



WOMEN'S FOUNDATION
OF THE SOUTH



2023

GRATITUDE

REPORT

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

Dear Valued Supporters,

On behalf of the Women's Foundation of the South (WFS), I am pleased to present the 2023 Gratitude Report, a true testament to your support in action. Our donors, partners, and supporters make our impact possible. We are deeply grateful for your continued commitment to building the health, wealth, and power of women and girls of color across the South.

At a time when our civil and reproductive rights are in peril, we hold the future of generations to come in our hands. Now, more than ever, it is crucial to give and act according to our values. WFS proudly remains steadfast in our commitment to address the urgent issues affecting women and girls of color and gender expansive people. In our second full year of operation, your generosity has empowered us to stand strong and expand our efforts, even in the face of these challenges. Your support helped to fuel our momentum in 2023 to:

- ▶ Expand to two additional states, funding 46 new nonprofit organizations in Texas and Georgia.
- ▶ Deepen our narrative change work by launching a three-part docuseries *As We Are*.
- ▶ Host our largest fundraising event to date, *Crescendeaux: A Carnival of Culture*.
- ▶ Represent the Foundation on a global stage as a Call to Action at the Clinton Global Summit.
- ▶ Gained recognition as an innovative foundation for our WOC @ Rest® program by the Truist Foundation and Philanthropy Southeast.

Thank you for being our allies and champions. Your support nourishes our passion and determination, and together, we are making a profound difference. Even with the challenges ahead, we remain inspired and filled with excitement for the future of WFS, and for the women of color in the South who we exist to serve. No one can do this work alone, and we are most grateful to you. Thank you for your support.

With heartfelt gratitude,



~ Carmen James Randolph, Founding President and CEO, Women's Foundation of the South



OUR TEAM

Our leadership possesses on-the-ground knowledge of women-of-color-led nonprofits and entrepreneurs and acts as a bridge between donors and solutions. We share a deep passion for resourcing marginalized communities to create transformational change. Together we engage community leaders and donors to create legacies, shape philanthropic priorities, and leverage significant gifts.



**Carmen James
Randolph**

Founding
President and CEO



**Christy Wallace
Slater**

Vice President
of Programs



**Erin McQuade
Wright, CFRE, CAP®**

Founding
Philanthropic Advisor
and Co-Vice President
of Advancement



**Jessica
Santos**

Chief of
Staff



**Kysha
Brown**

Co-Vice President
of Advancement

FOND FAREWELLS

We first birthed the vision for the Women's Foundation of the South almost five years ago, launching it in 2021 as a first-of-its-kind foundation that centers women of color in the South. WFS acknowledges that women of color over-index for inequities in health, wealth, and power. We actively work to change these injustices. Christy Wallace Slater was part of this vision from the very beginning. She shared our dreams, aligned with our vision, and helped build WFS into what it is today.

During her two-year tenure, Christy expanded our signature programming, WOC @ Rest®, to engage 67 additional nonprofits across three new states, helped launch impact storytelling Learn With Us and As We Are, partnered with Tulane University's John Lewis School of Public Administration for a high-profile study on supporting women-of-color entrepreneurs, and was an integral part of Crescendeaux, our signature gala fundraising event.

Erin McQuade-Wright was a key member of the five-person founding team for WFS, collaborating with the other members to establish and build our donor engagement activities, development plans, planned giving strategies, donor databases, annual campaign, and making the case to launch an endowment. Her unique and deep understanding of philanthropy proved a powerful force for change in our society, tackling the social ills we are trying to overcome. Her commitment to resourcing and amplifying the voices of women and girls of color and her devotion to being of service were always a driving force for Erin. In its inaugural year alone, she led efforts to successfully raise almost \$2M in 2023 and a total of \$6M over the course of her tenure.

With great gratitude and respect, we say farewell to our friends and colleagues, thank them for their many contributions, and wish them all the best as they start their new chapters.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Scantlebury, PhD**

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Payton**

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Board Member



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**Diana Jones
Wilson**

Board Member



**Lori Spicer
Robertson**

Board Member

2023 RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS



**Kieta
Mutepfa**

Board Member Emeritus



**Christy
Ross**

Board Member

Kieta Mutepfa is one of our founding board members who helped launch WFS. Her commitment to trans women and gender expansive people has become part of the ethos of the organization.

We are grateful to Christy Ross and her service as a member of the board and her service to strengthen board governance.

