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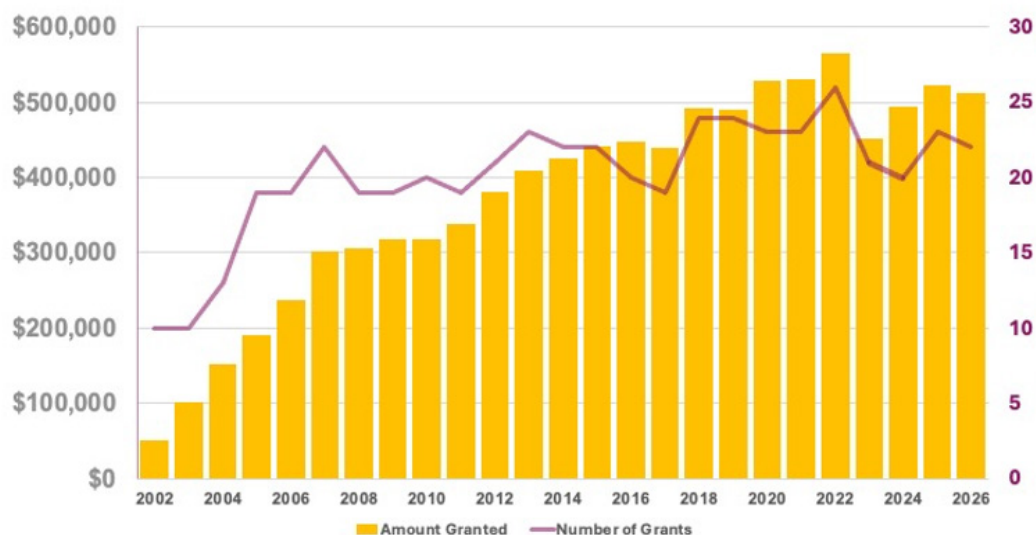
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25 Years of Grantmaking – On the Road to \$10 Million

This year marks the Giving Circle's 25th year of grantmaking – a milestone that underscores the extraordinary impact our members have made together. In that time, we've given 503 grants to 230 different organizations that advance opportunities for women and their families in the Baltimore area. Together we have invested more than \$9.4 million in our community, with nearly \$1.5 million supporting education, and almost \$1.3 million to fund workforce development programs.

As the chart shows, while the number of grants has increased from 10 grants in 2002 to 26 grants in 2022, the total dollars awarded has grown even more dramatically. In our early years, grants typically ranged from \$4,500 to \$15,000, so the growth in grant dollars and number of grants hasn't always followed the same trajectory.

Now we're on the verge of another exciting milestone: **reaching \$10 million in total grantmaking.** To reach that goal we need to expand our 2027 grants pool, and with your help, we can get there. Every new member we welcome, and every current member who renews, strengthens our ability to invest in women and their families. Let's celebrate 25 years by making next year's grant pool our largest yet!



Reflections From The Outgoing Co-Chairs

June brings the promise of warm and sunny days, but it also marks the end of our two-year term as Circle co-chairs.

As we reflect on our tenure, we are grateful for you, our members, for your financial support and the time and many talents you contribute to furthering our mission of providing opportunities for women and their families in Baltimore City and County.

This year was especially exciting. In November, BWGC celebrated its 25th anniversary with a gala celebration at the Baltimore Museum of Industry. In addition, BWGC approved a first-ever, three-year strategic plan. It represents the culmination of efforts by the Strategic Planning Committee and the Steering Committee, and we are grateful for their assistance. We are also grateful to the Strategic Plan Implementation Team for identifying the activities needed to carry out the goals and objectives of the plan.

We have been supported throughout our term by an amazing Steering Committee, and we give them our thanks. Now it's time for us to pass the torch to Lisa and Mary Jo.



Renee Gordon & Barbara Epke



Greetings From The Incoming Co-Chairs

Happy Summer. We hope you are enjoying some restorative time with friends and family. Along with our fantastic officers and Steering Committee, we are busy at work. Inspired by our strategic plan, committees are booking speakers, planning prospective and new member events, accessing tech platforms, reconsidering how we communicate, tweaking grant documents, and preparing to interact with our current and former grantees. So much for a summer lull!

As we begin our tenure as Circle co-chairs, we are humbled and excited to build upon the remarkable work of the women who led before us and the women who work alongside us. Together, we are demonstrating what is possible when we come together with purpose, generosity, and commitment to community. In the year ahead, we look forward to listening, learning, and acting together to help create a Baltimore where women and their families can flourish.

Special thanks to our outgoing chairs, Barbara Epke and Renee Gordon, for their leadership. We look forward to continuing the work they began, most notably implementing the recommendations from our strategic plan. This is an exciting time for our Circle. Thank you all for sharing the journey.



Mary Jo Wiese



Lisa Field



Introducing New Circle Leadership

Every year, the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee (NLDC) is responsible for selecting new officers and new committee co-chairs to serve staggered terms. This year's slate of officers was ratified by the full Circle via electronic vote with unanimous support.

