackawanna County, led by women entrepreneurs. Young women are realizing their potential and possibilities in science, engineering, and medicine. Women are building up savings accounts for their future, and being able to make necessary purchases like cars, education, and housing that help them attain economic mobility for their families. And so much more.

I believe that, over the years, Women in Philanthropy has not only strengthened individuals, but has also contributed to a more prosperous, hopeful region. On behalf of the Board of Governors and the staff of the Scranton Area Community Foundation, I want to reiterate how grateful and honored we are to partner with you to help make these transformative life changes a possibility for women, girls, and their families.

With appreciation,

Laura Ducceschi
A note from our Women in Philanthropy Co-Chairs

I am so proud to be a part of Women in Philanthropy and quite amazed at what we have accomplished over the last five years through this creative collaboration.

By actively participating in Women in Philanthropy, you are transforming the lives of women and children in Northeastern Pennsylvania. You are making a positive impact in education, encouraging entrepreneurship, and inspiring positive cultural change.

A special thank you to our incredible Women in Philanthropy volunteers who contribute not only their time and financial resources, but also their experience and expertise to address the important needs of women across the Northeastern Pennsylvania region.

As we celebrate the fifth anniversary of Women in Philanthropy, we look back proudly at the many accomplishments and transformative initiatives that have changed the lives of so many women and girls and their families and we look ahead to the next five years.

We are proud of our collective philanthropic efforts and look forward to a future of continued progress in helping women and their families succeed by living quality lives.

We are thankful to engage women philanthropists in finding innovative and effective solutions for some of the most pressing, challenging problems in our community.
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Celebrating **FIVE YEARS**

of **empowering and transforming** the lives of women and girls in Northeastern Pennsylvania

Since its inception in 2014, **Women in Philanthropy (WIP)**, has been an initiative of the Scranton Area Community Foundation that focuses on empowering and transforming the lives of women and girls and their families in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

WIP has provided STEAM education to over 2,000 students in K-12 public schools, provided capital in the form of micro-loans to launch 14 local women-owned businesses, facilitated the financial education of over 120 low-to-moderate-income women, provided a $1 for $1 match to low-to-moderate-income women trying to build a savings, convened over 80 presenters on topics related to community health and wellness, formed a Dental Council of health leaders who are working on a pilot project to improve access to restorative dental care for women, and are actively working on advancing access to health services through transportation.

WIP aspires to engage active supporters in collective decision making to fund programs that foster transformative measures and move women from places of disempowerment and poverty to levels of personal empowerment and economic self-sufficiency. To date, there are nearly 100 active Women in Philanthropy supporters.
Creating and funding effective learning opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math fields for students in Northeastern Pennsylvania bolsters children’s ability to compete in college and, ultimately, the work force. Careers in STEAM fields are growing and the need for skilled employees is increasing continually.

Research shows that girls, in particular, are often at a critical age in the middle school years when deciding whether pursuing STEAM education is right for them. The majority of school districts in Lackawanna County, however, lack the resources to give students effective STEAM instruction. To support their efforts, we have created opportunities for many students to learn about the various, well-paying career choices they could pursue, and what opportunities exist for them. Women in Philanthropy assists in bridging this educational gap by providing funding for STEAM education.

Throughout the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years, the Salvadori Center provided in-class instruction to over 2,000 students attending the Riverside and Scranton School Districts. The Salvadori Center’s program, which is an 8-week STEAM enrichment program, aimed to engage students in math and science using a hands-on, project-based approach. During the 2017-2018 school year, the Salvadori Center implemented the Bridges program, which used investigations of the built environment to introduce and reinforce STEAM concepts and skills. Throughout the module, students investigated the different types of bridges and their functions, while learning about the history of some of the world’s most prominent bridges. Students were also able to identify the structural parts that make up different types of bridges and understand the forces that enable different bridge types to support a load. Participants in the Bridges program demonstrated a statistically significant increase in motivation to pursue educational and career choices in math and science. Statistically significant improvements were observed at both Scranton and Riverside schools. To learn more about the evaluation of the Bridges program, visit https://salvadori.org/wordpress/programs/testimonials-results/.