WOC @ REST®

The year 2023 underscored yet again that women of color are always pushing for social justice and equality even as we face discrimination and bias on multiple fronts. Many women of color leaders find themselves working past the point of burnout and managing multiple health challenges. Our society tells us that rest is not for us, yet rest is productive and a critical part of the creative process. A tool for healing, freedom, and liberation, rest is a necessity for resistance. It is needed to thrive. WFS created our healing justice initiative, WOC @ Rest®, as a space to change this narrative.

WOC @ Rest® offers hard-working leaders a needed break from responding to compounding disasters – COVID-19, an eviction crisis, persistent maternal and infant mortality, challenges to mental health and safety, joblessness, voter suppression, and environmental disasters. The program has also helped expand their networks of support, connecting grantee cohorts across state lines. This approach undergirds our partnerships with WOC leaders to develop a comprehensive strategy to improve conditions for women and girls of color across the South.



WOC @ REST® EXPANSION

WOC @ Rest® also serves as a vehicle for programmatic expansion for WFS, launching in Louisiana in 2021, expanding to Mississippi in 2022, and adding Texas and Georgia in 2023. Since launching our program, nearly 100 women of color leaders have participated in five cohorts, and WFS has invested over \$1M in grants and programmatic investment. We will expand programming as our funding grows, eventually covering all 13 Southern states in our footprint and reaching thousands of women of color through the healing justice work of WOC @ Rest®.



Each Spring, WFS checks in with our grantee partners to evaluate the impact of our program. This year, we connected with Texas and Georgia grantee partners to check in on their progress since participating in their cohort and learned the following:

80% Reported Improvements in Leadership

Grantees attributed the program to changing their approach to their own self-care and wellbeing as well as the wellbeing of their staff.

49% Increase in Health & Wellness

Grantees complete a wellness survey when applying for the grant and upon program completion to identify areas of improvement. Participants rate themselves on six areas of wellbeing: eating, hydrating, sleeping, moving and exercising, connecting with family and friends, and relaxing.



Criminal justice reform work is tiresome. The WOC @ Rest® program helped me to realize that totally unplugging from my work just to be with myself and the ones I love is necessary to be able to do this critical work better.



Robyn Hasan -Simpson, Executive Director, Women on the Rise GA

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHTS

Elevating Voices & Investing in Change

Power Sector: Deborah Scott, Georgia Stand Up



By building a system of collective power, Deborah Scott and Georgia STAND UP are making a tremendous impact in Georgia. According to Deborah, Georgia STAND UP's goal is to help communities realize that they own their power.

Born out of a desire to increase civic engagement, Georgia STAND UP aims to foster a community of change based on community involvement. Areas such as voter registration, housing, and policy reform are where Deborah Scott sees a goldmine for opportunity. By focusing on the collective needs and concerns of Georgians, Scott and her team can curate an array of diverse, innovative, and effective campaigns and resources designed to bring solutions to both every day and systemic issues.

Going through WFS' WOC @ Rest® program helped Deborah realize she needed to extend the self-care practices she experienced to her staff. After the WOC @ Rest® retreat, she allowed her staff to work at least one day from home and implemented a week of staff appreciation activities. She plans to do a similar restorative retreat for staff in the summer of 2024. For her, these practices have increased the staff's and her own happiness, which is priceless in the stressful field of community organizing.

"I am eternally grateful for the support and reminders from the WFS retreat that Rest is necessary to restore the women of movement. Self-care practices and space for our team to restore ourselves and make time for restorative practices is now a part of our team practices. Thank you for the radical love that we are passing on."

Wealth Sector: Elizabeth Wilson, Georgia Microenterprise Network



Everyone deserves the chance to be financially and economically secure, and that is exactly what Elizabeth Wilson of the Georgia Microenterprise Network wants to give to Georgians who own micro-businesses. Georgia Microenterprise Network (GMEN) acts as a mentor for micro-businesses in Georgia and the Southeast of the United States. Being a member association, GMEN stresses economic support, opportunity, and growth for micro-businesses by offering technical assistance, funding, or digital readiness. Other programs include workshops on financial literacy and partnerships with large financial institutions such as Wells Fargo to create more opportunities for entrepreneurship and business ownership.

Elizabeth's goals for 2024 include expanding GMEN's services to Southeast Georgia and diversifying their funding streams.

The grant provided through the WOC @ Rest® program allowed Elizabeth to purchase a tool that significantly improved her physical health. Being physically healthier cleared her mind and helped Elizabeth reprioritize her vision and plans for the next five years. It allowed her to have a more long-term view of GMEN and build a new community model that can be replicated and lead to more growth for the organization. Finally, she is now less apprehensive about implementing innovative strategies within her organization such as instituting new technologies.

