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BWGC 2022 Annual Member Survey

In May 2022, BWGC members participated in an Annual Survey. Thanks to the team who created the survey - Lisa Field, Leslie Glickman, Pat Lasher, Katie Ryan Lakin, Vivian Manekin, Cathy Neuman, Mary-Ann Pinkard, Susan Talles, Mary Jo Wiese, Crickett Woloson, and Pam Young. The team contacted the Steering Committee consisting of the Circle Co-Chairs, officers and Committee Co-Chairs to find out what information we needed to gather from our members.

All 461 members received the survey via email; and 93% of those who opened it responded. Those responses are in a 44-page report available to all Circle members on the BWGC website in the Circle Library. It is very heartening to see that **94% of the respondents indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied** with their BWGC experience last year.

The Steering Committee (SC) has studied the responses and member information is already helping the SC make plans and implement changes for this year. Further analysis will continue, and help the SC begin its planning for the 2023 Annual Survey.

2023 Plans:

- An ad hoc committee is conducting a search for an administrative coordinator.
- Some committees are changing meeting times so working members can attend.
- Membership Committee is alternating meeting times and tracking attendance.
- For now, Full Circle meetings will be hybrid – both in person and on Zoom.
- The REDI Committee is looking into offering programs about regional demographics and national trends in philanthropy.
- A REDI Initiative Team is exploring how to integrate new practices such as trust-based philanthropy into the BWGC model.
- Committee co-chairs are reaching out to members who expressed an interest in participating.
- CircleWorks will organize three volunteer service projects during 2022-23.
- CircleFORUM will visit Marion House, one of our grantees, in November.
- Nominating will hold a Zoom meeting, Pathways to Leadership, on Wednesday, December 7 from 5-5:45 p.m.
- The survey underscored the fact that many members do not know the important work the Grantee Connect committee does. Its members are now working to educate both BWGC members and grantees.

Letter from the Co-Chairs



Hello Circle members,

The year is off to a terrific start, and for that we thank the Education and Membership committees for a wonderful September Full Circle meeting. Jabari Lyles was inspiring – there is no other word for it. If you missed it, it is worth a listen. [You can find his talk and a REDI Committee presentation here.](#)

Speaking of great events, we are thrilled to announce that Philanos will hold its 2023 Conference in Baltimore next November. Philanos' mission is to inspire women's philanthropic leadership and strengthen collective giving organizations across the country. The BWGC will partner with the Howard County Women's Giving Circle, Anne Arundel Women Giving

Together and Many Hands of DC to host this conference. More to come about the speakers, opportunities to volunteer, and how to register.

We are also pleased to share that BWGC nominated Black Women Build Baltimore (BWBB) for a Philanos Spotlight Award. This award spotlights a "grant that has transformed your members, your affiliate, a grantee organization, and/or your community." BWBB is one of three 2022 winners. Shelley Halstead and her team, recognized at the 2022 Philanos PowerUp Conference on October 11, will receive a \$500 gift from Philanos. Congratulations to them!

Our Administrative Coordinator search team, led by Mary Jo Wiese and Lisa Field, is looking to hire a part-time administrator for the Circle. This position will assist the Steering Committee and the work of the entire Circle. We hope to have someone on board in winter 2023.

Finally, we know that many of you who renewed by mail encountered problems with your membership renewals being returned (sometimes three times). We are sorry this happened, and Baltimore Community Foundation has assured us that the problem is fixed. We appreciate your patience and thank you for renewing!

All the best,

Ann and Salli



Save the Date!

BWGC will co-host the National Philanos Conference November 5-7, 2023 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Baltimore, together with the Women's Giving Circle of Howard County, Anne Arundel Women Giving Together and Many Hands of DC. The theme is "Power Up Baltimore." Expected attendance is 400+ from giving circles across the U.S. Attendees will pay their own registration fee (estimated to be \$500-600). BWGC will develop a hospitality plan, determine the menu, and arrange for a photographer and audio/visual. If you'd like to help with the planning, please contact Circle Co-Chair Ann Daniels. Stay tuned for more details in the near future!