Women in Philanthropy is grateful for the support of the Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation for this important program.

“This experience working with the Salvadori Center provided the framework for students to connect with the real world. Exposure beyond books and tests created a culture of learning and lifelong positive memories through visual projects which integrated the arts.” —Ann Grebeck, Principal at George Bancroft Elementary School, Scranton
In September 2018, Women in Philanthropy awarded five STEAM Stars scholarships to local high school students to cover the full cost of earning an associate degree (before they even finish high school!) through the Level Up Program at Lackawanna College.

The Women in Philanthropy STEAM Stars Scholarship Program provides a full scholarship to select female students in the Level Up Program at Lackawanna College, which gives high-achieving students the opportunity to take college-level courses so that they can obtain their associate degree by the time they graduate high school. A STEAM Stars Scholarship covers the students’ entire time in the program at the total cost of $6,200 per student.

The 2018 STEAM Stars were honored at the Women in Philanthropy Quarterly Meeting and Reception in September 2018. The STEAM Stars scholarship recipients included Lexa Hunt, Mariah Kumor, and Bella McKeefery, all 10th-grade students at Riverside Jr./Sr. High School, and Aaliyah Jalil and Priyal Patel, both 11th-grade students at Scranton High School.

The STEAM Stars Scholarship Program is supported through Women in Philanthropy’s Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) Education initiative which works to help bridge the educational gap by providing funding for STEAM education locally. More and more organizations nationally are encouraging young women to study STEAM fields in college as careers in STEAM fields are growing and the need for skilled employees is increasing continually.
In April 2019, Women in Philanthropy congratulated and celebrated graduates of the Matched Savings and Financial Confidence Program at a Graduation Dinner at Alfredo’s Café in Scranton. The Matched Savings and Financial Confidence Program was launched through Women in Philanthropy to help local women and their families achieve financial independence. In this program, women at 300% poverty line or below receive a $1 for $1 match up to $2,500 to save for multiple purposes such as a home purchase or repair, purchase or lease of an automobile, education or job training, business expense, health or wellness expense, debt reduction, or planning for the future.

The Matched Savings classes, hosted and facilitated in partnership with United Neighborhood Centers of NEPA, are designed to give participants the tools they need to take control of their personal finances. The Matched Savings classes take place monthly on a variety of topics including budgeting, savings, investments, rental or lease agreements, credit reports, and recognizing financial abuse.

Above photo: (Standing, left to right): Jessica Wallo, Vice President of Programs and Services, United Neighborhood Centers of NEPA; Clare Haggerty, Director of Grants and Communications, United Neighborhood Centers of NEPA; Joanne Cahee; Lacey Kolodzieski. (Seated, left to right): Ellen Burkey, WIP Impact Supporter and Financial Confidence and Matched Savings Program Chair; Laura Ducceschi, President and CEO of the Scranton Area Community Foundation; Cynthia Plaza; Yanet Garcia.
For many women, the biggest hurdle they encounter when trying to start a new business is obtaining start-up capital. For women with a limited credit history, access to a micro-loan (usually between $1,000 and $10,000) means the difference between creating or expanding a new business to help support themselves and their families, or facing limited economic opportunity.

To address this, Women in Philanthropy has established its Micro-Loan Program, which helps women move seamlessly through the process of developing a business plan, receiving mentorship to help run a successful business, and receiving capital in the form of a micro-loan. With support from Peoples Security Bank & Trust, micro-loans ranging from $1,000 to $10,000 allow women to start or grow their business venture. After repayment, the interest remains in a bank account for them to have as savings once the loan is complete. Women in Philanthropy supporters serve as mentors or advisors to support the growth of women-owned businesses aimed at empowering women and encouraging economic self-sufficiency.