“Through the WOC @ Rest® retreat, I made good connections and had great conversations with a diverse group of strong women-of-color nonprofit and movement leaders in my region. Together, we can work to tackle the similar problems and issues we face.”

Health Sector: Aidee Granados, Rosa es Roja



The Hispanic community often faces both systemic and cultural barriers in the United States when it comes to access to adequate healthcare and wellbeing. Aidee Granados wants to dismantle those barriers.

Rosa es Rojo delivers health and well-being education to Hispanic women and their families in the U.S. by creating positive health communities where culturally tailored and accessible chronic disease prevention programs are at the center. Founder and CEO Aidee Granados first started Rosa es Rojo in 2014 as a blog to document and share her and other women’s personal experiences with cancer. Granados wanted to not only foster a community of support but also raise awareness on how women like her can and are deserving of sustainable healthcare.

Prior to receiving the grant from the WOC @ Rest® program, Aidee was frustrated because she had been unable to leverage community partnerships as much as she would want to because of her limited capacity. Upon receiving WFS’ grant, Aidee hired a part-time executive assistant who has been able to attend community partner meetings that Aidee had not been able to attend. This allows Rosa es Rojo to explore other mid-term strategic partnerships with new partners.

“WFS’ grant allowed me to increase our organization’s capacity, which in turn has allowed us to build more value-added strategic partnerships. With this grant, we were able to achieve great positive impact for Hispanic women and their families.”

TEXAS GRANTEES



2 Inspire Peace Inc decreases the physical and mental stress Black people face, often because of trauma, by increasing self-awareness and mindfulness through mental health resources and therapies, including art therapy.



A Chance to Learn created to combat the issue of children entering kindergarten already academically behind their peers. AC2L is focused on building skills that are important for children of all backgrounds ages 0 to 5 years old.



Abide Women's Health Services is a Black-led nonprofit offering culturally-informed prenatal and postnatal care to improve birth outcomes in communities with the lowest quality of care.



CoACT brings together people, inspiration, and ideas to amplify communities with lasting solutions that address today's unique, complex and pressing social challenges.



Daughters Across the Diaspora connects Black women with business development skills that enables them to transcend barriers and rise above systemic economics that have kept them from reaching their highest potential.



De Colores Collective builds safe creative spaces by and for folks of color in solidarity with those in the margins, promoting narrative storytelling, art, and ability to gather in a reclamation of cultural identity and in celebration of life from a Latinx lens.



Delighted to Doula Birth Services exists to eliminate the maternal mortality in communities that have the lowest quality of care and offers resources including doula services and training.



Empowering the Masses empowers Dallas-area residents by providing life skills and educational training services so constituents achieve financial independence and self-sufficiency and gain self-worth.



First Choice Social Services strives to be the first choice in social services to provide treatment to families affected by domestic violence, substance abuse, and teen homelessness.



Heart of Courage helps mothers change their lives by providing an array of services, such as education and advocacy, one-on-one mentoring, parent support groups, job readiness, educational services, and community outreach.



Hope for You Inc works to eliminate poverty around the globe, empower the human potential for self-reliance and restore the power of hope for every individual one soul at a time through disaster relief and donations of food and household supplies.



Hopeful Solutions provides addiction recovery services and holistic support to single mothers and families in Dallas, Texas.



House of Rebirth offers a network of communities, families, and friends, bridging barriers to access alongside Black transgender women and femmes and providing safety and healing.



Journey for Justice Alliance is a national network of intergenerational, grassroots community organizations led primarily by Black and Brown people in over 30 U.S. cities working for high quality education for every child.



Rosa Es Rojo, Inc delivers health and well-being education to Hispanic women and their families in the U.S. by creating positive health communities where high-cancer-risk women receive support.



South Fair Community Development Corporation provides sustainable, affordable housing for low and moderate-income families through multifamily, single-family, economic development, and through the connectivity of social services.



Southern Sector Rising fights environmental, economic, and racial inequities brought on by decades of racist zoning policies and industrial pollution through education, coalition and power building, policy advocacy, and mutual aid.



Texas Muslim Women's Foundation empowers, promotes, and supports all women and their families through programs designed to promote peace in homes and communities, a mission that ultimately creates stronger communities.



The Afiya Center transforms the lives, health, and overall wellbeing of Black womxn and girls by providing refuge, education, and resources; it acts to ignite the communal voices of Black womxn resulting in our full achievement of reproductive freedom.



