



ANNE ARUNDEL WOMEN
GIVING TOGETHER

Full Circle News

January / February 2013

Leadership Letter

"When people contribute their unique skills and creative abilities, they are giving the one thing that is most genuinely theirs. What they are giving is what is at their core, and once tapped, it unleashes lasting energy."

Bill Shore, Revolutions of the Heart

Welcome back to what promises to be another big year for AAWGT! With new initiatives already underway and over \$90,000 to award in grants this year, 2013 is "teed up" to be a year of exciting growth and increased community impact, powered by the collective resources and talents of our 175-and-growing membership! Karen and I are grateful for your individual and collective involvement and for the tremendous efforts of our AAWGT leadership in past years on whose shoulders we begin this exciting new year.

In addition to our grant making in 2013, AAWGT will seek to advance our position as a thought-leader on key issues facing women and families in Anne Arundel County. As evidenced by the strong turnout at our January Education Session ("The Real Picture of Homelessness"), we believe AAWGT has a tremendous opportunity to build awareness and to seed changes which will improve the quality of life for women and families in our community.

And, as a rapidly expanding organization, we recognize the critical need to develop and improve our own internal management systems and communications tools so we can continue to grow and function dynamically. This year we plan to expand the role of our Governance Committee and create a standing Endowment and Fund Development Committee and put in place some new data and information systems, which will be designed and driven by an ad hoc group of talented members, to support AAWGT's ongoing work and future growth – stay tuned for more on this!

Of course, all of this is made possible by you! There's lots of room in AAWGT for putting to great use your own individual interests and talents! So, come join us – engage where it fits you – and know that we are all committed to an organization that, through our collective engagement, will have lasting and positive impact. We look forward to another exciting year at AAWGT!



Julie Schuelke
President



Karen Smith
Vice President

Circle Highlights

2013 Education Series - The Real Picture of Homelessness



AAWGT's first 2013 Educational Session, "The Real Picture of Homelessness," was held at the Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts on January 9. A large turnout heard Dr. Sheila Crowley, President and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), give an overview of the national picture; while Christine Poulsen, Special Programs Manager for Anne Arundel County Social Services, focused on the County's situation. County representatives from Arundel House of Hope,

Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake, and Lighthouse Shelter also gave brief overviews of their challenges and successes in recent years.

It is difficult to accurately count the homeless population. Crises triggering this status are not just financial, but include mental and physical health, abuse, divorce, weak family support, and many others. Some homeless people require only temporary assistance, but for others the need is long-term. Many of them have jobs.

Dr. Crowley explained that in 1970, the United States had a small surplus of affordable housing for extremely low-income residents (those making 30 % or less of an area's median income (AMI)). Since that time, the demand has far outstripped the supply, to the point that the national deficit has now reached 5.5 million units. The figure for Anne Arundel County is 3,740 units.

The County's situation is exacerbated by its high cost of living. It takes an hourly wage of \$23.67 for a household to afford a two-bedroom unit at the 2012 HUD-determined Fair Market Rent. Also, it is necessary to build or acquire affordable housing one unit at a time, as there is opposition to grouping such units together.

Since no one makes money building affordable housing, government and private help is essential. However, the recent economic downturn has led to drastic cuts in government aid. The Maryland Department of Human Services has cut its homeless funding in half over the past decade. The local Lighthouse Shelter receives only 9% of its funding from government sources, but has been fortunate enough to receive 91% of needed funds from within the community. The Lighthouse Shelter is a past recipient of an AAWGT grant.

NLIHC's proposed solution to this problem is to replace the current Federal mortgage interest deduction, which is now capped at \$1.1 million, with a 20% tax credit capped at \$500,000. This would save \$30 billion a year, while reducing the taxes of 92% of those making under \$100,000 per year who use this deduction. Dr. Crowley expects Congress to revisit the mortgage interest deduction this session but fears the savings will be used for other purposes.

