Women’s funds offer a unique model for philanthropy that creates deep-rooted, systemic change through the empowerment of women and girls. The 12 women’s funds included in this report work to address the critical issues affecting women in the southern United States. In a part of the country too often characterized by its problems, these organizations see enormous potential for women and girls to be the solution, creating change for their communities and their region.

This report represents a collaborative effort to present the common context and collective impact of the 12 funds. Working together, the funds identified their shared priorities and developed a common vocabulary for the key issues, approaches, and areas of social change in their work. The result goes beyond a simple overview of regional grant-making, embodying a shared commitment to build a better future for women and girls in the South.
12 Women’s Funds in the South

The Atlanta Women’s Foundation
Kentucky Foundation for Women
Ms. Foundation for Women
Women’s Foundation of Arkansas
Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis
The Women’s Fund, Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee
Women’s Fund of Greater Chattanooga
Women’s Fund of Miami-Dade
Women’s Fund of Mississippi
The Women’s Fund of Winston-Salem
Women’s Legacy Fund, Southwest Florida Community Foundation
Women for Women, Community Foundation of Western North Carolina

Common Issues

Through the collaboration of the 12 southern women’s funds represented in this report, three key issues have emerged as top priorities both locally and regionally. These issues were identified after examining the grants made by each fund to nonprofit organizations that address the issues of women and girls in their local areas.

Common Approaches

Women’s funds are characterized by an approach that goes beyond pure grantmaking to embrace a plethora of other strategies to fuel women-led solutions and community transformation.

Creating Social Change

Women’s funds work to create social change for individuals, for the communities we serve, and for society at large. Social change happens when a shift toward social justice takes place.
How Women’s Funds Work

Women’s funds exemplify a unique social change model that holds that investing in women and girls achieves lasting returns for families, communities and nations. Women’s funds offer a value to the projects and organizations that they support that goes ‘beyond dollars’ by offering additional services and resources such as training, education and networking that help grantees sustain themselves and have a greater impact.

Common Context, Collective Impact

Key Regional Issues

Economic Security:

Economic justice provides women with opportunities to flourish in every part of their lives. When a woman is financially secure, she is able to care for herself, her family, and her community. This ripple effect, beginning with a secure woman, creates a better society as a whole.

Teen Pregnancy

Births to teenagers are at higher risk for low birth weight, preterm birth and death in infancy than births to women over 20. According to the CDC, approximately one out of every 17 babies born in the Southeastern United States has a teenage mother.

Domestic Violence

1 out of 4 women will face rape or sexual assault by an intimate partner in their lifetime. There is a direct correlation between poverty and domestic violence therefore making it critical to address both issues simultaneously.

| Birth rate among girls age 15-19, percent of the national average. Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Birth Data Files, 2008, via The National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy |

The Atlanta Women’s Foundation

Mission
The Atlanta Women’s Foundation’s mission is to be a catalyst for change in the lives of women and girls. We are dedicated to eliminating the generational cycle of poverty for women and girls by investing in programs that enhance their quality of life.

How We Work
AWF supports organizations using one of several strategies to increase self-sufficiency and improve economic security. We support programs providing direct services, increasing community awareness about issues and conducting direct advocacy. AWF also supports the sustainability of local nonprofits through capacity building workshops and grants, hosting periodic community forums, and an upcoming research initiative on the needs of Atlanta women and girls.

50 Grants – $1.8M
2009–2010

Grantee Highlight: Atlanta Legal Aid Society
Atlanta, GA

- Economic Security
- Direct Service
- Maintaining Past Gains

Cancer takes a toll on any family’s finances, and low-income women dealing with the realities of a serious illness need an advocate who can help them cut through red tape, get the care they need, and provide for themselves and their families. The Women’s Cancer Legal Project (WCLP) at the Atlanta Legal Aid Society provides free legal services to low-income female cancer patients and survivors. WCLP helps clients navigate employment issues, assists with difficulties in insurance coverage, helps secure an income stream through insurance and public benefits, and helps create wills and advanced directives for women who are terminally ill.
Kentucky Foundation for Women

Mission
The vision of the Kentucky Foundation for Women is that feminist art can transform people and places and strengthen opportunities for women and girls through creative expression. KFW is a private, independent philanthropy whose mission is to promote positive social change through varied feminist expression in the arts.

How We Work
KFW funds diverse feminist social change artists and artist-centered programs through two grant programs. The Artist Enrichment grants fund artistic development and skill building. Art Meets Activism grants fund artists to directly engage community members in creating social change art. Through its retreat and residency center, KFW provides time and space for artists, allies and social service providers to create, connect and reflect in a beautiful natural setting.