The **Texas Signal Media Foundation** is a nonprofit organization devoted to creating honest public interest reporting by and for the new Texas majority and focuses on several reporting areas: reproductive healthcare, the environment, education, culture, and more.



Veteran Women's Enterprise Center positions women veteran-owned businesses as our nation's leading small business revenue generators and employers and helps them scale for success by advocating for them and giving them professional and personal resources.



Viola's House exists to provide maternity housing to mothers who are faced with an unplanned pregnancy and also offers job readiness/preparation, case management, parenting classes, individual counseling, educational services, and group counseling.



GEORGIA GRANTEES



Athena's Warehouse provides scholarships, workshops, and mentorship for youth ages 14-24, breaking the cycle of poverty by educating youth on domestic violence, reproductive health, emotional wellbeing, how to apply for college, and much more.



Atlanta Wealth Building Initiative reimagines economic realities in communities of color through community wealth building strategies that powerfully leverage ideas, people, and capital.



Black Mamas Matter Alliance, Inc centers Black mamas and birthing people to advocate, drive research, build power, and shift culture for Black maternal health, rights, and justice so they can thrive before, during, and after pregnancy.



Georgia Micro Enterprise Network, Inc: serves as a catalyst for economic development in Georgia and the Southeast, supporting and funding viable micro-businesses in an effort to create new jobs and business opportunities.



Georgia STAND UP inspires meaningful civic engagement, advocates for equitable access to public transit, promotes affordable housing, and supports Medicaid expansion in the state of Georgia to ensure the equitable distribution of resources for all.



Hand, Heart, + Soul Project, Inc seeks to nurture, celebrate, and advance the needs of the people they serve by creating equitable access to quality educational, nutritional, and community resources, developing holistic programs focused on health, wellness, nutrition, and education.



Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia works to improve access to prenatal and preventive healthcare for thousands of women, children and families in Georgia through direct service, collaborative advocacy and community education.



Housing Justice League works with renters and homeowners to self-organize and defend their right to remain, fights to preserve affordable housing, for just living conditions, to prevent gentrification, and to build community power for an Atlanta-wide housing justice movement.



Latino Community Fund Inc supports Latinx-serving and Latinx-led nonprofit organizations advancing democracy, protecting and building community, and facilitating economic opportunities for all.



Living Walls, The City Speaks promotes the power of public art as a social and economic engine, providing an artistic workforce to create healthy, sustainable urban spaces.



Mary Hall Freedom Village, Inc empowers women, children, veterans, and families to end the cycle of homelessness, addiction, and poverty through treatment services.



Our House provides transformative care to end the cycle of homelessness for families, offering interrelated programs that address the root causes of homelessness and ensure every family that leaves Our House has the tools needed to achieve lasting self-sufficiency.



Raksha, Inc has served the South Asian community since 1995 with a mission to promote a stronger and healthier South Asian community through confidential support services, education, and advocacy.



Refugee Women's Network

Refugee Women's Network, Inc created by women for women to serve refugee and immigrant families who have resettled in the state of Georgia, offering programs that are a steppingstone to self-sufficiency.



Science, Engineering and Mathematics Link Inc exposes students K-12 to positive adult role models from the STEM community to increase students' awareness of STEM careers and encourage their participation in digital learning and hands-on activities.



Trans Women of Color Healing Project combats the erasure of Trans people's lives, narratives, and contributions to society, speaking truth to power and uplifting the stories that center TWOC people, their families, their communities, and their movement.



Urban League of Greater Atlanta invests in the economic success of African Americans, coaching them to a better life through services and programs, including workforce development, youth services, entrepreneurship support, housing and community development, and financial empowerment.



Usher's New Look transforms the lives of under-resourced youth through comprehensive programming which helps youth rise above their circumstances and thrive as the leaders they were destined to be.



Women on the Rise GA combats the injustices of the carceral system and the disproportionate impacts it has on Black women, addressing the specific challenges faced by women within oppressive systems through advocacy and strategic campaigns.



Youth Empowerment Success, Inc provides youth ages 18-24 in the metro Atlanta area with affordable and stable housing, practical life skills, and an identifiable support system to propel them toward their future goals.



HONORS & AWARDS

In 2023, WFS continued to expand our imprint and make a deeper impact. We were honored to be recognized as a recipient of the **Truist Promise Award by Philanthropy Southeast for our WOC @ Rest® programming.** The award recognizes initiatives and innovative grantmaking strategies or approaches that focus on significant and systemic issues facing the region and the country today.