The NLDC is pleased to present the following Circle officers and committee co-chairs for 2026-27:

CIRCLE CO-CHAIRS

Lisa Field and
Mary Jo Wiese

SECRETARY

Lissa Abrams

TREASURER

Anita Pomerantz

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Dorie Fain

COMMUNICATIONS

Phyllis Kolman

EDUCATION

Silvia Golombek and
Liz Briscoe

GRANTS

Ev Amaral and Pam Pasqualini

GRANTEE CONNECT

Crickett Woloson and
Joyce Moskowitz

MEMBERSHIP

Heather Johnson and
Reba Cornman

NLDC

Ann Daniels and
Dana Foley

POST GRANTS

Sharon Edlow and
Carol Doctrow

2026-27 Steering Committee

The Circle is led by the Steering Committee (SC), which includes 5 Circle officers and 13 committee co-chairs this year. The SC oversees the Circle's management and operations. The 2026-27 Steering Committee is pictured below.



BWGC Approves Three-Year Strategic Plan

Assisted by the Strategic Planning Committee, the FY26 Steering Committee, and outside consultants, BWGC approved a three-year strategic plan designed to ensure the Circle's continued viability. After collecting data from a BWGC member survey, focus groups, and a grantee survey, the Strategic Planning Committee and Steering Committee identified four strategic priorities: *Identity & Member Experience, Leadership/Management, Resource Development, and Grants and Grantmaking.*

For each priority, the plan includes a set of goals and objectives. The Implementation Team, consisting of four separate sub-groups, one for each of the four priorities, recommended activities to be undertaken over the next three years. New Circle co-chairs Lisa Field and Mary Jo Wiese will assume responsibility for this next phase of the strategic plan.

Full Circle Annual Meeting

On May 13, more than 120 Circle members gathered at Beth El Congregation's Offit Hall to celebrate the work of the past year, learn the names of the 22 nonprofits awarded grants for FY 27, recognize and thank the outgoing Circle and committee co-chairs, and meet the incoming leadership team.

Presentations by last year's Post Grants liaisons highlighted the impressive impact that two of our grantees, Tahirih Justice Center and the Women's Housing Coalition, are having on women and their families. The meeting concluded with wine and hors d'oeuvres and an opportunity for members to socialize. Mark your calendar for the next Full Circle Annual Meeting to be held May 19, 2027.



Awarded Grants Exceed \$500,000

Each year, BWGC awards grants funded by member dues and other contributions to organizations aligned with its mission. **This year, a total of \$512,555 was awarded.**

Nineteen teams of five to six readers reviewed 178 applications, conducted site visits, and recommended organizations for funding. Members ultimately selected 22 grantees, including several first-time recipients. Seven small organizations (budgets under \$500,000) and four large organizations (budgets over \$5 million) were funded; the remainder were mid-sized.

We thank the many volunteers who made this process possible, including 26 team leaders, 91 readers, and 37 additional members who participated in the final vote.

The 2026-27 Circle Grantees are:

ADVOCACY

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Baltimore, Inc. - \$25,000

DOMESTIC/SEXUAL VIOLENCE

TurnAround, Inc. - \$25,000

DRUG/ALCOHOL/MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT

Marian House - \$25,000
Chrysalis House, Inc. - \$12,555

EDUCATION

St. Francis Neighborhood Center - \$25,000
The Glow Forward Foundation - \$25,000

EMERGENCY GRANTS

4MyCiTy Inc. - \$25,000

FOOD AND HUNGER SERVICES

Baltimore Hunger Project - \$25,000

HEALTH SERVICES

Shepherd's Clinic - \$10,000
The Violet Project - \$25,000
Mission of Mercy, Inc. - \$25,000

HOUSING

Baltimore Outreach Services - \$25,000

LIFE SKILLS

Drink at the Well, Inc. - \$25,000
UniFIED Efforts, Inc. - \$25,000

MENTORING

CASA of Baltimore County Inc. - \$25,000
Soccer Without Borders Maryland - \$25,000
Coach G Academy, Inc. - \$25,000
The Chris Wilson Foundation - \$25,000

PARENTING SKILLS

Saint Luke's Youth Center - \$25,000

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Caroline Center - \$25,000
Maryland Food Bank - \$25,000

MISCELLANEOUS

Identity Access Project - \$15,000

Committee Reports

Education

In April, the Education Committee wrapped up a year-long focus on the issue of affordable housing. We welcomed GEDCO's CEO Nicole Battle, who engaged a roomful of Circle members in a dynamic conversation about regional housing needs. We learned how GEDCO is responding with support for older adults, and food assistance and other services to the homeless.

Communications

The Communications Committee produced the Monthly Member Memo featuring updates on Circle events and news. A Volunteer Corner was recently added to alert members to opportunities to help grantees. Communications also continues to post on all BWGC social media platforms and publish newsletters and the annual Year in Review.