To date, Women in Philanthropy has provided capital in the form of micro-loans to launch 14 local women-owned businesses, with micro-loan support of $125,000. We recently connected with two of our recent Women in Philanthropy micro-loan recipients, Asia Wallace and Mary Beck, to see how they are succeeding today. We are excited to report about their success in business made possible because of the generosity of Women in Philanthropy supporters.
Meet Asia Wallace, Owner of Paradise Soulfood & Sweets, LLC

Asia Wallace was thankful for the opportunity to launch her business, Paradise Soulfood & Sweets LLC, last year through a $10,000 micro-loan made possible by the generosity of Women in Philanthropy supporters and Peoples Security Bank & Trust.

Paradise Soulfood & Sweets, LLC, is located on the second floor of the Marketplace at Steamtown, 300 Lackawanna Avenue, Scranton. It operates on Fridays and Saturdays offering soul food, cobblers, pound cakes, and more. Paradise Soulfood & Sweets, LLC has been operating since 2018.
Meet Mary Beck, Owner of
Central Station Marketplace & Antiques

Walk into Central Station Marketplace & Antiques, located in the Keyser Oak Shopping Plaza, 1744 North Keyser Ave, Scranton, and you’ll be greeted by owner, Mary Beck, who received a $10,000 micro-loan from Women in Philanthropy in 2017. Mary greets every customer with a friendly smile and thanks every single person for their business as they exit.

With over 40 vendors selling everything from antiques to local memorabilia and homemade goods, Central Station Marketplace & Antiques will celebrate its two-year anniversary in November 2019.
Women in Philanthropy has convened over 80 presenters on topics related to community health and wellness. Through these discussions, Women in Philanthropy supporters determined that oral health and transportation were the two most critical health concerns facing women, girls, and their families. Women in Philanthropy, as a result, has formed a Dental Council of health leaders who are working on a pilot project to improve access to restorative dental care for women. In the Summer of 2019, Women in Philanthropy will launch a pilot program to address regional dental concerns for women thanks to dental partners including Scranton District Dental Society, Scranton Primary Health Care Center, Outreach - Center for Community Resources, Catherine McAuley Center, Geisinger, and many others.

NEPA Moves, spearheaded by the Scranton Area Community Foundation and the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, launched in 2017 through Women in Philanthropy as a way to address transportation concerns, improve access, and foster greater opportunity for all people and communities across the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre/Hazelton regions. Comprised of nearly 100 key regional stakeholders, NEPA Moves works through a collective model to gain a better understanding of the specific barriers of current transit systems and focuses on solving the transportation challenges in NEPA. NEPA Moves is making great strides within the community and has been praised for being a unique, collaborative model not only for the state of Pennsylvania but also nationally for cross-sector partnerships advancing transit equity.
Two distinguished awards have been established through charitable funds to memorialize a loved one and to honor qualities of excellence that exist in female members of our community.

**Margaretta Belin Chamberlin Award**

The Margaretta Belin Chamberlin Award and the Roseann Smith Alperin Award are both presented annually during the Women in Philanthropy Annual Event.

*2017 Margaretta Belin Chamberlin Award* recipient **Nada Gilmartin** with Kathleen Graff

*Will Chamberlin and Kathleen Graff with 2018 Margaretta Belin Chamberlin Award* recipient **Laurie Cadden**

*Shannon Roche Cusick, then Junior League President, with 2017 Roseann Smith Alperin Award* recipient **Anne Falzett**

*2018 Roseann Smith Alperin Award* recipient **Katie Gilmartin** with Junior League of Scranton President Nicole Lance
In April, during the WIP Spring Meeting, Women in Philanthropy (WIP) proudly announced the first round of grants that were awarded through Women in Philanthropy after a highly competitive grant process. Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeastern Pennsylvania, Women’s Resource Center, and NEPA Youth Shelter each received a $10,000 grant from Women in Philanthropy after presenting their innovative projects during the reception.