32 Grants – $78K
Selected Grants, 2009–2010*

Key Issues
Average Grant Size
Economic Security $2.1K
Violence Against Women $2.8K
Teen Pregnancy $2.3K

Grantee Approaches
Visibility $2.4K
Direct Service $2.5K
Strengthening Organizations $2.8K
Education $1.5K

Social Change Shifts
Engagement $2.6K
Behavior $2.5K
Definition $2K
Policy $2.5K

Grantee Highlight: Lexington Art League
Lexington, KY

• Violence Against Women • Visibility • Engagement
KFW awarded the Lexington Art League $7,000 for the WITNESS program, a citywide exhibition, partnering artists with survivors of domestic violence to create art reflecting the survivors’ experiences. The partnership provided survivors with opportunities for creative self-expression and artists with opportunities to use their creativity and talent to raise awareness about violence against women in this community. This innovative project created safe space for women survivors to tell their stories and inspired high quality artworks realistically depicting how violence affects women and children.

*KFW awarded a total of 153 grants and $400,000 during these two years. The grants represented here were selected because they specifically address the common issues included in this report.
Ms. Foundation for Women

Mission
The Ms. Foundation for Women is the leading national social justice foundation committed to building women’s power to ignite change. Every day, it helps over 150 grassroots organizations across the US fight for changes like good paying jobs, reproductive health, ending violence against women and girls, and the inclusion of women at decision-making tables. By investing in social justice trailblazers (especially women from low-income communities and communities of color most affected by injustice) it works for a nation in which power and possibility are not limited by gender, race, class, or any other factor.

How We Work
The Ms. Foundation works to build collective power that tackles the root causes of injustice and ignites progressive change across the United States. We do this in three ways: through FUNDING, with over $54 million in grants to date to thousands of organizations who have the vision to build a movement and make change a reality; through LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT & CAPACITY BUILDING that helps organizations gain skills, sustainability and growth; through COMMUNICATIONS that raise the voice and profile of our grantees and result in powerful collaborations, learning, ideas and new partnerships.

20 Grants – $600K
2010–2011

Grantee Highlight: Mississippi Workers’ Center For Human Rights
Greenville, MS

Economic Security
Teen Pregnancy
Violence Against Women
Other
Advocacy
Leadership Development
Direct Service
Engagement
Policy
Behavior

In 2005, immediately after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the Gulf Coast, the Ms. Foundation established the Katrina Women’s Response Fund (KWRF). Through KWRF, we supported organizations such as the Mississippi Workers’ Center for Human Rights because we knew that in order to meet the urgent needs of people on the ground we had to invest in the communities themselves. Just three days after the storm the Mississippi Workers’ Center for Human Rights was already mobilized to respond, providing families and communities with the help they so desperately needed, from shelter, food, and employment, to investment, fiscal support, and much needed national exposure. In a time of official neglect, the Mississippi Workers’ Center For Human Rights provided both practical support to and impassioned advocacy for people whose lives were upended by the storms and ensured that their voices, lives and livelihoods were not ignored.
Women’s Foundation of Arkansas

Mission
The mission of the Women’s Foundation of Arkansas is to encourage philanthropy among women and to help women and girls achieve their full potential.

How We Work
Through its grant-making, the Women’s Foundation of Arkansas is the only not-for-profit, statewide organization with the sole focus of developing the professional, economic, and philanthropic potential of Arkansas women and girls by ensuring they have the necessary resources, tools and knowledge to reach their full potential.

3 Grants – $25K
2010

Grantee Highlight: Arkansas Tech University
Russellville, AR

- Economic Security
- Direct Service
- Engagement

ATU’s Summer Culinary Arts Institute introduced forty 9th through 12th grade girls to aspects of the hospitality industry including such topics as entrepreneurship, nutrition, and job readiness. The week-long Institute was designed to assist the young women in their decision making as to a college major - acquainting them with a career field that is currently male-dominated. In addition to kitchen basics, the young women learned how skills in math, science and nutrition are incorporated into the day-to-day running of a kitchen and/or business. Volunteer women chefs who travelled from respected restaurants around the state and nation served as the Institute trainers. The Institute, now successfully launched, will continue in future years incorporating Institute alumnae as mentors to each new group of aspiring chefs.

Average Grant Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Security</th>
<th>$8.3K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>$7.5K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Service</td>
<td>$10K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Issues

- Economic Security
- Education
- Direct Service
- Behavior

Grantee Approaches

- Economic Security
- Education
- Direct Service

Social Change Shifts

- Economic Security
- Education
- Direct Service
- Behavior

Photo: Liz Chrisman
Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis

Mission
The mission of the Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis is to encourage philanthropy and foster leadership among women and support programs that enable women and children to reach their full potential.

The Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis is the agent for change committed to a community of wellbeing and prosperity, where women live in sufficiency, strength and safety, sharing their leadership and empowering their children.

How We Work
The Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis is the only local organization dedicated to improving the economic self-sufficiency of women through an integrated approach focused on philanthropy, leadership, grantmaking, community initiatives and research and advocacy.

61 Grants – $977K
2010–2011

Key Issues
Grantee Approaches
Social Change Shifts

Grantee Highlight: Booker T. Washington High School
Memphis, TN

• Economic Security • Direct Service • Behavior

Hope, Pride, Resilience, Perseverance … these are just a few words that describe the accomplishments of Booker T. Washington High School (BTW), winner of the Race to the Top High School Commencement Challenge. Because of those characteristics, the city of Memphis witnessed history when President Barack Obama delivered the school’s commencement address. For the past five years, the Women’s Foundation has funded the BTW Educational/Cultural Experience program. Started by Coach Derek Hunter 12 years ago, the program exposes inner-city, low-income, female student-athletes to experiences beyond their South Memphis community and to opportunities to achieve their goals. This program, along with others like it, have helped BTW increase its graduation rate from 55% in 2007 to 81.6% last spring. Coach Hunter’s program boasts a 100% graduation rate with 90% of the girls entering college on an academic or athletic scholarship.
The Women’s Fund
Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee

Mission
The Women’s Fund, an endowment fund within The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, is dedicated to increasing support in Middle Tennessee for programs serving women and girls. The Fund makes grants to programs addressing:

» Achievement of economic self-sufficiency for women
» Prevention of violence against women and girls
» Promotion of health, well-being, and talent for women and girls

How We Work
The Women’s Fund of The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee is the only permanent fund in Middle Tennessee dedicated exclusively to the needs of women and girls. The interest generated from the Fund is given annually to provide support to programs dedicated to helping women and girls in our community. As the principal grows, so does our ability to meet crucial needs and affect social change.

32 Grants – $119K
2009–2010

Grantee Highlight: Mending Hearts
Nashville, TN

» Economic Security
» Direct Service
» Behavior

The Women’s Fund of The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee is a proud grant partner of Mending Hearts in Nashville, Tennessee. Mending Hearts is a residential recovery-oriented therapeutic community for women who are or are at risk of becoming homeless as a result of their addiction to drugs, alcohol or both. Many of the women served have been prostitutes, prison inmates or homeless.

Founded in 2004, Mending Hearts is now home to 40 women who are ready to set their lives straight, address their addictions and become law-abiding, productive citizens again. Out of the 100-150 women served each year, 73-109 become graduates of the program.
Women’s Fund of Greater Chattanooga

Mission
The Women’s Fund of Greater Chattanooga is a component fund of the Community Foundation managed by a local Board of Directors. Our mission is to improve the lives of women and girls in our region. Our work is rooted in providing opportunity, encouragement, knowledge and resources to the women of our community through our philanthropy and advocacy.

How We Work
The Women’s Fund of Greater Chattanooga is housed under the umbrella of the Community Foundation and takes a two pronged approach to our work: first through policy advocacy and grant-making to address issues critical to women’s economic security, and second by encouraging and empowering women as philanthropists to use their economic power, individually and collectively, to make the social change they seek.

1 Grant – $12.2K
The Women’s Fund gave its first grant to better the lives of women in our community in June 2011. Grantmaking will become an increasingly central part of our work once our operating fund meets its initial growth targets.

Acting as a Convener
We work with local service providers to discuss the pressing needs of low-income women and have created a collaborative working group of organizations focused on these issues.

Advocacy
We engage with local, state, and federal governments to influence policy and legislation that can help low-income women access health care, education, and other resources.

Research
We have commissioned a series of research and data briefs on the economic status of women in Hamilton County, shedding light on key issues not previously documented in the area.

Philanthropy
We engage women as philanthropists at all levels, stressing the democracy of philanthropy. In 2011, we launched the Nightingale Network to encourage young women in philanthropy for social change.

Operating Fund Growth
The Women’s Fund has grown its operating fund from 0 to $160K since its inception in 2008, and we are rapidly approaching our goal of $180K.