Membership

The committee held several prospective member events, including one at Jeremiah Project, another, a presentation by the Helping Up Mission, and yet another that featured the Immigration Outreach Service Center. The committee sponsored hikes for new members, a new member social, and two well-attended zip code "Meet and Greet" for members. Total membership stands at 408.

Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (REDI)

The Steering Committee established the REDI Committee in 2020 as a resource and support to the existing Circle committees. REDI's accomplishments are far reaching and were completed, as intended, by working with and through other existing Circle committees. This successful approach helped to infuse REDI principles throughout the Circle and lead REDI members to conclude that it was the appropriate time to disband. The Steering Committee accepted this recommendation with the understanding that the Circle's commitment to racial equity, diversity, and inclusion remains steadfast and the belief that individual committees are best equipped to advance those values.

Nominating and Leadership Development

The NLDC worked diligently to fill the roles of Circle co-chairs, assistant treasurer, and seven committee co-chairs. NLDC members reviewed and discussed potential nominees and created a slate for 2026-27. Nominees were then invited to serve. At the annual Full Circle meeting, the entire membership voted to elect Circle officers (co-chairs, treasurer, assistant treasurer, and secretary). Many thanks to Bonnie Stainman as she steps down as NLDC co-chair, and a warm welcome to Dana Foley as she steps into that role.

Post Grants

The Post Grants Committee celebrated the 2025-26 grant year with a luncheon meeting at the Maryland Philanthropy Network facility. Committee members, who are liaisons to Circle grantees, each gave brief reports on highlights from the grantees' work over the course of the year. The reports were overwhelmingly positive, and it was gratifying to hear of the impressive accomplishments of the organizations supported by Circle funds.

March Full Circle Addressed Housing Issues In The City And County

More than 100 members attended the March Full Circle to hear Baltimore City Councilwoman Odette Ramos and Baltimore County Housing Director Terry Hickey (*left and right, respectively, in top photo*) address regional housing issues.

Ramos and Hickey cited many shared concerns, including a shortage of affordable housing, rising housing costs outpacing incomes, the link between affordable housing and health, and the growing impact of the housing shortage on older adults and women with families.

An energetic discussion followed, highlighting steps we – as Circle members and individuals – can take to help reverse the crisis: continue funding and volunteering for organizations working on housing and homelessness, encourage our elected officials to make affordable housing a priority, and support legislation.



May Grantee Connect Forum: From Partnership to Collaboration

On May 5, the Grantee Connect Forum convened 34 BWGC grantees and six funders at TouchPoint, a beautiful building that Thread – a Circle grantee – shares with other youth development organizations. Fittingly, the gathering's Forum topic was "From Partnership to Collaboration: Amplifying Impact Together."

Kelsey Brooks, BGREEN Collaborative's coordinator, framed the discussion this way: What do collective impact and systemic change look like? She guided participants to consider ways to structure, evaluate, and overcome the challenges of moving beyond traditional non-profit-funder partnerships toward collaboration.

Attendees engaged in lively group discussions. Funders pointed to their focus on concrete measures such as how their grants are used and how organizations are "moving the needle". Nonprofit representatives emphasized the "need to stop pulling people out of the water and start building seaworthy boats." They agreed that the first step toward change was meeting each other at events such as the Forum to find common cause. Pointing to the Circle's leadership in this effort, one participant commented, "... the BWGC is filling an empty space and is the neutral ground where change can occur."



We Welcome These New Members To The Circle:

Eileen Abel
Emily Bitner
Barbara Enrich
Amy Entwisle
Gigi Farley
Megan Gillick

Debbie Grichuhin
Mary Huddleston
Traci James
Jenny Kassan
Denise Kramer-
Buchman

Nancy Landolf
Brenda Martin
Brenda Moses-Allen
Pamela Russell
Jennifer St. Germain
Rita Singer

Kathleen Vincent
Leslie Waldman
Sharon Warren
Carol Wettersten
Janet Yellowitz

Upcoming Events

9
Sept.

Prospective Member Social

30
Sept.

Full Circle Meeting

BWGC – Making A Difference For 25 Years!

- \$9.4 million invested in improving lives and advancing opportunities for women and their families in Baltimore City and County
 - 230 grantees
 - 503 grants

Thank You To Our Contributors

Ev Amaral • Susan Anderson • Kelly Chew • Ann Daniels • Sharon Edlow • Amy Entwisle • Barbara Epke
Lisa Field • Silvia Golombek • Renee Gordon • Sarah Grebow • Heather Johnson • Phyllis Kolman
Bobbie Miyasaki • Catherine Morris • Sharon Nathanson • Pam Pasqualini • Mary-Ann Pinkard
Ida Samet • Jane Strausbaugh • Jaclyn Vorenkamp • Mary Bruce Webb • Mary Jo Wiese • Crickett Woloson