JABARI LYLES

Full Circle Meeting

On September 21, 80 members met at The Church of the Redeemer in the first in-person Full Circle meeting in more than two years. Many more members attended on Zoom. The speaker, Jabari Lyles, a longtime advocate for LGBTQ issues, is a Baltimore native who has worked for local government and nonprofits and as an educator and consultant. Currently, he provides LGBTQ inclusion training for organizations across the U.S. and was appointed to Maryland's first Commission on LGBTQ Affairs.

Lyles discussed the LGBTQ acronym - lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer, and provided an overview of the difficulties LGBTQ people face. Those issues include safety, unity within a diverse community, obtaining stable housing, employment and quality health care and inclusion, affording

LGBTQ people rights and respect in society. Finally, he encouraged BWGC to include transgender women in our mission to help the women of Baltimore.

REMEMBER: [You can see all the Full Circle and other videos on the Circle's YouTube page.](#)

Nominating & Leadership Development

We Need YOU!

The BWGC relies on the passion, energy, and participation of our membership. The Nominating & Leadership Development Committee (NLDC) recruits active Circle members for future leadership roles. We need your help! [Please contact us to learn more about leadership roles.](#) Also, be thinking of members you would like to recommend for leadership positions.

Here are some great ways to learn about Circle leadership possibilities:

1. **PARTICIPATE** as an active member on a committee;
2. **TALK** with committee co-chairs or Circle officers about their work;
3. **SPEAK** with a member of the NLDC about your interests;
4. **ATTEND** the Circle leadership orientation program, Pathways to Leadership, via ZOOM on Wednesday, December 7 at 5 p.m. Evites for this program will be sent in November.

Circle members will receive an email in late November asking them to self-nominate and/or make recommendations for Circle leadership. The NLDC will begin selecting potential officers and committee co-chairs in late January. If you have any questions or ideas to share, please reach out to us directly at Nominating@TheBWGC.org or to a member of the NLDC: Susan Hovanec, Penny Wald, Lissa Abrams, Day Bank, Renee Gordon, Hilary Campodonico, Susan Shubin, Peggy Cohen, Suzanne Dagurt, and Laura Hahn. Thank you for your interest and help!



GRANTEE PROFILE

Farm Alliance of Baltimore

The Farm Alliance of Baltimore, whose seeds were first sown in 2011, supports farms in formerly vacant lots in Baltimore City. These farms and gardens now make additive-free fruits and vegetables available in areas where access to fresh, healthy produce is limited.

This first-time Circle grantee sees its role as supporting urban farmers and gardeners through training, education and ongoing support, helping them build confidence in their abilities and gaining independence. In turn, these farmers and gardeners help stabilize and build the communities where they are located as well as support the health and well-being of the neighborhoods and their residents. The Alliance counts 16 farms and 10 gardeners as well as 80 members who participate in farming activities. The farms and gardens are in central Baltimore – from Cherry Hill to Clifton Park to Reservoir Hill.

The Alliance participates in the SNAP/EBT matching dollar program and has a stand at the 32nd Street/Waverly Market on Saturdays. Its outreach includes providing seedlings, soil testing, training and workshops. Its community cooking demonstrations, with healthy cooking instructions using Alliance farm produce, focus on women growers and home cooks, positioning them to be their neighborhoods' mainstays for greater food security and healthy food choices. These programs have attracted nearly 500 participants per year.

Over the past year, the Alliance has been developing the Black Butterfly Urban Farmer Academy teaching farm on a 6.7-acre city-owned site in the Curtis Bay area with the help of a USDA farmer education grant. The Black Butterfly Urban Farmer Academy is a nine-month program of farm work, classroom sessions, and field days with a focus on farm business planning and sustainable farming methods. Besides the USDA, the Alliance counts the Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health, University of Maryland Extension Service, Black Yield Institute, and Horticultural Society of Maryland among its partners.

Welcome to our new BWGC members!

