

THE WOMEN'S FUND
of Southern Alabama

Give to Empower
Women and Girls

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For good. For ever.

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January 13, 2005 Mark Your Calendars!

The First Annual Meeting is scheduled for January 13, 2005 at noon. The event will be held at the Riverview Plaza Hotel and the public is invited. Among the highlights of the Meeting is the award of the first grant. In conjunction with our theme "Higher Steps for Women and Girls" participants are asked to bring gently used shoes for donation to Our Sister's Closet, an organization that provides business attire for interviews and career advancement for women in crises. Door prizes will be awarded.

We are actively recruiting participants and sponsors to ensure the First Annual Meeting is well attended and helps to spread our message and our mission. You can demonstrate your support of this initiative by inviting others who share our goals and interests. The Meeting promises to be empowering, enjoyable and inspirational. Please make plans to attend. The tickets are \$25 each. A table of ten is \$200. Make your reservations by calling 251.438.5591. Or, you may mail your check to the Women's Fund in care of the Community Foundation, P.O. Box

Grant Initiative Started in Anticipation of First Grant

On November 10, 2004, the Women's Fund conducted a mass mailing to area non-profit agencies seeking applications for the first grant to be awarded by the Women's Fund of Southern Alabama. The 2005 grant will be in the amount of \$500. It will be awarded to a female head of household who is experiencing financial need and who is enrolled in some form of post-secondary education. The application deadline is December 17, 2004. The Grants Advisory Committee will then select the lucky recipient from the pool of deserving applicants. This first grant is a significant step in the evolution of our Fund and we expect it will be the first in a long history of grants!



Pictured at the One Year Anniversary on August 26, 2004 are Janine Phillips, Staff, and Executive Board Members Rose Johnson, Barbara Drummond, Kathryn Cariglino, and Debbie Hembree.

Why the “Women’s” Fund?

Yes, we want to include men in our mission and in our goals. No, we do not mean to exclude men by choosing the name “Women’s” Fund of Southern Alabama. We want to emphasize that our Fund promotes philanthropy by women and for women.

Here are some facts and figures. We know that many of the challenges faced by society today are felt disproportionately by women and girls. Yet, according to data provided by the Women’s Funding Network less than five percent of national philanthropic dollars in the United States goes specifically to address their needs. Women have the potential to be a major force in philanthropy. Women over the age of 70 control most of the wealth in this county according to Lilya Wagner, Ed.D., CFRE in her article “Women and Philanthropy: The Power of One!” Yet institutions still do not adequately address women’s interests, needs for giving, and giving preferences. (Wagner). At the same time, women are also in need of financial education. (Women’s Fund of Southern Alabama, 20 Questions). A recent study tells us that 95 percent of all women will have sole responsibility for their finances at some point in their lives and that 75 percent of all women have not begun to plan for retirement. (20 Questions). Further, analysis of new census data finds that poverty of women and children increased for the third straight year. www.nwlc.org, “NWLC Analysis of New Census Data,” August 26, 2004. The analysis conducted by the National Women’s Law Center (NWLC) of new census data shows that women were hit especially hard by the sluggish job market and health insurance cutbacks last year. (NWLC Analysis). “The data reveals women’s poverty rate increasing for a third straight year; the jump in child poverty over the past year was the largest in a decade.” (NWLC Analysis). As women’s incomes fell, men’s incomes remained stagnant resulting in a wider wage gap between the sexes. (NWLC Analysis). Women also experienced a sharper decline in health insurance coverage than men. (NWLC Analysis).



In summary, the special needs of women and girls affect our whole society. Let us all join together, men and women, to address these issues.

Invitation to Give

Financial support is vital. With a permanent endowment even small gifts become major gifts over time. But there are other ways to support The Women’s Fund. You can join our Board of Advisors, help spread the word about our organization, and you can volunteer your time, talents and resources. By getting involved and putting your dollars behind your commitment, you are investing in human lives and the well-being of our community. Together we *can* make a difference!

Some of the ways in which you can financially support The Women’s Fund include:

- * Cash/Credit Card Gifts
- * Pledges
- * Planned Gifts or Bequests
- * Insurance
- * Real Estate
- * Stocks
- * Memorials or Honoraria



Sandra Kendall, Sharon Beasley, Kelly Estle, and Judy Aronson at the Women’s Fund First Anniversary Celebration on August 26, 2004.

Other Women's Funds

Women's Funds are springing up all over the country and the world. In the United States, Women's Funds are working from Alabama to Rhode Island and from Massachusetts to Mississippi. Although our search does not purport to be exhaustive, we located other Funds in Florida, Indiana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, Wisconsin and even Scotland! We are gratified to be a part of a growing network of Funds dedicated to promoting philanthropy by women and for women!

The Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham has been both a resource and a guide to the establishment of our Fund. The Birmingham Fund was founded in 1996, according to its website. Today, that Fund proudly states its permanent endowment is more than \$1 million. Since making its first grants in 2000, the Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham has allocated \$100,000 to over thirty agencies serving women and girls in the greater Birmingham area.

Increasingly, women's foundations are funding research on women and girls in their own communities because the information is otherwise unavailable, according to an article in Women's E-News, dated May 20, 2003. That same article states that for many communities, it is either the first or only research of its kind. Assuming that knowledge is power, these studies will be a valuable resource in identifying needs of women in our communities and addressing those needs.

All of these Funds provide a shining example of the goals we anticipate to accomplish and exceed!

This & That

*Women's Fund logo pins are available for purchase in either sterling silver or sterling silver and gold. They make charming gifts.

*We at the Women's Fund are seeking speaking engagements. We would be delighted to speak to your club, gathering or group.

Balance on Hand

The Finance committee reports that contributions to the Fund total \$12,744 as of October 18, 2004. We have come a long way, and we have a long way to go! A spending policy was implemented by the Executive Board to assure that all gifts will be invested and not spent. This creates a permanent endowment that will keep giving long after we are gone.

Host a House Party

House parties are informal gatherings where guests are educated about the Women's Fund and are encouraged to participate in any way they can. The host or hostess invites family, friends and associates who may be interested in the mission of the Women's Fund to a luncheon or an after-five get together. The Women's Fund provides logistical support, information and will assist in educating your guests about the Fund. It is a grass roots approach to spreading information about the Women's Fund. Please consider hosting a house party.



**Celeste Powers, Doris Henning and Erin Wheeler
at Wheeler's house party on August 18, 2004**



Mission Statement – The Women’s Fund of Southern Alabama is dedicated to improving the status and quality of life for women and girls in the eight counties of Southwest Alabama through purposeful philanthropy and the establishment of a permanent endowment.

The Community Foundation of South Alabama

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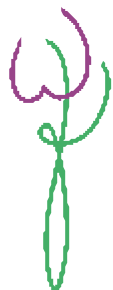
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Barbara Drummond speaking on behalf of the Women’s Fund at the Women’s Business Center of Southern Alabama SAL Client Recognition Awards on May 26, 2004.



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*Care to Empower
Women and Girls*

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