

## Did you know?

- In 2015, IWF awarded more than \$60,000, the largest amount in their history and will award even more in 2016.
- When you honor a woman or girl through a tribute in OVATION, you contribute funds that help IWF make grants to organizations across Iowa.
- IWF is on target to be able to grant \$80,000 for the 2016 award cycle due to generous support of our donors. The more we raise, the more we can give out to communities across the state.
- Run Like a Mother is a four mile run/walk that takes place the Saturday before Mother's Day in Cedar Falls. It is one of the largest road races in Cedar Valley and attracts more than 500 runners each year. Proceeds from the race benefit IWF.
- IWF was founded as a STATE WIDE organization and is the only state wide organization of its kind in Iowa.
- Leadership Circle has grown to 199 donors who give at least \$250 annually for three years to support the operations and grants of the Foundation. Make 2015 the year to join this essential group!



IOWA WOMEN'S  
FOUNDATION

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## SHE MATTERS: We Listen and Iowa Wins!

2015 begins a new decade of work at the Iowa Women's Foundation (IWF). IWF continues to improve the lives of Iowa's women and girls through economic self-sufficiency. In addition to our grant-making the IWF has a long tradition of being an advocate for women's needs and concerns. In 2012, 13 organizations from across the state, all who are working to improve the lives of Iowa's female population came together to form the Iowa Women's Leadership Project.



This collaborative effort produced SHE MATTERS: 2012 The Status of Women and Girls in Iowa, a report with up-to-date data on demographics, health and well-being, achievement and autonomy and employment and income. Recently released - SHE MATTERS: 2015 Issues and Actions is the next report in the series and contains recommendations and strategies businesses, individuals, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions and elected officials can take to help ensure self-sufficiency, equity, education, safety, and opportunities for all of Iowa's women and girls.

In April, the IWF will hit the state highways and byways for our SHE MATTERS: We Listen and Iowa Wins tour! The tour will take us to 16 Iowa communities: Cedar Rapids, Chariton, Council Bluffs, Creston, Decorah, Des Moines, Dubuque, Fort Dodge, Fort Madison, Jefferson, Mason City, Ottumwa, Quad Cities, Sioux City, Storm Lake and Waterloo.

We will share the latest finding from SHE MATTERS: 2015 Issues and Actions report and ask the question why? Why are women and girls in Iowa not economically self-sufficient? Why are 70% of our female headed households struggling? Why has the wage gap fallen from 79 to 77 cents in the last two years and why are many of our female-owned business generating less than \$250,000 in annual revenue? We will convene focus groups with a panel of experts or professionals recognized for their work with women and girls. The findings from the tour will be shared with the communities across the state and used to focus the work of IWF.

## Grants - Grants - Grants

Nothing has quite the tranquilizing effect as a warm sunny spring day. We at the Iowa Women's Foundation (IWF) are delighted to welcome spring.

The Iowa Women's Foundation (IWF), with support from its Board of Directors and supporters, is also welcoming applications for its 2016 grants. IWF awards grants to fund Iowa non-profit programs that focus on making lasting improvements to the lives of women and girls. An RFP is available online at [www.iawf.org](http://www.iawf.org).

In order to be considered for a grant, non-profit organizations must complete an application. Eligibility requirements and the application are available at [www.iawf.org](http://www.iawf.org). The deadline for submitting a 2016 grant application is Friday, May 29 at 5:00 p.m.

In June, the Grants Committee and Community Review Panels will begin the most important work of our organization, reviewing grant requests and making funding decisions to support the economic self-sufficiency and betterment of women and girls in Iowa. Decisions will be announced at the Annual Luncheon in October.



2015 Grant Recipients and Grants Committee

## Save the Date

### Mark your calendars:

**May 9** – Run Like a Mother, Cedar Falls

**May 11** – *Ovation: A Tribute to Iowa Women and Girls* unveiling, Iowa City

**May 13** – *Ovation: A Tribute to Iowa Women and Girls* unveiling, Cedar Valley

**October** – Annual IWF Luncheon, Coralville

### Interested in Supporting the Iowa Women's Foundation?

Want to do more? Looking for volunteer opportunities? Contact Dawn Oliver Wiand at (319) 774-3814.

“Like” us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/IowaWomensFoundation](http://www.facebook.com/IowaWomensFoundation)

Follow us on twitter! @iowawomensfdn

### More about the Iowa Women's Foundation:

Visit our website at [www.iawf.org](http://www.iawf.org)

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## From the Executive Director

The Iowa Women's Foundation (IWF) is fortunate to have six new individuals who are giving their time, talent and resources to IWF through service on the Board of Directors. Their exceptional leadership and extraordinary commitment to our work have IWF on track for a banner year.

### Dawn Oliver Wiand

New 2015 Board members include:



Jacque Andrew



Linda Hopkins



LaShonda Kennedy



Sarah Leonard



Lisa Sievert



Carrie Wagner

No board is complete without its officers. The 2015 IWF Officers are Liz Swanson, President; Alison Ames Galstad, Vice President; Jill Olsen, Secretary and Linda Hopkins, Treasurer.