We were also excited to be selected as a **Call to Action** by the **Clinton Foundation** at the **Clinton Global Summit** for using the power of narrative in the implementation of our endowment campaign and the production of our docuseries, *As We Are*.

These recognitions have expanded our visibility in the philanthropic landscape and signaled that we are poised for growth and strategic impact.



OUR WORK: TRUSTED PARTNER & INTERMEDIARY

In 2023, WFS continued to establish itself as a trusted partner and intermediary in the philanthropic community. As we host our first giving circle at the Foundation, we are proud to serve as the fiscal sponsor for the Geaux Girl Giving Collective. Our role as a philanthropic intermediary extends to supporting initiatives like Voice.Vision.Values and the Standing in the Gap Fund. Through these partnerships, WFS continues to facilitate impactful giving and foster a collaborative spirit among donors and organizations dedicated to making a difference.

GEAUX GIRL GIVING COLLECTIVE



In 2023 WFS was honored to serve New Orleans based Geaux Girl Giving Collective as its fiscal sponsor and supported Geaux Girl Giving with the administration of its grants. Geaux Girl Giving is a dynamic group of 22 Black women on a mission to rewrite the narrative of philanthropy by empowering Black women as both beneficiaries and benefactors. Through collective giving and the pooling of resources, the organization sparks lasting change and uplifts the lives of Black women and girls across the city.

The highlight of our first year of partnership was the launch of the Geaux Girl Giving Ignite Award. The award provides five \$5,000 awards and five \$1,000 awards to 10 Black women-led nonprofits working in any sector, from education and health to social justice and economic empowerment.

Geaux Girl Giving has made a significant impact by supporting over 30 nonprofits across Metro New Orleans. They have distributed over \$50,000 in grants to Black women-led organizations through pooled resources.

GEAUX GIRL GIVING IGNITE AWARDEES

\$5,000 awardees



The Black New Orleans Mom



The Blooming Phoenix



Kimberly Gallow Foundation



Glam U 101



Bloom Dance Inc



The Horticulture



Queendom 101



Supreme Midwifery



Operation Inclusion Center



Black Girl Comedy Fest



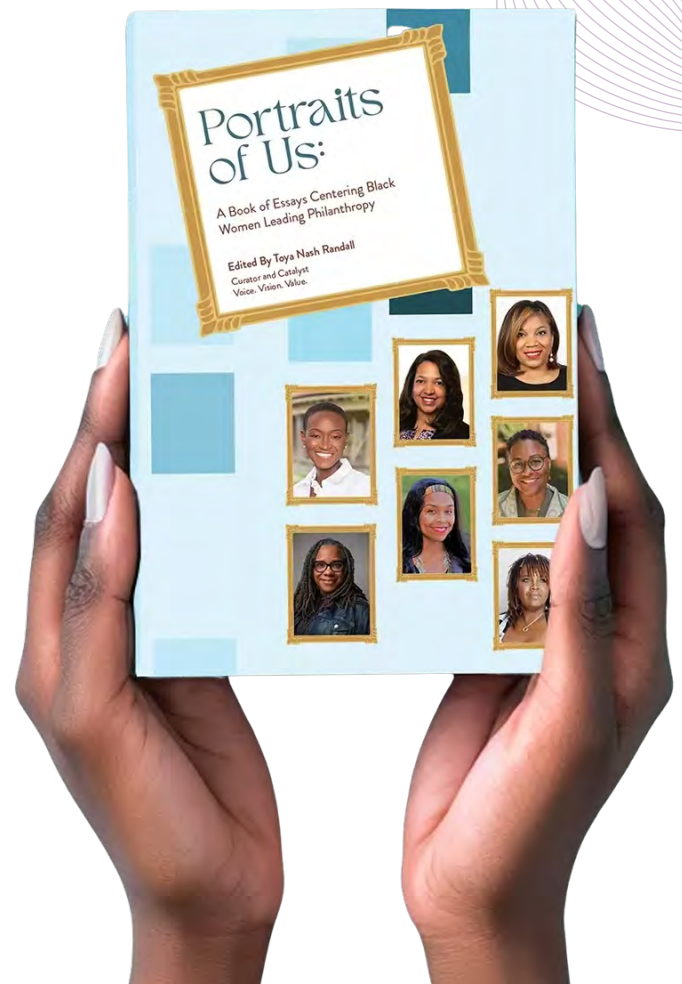
A'sani Heartbeat Foundation

VOICE.VISION.VALUE.



