The well attended Fall Full Circle meeting of the Baltimore Women’s Giving Circle took place on September 13 and featured a panel discussion on Juvenile Justice.

Circle co-chairs Jodi Dunn and Vivian Manekin opened the meeting by welcoming members and guests, including representatives from ten of our current grantee organizations, along with Phoebe Stein, Executive Director, Maryland Humanities and Laury Scharff, Chair of The Jewish Women’s Giving Foundation.

Karen Singer, a new BWGC member, invited Circle members to save the date for a poverty simulation program to be hosted by the United Way on January 17, 2018 titled ‘Walk a Mile’. Watch for more detailed information about this important event.

Penny Cordish, Education Co-chair, introduced the Juvenile Justice panelists Ganesha Martin, Chief, Department of Justice Compliance and Accountability/External Affairs for the Baltimore Police Department; The Honorable Robert Kershaw, Judge-in-charge Juvenile Justice Center, Circuit Court of Baltimore City; and Nancy Blackwell, Executive Director of Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children (CASA).

Ganesha Martin opened the discussion by first laying out the juvenile justice issues in Baltimore City, stressing not only that human beings are involved but that justice issues themselves are complicated especially when you consider the environment in which a child was “conceived, nursed and reared.”

Hardships that children might deal with include malnutrition, under education, neglect, trauma, violence and few or no positive role models. Martin balanced these against what police have with them - guns, handcuffs, and tasers, which, she noted, are not the tools that can help. Yet she stressed what we all know—children are resourceful and resilient and that if they can be involved in programs based on best practices, many of which include police officers, a better environment can be created for both.

The Police department uses a 2-pronged approach in dealing with juvenile offenders. First, remove violent repeat offenders from the community and ensure that while behind bars they have access to basic schooling, job and or trade skill training, anger management, etc. Second, develop diversion programs, like the one currently being piloted at the Western
THE BWGC LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

As we begin our second year as Co-chairs of the Circle, we are continually amazed at the dedication of our members and especially the leaders of our committees. Our work requires an incredible amount of planning and coordination, yet it is always done professionally and with good humor (a huge plus in volunteer work!)

We began the year with a Steering Committee meeting getting to know each other better and brainstorming ideas for growing and maintaining our membership. A new ad hoc committee, headed by Anita Pomerantz, will be exploring these ideas during the coming year.

At our Full Circle meeting on September 13th, we gained valuable insight into the Juvenile Justice system by hearing different perspectives from a very knowledgeable panel. They shared with us the incredibly complicated but hopeful work of redirecting youth who are experiencing trauma and have extremely limited resources. We were also excited to engage with some of our most recent grantees who joined us at the meeting to share their passion and dedication for the work they do.

Congratulations to our website committee, headed by Janice Williams and Cathy Neuman, which has worked tirelessly to bring us our new website. We love the bright design, improved navigation, new images and great new features that members requested.

Finally, thanks to our hard working membership committee, we have over 30 new members who need mentors. If you have been an active member for a year or two, you have the experience needed. Mentors “show new members the ropes”, introduce them to other members, join them at a meeting, or just share a cup of coffee and get to know each other. It would be great for all involved! If interested, please email the mentoring co-chairs: Marsha Ramsay (marsharamsay@msn.com) or Hilary Campodonico (hilarycampodonico@hotmail.com).

We look forward to another year of connecting women and improving lives. We are all very lucky to have each other and this work that binds us. Thank you all.

— Jodi Dunn and Vivian Manekin, Co-chairs of the Circle

GRANTS UPDATE

The new grants season has begun! Over 375 organizations received an email notifying them of the opportunity to apply for a grant beginning October 1. We also invited nonprofits to attend one of our two applicant information sessions on October 4 and 5. Awards will be made in June 2018.

Please join the exciting process of evaluating grant applications by becoming a grant reader. We would welcome your participation on one of our grants teams. It’s not too late!