New Advisory Council members for 2015 include:



Dee Baird



Peggy Doerge



Christine Grant



Dolores Gutierrez



Jo Jones



Jean Lloyd-Jones



Della McGrath



Linda McGuire



Susan Shullaw

NOT PICTURED:

Phyllis Chang

Each Board and Advisory Council member brings to the Foundation talent, leadership and passion. All will be instrumental in guiding the Foundation's future. We look forward to the future with exuberance as we continue to improve the lives of Iowa's women and girls.

To learn more about the members of the IWF Board of Directors and Advisory Council, please visit our website at [www.iawf.org](http://www.iawf.org)



## 2015 Grantee Spotlight

### Iowa Youth Writing Project: Writing for Change

Article by Audra King

The Iowa Youth Writing Project (IYWP) was founded in 2010 by graduates from the Iowa Writer's Workshop that deeply believed in the transformative powers of the written word. Their goal, at a high level, is to "inspire a love of literacy by making writing irresistibly fun and by giving children the tools for reflection, emotional control, and positive self-expression". More specifically, they employ the practice of "stealth literacy". This approach teaches creative writing in a way that shows, despite their belief that they can't or don't like to write, that the youth of Iowa can succeed in this medium.

IYWP works to bring empowerment workshops to at-risk young women. With the help of Iowa Women's Foundation, their current plan is to launch a literacy project that can provide ten mentors for up to twenty-five participants. The project will run for about four months, and will produce four publications created from student work.

When asked what she would like to share about the program, Lisa Roberts, who coordinates the workshop with Mallory Hellman, said "I wish people knew...how incredibly brave they are. And how deeply committed they are to changing their lives." Many of the participants are abuse survivors, and Ms. Roberts noted that she is in awe that the young women continue to be open to the possibilities of bright futures that the mentors help them to envision.



She shared the story of one participant who, when faced with the very real possibility of aging out of the system when she turned eighteen, decided to stand up for herself. The young woman requested that she be allowed to stay with the program until she graduates from high school. By speaking up, she has been able to work with the mentors on her writing skills prior to attending community college in the fall.

Another participant, who had previously preferred drawing over writing, recently realized that because of the support she had been receiving, she had been able to write a piece that was longer than anything she had ever written before. The pride that rolled off of that participant when she finished the piece and had the opportunity to read it to the group was amazing.

Looking forward, IYWP hopes to create a book that will allow them to share their curriculum with other programs and treatment centers.

"We're also hoping that a book like this will increase empathy for girls in the justice system by representing them as they truly are: creative, smart, funny, resilient, courageous, and ready to change their lives."

They are also in the beginning stages of planning an event in the Iowa City area that will, via a reading, allow the young women involved to hear their voices and feed their dreams.

Ms. Roberts would be happy to talk with anyone who is inspired by the work IYWP does or the people they help. Interested people should visit the organization's website at <http://www.iowayouthwritingproject.org/> or write to her for more information at [lisa@iywp.org](mailto:lisa@iywp.org), or IYWP's Director Rachel Yoder, at [rachel@iywp.org](mailto:rachel@iywp.org).

## Crossroads of Iowa

Article by Audra King

"No woman – and no group of women – can ever be considered a throwaway."

"...Every woman has infinite value, awaiting only the stepping stones to unlock her unique potential."

Crossroads of Iowa was founded in 2012 to address the needs of women seeking to rebuild their lives after the trauma of abuse and addiction. The organization's mission is to reduce the percentage of women that relapse and must return to the correctional system. In addition, the organization is committed to raising awareness and educating communities across Iowa about this segment of the population.

According to Ruth Hardin, executive director of the program, there are two critical periods of time once a woman completes the treatment program at the prison: immediately after release, and three years later. In the case of Laurie, who graduated from the prison treatment program, she relapsed at the three year mark. Having suffered a debilitating injury at the hands of her abusive father, she found herself in pain with no coping mechanisms. She made the choice to steal pain medicine, and as a result faced twenty to thirty years because of her prior record. Laurie decided to reach out to Crossroads, and was able to help others by sharing her experiences. This move reflected positively on her case.



Primarily focused in Polk County, the ultimate goal of this organization is to establish a residential immersion program that can support individuals at times when they feel they need it most. This program would aid women in successfully transitioning back into the community with skills that would enrich their lives going forward.

The pilot of the program debuted in 2014 and included sessions to help attendees address inner needs, such as finding a sense of peace post-release, as well as outer needs, including how to search for employment with limited financial resources. The program also offered craft classes, known to ease the brain patterns of trauma, and support groups that dealt with different kinds of addiction.

As a testimony to the success of the program, Ruth shared that a trauma survivor chose to attend a craft class provided by Crossroads, and was able to take the tools given to her to go from student to teacher, instructing others in her own craft class at Des Moines Area Community College. Another woman attended a class at the Polk County jail and was finally able to speak more openly about the abuse she had suffered as a young girl. In both cases, it is clear that Crossroads was able to help these women achieve progress and success where they hadn't before.

The success from the 2014 program allowed Crossroads to establish a trauma seminar (attended by both community members and professionals) as an annual event. In addition, a class called "Listening to Your Voice" was founded. This class provides a space for the attendees to talk about their thoughts and feelings, and address how they cause issues with addiction.

To learn more about Crossroads, visit their website at <http://www.crossroadsiowa.org/> or contacting Ruth at [ruth.crossroads@gmail.com](mailto:ruth.crossroads@gmail.com).