There are some bright spots in this situation, as both public and private service providers work to do more with less. Under the Rapid Re-Housing Program, which helps stay evictions, the County was able to help 856 households retain their residences over a three year period, with an amazing 92% success rate. Sadly, funding has been cut so only 30 families can be helped this year. The County holds a Homeless Resource Day each year, at which the homeless can receive "one stop" information while service providers can interact and better coordinate their services. In 2012, 674 homeless people and over 500 volunteers participated in this event.

By calling attention to community needs, AAWGT's educational programs make us better informed residents and hence, better grantmakers. We have awarded past grants to organizations that serve the homeless and anticipate receiving future applications from these and similar groups.

For more information, go to nlihc.org. Copies of handouts from the session can be found on the AAWGT website.

Photo above features from the left AAWGT Education and Program Assistant Chair Mary Grace Folwell, who moderated the session, Dr. Sheila Crowley and Christine Poulsen.

Sixth Annual Leadership Event taking place on February 13 to feature Ritu Sharma, President of Women Thrive Worldwide



Women Thrive Worldwide Co-Founder and President Ritu Sharma will be the featured speaker at Anne Arundel Women Giving Together's (AAWGT) Sixth Annual Women and Leadership meeting Wednesday, Feb. 13 from 6-8 PM at the Boys and Girls Club of Annapolis, 1103 Smithville St. Annapolis, MD 21401. An Annapolis resident, Sharma co-founded [Women Thrive Worldwide](http://www.women-thrive.com) in 1998 to bring the voice of women around the world directly to decision-makers in Washington. The session will be moderated by Baltimore Sun columnist Susan Reimer.

An adept coalition builder, political strategist, communicator and motivational speaker, Sharma is a leading voice on international women's issues and U.S. foreign policy, and will draw on her personal stories, travels, unusual insights, and 'out-of-the-box' thinking that inspires her audiences to get involved in changing women's lives for the better. She will speak about the work of Women Thrive Worldwide, which advocates for change at the U.S. and global levels so that women and men can share equally in the enjoyment of opportunities, economic prosperity, voice, and freedom from fear and violence. The organization grounds its work in the realities of women living in poverty, partners with locally based organizations, and creates powerful coalitions to advance the interests of the women and girls they serve. Sharma will also discuss a personal effort she has undertaken to help stay in touch with the lives of the women the organization serves, whereby she travels to some of the world's poorest countries and lives on \$1 a day, most recently in Sri Lanka.





A first generation American of East Indian heritage, Sharma's family left behind generations of struggle in Punjab, India to build a new life in the United States. Her familial experiences prompted her to dedicate her life to helping women around the world. She is a graduate of Georgetown University's School of Foreign

Service and holds a Masters in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University. Her leadership skills were present early. In 1995, at age 26, she led a coalition of more than 100 organizations to influence the United Nations Summit on Social Development. Ritu also served on the official United States delegation to the Summit and later on the U.S. delegation to the United Nations General Assembly Session on Women, also known as "Beijing Plus Five." To register, click [here](#). Feel free to bring a friend!

2013 Leadership Slate

The following members were approved to represent AAWGT as the 2013-2014 Leadership Slate:

President - Julie Schuelke

Vice President / President Elect - Karen Smith

Treasurer - Cele Brown

Assistant Treasurer - Valerie Gutterson

Secretary - Jenny Kottler

Assistant Secretary - Judy Coughlin

Grants Chair - Cynthia Danjczek

Grants Assistant Chair - Kimberly Breton Iaguinta

Education & Program Chair - Maureen Cavaiola

Education & Program Assistant Chair - Mary Grace Folwell

Governance Chair - Martha Schwieters

Governance Assistant Chair - Donna Stackhouse

Leadership Development & Nominating Chair - Susan Amos

Leadership Development & Nominating Assistant Chair - Julie Crudele

Marketing & Communications Chair - Diana Rode

Marketing & Communications Asst. Chair - Lynn McReynolds

Membership & Outreach Chair - Missy Attridge

Membership & Outreach Assistant Chair - Marie Brockhurst

Post Grant Evaluation Chair - Lynn Buhl

Post Grant Evaluation Assistant Chair - Diane Evans

Welcome to New Members



A warm welcome to the newest members who joined our circle and are making a difference in our community!