Evelyn Amaral
Lindsay Bearman
Nancy Diamond
Sarah Grebow
Mary Helfrich

Jane Huth
Elizabeth Insley
Janet Jacobs
Julie Marshall
Suzy Nance

Michelle Pappas
Kylie Patterson
Lora Rosen
Laura Rossman
Ayanna Simmons

Kathy Vogelsang
Lauren Wayne
Carla Weisman

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee (ComCom) recently produced and distributed BWGC's annual report, The Year in Review (YIR), to BWGC members via snail mail and email. Friends of the BWGC also received digital copies. ComCom's ad hoc Social Media Planning Group, tasked with rethinking the Circle's social media (SM) presence, had an initial meeting in early October to discuss what the Circle hopes to achieve through SM. Future meetings will discuss how best to utilize SM to achieve our goals. Finally, if you missed the September Full Circle meeting, videos from the meeting (Jabari Lyles and REDI presentations) are available on YouTube (links are available in the Circle Library).

Grantee Connect

Grantee Connect's November online forum for Circle grantees will focus on staffing, morale building and volunteer recruitment and retention. To garner grantee recommendations for the event's topic, Committee members Barbara Anderson and Tara Clifford consulted representatives from Goucher Prison Education Partnership, Vehicles for Change, Feeding the Flock, Mission of Mercy, St. Vincent de Paul, and Dundalk Renaissance Corporation. All agreed that while fundraising is an ongoing issue, staffing and volunteer recruitment and retention is a primary concern of nonprofits coming out of the pandemic: From staff and volunteer burnout to "the great resignation," all are asking, "How do we build and maintain our organization's morale?"

Tara and fellow Committee members Robin Kaplan and Ellen Hochman are contacting potential speakers for the forum.

REDI (Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)

The REDI Committee's co-chairs, Vivian Manekin and Crickett Woloson, presented a substantive report at the September Full Circle meeting. They described the tasks of four REDI Committee "Initiative Teams" (ITs):

- The Vision, Values Mission IT is engaging a facilitator to assist the Circle with developing vision, values, and mission statements.
- The Grant IT is researching innovative grant models with other collective giving groups and Baltimore-based nonprofit leaders.
- The Conversation IT is planning possible REDI-related programs for 2023.
- The Onboarding IT is meeting with the new REDI Committee members to orient them to the REDI committee's extensive work to date.

Several new members have joined the REDI Committee and each is choosing a team with which to work.

GRANTEE PROFILE

Dundalk Renaissance Corporation

Dundalk Renaissance Corporation (DRC) began in 2001 with the goal of strengthening and revitalizing the area surrounding what had been the Bethlehem Steel complex at Sparrows Point. Its focus has changed since 2017, with an emphasis on traditionally under-resourced neighborhoods such as Turner Station and Graceland Park and the adjacent commercial district of the Historic Dundalk Town Center.

The DRC's 2-year-old Financial Literacy and Coaching Project teaches financial skills, including household budgeting and financing tools, that will enable area residents to make competent financial decisions in meeting their needs and aspirations. The Circle's \$15,000 grant will allow the DRC to identify and serve more women in the Dundalk area and to help fund a permanent project coordinator.



More than 600 individuals from Baltimore County and Baltimore City have participated in at least one of the project's activities. Seventy-five percent of the participants had incomes at or below the area median, 68% were women, and 57% were minorities. Through workshops, monthly meetings, individual counseling, and follow-up support, the project covers topics such as budgeting and financial fitness, foreclosure/eviction prevention, tax preparation, and home renovation/purchase. The DRC recognizes that financial stability plays a role in

housing and food security, educational attainment, as well as physical and mental health, and its partnerships give it access to outside expertise, enabling participants to get referrals for related issues of domestic violence, homelessness, employment, and substance abuse.

To measure participants' success in achieving their stated financial goals, increasing their savings rates and improving their credit scores, the first step is a comprehensive financial well-being survey, followed by monthly monitoring and quarterly assessments. DRC collects demographic information to evaluate the project and to make sure it represents the overall community.

