2018  ANNUAL REPORT

THE WOMEN’S FUND
of GREATER BIRMINGHAM
Mission

The Women’s Fund of Greater Birmingham accelerates economic opportunity for women and their families through philanthropy, research, and advocacy.

Vision

We envision a society where power and possibility are not limited by gender.

Values

Equity, Inclusion, Impact, Innovation, Collaboration

Region

The Women’s Fund of Greater Birmingham invests in programs that impact women living in Blount, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, and Walker Counties and public policy advocacy that impacts women statewide.

Women, who make up 52% of the population of Greater Birmingham, deserve a seat at every table. But with over 31% of women-headed households living in poverty, this is far from the reality. Through our core strategies of philanthropy, research, and advocacy, we’re working to change this.
The Women’s Fund of Greater Birmingham has the great privilege and responsibility of being Alabama’s first and only philanthropic foundation investing, researching, and advocating solely to address the needs of women. In this unique role, we act as a force multiplier by leveraging the resources of generous individuals, nonprofits, and community leaders in both the public and private sectors.

We are proud to share the impact of this work in the pages that follow, but first we want to thank you. **Without your support and partnership, none of our work would be possible.**

As a supporter, you understand that our strategic focus on women—specifically women who experience significant barriers to economic opportunity—is key to creating deep, long-lasting change for our region and state. Because when women move forward, the entire community moves with them.

In 2018, as we welcomed Melanie R. Bridgeforth as our new President & CEO, we sharpened our strategic vision and continued to hone our mission for women and Alabama. Just as you made a targeted investment in us, we are making targeted investments in solutions to accelerate economic opportunities for women and their families.

Each member of The Women’s Fund of Greater Birmingham community—volunteers, donors, corporate sponsors, grantees, collaborators, board, and staff—has played a critical role in achieving these milestones, helping us reach new philanthropic heights, and expanding our impact.

Thank you for being a part of our community. Together we will achieve far more than we ever could alone.

Warmly,

Leslie H. Carlisle
Board Chair
Finding Needs, Funding Change

As a change-making philanthropic organization, The Women’s Fund of Greater Birmingham accelerates economic opportunity for women through philanthropy, research, and advocacy. By funding change, identifying research-informed solutions, and shaping policy to create opportunities for women and their children to thrive, we strengthen all Alabama families.

With your help, The Women’s Fund invested $679,500 in community organizations working to address barriers to economic opportunity for women and their families.

### Community Investments

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<td>Two-Generation Collaboratives</td>
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**In 2018, The Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham's investments impacted:**

- **24** grantee partners
- **1,394** single mothers
- **2,811** women
- **2,661** children

**Total Community Investments**: $679,500

*Note: Numbers of women and children impacted in 2018 are the result of investments made in 2017.*
In 2018, The Women’s Fund continued to focus on three core strategies for change:

**Philanthropy**
Funding change

**Research**
Identifying solutions

**Advocacy**
Shaping policy
Nicole’s Story

Less than a year ago, Nicole was working at a child care center living paycheck to paycheck. She was on the verge of losing her apartment, unable to pay bills, and struggling to provide for her two-year-old daughter, Journey. Nicole wanted a better career and a better life. She thought about working in health care for many years and even applied for jobs in doctors’ offices and hospitals, but lacked experience and formal training. She found herself questioning how she would ever find the time or money to get the skills she needed to move ahead.

Then a friend told her about Jeremiah’s Hope Academy (JHA), a program at St. Vincent’s Hospital made possible by funding from The Women’s Fund of Greater Birmingham. Nicole’s friend explained that JHA offers six different health care-related certifications, all of which could be completed in less than six months.

Nicole knew these were the credentials she needed to take her career to the next level, but she was nervous. She hadn’t been to school in a long time. Plus, she would have to juggle classes, homework, and child care—all as single parent.
Eventually, Nicole took a leap of faith and enrolled in JHA’s Medical Office Assistant Program. Her teachers immediately recognized her aptitude as caregiver, and because of the investment from The Women’s Fund, offered her an academic scholarship and assistance with child care for Journey while she was in class.