VOICE. VISION. VALUE.
Black women leading philanthropy

In 2022 and 2023, WFS supported the development of the Voice.Vision.Value (VVV) book project that featured networks of Black women philanthropic leaders from 10 regions across the United States. WFS made grants to nonprofit organizations in each region across the United States to serve as the regional co-curators for the project and included Philanthropy Southeast, The Minneapolis Foundation, Philanthropy Ohio, Philanthropy Northwest, and Forefront. Co-curators hosted a series of listening sessions across the country that informed the essays featured in the book. The book project worked with Black women authors to capture a collective narrative detailing the leadership impact, experiences, and strategic perspectives of women in each region.



2023 GIVING

WFS 2023 GIVING SUMMARY



In 2023, WFS continued building resources with focused campaigns and activation events aimed at telling our story and inspiring donors to empower women and girls of color in the South.

We are deeply grateful for the unwavering support from both institutional donors and individual contributors. Institutional grants played a pivotal role in fueling our expansion to Texas and Georgia, enabling us to broaden our reach and impact. These generous grants have been instrumental in supporting the missions of our grantee partners, allowing them to continue their vital work in communities across the South.

Equally, the contributions from individual donors have been a cornerstone of our success. Each donation, no matter the size, has made a difference in our ability to empower women and girls of color. Your support has not only helped us grow but has also inspired us to strive for greater heights.



Together, institutional and individual donors have created a powerful force for change. Your generosity has enabled us to launch new initiatives, provide critical resources, and foster a community of support and empowerment for nonprofits across the South. We celebrate each one of you for your commitment to our cause and for believing in the potential of every woman and girl we serve. With your support, we nearly surpassed our \$3M fundraising goal in 2023.

2023 SUPPORTERS

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Edgar Aglipay
Elaine Aglipay Delio
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Katharine Arnold
Mona Arnold-McBride
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Kristine Baltasar
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Donna Beaulieu
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Samantha Bickham
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Dawn Bradley-Fletcher
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Tosha Link
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Karron Williams
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Donna-Marie Winn
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Hearthland Foundation
Kresge Foundation
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Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation
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PayPal Giving Fund
Pivotal Ventures
Power Coalition for Equity and Justice
Satterberg Foundation
Seeding Justice
Stupski Foundation
Target Employee Giving Campaign

The Rockefeller Foundation
UK Online Giving Foundation
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Women's Funding Network
A New Hope Consulting
Ashunta Sheriff Beauty
Brothers Empowered to Teach
Care First Pharmacy & Wellness Center LLC
CCS Fundraising
Evan James Consulting
Funkshuns
Gulf Coast Bank & Trust
John Lewis Public Administration Program
at Tulane University
New Orleans & Company
Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast
The Jae Impact
Tito's Vodka

2023 WAY MAKERS

At WFS, we refer to our monthly donors as Way Makers. Cultural communities have historically known how important it can be when one, a few, or many come together to make sustained contributions for growth and stability. Way Makers, we shine a light on what your giving makes possible. your consistent support is crucial in enabling us to respond swiftly to emerging needs and to sustain ongoing approaches. You are pillars of possibility, and your consistency makes a difference. Thank you for being Way Makers and for standing with us every step of the way.

Alisha Johnson Perry

Angela Shiloh

Bonita A Robertson-Hardy

Carmen James Randolph

Christiane-Tresor Crawford

Erin McQuade-Wright

Gayle Williams

Gracia Hillman

Halima Leak Francis Ph.D.

Isaac MacDonald

Jailaih Gowdy

Katharine Arnold

Kimberly D. Williams

Kristyna Jones

Kyscha Brown

Shaunna Randolph

Sonny S. Haynes

CAMELLIA CAMPAIGN



You continued to use the annual giving campaign to capstone your generosity in 2023. We appreciate you for using this pathway to support organizations and leaders who build the health, wealth, and power of women and girls of color across the US South.

Aptly named, the Camellia Campaign is more than just a fundraising effort – it serves to express how we hold our commitment and shared destiny with both benefactors and beneficiaries. Known to represent love, adoration, and most importantly to our mission – perseverance, the camellia represents our belief that we rise and fall together, and that our strength lies in our unity and resilience. Our campaign highlights our shared value of love for the communities we serve together and celebrates the interdependence of our resilience in the face of structural inequities. This is why we continue to clasp hands with the Black women in philanthropy who made the first gifts to birth WFS, the Latina, AAPI, Indigenous, and gender expansive women, the brothers, fathers, and sons, and all the allies who gave in 2023. We rise and fall together.

