



## *Women United in Philanthropy*

On April 28, 2011, *Women United in Philanthropy* gathered to hear from seven local non-profits with projects or programs that are dedicated to helping women and children in the Charlottesville community. Each of these organizations is hoping to be selected as a recipient of one of two \$20,000 grants awarded by *Women United in Philanthropy* at our annual Human Services Award Luncheon on October 4, 2011.

One shocking statistic presented at the *WUP* event was that the Charlottesville/Albemarle community has three times the reported domestic abuse rate than average in the state of Virginia. We also have more children in the foster care system than average and thousands of women and children living in homes that are either physically or emotionally unsafe. The two grants being awarded this year by *Women United in Philanthropy* could go a long way towards changing these statistics.

These are our seven grant semi-finalists and the programs our grants may fund:

**Children Youth and Family Services** - The presentation by CYFS included a troubling statistic: the Charlottesville/Albemarle community has three times the reported domestic abuse rate than average in the state of Virginia. CYFS spoke of their *Healthy Families Home Visiting Program*. This program will help mothers who are often the victims of abuse and for whom mothering does not necessarily come naturally. CYFS trains women not only about proper nutrition, but also about the importance of interactive touch. A *WUP* grant would pay for a part time Home Visiting position serving 13 families.

**International Rescue Committee** – The IRC has been helping refugees resettle in the Charlottesville community since 1998. These refugees come to the United States in order to escape persecution and often are illiterate or have linguistic barriers difficult to overcome. 80% of these refugees are women and children, many of whom have craft skills valuable in their native lands. The IRC would use a *WUP* grant to start a Women’s Craft Cooperative to empower local refugees to take ownership of their lives and to provide long-term financial and emotional benefits.

**Jefferson Area CHIP** – The Children’s Health Improvement Program provides services for low-income families in the Charlottesville community with children ages 0 to 6 and/or pregnant mothers. CHIP has found that many of these families do not understand basic home safety for children. They would use a *WUP* grant for their *Keeping Children Safe at Home* program. This program begins with a home safety assessment by both a nurse and a family support worker. Grant money would be used to fund these workers as well as to purchase things like safety gates, smoke detectors, flashlights and more.

**Piedmont CASA** - CASA is an organization that trains Court Appointed Special Advocates who work one-on-one with abused and endangered children to assist the courts in determining the best environment to ensure each child's safety and well-being. They work to promote and support safe, permanent and nurturing homes for child victims before the courts of the 16th Judicial District of Virginia. A *WUP* grant would go towards training and supervision of volunteer advocates, without whom these children often have no other voice.

**Region Ten/Project Link** – A *WUP* grant would allow Region Ten to start a *Celebrating Families!* program in Charlottesville in partnership with social services. These families are separated by drug or alcohol addiction and the children are at high risk of abuse and neglect. *Celebrating Families!* works with every member of the family, from ages 3 through adult, to strengthen recovery from alcohol and/or other drugs, break the cycle of addiction and increase successful family reunification. They work with parents and trained professionals to communicate and interact as families while the children are surrounded by safety. The goal is to bring the number of kids in foster care down and to make families whole again.

**Shelter for Help in Emergency** – SHE provides services designed to empower victims of domestic violence and to create a community of support. They have both a shelter and a 24-hour hotline and offer counseling and legal advocacy against abusers. A *WUP* grant would go towards creating a health clinic within the residential shelter. There are at least three faculty members from the UVA School of Nursing interested in participating and they and their students would provide immunizations and general health maintenance. The goal is to teach these women and children how to better care for themselves and that the ER is not their default healthcare provider. They will also learn to be self-sufficient as they return to the community.

**Community Attention Youth Internship Program** – This program connects at-risk children and adolescents with the Charlottesville/Albemarle community. Youths are given jobs where they learn money management and work skills that will follow them throughout their lives. They learn what responsibility means and to take pride in themselves. There are 156 local businesses that have agreed to provide jobs at about 20 hours per week. *WUP* grant money would be used as a stipend for these jobs.

There is a great deal of need in our community and a number of deserving projects and programs aimed at alleviating that need. The next step in the *WUP* grant process is on-site visits with each organization. The *WUP* Grant Committee has a tough job narrowing the seven semi-finalists down to a select few. The few remaining finalists will then be presented to the *WUP* Donor Members who will vote on which two finalists each receive a \$20,000 grant.

The two *WUP* grants will be awarded at our **2011 Human Services Grant Award Luncheon** at Farmington Country Club on **October 4, 2011**. The keynote speaker is Jennifer Ackerman, author of *The Social Network Diet: Change Yourself, Change the World*. If you would like to attend or know of an organization interested in a corporate sponsorship, please contact *WUP* Co-Chair, Robin Amato at (434) 981-0767 or [robin.amato@re3cp.com](mailto:robin.amato@re3cp.com).

*Women United in Philanthropy* was formed in Charlottesville in 2004 in partnership with the [United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area](#) with the goals of fostering women's philanthropy and helping the Charlottesville/Albemarle area by addressing human service needs through collective donations. *WUP maximizes women's leadership in philanthropy by engaging and educating its membership, increasing charitable contributions, and strengthening our community through the impact of collective giving to support human services. For more information, please visit [www.WomenUnitedCharlottesville.info](http://www.WomenUnitedCharlottesville.info).*