



## Anne Arundel Women Giving Together

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AAWGT Newsletter

March 2009

One evening this past month, I had the opportunity --along with some other AAWGT members-- to attend a presentation sponsored by the Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County. Speaker Lew Feldstein, Co-Chair of the Saguaro Seminar at Harvard, talked enthusiastically about the concept of social capital and how people's interconnectedness can improve the community in which they live (see [www.bettertogether.org](http://www.bettertogether.org) for more info about this).

One of the interesting facts conveyed was that joining or participating in a group doubles your health-life expectancy for the next year; and joining two groups improves those chances by another 50% -- so there are real benefits to joining groups!!

This was a reminder of how easy it is to take for granted the connections we have with others in our community and how valuable they are to our well-being. It was also a reminder that one of the benefits of AAWGT membership is the opportunity to connect with and get to know so many wonderful women in our community, while at the same time making our community a better place to live.

We are looking forward to connecting with you at many of the upcoming events described below!

Sharon L. Stewart, President

[stews@mindspring.com](mailto:stews@mindspring.com)

Lynne Davidson, Vice President

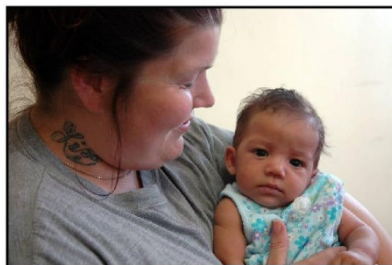
[lynnedav@aol.com](mailto:lynnedav@aol.com)



Help [Anne Arundel Women Giving Together](#) grow and share our good work: please feel free to share this newsletter with your friends.

There is no general meeting scheduled for March in order to allow members to participate in the site visits.

### March Site Visits



We still have a few spaces left for the Wednesday, March 11, site visits to the Light House Shelter. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the AAWGT-funded Building Futures Self-Sufficiency Program, which helps women gain skills and become strong. Please RSVP to Laurie Sharp at [lsharp1000@msn.com](mailto:lsharp1000@msn.com).

**Date:** Wed., March 11

**Time Slots:** 10 am and 11 am

**Location:** Light House Shelter, 206 West St., Annapolis

There also is an opportunity to learn more about another AAWGT grantee. The Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Volunteer Graduation Ceremony will be held on March 24th. The ceremony will feature speakers who will talk about what CASA means to the children who are served and provide a better understanding of the organization and the dedicated and well-trained volunteers who commit at least a year to these children.

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#### Who We Help

Women Entrepreneurs of Baltimore

Micro-enterprise for Women

#### [Annapolis Area Ministries, Inc.](#)

Building Futures: A Self-Sufficiency Program

#### [Anne Arundel Co. CASA, Inc.](#)

Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children

#### [Rob's Barbershop Community Foundation](#)

Gifts for Grooming Program

#### [YWCA of Annapolis & AA County](#)

Life Skills Training at Arden

Again, please RSVP to Laurie Sharp at [lsharp1000@msn.com](mailto:lsharp1000@msn.com) if you would like to attend.

**Date:** Tues., March 24

**Time:** 4:30 pm

**Location:** Anne Arundel County Circuit Court, 7 Church Circle, Top Floor, Annapolis

**Please visit our Grantee websites to see updates on their activities!**

**Reminder: Please renew your membership!**

**Upcoming AAWGT Events and Meetings - Save the Date!**

**April 15 Member Reception**

Don't miss our upcoming reception for current and prospective members. Details will follow, but please mark your calendars now for this very enjoyable event. And plan to bring your friends!

**Date:** Wed., April 15

**Time:** 6-8 pm

**Location:** Fishing Creek Farm Clubhouse, Annapolis

**TIME TO RENEW YOUR AAWGT MEMBERSHIP!**

As we begin our fourth year together, we can be proud of what we have already accomplished. In 2008, for example, we granted \$57,175 to six deserving nonprofit programs. We organized educational sessions, sponsored an AAWGT Volunteer Day, and celebrated our grantees at the annual Grants Showcase.

But there is still much work to do, especially as nonprofits struggle to meet community needs in the face of today's unstable economy. Your membership contribution is an investment in our community.

To increase membership, we have created a new "Associate Member" category, which will invite women 35 and younger to participate for one-half the cost of a regular membership. We also hope to offer scholarships to two or three women who might add special talents to our organization.

If you have questions about your membership contribution, please feel free to call Barb Novak at (410) 224-2528 (410) 224-2528 or Mary Osbourne-Reilly at (410) 266-8299 (410) 266-8299 .

Membership forms can be found on our website, [www.givingtogether.org](http://www.givingtogether.org)

**Remember: By pooling our resources, your annual AAWGT contribution is multiplied 100 times or more!**

**February 11 Meeting: Program Recap**

The Education and Program Committee presented an interesting and informative program on economic self-sufficiency.