Throughout the 12-week program, Nicole was an exceptional student. She excelled in all her classes and discovered she had a true heart for helping others. “I learned not to give up on myself,” said Nicole. “I used to say ‘I can’t’ a lot, but I learned that I can.”

Today, Nicole is employed as a front office associate at a medical clinic in Birmingham. The position is full-time with health insurance and other benefits. She can now pay all of her bills and help with her mom’s. Achieving her dream has also boosted Nicole’s self-confidence, allowing her to deliver a high-level of care to her patients. “When I hear people’s stories, or they call me crying, I have become more encouraging. I am more uplifting to my patients,” Nicole says.

Nicole’s tenacity and the training from Jeremiah’s Hope Academy through The Women’s Fund’s investment have propelled her and her daughter into a new phase life full of opportunities. She stays in touch with her network of classmates and continues to find joy in her work.

“I learned not to give up on myself. I used to say ‘I can’t’ a lot, but I learned that I can.”

— Nicole
Philanthropists like you—our committed donors and corporate partners—fuel our work to create systemic change for our region and the entire state by investing in women. As a place-based foundation, The Women’s Fund of Greater Birmingham leverages the power of collective giving to strategically invest in organizations that help women move forward on their path toward economic opportunity by increasing access to supports like child care, job training, post-secondary education, mental health services, and more.

In 2018, in an effort to deepen our impact, The Women’s Fund made its first-ever grant for public policy advocacy, signaling a bold shift in our investment strategy.

Our philanthropic investments in programs have a critical and deep impact for families. Yet many families still encounter complex, systemic barriers that can’t be addressed by programs alone.

This is why we have made an intentional expansion into systems change through public policy advocacy.

We also continued to support high-impact interventions proven to interrupt the cycle of poverty and advance women’s economic opportunity, including two-generation collaborative initiatives like Collaboration Institute 3.0.

The two-generation (2Gen) approach is a national, research-informed model that intentionally integrates and aligns often-isolated services for kids and adults simultaneously in ways that lead to accelerated progress for the whole family.

Collaboration Institute has been a five-year body of work at The Women’s Fund of Greater Birmingham that has pushed us to reimagine how we do grantmaking to catalyze alignment of support systems to better address the needs of families.

Catalyzing Community For Lasting Change
Because of the great outcomes we achieved by bringing nonprofits together to serve families through short-term pilot projects in years past, we sought to permanently embed collaboration into our region. In 2017, we identified three place-based teams in Jefferson, Shelby, and Walker counties comprised of local leaders from nonprofits, community colleges, and child care centers.

Over the next 18 months, we provided the three collaborative teams with the strategies, tools, and expertise to help them realign and integrate their services to better serve low-income families, including:

- Peer-learning workshops, led by the Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group
- $100,000 in start-up funding
- Site visits to 2Gen models that work in Garrett County, Maryland and Newport, Kentucky
- A local coach, with place-based knowledge and expertise
- Technical assistance training in areas critical to collaboration
- empowOR, a robust client-tracking software to measure the success of the work

To signify that their work had advanced beyond the design and planning phase, the teams opted for a common name, logo, and messaging to use across their three-county footprint. In November 2018, the Collaboration Institute 3.0 teams officially became **Thrive Together**, Greater Birmingham’s network of two-generation collaboratives providing seamless, wraparound services to women and their families.

The Thrive Together network is now implementing what they’ve learned in incremental phases and will serve roughly 100 families in 2019.

*Photo below: Representatives from organizations in the Thrive Together network at a peer-learning convening in May 2018.*
2018 Grant Recipients

The Women’s Fund of Greater Birmingham proudly invested in the following nonprofits and collaboratives in December 2018:

- **Alabama Arise, Medicaid Expansion Campaign**
  Provides public policy advocacy to support the expansion of Medicaid through coalition partners and stakeholders, story collection from those who will benefit, and a co-branded report.

