

Advisory Council Members



Seated left to right: Katherine Moyers, Judy Leavitt and Joy Smith
Standing left to right: Lois James, Mary Anders Morris, Susan Frye, Madgetta Dungy, Stephanie Clohesy, Jean Jew and Ellen Heywood

In June 2013, the Board of Directors approved the creation of the IWF Advisory Council, convening in January 2014. The purpose of the Council is to advise the Board with respect to all or any part of the affairs and/or operations of the Foundation, as the Board may determine. Council members include Stephanie Clohesy, Madgetta Dungy, Susan Frye, Ellen Heywood, Lois James, Jean Jew, Judy Leavitt, Katherine Moyers, Mary Anders Morris and Joy Smith.

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.



IOWA WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION

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20 Years of Improving the Lives of Iowa's Women and Girls!

Article by Dawn Oliver Wiand, Executive Director, Iowa Women's Foundation.

2014 marks the 20th anniversary of the Iowa Women's Foundation. In 1994, the Foundation was started by 27 women who joined forces to "form a lasting philanthropic institution to invest in the future of Iowa women and girls." Over the last two decades, almost a half million dollars have been awarded in grants to 91 organizations benefiting more than 30,000 women and girls throughout the state of Iowa.

The IWF's focus is statewide. The programs supported by our foundation have reached urban and rural communities across the state from Sioux City to the Quad Cities, and Cedar Rapids and Johnson County to the Cedar Valley. We have helped survivors of domestic violence become economically self-sufficient so they never again have to rely on an abuser for daily sustenance. We have taught young women at risk to think about themselves as future strong women with the potential to be whatever they dream. We have provided coaching, mentoring, and skill-building to women business owners to help grow their businesses. We have provided many women with low wages, no child care, no health care, and no transportation, who work hard just to survive with opportunities to thrive and grow.

More than 9,000 individuals, businesses, and other organizations have supported the work of the Iowa Women's Foundation during its first 20 years. The legacy of our past is now opening up a new future for our next 20 years and beyond. Happy Anniversary IWF!

Save the Date

Mark your calendars:

October 22, 2014 for the **18th Annual Women's Foundation Luncheon** at the Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center.

Come celebrate **our 20th Anniversary** of improving the lives of Iowa's women and girls. **Don't miss it!!!**

Interested in Supporting the Iowa Women's Foundation?

Want to do more? Looking for volunteer opportunities? Contact Dawn Oliver Wiand at (319) 774-3813.

"Like" us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/IowaWomensFoundation

Follow us on twitter! [@iowawomensfdn](https://twitter.com/iowawomensfdn)

More about the Iowa Women's Foundation – Visit our website at www.iawf.org

Executive Director Dawn Oliver Wiand **Board of Directors** Kay Braverman | Elizabeth Daly | Alison Ames Galstad | Renda Greene-Fishman | Jo Jones | Beth Kielts | Mary Lea Kruse | Jill Olsen | Linda Paul | Janey Jill Piersall | Sashi Solomon | Elizabeth Swanson, President | Buffie Tucker | Vicki Walch | Susan Zude **Council Members** Stephanie Clohesy | Madgetta Dungy | Susan Frye | Ellen Heywood | Lois James | Jean Jew | Judy Leavitt | Mary Andrews Morris | Katherine Moyers | Joy Smith

Grants - Grants - Grants



Spring is in the air and along with flowers, baseball and flip-flops, we at the Iowa Women's Foundation feel the nip of grants allocations. The deadline for submitting a 2015 grant application is Friday, May 30, 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 18th Annual Luncheon on October 22.

Photo: Seated left to right: Caitlin Hage, Children & Families of Iowa, Dawn Oliver Wiand, IWF Executive Director, Mary Grants, IWF Grants Committee Chair, Brenda Cruikshank. Standing left to right: Jamie Gordon, Ascent, Ellen Heywood, Vicki Walch, Jean Jew and LaShonda Kennedy

From the Executive Director



Dawn Oliver

More than 20 years ago, an amazing group of women recognized an opportunity to improve the lives of Iowa's women and girls. Today, the Iowa Women's Foundation (IWF) is the only state-wide organization working to improve the lives of Iowa's women and girls through economic self-sufficiency. With a diversified mix of action and funding including research, grant making, advocacy, education and collaboration we work to alleviate the causes and not just the symptoms of economic illiteracy.