If you have not read grants before, please join us for an introduction to the grants reading process on Thursday November 2nd from 9:30 to 11:30 to learn what grant reading is all about. You will get an introduction to evaluating grant applications, making site visits, and presenting recommendations to the full Circle. Evaluate an actual, submitted grant and see if you agree with others whether it should have a site visit. This meeting is open to returning grant readers or to any other members who intend to vote and want a refresher.

To RSVP to the New Grant Readers training or to sign up for the Grants Committee please email us at: grants@thebwgc.org

New Grant Reader Training
Thursday, November 2, 9:30-11:30
Courtyard Room, Central Presbyterian Church
7308 York Road (use parking lot off of York)
Towson, MD 21204
District, these are located within each of the district police stations and offer community-focused programming to provide youth a safe and fun place to be.

Judge Robert Kershaw’s presentation followed, and he said that in his opinion there is a positive convergence in leadership at the Dept. of Social Services, the Dept. of Juvenile Justice, the Baltimore City Police and other organizations to focus on evidence-based approaches that are proven to be effective.

Kershaw pointed out that the human brain does not fully develop until age 25 or 26 and that full development depends on adequate nutrition, no ADHD, enough exercise and sleep, and no trauma. Not surprisingly, most of the children he sees in his courtroom suffer from a lack of one or more of these essential requirements.

Judge Kershaw described his court’s three-fold purpose – to address children’s welfare, delinquency and accountability.

Child welfare, Kershaw says, is all about keeping kids safe from abuse and neglect. However, family reunification is always the goal if it can be done safely, ideally within 15-20 months. Research shows that keeping children away from relatives for long periods of time misses a huge opportunity to help families do better.

Delinquency pertains to juveniles who have broken the law. And these children (and their parents, depending on the circumstances) have to be held accountable. But with the right programs and outside placements, when necessary, it is possible to get back on a positive track.

Accountability, Kershaw stressed, does not mean punishment. Research shows that punishment does not work and that punishment alone tends to reinforce stereotypes and lead to further bad behavior.

Kershaw also supports connecting juveniles to programs with professionals so children have the tools they need to change their behavior and find positive outlets.

Nancy Blackwell of CASA, our third panelist, comes to juvenile justice work as an advocate for youth. CASA often opens lines of communication between youth and foster parents or the courts and provides one on one support for children in need of an advocate.

Blackwell provided the example of one boy in the foster care system who was consistently missing his curfew so he could travel back to his old Baltimore City neighborhood. The court’s solution was to reassign him to foster homes farther and farther away from his neighborhood as a deterrent. It did not work. His CASA volunteer found that he was going back to his old neighborhood to take care of his baby while his girlfriend was working. CASA was able to work with the judge to change his placement to be closer to his girlfriend and baby and he now has own apartment and is in a work program.

A common theme across the various panel presentations was the understanding that children who come into contact with the juvenile justice system are just that - children. Kids whose brains are not developed, whose long-term thinking skills are non-existent, who face a wide range of physical and mental health stressors that potentially impact them even before they are born. Yet they can be strong, resilient and creative survivors who deserve support and access to programs that realistically meet their needs, and those of their families.

An interesting question and answer period followed the panel discussion and we were left with much to think about and what needs to happen in order to improve the juvenile justice system in Baltimore and help those youth that are struggling to a better future.
Through collective giving and collaboration, The Baltimore Women’s Giving Circle seeks to empower women and their families in the greater Baltimore area to achieve self-sufficiency. The Giving Circle encourages members to participate in philanthropy through grant-making, education, advocacy and community-based activities.

IN HER OWN WORDS

What are Your Plans and Goals for the Year?

**JENNIFER YEAGLE**
Membership
As co-chair of the BWGC’s membership committee, I am excited to introduce prospective members to the Circle and the many ways in which the Circle helps women and children throughout the Baltimore community. I hope to help grow the membership and recruit the next generation of Circle members.

