



FULL CIRCLE NEWS

August / September 2015

SUMMER TALES

In the midst of summer fun and sunshine, AAWGT has been working hard to improve processes and plan programs for the fall and beyond. We are fortunate to have so many members willing to donate their talent, skills and energy to strengthen AAWGT.

Our jewel of a website has been upgraded so that it can easily be used at home or away, on your computer, tablet or smart phone. We encourage you to log in and update your profile; click on a few buttons to see the breadth and scope of our amazing organization. Let's all commit to using our great website to its fullest potential.

More than half of our members completed the Member Survey and offered thoughts and ideas for the future of AAWGT. We listen to what you say and will build and implement the programs you want. When asked in the Survey, for the first time, what you see as the most important values for AAWGT, rising to the top were "meaningful," "informative," and "collaborative." At the Steering Committee's retreat in June, we added "generous" based on our discussion of the general Survey results. You will hear a lot more about our values as we begin the 10th year celebration in 2016. Think about these values as you move about in your giving circle world.

Looking to the fall, remember to mark your calendar for the September 16 Grants Showcase! This meeting is a highlight of the year when all of our core values are celebrated with the amazing work that our community partners do with our philanthropic dollars. This event is a perfect way to end summer – hearing the tales and stories of great outcomes in our community. Registration will open August 26. Hope to see *you* there!

[Maureen Cavaiola](#), President
[Mary Grace Folwell](#), Vice President

ANNUAL MEMBER SURVEY

Thanks to the 111 members who completed the annual Member Survey! We use the annual survey to get direct feedback from members on a wide range of issues, including guidance on AAWGT's future direction.

The survey tells us that members are often surprised to learn, through participation with AAWGT, of the depth and extent of need in Anne Arundel County. The number of nonprofits working to improve the lives of women and families in the county also impresses our members.

Highlights of issues for which a clear majority of the respondents were in agreement:

- 74% want to grow the size of our membership. Among the comments, an increase in growth is seen as a means to increase our grant pool. Some respondents expressed concern that growing the membership would pose logistic challenges.
- 66% agreed we should keep our annual contribution at \$550 to keep membership widely affordable.
- 74% are willing to support an increase in the administrative fee from \$50 to \$75 to support the costs of our grants software and website software.
- When asked to select core values reflected by AAWGT, 70% of respondents selected "informative", 69% selected "collaborative," and 66% selected "meaningful". These responses suggest that membership sees AAWGT as a group that works together to learn and to serve the needs of women and families in Anne Arundel County.

The individual responses on what AAWGT means to each members, and thoughts and suggestions on how to improve the organization make for interesting reading. As a member you can log in to the website can see the entire survey [HERE!](#) Individual respondents' names were removed from the survey results to maintain privacy.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

AAWGT welcomes six new members and thanks 18 members who renewed their membership during June and July. The lists below include three new and one renewing member who were mistakenly omitted in last month's newsletter (noted with an *).

New Members

Elena Boisvert
Petey Cosby
Cori Dykman *

Maureen Fitzgerald
Maryann Gosnell
Lisa Hartman *

Jennifer Haythornthwaite *
Bette Henick
Mary Walton *

Renewing Members

Alpine Bird *
Lynn Buhl
Helen Chin
Carol Cronin

Molly Knipe
Fran Kushner
Eve-Marie Lacroix
Judy Moore

Ellen Piwoz
Elaine Ralph
Rita Reimer
Madelyn
Schaefer
Sharon Stewart
Kristy Weight
Ginger Woolridge

Beth Dolezal
Lee Finney
Mary Grace Folwell

Sara Moran
Kathy Nellius
Barbara Petersen

2015 New Member Event

WINE & CHEESE RECEPTION

September 23, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Members who have joined AAWGT in 2015 will receive an invitation to a Wine & Cheese Reception at a member's home. This small gathering provides an opportunity for our new members to connect with other new members and the Steering Committee, to ask questions and learn about the organization.

To **JOIN** or **RENEW**, click [HERE](#)

[Membership & Outreach](#)

Heidi Busch, Chair

Paula Abernethy, Assistant Chair

WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE SAYING . . .

"The giving circle is a way for women to leverage their philanthropy to have a bigger impact on the issues facing women in our county."

Sandy Sweeney (Member since 2006)

"I like supporting local efforts."

Sharon Boettinger (Member since 2012)

"You should join!"

Marilyn Lyons (Member since 2007)

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Leadership Development and Nominating (LDN) Committee is starting to review candidates for the slate of 2016 officers and committee chairs/assistant chairs that will be presented to the membership at our November 2015 meeting. During this process, we seek input from our members, but we may miss someone. So . . .

If you would like to be considered for an officer position or as chair or assistant chair of one of the committees, we encourage you to let us know. The work of LDN is in process, so please respond at your earliest convenience. You can reach us at leadership@givingtogether.org.

If you're not quite ready for a leadership role, but would like to become more involved and participate in one or more of our committees, most committees are actively looking for new members. AAWGT's website offers a list of 2015 officers and a brief description of each committee with the committee's current leaders. Click [HERE](#).

Thanks for your interest – and we look forward to hearing from you!

