



Dear Fellow Circle Members,

We assumed our roles as Co-chairs quietly on May 22nd. There was no or little fanfare as we missed the March and May Full Circles meetings due to the COVID-19 crisis. Hopefully you watched the video that was created and sent in May. As we head into these uncharted waters, we pledged to always be open to new initiatives, new people and new cooperation. "Flexible" and "creative" will be the buss words this year. We assure you that we will follow all health and safety protocols advised.

We extend our welcome and deep gratitude to our board members and their respective committees. They have been hard at work behind the scenes to keep our members informed, while supporting our grantees. They are a hardy, resilient group. We know that we are a member driven organization and this has been critical to our operations.

Our Circle has proven how quickly and collaboratively we can move together to adapt our process and policies. We are reimagining our work as we go forward to achieve our goals of assisting women in the greater Baltimore area move towards self-sufficiency.

We write to share news about:

Membership Renewal

This year, we continued with a cost-effective and environmentally friendly online renewal process. All members should have received an e-mail with instructions how to pay your dues for the July 2020 - June 2021 membership period. Thanks to those of you who have already paid.

Joining a Committee

While joining a committee is not required, it has the potential to not only deepen your understanding of the hardships facing Baltimore's women and families, but many women make new friends and connections with fellow committee members in a smaller setting. We current co-chairs got to know each other when serving on a grants team together a few years ago. All should have received an e-alert sent out in July on how to join a committee, but if you would like to receive it again, please let us know.

[Click Here for Committee Email](#)

Communications Committee

In this period of "Stay at Home", the Communications Committee has been hard at work to keep our members informed and engaged. You should have received our Year in Review hard copy, along with the electronic copy if you'd like to share with friends. They created the special summer zoom on July 29 entitled *The Year in Review* where we heard from four of our past grantees, along with several of our Steering Committee members. They also

are creating a second zoom, *The Year Ahead* to be held on August 27th. This will also be a chance to hear from several of our current grantees, along with our current leadership. Our webmaster has completed the updating of our pages listing the new grantees and leadership.

Education Committee

The committee has planned the Fall Full Circle Meeting for September 23rd at 11:30 via Zoom. It will be on two approaches to affordable housing, moderated by Lawrence Lanahan, author of *The Lines Between Us*. Panelists will include Matt Hill, Adria Crutchfield and Adriana Foster.

Membership Committee

This committee has really knocked our socks off. They made phone calls to close to 200 of our members just to check in and see how they are doing. The response was incredible and so appreciated. They completed a Summer Circle Works project collecting basic personal items and food for four of our grantees in critical need which serve vulnerable populations. The support was overwhelming, collecting much more than requested. They are also planning a prospective member event on September 9th.

Post Grants

Another busy group, Post Grants along with keeping in contact with our last group of grantees, has decided to reach out earlier than usual to our new 2020 grantees. This summer they will reach out to all 23 new grantees to learn about how the organizations are coping.

Grants Committee

In case you missed it, this past May Circle members made grants to 23 grantees totaling \$529,634! We believe with hope and optimism that we will be able to fulfill our mission and improve lives.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The lack of diversity in the Circle has been a concern of many Circle members. Last year several of our members attended seminars and shared resources to explore these issue and the process for creating an inclusive, multi-cultural organization. The tragic events surrounding the death of George Floyd highlighted the racial divisions in this country and have given increased urgency to this issue.

In June the Steering committee approved the creation of a summer Study Group to formulate the first steps in what we realize is a long and complex endeavor. This group is capably led by Crickett Woloson and Vivian Manekin.

In Closing

The last few months have brought unprecedented and unexpected changes for our daily lives. It has been a difficult time for us, our community and many of our grantees. We confront the challenges ahead and continue to look forward to another year with deep commitment to our mission. We want to thank you for your time, talent and financial support for the benefit of our grantees and membership.

We look forward to being with you soon!

Susan & Martha

Susan Perl and Martha Cukor

CONNECT WITH US!