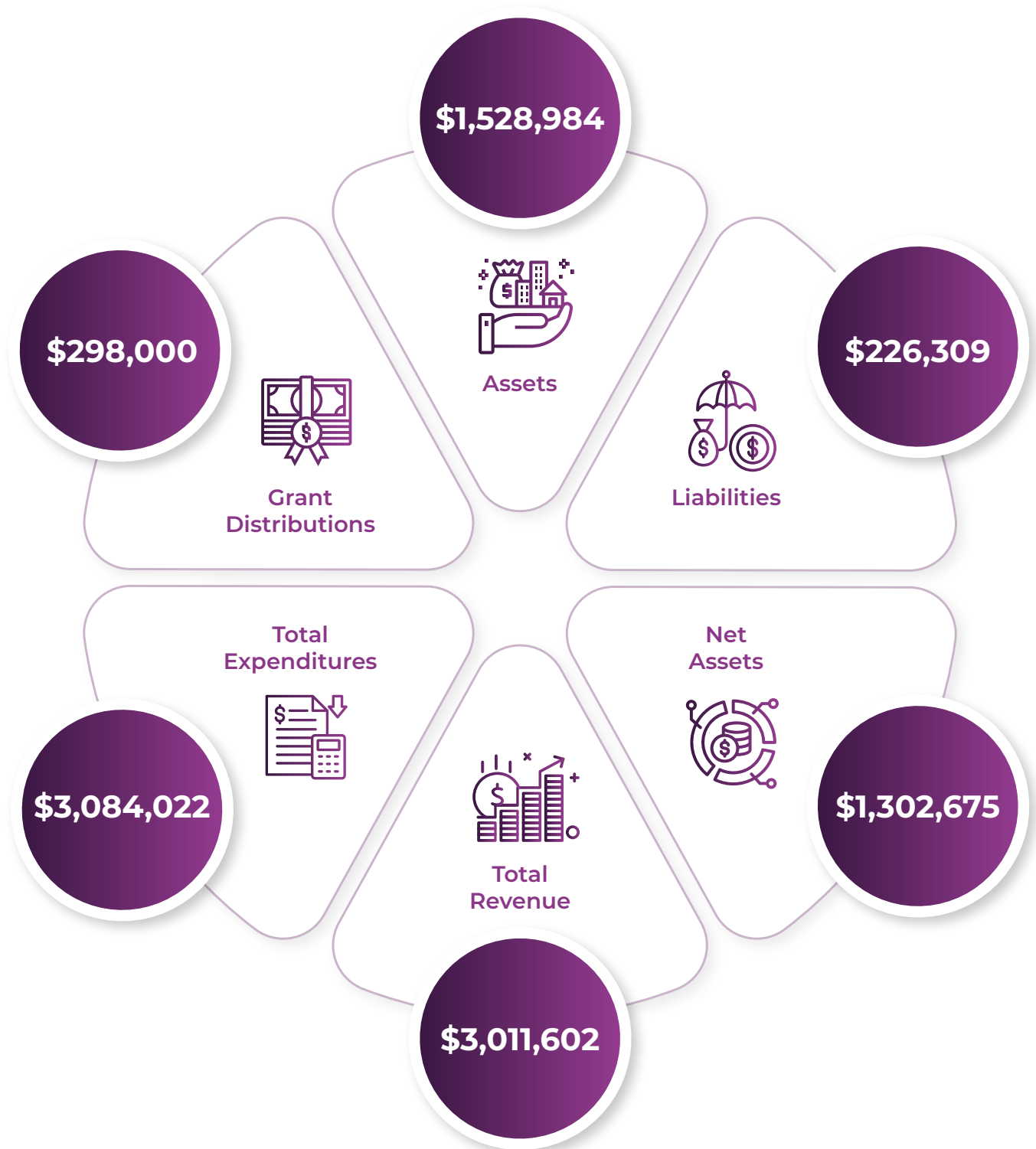
Thanks to your generosity, the Camellia Campaign raised \$139,244 in 2023

SACRED MOTHERS OF THE SOUTH LEGACY CAMPAIGN



This year, we also began planning for the launch of our endowment campaign, Sacred Mothers of the South. Our goal is to encourage Legacy Giving among our donors that directs planned gifts and other gifts toward the endowment. Donors will be invited to give a gift in honor of an ancestor or a living legacy who is a woman of color from the South. We will memorialize and celebrate the honorees via a special interactive website that features personal stories, photos, audio recordings, and videos. This campaign is a true expression of love and honor for women and girls of color, and the amazing things we do every day to change our communities.