Grantee Highlight: Bethlehem Community Center Chattanooga, TN

- Economic Security
- Philanthropy
- Behavior

The Nightingale Network of the Women’s Fund of Chattanooga made their first grant on June 30th, 2011. The network, which engages young women in the power of collective philanthropy, started in May with the kick-off of a “Girls’ Night In” campaign to raise funds in support of low-income women in the greater Chattanooga area. With matching support from the Women’s Fund, the Nightingale Network awarded their first grant of $12,210 to the Bethlehem Community Center’s Health Community Initiative for Women. The program will empower women to excel economically through job skills and entrepreneurship training and to create businesses that will bring healthy food options to the Alton Park community.
Women’s Fund of Miami-Dade

Mission
Our vision is a community where all women and girls have equal access, opportunity, and influence. Women’s Fund of Miami-Dade empowers women and girls through advocacy and funding for innovative initiatives that build equality, foster social change, and create community partnerships. As the only grantmaker in Miami-Dade dedicated to funding femalespecific programs and the first Women’s Fund in Florida, Women’s Fund has awarded over $3 million to a wide range of gender-specific projects since 1993.

How We Work
Women’s Fund of Miami-Dade believes that by investing in organizations dedicated to enhancing the lives of women and girls we increase their effectiveness and strength. We build partnerships with funders and nonprofits to help educate and engage staff while developing leadership among participants. Women’s Fund of Miami-Dade seeks to create a sense of collaboration among those who share common goals, even in a community with a multitude of strong ethnic groups.

73 Grants – $71K
2009–2010

Grantee Highlight: Center for Independent Living
Miami, FL

- Violence Against Women
- Advocacy
- Engagement

In 2010, WFMD awarded a $6,000 grant to Center for Independent Living (CIL) in Miami, a civil rights organization for people with disabilities, to fund a project called “Women with Disabilities Can’t Be Beat”. Research shows that women and girls with disabilities are more often victims of domestic violence/sexual assault yet crimes against them are rarely or ever prosecuted. The project educates law enforcement professionals on how to communicate with disabled women and take their reports seriously while teaching disabled women their legal rights and assist them in reporting crimes. It also promotes collaboration with victim services programs to provide accessible services.

Key Issues
Average Grant Size
Grantee Approaches
Social Change Shifts
Leadership Development
Direct Service
Advocacy
Forging Community Partnerships
Strengthening Organizations
Forging Community Partnerships

Reproductive Justice
Girls’ Leadership
Economic Security
Violence Against Women
Teen Pregnancy
Other

Reproductive Justice
$13K
Girls’ Leadership
$6.5K
Economic Security
$11K
Violence Against Women
$7.5K
Teen Pregnancy
$7.5K
Other
$5.8K

Reproductive Justice
$2.1K
Direct Service
$11K
Advocacy
$13K
Strengthening Organizations
$13K
Forging Community Partnerships
$2.5K

Leadership Development
$7.1K
Engagement
$13K
Definition
$7K
Policy
$14K
Maintaining Past Gains
$8.8K

Behavior
$7.1K
Engagement
$13K
Definition
$7K
Policy
$14K
Maintaining Past Gains
$8.8K

Behavior
$7.1K
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$8.8K

Reproductive Justice
Girls’ Leadership
Economic Security
Violence Against Women
Teen Pregnancy
Other

Reproductive Justice
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Reproductive Justice
Girls’ Leadership
Economic Security
Violence Against Women
Teen Pregnancy
Other

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Reproductive Justice
Girls’ Leadership
Economic Security
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Teen Pregnancy
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$14K
Maintaining Past Gains
$8.8K

Behavior
$7.1K
Engagement
$13K
Definition
$7K
Policy
$14K
Maintaining Past Gains
$8.8K
Women’s Fund of Mississippi

Mission
The Women’s Fund of Mississippi is dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls by promoting social change and economic self-sufficiency through advocacy and strategic grantmaking. The Women’s Fund of Mississippi is the only grantmaking and advocacy organization in Mississippi entirely dedicated to funding programs that improve the lives of women and girls statewide.

How We Work
As a public foundation dedicated to using women’s philanthropy to create social change, we recognize that policy change at the state level is one of our most effective strategies. The Fund is most interested in funding programs that get to the ‘root’ of the problem, often through public policy and advocacy. The Women’s Fund has actively participated in advocacy campaigns related to payday lending reform, teen pregnancy prevention, and prevention of violence against women.