Speaker Donna Addison, the Director of Wider Opportunities for Women, explained that the Self Sufficiency Standard (SSS) is different from the federal poverty level. The SSS, which is based upon the costs of food, child care, housing, transportation, health care, and taxes, represents the amount on which an individual or a family can exist without public assistance. In Anne Arundel County, the SSS for a family of four is about \$65,000. Many families in our area find this amount difficult to attain.

Mary Lassen, the Director of the Center for Community Change, stated that the SSS has been calculated for 40 states. Her organization has tried to identify jobs available to women that would offer enough compensation to allow women and families to live above the SSS level. The organization attempts to effect policy changes at the federal level.

Sean Dobson described the work of his organization, Progressive Maryland, an advocacy group with a political division. They have published "The State of Working Maryland," which details economic distress in the state and work on passing living wage laws. Thanks to the E&P Committee for their working in setting up this meeting.

## **2009 Budget**

The 2009 budget was approved at the Feb. 11 meeting. Given the current economic climate, our proposed administrative expenses are conservative and lower than last year, but will continue to focus on support for membership outreach and the grants program. Please be reassured that, of the \$550 contributed each year, \$500 goes right back out the door to support the important AAWGT grants program.

## **Organizational Updates**

### **From the Committees**

Kathy Brooks chairs a new committee, Leadership Development. Committee members reach out to new members and guests before each general meeting to welcome them and identify skills and talents valuable for future leadership roles. The Committee is planning a focus group to develop strategy and, for the November meeting, they will present a panel discussion of women in leadership positions. Kathy remarks that the first pre-meeting reception was a great hit, affording new members an opportunity to learn about AAWGT's history and our successes.



The Grants Committee has begun the process of evaluating the 29 proposals received this year (five more than last year). There are many interesting proposals. Twenty four members, organized into six review teams, will read and score the proposals between the beginning of March and the second week in April, when a short list of finalists will be compiled. At the May meeting, AAWGT members will vote to choose the 2009 grant recipients.

### **Volunteers Needed**

AAWGT is looking for volunteers to help with the following:

- Someone who would like to take photos at our April 15 member reception (contact Julie Crudele at [Julie.crudele@comcast.net](mailto:Julie.crudele@comcast.net))
- Someone with good computer skills who would be willing to maintain our membership list (Excel format) - contact Sharon Stewart at [stews@mindspring.com](mailto:stews@mindspring.com).
- Additional members for the Marketing/Communications Committee (contact chair Julie Crudele at [julie.crudele@comcast.net](mailto:julie.crudele@comcast.net))
- Additional members for the Membership/Outreach Committee (contact chair Martha Hoyer at [sycamore34@aol.com](mailto:sycamore34@aol.com))

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### **AAWGT Light House Lunch Group**

Since January, AAWGT members have been meeting in a member's kitchen to make 50 bag lunches for the Light House Shelter.

The group meets at 8:30am to share coffee and make the lunches. The hostess purchases the food and then the cost is divided equally among the group.

The next gathering is on Tuesday, April 7, at the home of Sharon Stewart. If you would like to participate, please email Karen Davis at [kluciadavis@hotmail.com](mailto:kluciadavis@hotmail.com).

You will receive a follow-up reminder email with the address.

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### **Kidwalk**

On Saturday, May 2, six local charities (including three that are current or past

AAWGT grantees) are sponsoring a 5K walk at the Naval Academy Stadium to raise money for at-risk children in Anne Arundel County. The Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County (CFAAC) is one of the sponsors for this event and is forming a team of walkers. They have asked AAWGT members to join them, along with CFAAC board members and other donors.

The event starts at 7:30 am and walkers are asked to make a minimum contribution of \$25.

If you are interested in being a part of the team, please contact Lea Loflin at CFAAC at [lea@cfaac.org](mailto:lea@cfaac.org) or (410) 280-1102 (410) 280-1102 .

For additional details about the event, visit the Friends of the Light House Shelter at [www.FriendsLHS.org](http://www.FriendsLHS.org).

We hope that you will join us for this fun event, which will benefit many children in our community!

### Board Openings

Former AAWGT grantee, the AAC Literacy Council, has several board openings. Please contact Vinny Goldsmith at [pastpresident@aac.org](mailto:pastpresident@aac.org) for additional information

### Welcome New Members

Welcome to the following new AAWGT member:

- Ruth Anderson Coggeshall
- Marie Brigham, MD

Please make a special effort to welcome our new members if you meet them at one of our meetings.

### Contact Information

Anne Arundel Women Giving Together  
914 Bay Ridge Avenue, Suite 220  
Annapolis, MD 21403  
(410) 280-1102 (410) 280-1102

*AAWGT is a non-denominational, non-partisan group that welcomes all interested women.*

Website: [www.givingtogether.org](http://www.givingtogether.org)

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