2023 FINANCIALS



CRESCENDEAUX 2023

Crescendeaux: A Carnival of Culture, WFS' fundraising fashion show gala, was a big success and shined the spotlight on women of color designers and entrepreneurs innovating in their craft and bringing fashion with flair to women in the South. Their creativity in fashion is a reflection of the creativity used by WOC leaders to shape strategies and solutions that produce real actionable change in their communities.

Last year, year we lifted up the vibrant and diverse cultures of the South through our curated lineup of designers and runway appearances by some of New Orleans' famous Mardi Gras Queens. In 2023, Crescendeaux drew its largest crowd yet –and was presented at the Orpheum Theatre, a world-class performing arts and events venue located in the heart of New Orleans. It was truly a night of celebration, culture, and a dazzling display of the power of women of color creatives and leaders.



CRESCENDEAUX DESIGNERS



Korto Momolu
cut • toe • mo • mo • lu

Korto Momolu



AOMO

Sophia A. Omoro, MD, PhD



OLIVIA LONDON
SUSTAINABLE

Celeste Madhere



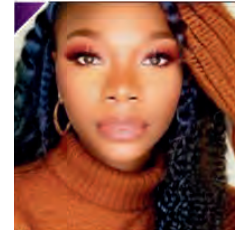
Brocade

Brocade Stops Black Eagle



WEST LONDON
BTQ

Mariah Walton Bencik



DELISA ROSE

Taquiela Wright

Thank you to our Corporate Sponsors and Underwriters

PLATINUM



GOLD



PEARL



TRENDSSETTER

CCS Fundraising
Foundation for Louisiana
Larry Irvin
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Ms. Foundation for Women
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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

OUR STORIES, OUR VOICES: WFS STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

As we grow and achieve new milestones in our mission to #ShiftTheSouth, we strive to keep the stories and voices of women and girls of color at the center of our organizational identity. Strategic communications allow us to amplify that message and remain top of mind with donors as well as at the forefront of the cultural conversation, driving cultural currency for the organization across the American South.

In collaboration with our Strategic Communications partner, strut AGENCY, we have developed an approach that is steeped in behavioral change and narrative change communications, social impact storytelling, empowerment activations, robust research and trending media topics affecting the HEALTH, WEALTH, and POWER of women and girls of color. The combined impact of each area is authentic community building with our grantees, partners, and potential donors that touches their real lives and experiences.

SOCIAL IMPACT STORYTELLING



The narrative impact of our strategic communications in 2023 was elevated through the filming of *As We Are*, a impact docuseries. In partnership with strut AGENCY, WFS leveraged the talent of two-time Emmy-nominated and Award-winning filmmaker Eternal Polk, and award-winning producer, Anna Notarides to bring the cinematic vision to life. The three-part series showcases the stories of nonprofit leaders in Louisiana and Mississippi working through major challenges like natural disasters, funding gaps, and the complexities of navigating life and leadership. The *As We Are* docuseries builds on the WFS impact video series from 2022, *Learn with Us*, and evocatively explores the lives, work, struggles, and achievements of women from diverse cultural backgrounds. Through interviews and powerful storytelling, the series offers an inspiring portrayal of women of color leaders and celebrates their stories as multi-dimensional and central to building movements for systemic change.

The work of WFS and that of its grantees is highlighted, through the social impact storytelling strategy, giving voice to rarely told stories and scenarios of women of color leaders in the South. Through this work, WFS continues to be on the frontlines for needed change, lifting their voices as thought leaders in philanthropy and in solidarity and sisterhood with the women of color leaders with whom they work.



EXPRESSING GRATITUDE – WFS INTO THE FUTURE

2023 was a great year and the best is yet to come! We extend a huge thank you to every donor and supporter who gave to our campaigns, supported our programming, attended our fundraising gala, and engaged with our growing network of partner grantees. You are the reason we do what we do, and why we continue to press forward to create new funding mechanisms and initiatives that spark real change.

Thank you for standing with us and for being a part of the incredible journey of 2023. We look forward to continuing our work together, making a lasting impact in the lives of women and girls of color in the South.

Again, we thank our institutional partners and donors for your unwavering support and willingness to work with us to change the face of philanthropy for women and girls of color. Your investment in our future is a win for us all and we look forward to blazing new trails and changing more lives as we #ShiftTheSouth.

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Thank you!

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