- **Birmingham Education Foundation, Women of Innovate Birmingham**
  Provides support for wraparound services, including child care, transportation, and health care to women receiving IT certifications.

- **Childcare Resources, Supplemental Child Care Program**
  Provides assistance with child care costs to low-to-moderate income working families, allowing parents to remain employed and provide a safe learning environment for their children.

- **Children’s Aid Society of Alabama, Project Independence**
  Provides pregnant and/or parenting homeless young women with independent living skills, safe housing, educational opportunities, transportation assistance, quality child care assistance, and counseling.

- **Girls, Inc., Young Women’s Advisory Council**
  Provides advocacy training for young women of color in order to elevate their voices and leadership.

- **Jefferson State Community College, Women in IT**
  Provides women with a CompTIA A+ certification course and wraparound services, including job readiness training, child care, and coaching.

- **Lawson State Community College, Pharmacy Tech Training Program**
  Provides women with pharmacy technician training and credentialing, partnering with DHR, JCCEO and the Walgreens Corporation, to provide transportation, child care, and case management.

- **The Literacy Council, Workforce Leadership for Women through Literacy Education**
  Provides for a pilot program that offers workforce leadership and literacy education for women employed at ACIPCO.
• **Oasis Counseling for Women and Children, Mentally Healthy Moms**
  Provides low-income women with counseling and case management services, including support for employment assistance and pursuit of continued education.

• **St. Vincent’s Foundation of Alabama, Inc., Jeremiah’s Hope Academy**
  Provides student scholarships and child care vouchers for women receiving training and certification in six health care careers.

• **Volunteer Lawyers Birmingham, Justice for Women**
  Provides free legal services to mothers in three critical areas that prohibit vulnerable families from achieving economic security: finances, housing, and family law.

• **Walker County Coalition for the Homeless, Operation Home Port**
  Provides homelessness prevention, shelter, and rapid-rehousing services for women and their children.

• **Wallace State Community College, Blount County Mothers STEAMing Towards the Future**
  Provides women the opportunity to complete a certificate in welding, machine tool technology, engineering technology, or electronics technology, including support for child care, transportation, and some living expenses.

• **YWCA Central Alabama, YWoodlawn Works**
  Provides wraparound services to low-income women while they complete job training or educational programs that lead to living wage jobs.

• **Thrive Together Shelby County**: University of Montevallo, City of Montevallo, City of Vincent, Jefferson State Community College

• **Thrive Together Jefferson County**: East Lake Initiative, Hope Inspired Ministries, Serving You

• **Thrive Together Walker County**: Bevill State Community College, Jasper Area Family Services, Walker County Board of Education

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For more information about our philanthropic investments, visit: [www.womensfundbirmingham.org/grants](http://www.womensfundbirmingham.org/grants).
A Roadmap For Change

Research guides all areas of our work. It underscores that building pathways to sustainable employment with living wages is the key to more women achieving economic security, which is critical at a time when Alabama faces a predicted skilled worker shortage of 500,000 by 2025.

In 2018, The Women’s Fund of Greater Birmingham was a driving force to ensure women are a targeted part of the solution to our state’s workforce challenges. With the release of our second **Clearing the Path™** report, we focused our research on how family-friendly workplace policies create a stronger economic future for Alabama women and the entire state. The report, *Clearing the Path: Next Steps - Creating Birmingham’s Family-Friendly Workplaces*, highlighted specific policies already working well in our community, provided opportunities for employers to learn from their peers, and created momentum for Alabama corporations and industries to evaluate how their own policies could better balance the needs of families.

The Clearing the Path community event convened business and community leaders from the public and private sectors and over 250 guests to continue the conversation and highlight local and regional employers who implemented innovative policies and saw benefits to their bottom-line.

By partnering with business leaders, The Women’s Fund is committed to building on our efforts to create scalable workforce solutions that create access to post-secondary education, affordable child care, and better jobs with living wages for women.