This is the Circle's eighth grant targeting financial literacy and the first since 2016. The first such grant went to the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service in 2002; the last one went to the International Rescue Committee in 2016.



2020 Grantee Wins Philanos Award

We are delighted that our 2020 Grantee, Black Women Build Baltimore, was recognized at the Philanos fall gathering PowerUP! The Spark That Ignites Change on October 11 with a Spotlight Award! Thanks to Dawna Cobb for writing the application for this honor.

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Opportunities to Help Current and Former Grantees



FAMILY CRISIS CENTER
OF BALTIMORE COUNTY

Family Crisis Center of Baltimore County

works with individuals, families, and communities to interrupt and prevent cycles of violence in relationships. Board members are being recruited. Contact amie@familycrisiscenter.net.



Learn Everywhere | Goucher Prison Education Partnership

The Goucher Prison Education Partnership gives women incarcerated in Maryland the opportunity to pursue a Goucher College education through courses on-site at the prison. The program provides academic materials, access to skilled tutors and office hours with professors and academic advisors. Potential volunteers should attend 1 of 2 information sessions on October 30 and November 13 on Goucher's Towson campus to learn more.



Martha's Place is a housing program in West Baltimore for women recovering from addiction. Volunteers who are passionate about a topic that promotes wellness in any way are needed to lead workshops or Wednesday discussion groups. Email programcoordinator@marthasplace.org if you are interested.



Maryland New Directions offers no-cost employment coaching and specialized career training programs to Baltimore-area residents ages 18-60. Volunteer opportunities include helping with mock interviews, job searches and applications. If interested, contact Karlise "Kae" Brown at kcureton@mdnewdirections.org.



Metropolitan
Baltimore

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)

Metropolitan Baltimore works to provide support, education and advocacy to anyone living with a mental health condition and their families on Baltimore City and County. Volunteer opportunities include facilitating support groups, teaching education classes, and providing resources to individuals through NAMI's Helpline. Go to www.namibaltimore.volunteerhub.com.



Reading Partners promotes children's literacy by providing Baltimore City public school students with one-on-one reading support. Volunteer tutors, in-person and online, are needed; no prior experience is necessary. Sign up at readingpartners.org/volunteer-baltimore/.



Sisters Circle is recruiting new mentors as it works to identify and leverage a vast array of resources to help expand each young woman's vision of herself and her future. Learn more at www.sisterscircle.org/volunteer/.



St. Francis Neighborhood Center, the oldest neighborhood center providing enrichment in Baltimore City, is committed to ending generational poverty through education, inspiring self-esteem, self-improvement, and strengthening connections to the community. It is looking for tutors, classroom assistants, and activity club leaders. If you are interested, email volunteer@stfranciscenter.org.

VOLUNTEER CORNER (CON'T)



St. Vincent de Paul is a leading provider of community services to people suffering from the effects of hunger, homelessness, and poverty in the Baltimore region. To learn more about volunteer opportunities, email Kelsea Guckin at kelsea.guckin@vincentbaltimore.org.



Thread harnesses the power of relationships to create a new social fabric of diverse individuals deeply engaged with young people facing the most significant opportunity and achievement gaps. To learn about volunteer opportunities, go to www.thread.org/get-involved/volunteer/.



WEEKEND BACKPACKS
Hunger doesn't take the weekend off

Weekend Backpacks aims to improve the lives of students affected by food insecurity in Baltimore. Volunteers are needed to help pack on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings and to deliver the bags to schools on Thursday and Friday mornings. Contact volunteer@weekendbackpacks.org.

If you decide to volunteer for any of these organizations, please let us know! Send your name and the name of the group you will be volunteering for to: granteeconnect@thebwgc.org and to postgrants@thebwgc.org.

Calendar of Events

11/10/22	Circle Forum: Visit to Marian House
12/07/22 5-5:45pm	Pathways to Leadership: Orientation (zoom)
12/14/22	Full Circle Meeting (hybrid)
01/11/23	New Grant Reader's Orientation

Thank you to our contributors:

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