“Women in Philanthropy focuses on creating meaningful, positive change in the lives of women and girls throughout the Northeastern Pennsylvania region and this new competitive grant program is just one additional way the initiative is making an impact.”
The grant award recipients were selected because of their drive to help women and girls in the region in a variety of Women in Philanthropy priority areas. Applications were solicited in following areas: helping women and girls learn about and pursue entrepreneurship; advancing the inclusion of girls in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) Education; providing transportation solutions that help women and their families; increasing and improving access to restorative dental care for uninsured or underinsured women; and helping low-to-moderate-income women build wealth and advance economically.

“Women in Philanthropy focuses on creating meaningful, positive change in the lives of women and girls throughout the Northeastern Pennsylvania region and this new competitive grant program is just one additional way the initiative is making an impact,” says Laura Ducceschi, President and CEO of the Scranton Area Community Foundation. “As Women in Philanthropy celebrates its fifth anniversary, the opportunity to provide grant support to the community is made possible only because of the generosity of Women in Philanthropy supporters.”

**Photo:** Top row (left to right): Ellen Burkey, Women in Philanthropy Impact Supporter; Laura Ducceschi, Scranton Area Community Foundation President and CEO; Jennifer Manner, Women’s Resource Center; Diamond Epps, NEPA Youth Shelter. Bottom row (left to right): Tricia Thomas, Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeastern Pennsylvania Executive Director; Julianne Cucura, Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeastern Pennsylvania Development Director; Nancy Ramirez, Women’s Resource Center; Nancy Perri, Women’s Resource Center Grants and Education Program Director; Peg Ruddy, Women’s Resource Center Executive Director; Maureen Maher-Gray, NEPA Youth Shelter Executive Director; T. Brown, NEPA Youth Shelter.
### Founding Philanthropists
- Heather Acker
- Donna Barbetti
- Susan Belin
- Betty Burns
- Ida Castro, J.D.
- Kathleen Graff
- Barbara O’Hara, Esq.
- Maureen Pesavento
- Mary Rhodes
- Maryla Scranton

### Guiding Philanthropists
- Tiffany Cross-Luciani
- Nancy Lawton-Kluck
- Andrea Mulrine
- Barbara Norton

### Impact Philanthropists
- Marise Garofalo
- Paige Gebhardt Cognetti
- Natalie Gelb
- Katherine Gilmartin
- Annette Ginocchetti
- Judith Graziano
- Dorothy Grill
- Amy Grocki
- Cathy Ann Hardaway
- Kathryn Holod
- Dana Hunter
- Julie Jordan
- Alexis Kirjian, Ed.D.
- Cynthia Klenk
- Gretchen Ludders
- Paula Mackarey
- Dorothy Mackie
- Maggie Martinelli
- Michelle McGowan

### Organizational Philanthropists
- Moses Taylor Foundation
- The Hawk Family Foundation

### Emerging Philanthropists
- Bryanna Burnside
- Lisa Bothwell, J.D.
- Kate Eary, J.D.
- Laurel Radzieski
- Alison Woody
Community Partners and Sponsors

- Peoples Security
- SBDC Pennsylvania
- Penn State Worthington Scranton
- Women’s Entrepreneurship Center
- Moses Taylor Foundation
- MetroAction
- salvadorei Center
- The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation
- Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia
- Northeastern Pennsylvania Health Care
- Margaret Briggs Foundation
- Willary Foundation
- Geisinger
- Schwartz-Mack Foundation
- United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania

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Though we are five successful years into the Women in Philanthropy initiative, we know that the work has only just begun. Women in Philanthropy, through the guidance and determination of our supporters, will continue to make an impact for women, girls, and their families in our region. We plan to continue addressing the critical issue areas which have been designated by WIP leadership. We will continue to listen, learn, adapt, and evolve so that we are meeting the most pressing needs of the women and girls that we serve. We will further engage our community to strengthen our connections and renew our support.

The future of Women in Philanthropy is bright due in large part to our supporters and partners. It has been your generosity of time, resources, and effort that has enabled us to reach today’s successes, and that will ensure the long-term impact of Women in Philanthropy.
We look forward to serving the Northeastern Pennsylvania region for many years to come!