**SUSAN TALLES**
Education
As the new Education Committee co-chair, I am hoping to foster an environment where all of our committee members have input in the planning of Full Circle, Circle Forum, Circle Advocacy and Circle Reads events. Through the cooperative work of these subcommittees, I hope we can continue to provide informative learning opportunities for the entire BWGC membership.

**MARA BRAVERMAN**
Grants
I look forward to supporting the important work of the many members of the Grants Committee who evaluate applications, as well as all the Circle members who vote on which applications to fund. My focus will be on looking for ways to make the grants process easier for both applicants and BWGC members.

**PAT LASHER**
Post Grants
The Post Grants Committee acts as a liaison with the grantees as they undertake and complete their projects and programs and committee members provide an important link between the Giving Circle and the Grantees. As the new Post Grants co-chair, I look forward to supporting the work of our committee members and hope to help streamline the reporting process.
TWO-YEAR GRANTEES:

**GOUCHER PRISON EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP**
General Operations
$50,000
To provide a college education to nearly 100 female inmates housed in Maryland’s prisons, giving these women the foundation for future employment and a better life for themselves, their children and our communities. Participants are far less likely to return to prison than non-participants. In 2016, Goucher received permission to confer a bachelor’s degree to prison students. The Goucher Prison Education Partnership boasts an admirable 88 percent retention rate.
www.goucher.edu/academics/other-academic-offerings/goucher-prison-education-partnership

**ST. VINCENT DE PAUL OF BALTIMORE**
Sarah’s Hope Family Center
$50,000
To help support a comprehensive family shelter that provides 24 hour services for 150 homeless families in the Sandtown-Winchester area of Baltimore City each year. Sarah’s Hope strives to keep families together, helping them attain permanent housing after an average stay of four months. Children’s services include onsite therapeutic day care and Early Head Start, school enrollment and tutoring, onsite primary health care with referral to offsite providers for specialty care, and daily recreation and social activities designed to promote social skills and reinforce learning. Sarah’s Hope also offers an academically enriched summer camp.
www.vincentbaltimore.org

**ASYLEE WOMEN ENTERPRISE**
General Operations
$20,000
To provide housing, counseling, and community to asylum seekers until they obtain work permits and/or approval of their asylum case, which often takes a year or more.
www.asyleewomen.org

**MIRIAM LODGE WEEKEND BACKPACKS FOR HOMELESS KIDS**
Backpacks
$20,000
To provide food for the weekend for homeless children, and expand the number of Baltimore schools served from six to eight, benefitting more than 150 children every week throughout the school year.
https://www.miriamlodgeksb.org/weekend-backpacks

**BALTIMORE OUTREACH SERVICES**
Journey to Independence and Self Sufficiency for Homeless Women and Children
$20,000
To help homeless women and children acquire stable housing and the resources to remain housed and independent, via counseling, treatment for mental and physical health needs, education, and job preparation and placement.
www.baltimoreoutreach.org

**BIOTECHNICAL INSTITUTE OF MARYLAND**
General Operations
$20,000
To train 10 single mothers, who are unemployed or underemployed, for careers in laboratory science.
www.biotechmd.org

**BUILDING SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS**
General Operations
$20,000
To enable high achieving Baltimore City high school students from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue careers in the science and technology fields through a structured program of internships, seminars and mentoring, and increasing the number of students served from the present 72 to 150.
www.buildingsteps.org

**COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES (CASA) OF BALTIMORE COUNTY**
Fostering Futures Expansion – Women’s Initiative
$20,000
To add and train staff to advocate for the needs of older youth in foster care, and to identify and work to overcome problems that hinder self sufficiency when youth age out of foster care.
www.casabaltco.org

**HEALTHCARE FOR THE HOMELESS**
Caring for Homeless Children and Young Families
$20,000
To provide primary pediatric and family medicine services, along with behavioral healthcare, to young women and children without homes via the Health Care for the Homeless’ mobile clinic.
www.lhchmd.org