Ann Carroll, Kim Jones and Christine Kelley

Upcoming Events



Wednesday, January 16, 6:30-8:30PM

BOOK GROUP PLANNING AND POTLUCK DINNER

Gloria Martin-Pressman will host the first get-together for 2013 including a potluck dinner at her home in Edgewater.

We will discuss our book selection and set up meeting dates and locations for the new year.

For more information contact Cele Brown, bookgroup@givingtogether.org

Wednesday, February 13, 7:00-8:30PM

SIXTH ANNUAL WOMEN & LEADERSHIP EVENT

Connecting to the Global Community

Boys & Girls Club, 1103 Smithville St., Annapolis, MD 21401

In anticipation of International Women's Day on March 8th, we will be focusing on global efforts to improve the lives and women and girls worldwide. Our speaker, Ritu Sharma, is Co-Founder & President of [Women Thrive Worldwide](http://WomenThriveWorldwide.com).

Wednesday, March 13

EDUCATION SESSION: *Housing and Homelessness II*

TBD

Register Online! Simply visit givingtogether.org and look for the event under [upcoming events](#). All events are open to members and guests unless noted otherwise.

Committee News

EDUCATION

SAVE THE DATE: On Wednesday, March 13, the Education Program

Committee will continue this year's education programming with a closer look at the local issues of Housing and Homelessness. Stay tuned - may include travel!

EVENTS

The Events Committee is in need of several new members to expand their logistics team. The Events Committee works closely with each meeting's host committee to coordinate logistics and details such as venue selection, set-up and clean-up, food and beverages, and any special requirements such as AV needs, etc. The Events Committee is also looking for new affordable venues in the area which would fit 75-100 people. Anyone with access to community locations, please contact Noelle Richmond at events@givingtogether.org.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Marketing and Communications Committee is working with several new members to expand our marketing power, and is especially interested in adding new members who have some familiarity with and/or interest in working with our website or have knowledge of Microsoft Publisher and would be willing to help with graphics and design. For more information, please contact Lynn McReynolds (lynn@mcreynoldselek.com) or Diana Rode (rodebayridge@verizon.net).

MEMBERSHIP

Not surprisingly, word of mouth is the most effective way to encourage new members to join AAWGT. We have postcards with a basic explanation of our giving circle and our website address that you can mail or give to friends. They are available for the asking and we bring some to every AAWGT meeting in case you want to pick some up. The Membership Committee is always happy to e-mail information to prospective members or to discuss AAWGT with them. Just send us an e-mail at membership@givingtogether.org.

Perhaps the best way to explain what we do, is to bring a friend (or two or three) to an appropriate meeting. It is a good way for all to see how we begin the process of informing ourselves about unmet needs in our community.

Thanks for your help in spreading the news about AAWGT to your friends and other prospective members.

Missy Attridge 410-280-6655	Marie Brockhurst 410-703-8335
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Help Wanted



Volunteers needed to make lunches for the Light House Shelter

Participating in a lunch making session for the Light House Shelter is a great way to get to connect with other giving circle members for coffee, conversation and good deeds.

Volunteers gather once a month at the home of an AAWGT member to make 70 sandwiches to feed our less fortunate neighbors. The host purchases the provisions ahead of time. Those present share the costs of supplies (about \$25 per person). Members are more than welcome to bring a friend to see our giving circle in action! Upcoming dates include:

Thursday February 21 at the home of Barbara Hoffstein, Eastport

Tuesday March 19 at the home of Bronwyn Belling, Annapolis

Monday April 8 at the home of Evie Rentz, Annapolis

Wednesday May 15 at the home of Prue Clendenning, Edgewater

If interested in volunteering to help, contact Karen Davis at kluciadavis@hotmail.com.



[Check out our Website!](#)



[Like us on Facebook!](#)

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Contact email: giving@givingtogether.org

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