What makes IWF uniquely effective is our focus: we use research to uncover the biggest barriers to women's success and their greatest needs, and we target our efforts accordingly to achieve our goals and make the most significant impact.

It is the outstanding leadership and vision of that original founding group and others over the years that have worked hard to make the Foundation the organization it is today. Current Board President, Elizabeth Swanson (Liz) is one such person. She is smart and effective. She exhibits exceptional determination and leadership. Liz is a visionary who is tireless in her attention to details and gives 110% or more. She is capable of bringing consensus to an issue and inspiring other to achieve. As our Board President, Liz is a key factor in keeping the wheels turning to strengthen the Foundation's work. Under her leadership, the Foundation is adding education, advocacy and collaboration to its expansive reach. Her tenacity and dedication to improving the lives of women and girls across Iowa make her a driving force in forging this new path for the Foundation. We are honored and privileged to have her spirited leadership.

Meet Our 2014 Board of Directors



Photo: Left to right front row: Elizabeth Daly, Linda Paul, Kay Braverman, Vicki Walch, Janey Jill Piersall and Jo Lavera Jones. Left to right back row: Renda Greene-Fishman, Jill Olsen, Sashi Solomon, Mary Gantz, Alison Ames Galstad, Liz Swanson, Mary Lea Kruse, Buffie Tucker and Susan Zude. Not pictured: Beth Kielts.

No board is complete without its officers. The 2014 IWF Officers are Liz Swanson, President, Alison Ames Galstad, Vice President, Vicki Walch, Secretary and Beth Kielts, Treasure.

Another 15 individuals give their time, talent and resources to the Iowa Women's Foundation through service on the board of Directors with Liz. Their exceptional leadership and extraordinary commitment to our work are above all. Members returning for a second term include Elizabeth Daly, Mary Gantz, Renda-Greene Fishman, Jo Lavera Jones, Mary Lea Kruse and Buffie Tucker. We are pleased to welcome 6 new members to the IWF Board of Directors. Kay Braverman, Jill Olsen, Linda Paul, Janey Jill Piersall, Sashi Solomon and Susan Zude.



2014 Grantee Spotlight

Children & Families of Iowa Employment for Survivors of Domestic Violence

Article by Erin Becker

Fleeing an abusive relationship, Rhonda* and her son left their home with no income, almost no savings, and very few belongings. When they arrived at the Children & Families of Iowa shelter in Des Moines, Rhonda felt like she had nowhere else to go.

"He would take me to parties and introduce me to his friends," Rhonda said of her abusive boyfriend. "Then by the end of the night he'd be screaming at me and accusing me of having sex with the people he just introduced me to. We'd get home and he'd slap me around."

Though Rhonda felt she'd hit a new low, the shelter's safe environment and staff counselors helped her gain both perspective and skills. "I talked about my childhood experiences of abuse and trauma, and began to process some of the negative patterns in my life," Rhonda said. Staff coached Rhonda, helping her with interviewing skills and job search strategy. Through the Dress for Success program, she built up a work wardrobe. CFI provided backup transportation for interviews. Soon, Rhonda landed a full-time job. She recently moved with her son into their own apartment, aided by CFI's Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program. "I have such hope for the future," Rhonda said.

Rhonda is just one example of CFI's holistic approach to helping domestic violence survivors achieve both emotional healing and economic self-sufficiency. Catherine Reaman-Gerdes, program director for domestic violence services, described CFI's approach like this: "When clients come in the door, we wrap resources around them." Those resources include medical care, spiritual healing, emotional healing, therapy and job search help. Because many victims of domestic violence have inconsistent work histories – domestic violence is the number one cause of injuries in women, and those injuries can often lead to poor work attendance – finding a job and gaining economic independence can become a huge hurdle.