**ONE-YEAR GRANTEES:**

**ST. VINCENT DE PAUL OF BALTIMORE**
Sarah’s Hope Family Center
$50,000
To help support a comprehensive family shelter that provides 24 hour services for 150 homeless families in the Sandtown-Winchester area of Baltimore City each year. Sarah’s Hope strives to keep families together, helping them attain permanent housing after an average stay of four months. Children’s services include onsite therapeutic day care and Early Head Start, school enrollment and tutoring, onsite primary health care with referral to offsite providers for specialty care, and daily recreation and social activities designed to promote social skills and reinforce learning. Sarah’s Hope also offers an academically enriched summer camp.
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www.lhchmd.org
HIGHER ACHIEVEMENT
General Operations
$20,000
To help expand a year-around academic program, from the present 180 Baltimore City middle school students to 285 students. The program aims to help middle school students prepare for success in high school, college and beyond.
www.higherachievement.org/baltimore

MISSION OF MERCY
Medical and Dental Care for Women
$20,000
To provide medical and dental care to 400 uninsured women and children via Mission of Mercy’s mobile clinic in Reisterstown. Services include physician/dentist visit, laboratory testing, prescription medications and referrals for free care from cooperating specialists.
www.missionofmercy.org/maryland-pennsylvania

MOVABLE FEAST
Culinary Training Program
$20,000
To provide high quality, culinary arts training to 13 women to enable them to find employment in the food services industry.
www.mfeast.org/services-programs/culinary-training/

NORTHWEST HOSPITAL CENTER
DOVE: Social Work and Emergency Client Assistance
$20,000
To provide evening and weekend individual counseling and group therapy to women who have experienced domestic violence via a part time social worker, and to supplement emergency funds for clients who need help paying for rent, transportation, food, diapers, and other necessities.
www.lifebridgehealth.org/northwest/northwesthospitaldomesticviolenceprogram.aspx

PRO BONO COUNSELING PROJECT
Terapias para Familias, Parejas e Individuos
$20,000
To expand its Spanish language therapeutic counseling services by increasing its outreach to Latinas focused metropolitan organizations, matching 60 Latina women and their families with volunteer therapists and community services; recruiting an additional 10 Spanish-speaking, culturally knowledgeable therapists; and providing a continuing education workshop for more than 30 licensed clinicians to increase awareness of the unique clinical needs of Latinas who have experienced abuse.
www.probonocounseling.org

READING PARTNERS
Reading Partners Baltimore: One on One Literacy Tutoring for Low Income Students
$20,000
To expand this community-driven literacy tutoring program from 19 to 20 Baltimore City elementary schools, serving more than 1,100 students, and pilot an innovative summer reading program to cement student proficiency in reading, and help prepare students for the 2017-18 school year.
www.readingpartners.org/location/baltimore

ST. FRANCIS NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER
Power Project
$20,000
To supplement a tuition-free after school program for 48 children ages 5 to 15 in Baltimore’s Reservoir Hill area, and provide academic tutoring, art instruction, life skills and mentoring.
www.stfranciscenter.org

THE ENOCH PRATT FREE LIBRARY
Enoch Pratt Free Library Book Buggy
$20,000
To supply books, computers, educational materials, and enrichment activities to Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Centers and daycare facilities, helping children in underserved communities develop pre-reading skills and boosting mothers’ skills as their child’s first and most significant teacher.
www.prattlibrary.org/bookbuggy/

THE SAMARITAN WOMEN
Vocational Baking Enterprise
$20,000
To provide vocational training and paid employment in a real world baking business, part of a comprehensive residential treatment program for women who have endured domestic sex trafficking.
www.thesamaritanwomen.org

URBAN ALLIANCE FOUNDATION
High School Internship Program - Baltimore
$20,000
To provide workforce development, financial literacy, and life skills training to 50 low-income Baltimore female high school students via workforce and college readiness classes, a 10-month paid internship, case management services and post-graduation career guidance.
www.theurbanalliance.org/locations/baltimore/get-involved/

www.thebwgc.org