[Leadership Development and Nominating Committee](#)

Carol Cronin, Chair LDN

Lynn McReynolds, Assistant Chair LDN

MONTHLY MEETINGS:

**What's Coming Up . . .
and What's Already Happened**

September 16 Meeting *Preview*:

[Fall Open House and Annual Grants Showcase](#)

6:00 - 8:00 PM

Loews Annapolis Hotel

126 West St

Please join us for an inspirational evening of good cheer as we celebrate the accomplishments of our 2014-2015 Grantees, meet the Grantees for 2015-2016, and hear how our dollars are put to work. This year we awarded a record total of **\$105,505!** We hope to see you – and we hope you will bring a friend or two! This event is free, open to the public, and accessible to persons with disabilities. Cash bar and light appetizers will be served. Registration will open August 26. Click [HERE](#) to register and for more information about the event, including parking.

[Post Grants Committee](#)

Judy Templeton, Chair

Madelyn Schaefer, Assistant Chair

June 10 Meeting *Review*:

Living on the Ledge Part II: Debunking the Myths of Poverty

We often hear or read statements in the media about poverty, statements that are actually myths. On June 10, AAWGT sponsored a forum that brought together community leaders to address several myths head on, shedding light on the real nature of poverty in our community. AAWGT's website provides a review of the education event that was attended by 87 people, of which 40% were guests and 60% were members. Click [HERE](#) to read the full review.

YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK

YWCA of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County:

Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Therapeutic Services for Women & Children

Over the past 12 months, the YWCA of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County has served 50 women who experienced domestic abuse or violence in their lives. The AAWGT Grant awarded in 2014, supported therapeutic crisis intervention to victims and their children through the Counseling Center, while also providing referrals to safe house shelters, legal services, support services and additional emergency resources to ensure a continuum of care. The YWCA recently added Art Therapy to their more traditional therapy. First utilized following WWII, Art Therapy uses creativity and imagination to restore a sense of possibility, identity and reconnection for victims who have been silenced by violence. Talking about abuse is difficult. Sharing their art furnishes a coming back to who they were.

[Susan Amos](#), Post Grants Evaluation Committee Liaison

WHAT'S NEW ON THE WEBSITE?

New Design and More Membership Features

AAWGT's [new website](#) look was launched on July 15. The new design is fully responsive, meaning the website adjusts to display on phones, tablets and desktop computers. AAWGT's web masters (our very own members, Eve-Marie Lacroix and Bronwyn Belling) have streamlined the menus to simplify finding what you need quickly and easily. At the same time, the membership application and renewal process have been automated to save time and improve communication. New website features include:

- AAWGT's Facebook feed and newsletter sign-up are featured at the bottom of the Home page.
- The Membership Application form now appears on the Join Us page, making it easier for prospective members to join.
- The Members Only page includes photos of our members from the Membership Directory and also features Steering Committee members' photos and position.
- When logged in as a member, you will see the upcoming events that are restricted to members.
- The renewal process has been automated, based on a member's initial join date.

Members Have Unique Access

When a member logs in to the website, they have access to information that is not available to the general public. The membership directory includes phone and email contact information, as well as a photograph of each member who has posted her picture. So far, 77 members' photos are posted on the website -- our goal is to have a photo of every member. If you need help to add or replace your photo, email webmaster@givingtogether.org for quick and easy help.

LUNCH MAKING HOSTS AND VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Hosts are needed for the monthly assembly of 70 lunches in a member's kitchen from September through December. If you've made lunches before, you're eligible to host. Guideline shopping instructions are posted in the Members Only section. The host is responsible to purchase items needed to make the lunches; the cost is equally split among those participating at the host's home. If you would like to host, want to know more, or want to be added to the email group for future notices, send an email to lunchmaking@givingtogether.org. Thanks for helping those among us who are less fortunate.

WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE READING

Book ideas from speakers and members were circulated at the June 10 Education Meeting on "The Myths of Poverty."

Speaker Reverend Dr. Carlotta Allen recommended *The New Jim Crow* as providing insight into how incarceration exacerbates the problems of poverty. *The Myth of the Welfare Queen* addresses some myths of poverty directly by sharing stories of the lives of several women living in poverty in Philadelphia. Finally, *The Warmth of Other Suns* was mentioned multiple times by different members and received high marks when the AAWGT book group read it.

Click [HERE](#) for a brief review of these tomes.

UPCOMING FALL EVENTS

September 16	6:00 – 8:00 pm	Fall Open House and Grants Showcase
September 23	6:00 – 8:00 pm	New Member Reception (<i>Open to 2015's new members</i>)
October 14	11:30 – 1:30 pm	Poverty Amidst Plenty: Biennial State of AA County
November 11	6:00 – 8:00 pm	Business Meeting and Members' Forum (<i>Members Only</i>)

Click [HERE](#) to access the Events page of the website for overview of all events, including event descriptions, location and registration link.

Members: If you login as a member, the calendar listings you see will include members only events like Book Group, Lighthouse Lunch Making and Committee Meetings.

Full Circle News

The Full Circle News is published bi-monthly throughout the year. Suggestions, feedback and questions are welcome and can be sent to marketing@givingtogether.org.

Marketing & Communication Committee

Jenny Kottler, Chair
Deb Schilling, Assistant Chair