9 Grants – $120K
2009–2010

Grantee Highlight: Women in Construction
Biloxi, MS
- Economic Security
- Strengthening Organizations
- Engagement

The Women’s Fund of Mississippi has granted $81,000 since 2007 to support the Women in Construction (WinC) program at Moore Community House. WinC is an innovative program that trains women in the construction trade so that they can attain self-sufficiency. Since its inception in 2007, WinC has graduated over 100 women, with job placement rates over 60%. An entry level carpenter/general laborer makes about $10 an hour, several dollars above minimum wage. The Women’s Fund grants have supported advocacy and public awareness related to the program, as well as quality child care and transportation stipends, two must-haves for working women.
The Women’s Fund of Winston Salem

Mission
The Women’s Fund of Winston-Salem seeks to improve the lives of women and girls by building a community of female philanthropists who provide grants to local programs and initiatives that address the root causes of social issues impacting women and girls in Forsyth County.

How We Work
The Women’s Fund of Winston-Salem has an intentionally inclusive membership model that encourages philanthropy among a broad base of women and girls and is recognized in the community as an advocate for women’s and girls issues and using sound research methods to raise visibility and awareness of the critical needs of women and girls.

18 Grants – $305K
2009–2010

Grantee Highlight: Family Services
Winston Salem, NC

- Violence Against Women
- Leadership Development
- Engagement

Teens-4-Change is a teen-led social change/peer education group based in Family Services’ Safe Relationships Division. The group develops leadership skills by planning and implementing a variety of activities to educate others about teen dating violence and healthy relationships. One such activity is the P.L.A.Y (Positive Learning About Yourself) First Workshops which focus on self-image, self respect, healthy relationships, and safety. Teens-4-Change shares information in ways that their peers appreciate such as through social media sites and the creation of performance pieces using a variety of forms of artistic expression to spread the word about dating and sexual violence.
Women’s Legacy Fund
Southwest Florida Community Foundation

Mission
The Women’s Legacy Fund was founded to improve the quality of life in Southwest Florida from a women’s perspective. We inspire women to become leaders in philanthropy; educate women and the community on current issues and philanthropic strategies; and empower women to strengthen the community from their unique giving perspective.

How We Work
Annual membership donations are divided with 50% going to current year grants, and 50% to build an endowed fund by which the WLF can impact the community in perpetuity. Members who have donated at least $250 vote to determine the area of interest for the current year’s grants. Area agencies’ grant proposals are reviewed by the WLF grant committee for current year’s grants.

3 Grants – $21K
2010–2011

Grantee Highlight: PACE Center for Girls of Lee County
Fort Myers, FL

• Violence Against Women  • Direct Services  • Behavior

PACE Center for Girls is a non-residential, gender-specific center which focuses on intervention and prevention programs for at-risk girls in the formative teen years. Part of a statewide organization with centers in 17 counties, PACE has a 90 percent success rate in keeping their students out of the Juvenile Justice system. Because of its success, PACE has been nationally recognized as a best practices model by the Federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The 2010 Grant funded the Girls Circle Program, a structured support group for girls between the ages of 9 and 18. In weekly sessions girls are taught about relational theory and resilience practices in order to redirect their behavior and choices and break the cycles of violence, abuse, and victimization they have experienced.
Women for Women, Community Foundation of Western North Carolina

Mission
The mission of Women for Women is to improve the lives of women and girls in Western North Carolina through women’s collective giving. Our vision is that Women for Women empowers women to take action, inspires hope and possibility and strengthens Western North Carolina.

How We Work
Women for Women members commit to a gift of $1,100 per year for three years. They learn about regional issues affecting women and girls and make high-impact grants that focus on women’s economic security. Each member has a vote in how funds are distributed and may also choose to be involved in reviewing grant proposals, conducting site visits, or being involved in advocacy calls to action which support the work of our grantees.

8 Grants – $505K
2010–2011

Key Issues
- Economic Security

Grantee Approaches
- Forging Community Partnerships
- Leadership Development
- Advocacy
- Direct Service

Social Change Shifts
- Definition
- Engagement
- Behavior

Average Grant Size
- Economic Security: $63K
- Forging Community Partnerships: $100K
- Advocacy: $28K
- Leadership Development: $20K
- Direct Service: $100K

Grantee Highlight: Children First/Communities in Schools
Asheville, NC
- Economic Security
- Advocacy
- Engagement

Children First/Communities in Schools in Buncombe County was awarded $50,000 over two years to support their public policy advocacy and community engagement programs that address issues such as child care, paid sick leave, NC tax modernization and a poverty reduction initiative. In the past 3 years, with help from a WFW grant, Children First has saved key state investments in education, health, and human services from drastic budget cuts. Children First has increased the advocacy capacity and networking among local nonprofits and has involved low-income families in developing advocacy strategies. This is their second multi-year grant.