*To read the full Clearing the Path report, visit: [www.womensfundbirmingham.org/research](http://www.womensfundbirmingham.org/research).*
Because challenges facing women exist at multiple levels, The Women’s Fund of Greater Birmingham employs our research as a tool to create systems-level change in addition to our philanthropic investments.

In 2018, as part of statewide coalitions, we advocated for women- and family-friendly policies to accelerate economic opportunity, including:

- **The Child Care Safety Act** requiring licensing for all child care centers, increasing the safety of child care, a critical economic support for working mothers

- **Payday and title lending reform**, including an interest rate cap for short-term loans, making loan terms fairer for low-income customers who have few other options in a financial emergency

In a major success for all Alabama families and the culmination of years of work by Alabama’s leading child advocacy organizations, the Child Care Safety Act was signed into law by Governor Kay Ivey in March 2018.

We also continued our partnership with the **Women’s Funding Network**, an international network of over 100 womens funds and foundations, and the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation**, one of the largest philanthropic foundations in the U.S. Together with The Women’s Foundation of Colorado, the Texas Women’s Foundation, and the Women’s Foundation of Southern Arizona, we are sharing strategies and developing approaches to expand our two-generation (2Gen) program work into statewide public policy. 2Gen policy advocacy focuses on solutions that address the needs of mothers and their children simultaneously.

For more information about our advocacy work and policy priorities, visit: [www.womensfundbirmingham.org/advocacy](http://www.womensfundbirmingham.org/advocacy).
Tammy’s Story

Tammy, a hard-working mother of four, grew up watching her father weld and was always fascinated by his work. She never knew there was a market for women welders until she found the Women in Welding program at Wallace State Community College made possible by funding from The Women’s Fund of Greater Birmingham.

Before beginning the welding program, Tammy was already a student at Wallace State as well as a volunteer firefighter and full-time EMT. She struggled with some of her classes and had difficulty balancing work, school, and parenting. “The hours of being on an ambulance is really hard for a single mom,” said Tammy.

When a fellow EMT told her about Women in Welding, Tammy leapt at the opportunity. “The scholarship gave me an opportunity to go to school without having to work full time so I could focus on my classes and still have time to spend with my children.”

The Women’s Fund’s grant to Wallace State Community College provides scholarships to students enrolled in the Women in Welding. Scholarships cover child care and living expenses while the women are in school, and Pell grants cover the cost of their classes and books.
Tammy thrived in the program. She made Dean’s List for two semesters and impressed instructors with her positivity and passion. Beyond the skills and knowledge she acquired in the classroom, Tammy is even prouder of the example that she is setting for her children.

“It has been an awesome experience for my children to see me learn to weld,” says Tammy. “My oldest son, Jackson, has shown a keen interest in welding and has tried his hand at it too. He has already told me that when he is old enough to go the career technical center, he will take welding. My youngest son is doing woodworking projects because he sees me working with my hands. My daughter, Lileigh, has shown great pride that Mommy is a welder.”

Tammy considers her classmates to be “lifelong friends” and has a new-found confidence in herself and her chosen profession. “Using my welding skills, I made a cargo basket for my truck that fit into the receiver hitch. Other people saw it and wanted one too. That’s when I realized that I could do this!”

Tammy will receive her associate’s degree in May 2019 and plans to be a welding entrepreneur. “I want to open up my own welding business. I envision a mobile welding service where I would go out on a farm or a job site and repair equipment or go to someone’s residence to build a metal fence.”

The Women’s Fund respects the women in the programs we fund—and many are looking for a fresh start in life. Some names and photos have been changed to protect their privacy.
**financials**

**Income**

- **Individual/Corporate**
  - $1,525,673 | 88%
- **Grant**
  - $195,100 | 11%
- **Endowment**
  - $12,884 | 1%

**Total**
- $1,733,657

**Expenses**

- **Program**
  - $1,328,654 | 79%
- **Development**
  - $285,913 | 17%
- **Administrative**
  - $67,273 | 4%

**Total**
- $1,681,840
leadership

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