Last year, IWF provided a grant for CFI's Employment for Survivors of Domestic Violence program, with the goal of helping women like Rhonda gain financial independence from their abusers. CFI's employment programs include job search coaching, resume writing, mock interviews, day care assistance and transportation help. In fiscal year 2013, CFI served 2,408 clients through its shelter and outreach services. It's the largest shelter in Iowa, helping survivors from all over the state.
*(*Name has been changed to protect privacy.)*

ISED Ventures Women's Business Center TechStart

Article by Erin Becker

What do Scratch Cupcakery, Smitten Kitten cat grooming and Biz Source Iowa have in common? They have all received support from ISED Ventures, a Des Moines-based organization that helps individuals and small businesses build assets and achieve financial stability. Along with programs for low- to middle-income earners like free tax prep, savings matching and homebuyer education, ISED Ventures runs Iowa's only Women's Business Center. Amelia Lobo, director of the WBC, said that for women entrepreneurs, the support network the center creates is crucial. "There are so many barriers that arise for women, simply because we are women," Lobo said.

Continued on next page

ISED Ventures (Continued)

For those shut out of traditional opportunities, entrepreneurship is often a first foray into financial independence. Lobo explained that the program builds a community of mutual respect and idea-sharing that helps women navigate a new era in their life. "There's something very powerful about these women coming in, sharing their stories, and saying, 'I don't know anything about managing a business, but I can learn,'" she said.

Over 200 women business owners statewide have taken classes or received assistance at the WBC. Four or five times a year, the center offers classes to groups of around 15 entrepreneurs. Striving to accommodate clients' complex schedules – days often full with multiple jobs and full-time motherhood – the center offers evening classes and one-on-one counseling after regular work hours and on the weekends. Last year, IWF gave ISED a grant to support its WBC TechStart education programs, aimed at developing clients' digital skills. Lobo said that after the WBC received the grant, a Connect Iowa study made it even clearer that programs like TechStart are crucial for women business owners. According to the study, women-owned businesses in Iowa tend to lack broadband connection. Worse, many women business owners don't think that's a problem – because 20% of them don't use a computer. "These skills will become more and more indispensable in the future," Lobo said. "These women need digital literacy."

For trainees who already have computer skills, the TechStart classes help with more advanced topics, like creating a website. For those who still need the basics, the center teaches skills like email. "With regards to the grant from IWF, when I started here, we didn't have the computer classes. Without funding, we couldn't do that," Lobo said. "Now, the world has changed. And for a lot of our clients, it's changed around them. They were shut out of these opportunities, and they didn't change with the world. So it's so important for us to teach our clients to use technology."

Now, the WBC is working to incorporate digital literacy into its regular curriculum cycle. The goal is to integrate technology instruction with the other topics the center covers. "It's really, really hard to run a business successfully when you don't have a website, and it's hard to bid on projects when you don't have email," Lobo said. "We always have new ideas to support these women business owners. And we always need funding to help make it happen."

Did you know?

- You can now securely donate online through our website www.iawf.org. Make your payment on your pledge, reserve your seat at the Luncheon or give a gift in honor of a special woman in your life. It can all be done with the click of a button.

- 118 women will be honored in the first edition of Ovation: A Tribute to Iowa Women and Girls. Did you recognize that special woman in your life?

- Since the Foundation started awarding grants in 1996, we have give 122 grants to 91 agencies totaling \$399,112 across Iowa reaching all 99 counties. That is something to be proud of!

- The amazing work of the Foundation is accomplished by one full-time and two part-time staff members with the help of hundreds of volunteers.

- The Annual Grants Luncheon will be held Wednesday, October 22. Mark your calendars!

- IWF collaborated with 15 other women's organizations across the state of Iowa to produce "She Matters," the 2012 Status of Women and Girls in Iowa. Have you read the surprising and unacceptable statistics?

- The Foundation is proud to have the support of ten Directors Circle and 162 Leadership Circle donors who give at least \$250 annually for three years to support the operations and grants of the Foundation. Are you a Director or Leadership Circle donor?