YOUR IMPACT REPORT 2019
Together we are a catalyst for positive change in the lives of women and girls in Greater Hartford.
Dear Luminaries,

What a sparkling year we’ve had! Thanks to YOU, in 2019 we funded educational programs for women and girls, produced and shared vital data, and empowered both women and men to pursue philanthropy through our Women’s Giving Circle and 100 Men Campaign. You know that many women in our community struggle to support themselves and their families, lack opportunities for education, need mentorship to build careers, and want to improve their communities, but don’t have the tools they need. Together we are lighting the way for more women and girls to achieve their potential—thank you!

The stories that students in our Aurora-funded programs share show what light would be lost from our communities if these young women didn’t get the help our programs provide. At the Luminary Luncheon, Angelica Soto shared her experience growing up amidst the effects of poverty and gun violence. Before the “Launch Your Leadership Journey” program, she was afraid to speak up in class, was without a focused plan to finish her degree and unable to advocate for herself. Speaking to a crowd of 500 community leaders would never have been something she would have thought she could do, and she brought the crowd at the luncheon to their feet. Seeing Angelica’s light glow so brightly inspires us to reach even more women and girls to share the spark of resources and mentorship.

Our community shines brighter thanks to supporters, volunteers and staff. In 2019, Aurora’s board members provided guidance and hands-on expertise to get things done under the fabulous leadership of Chair Karen Jarmoc. As Karen ends her 3-year term as Chair, we are deeply grateful for her leadership that spearheaded efforts to find Aurora a new home at University of Saint Joseph, bring vital new donors with the 100 Men Campaign, and provide vision that has made Aurora a thought leader in our region. Bookkeeper Joanne Vitarelli kept us organized and on budget and welcomed guests to all our 2019 events. Program Coordinator Laurie Robillard supported all our efforts from grantmaking to fundraising and communications with inspiring organization. She left Aurora in the summer, but we would be remiss not to express our deep appreciation and affection for her and her amazing contribution to Aurora. We are pleased to welcome Marie McNamara as our new Program Coordinator in 2020 and hope you will stop by and get to know her.

The pages of our Annual Report are filled with inspiring accounts of the impact you have had on women and girls who need you. You are lighting the way for them to realize their potential and thrive. I can’t wait to see just how brightly 2020 will shine!

Thank you!

Jennifer Steadman
Executive Director

MISSION AND GOALS

The Aurora Foundation is a catalyst for positive change in the lives of women and girls in Greater Hartford.

• We conduct research and convene the community around gender issues to promote understanding, collaboration and effective solutions.
• We educate and engage women and men in the power of philanthropy to improve social and economic outcomes for women and girls, their families and communities.
• We implement strategies, including targeted grantmaking, to address key issues and significantly impact women and girls in Greater Hartford.

AURORA’S IMPACT

Aurora is the only women and girls fund exclusively focused on the needs of women and girls in Greater Hartford, and it is the only free-standing foundation in Connecticut focused solely on supporting groups that serve women and girls.
FINANCIAL LITERACY CONFERENCE

Aurora co-sponsored the Women’s Financial Literacy Conference at Goodwin College where participants spent the day taking a deep dive into topics including investing for retirement, negotiating salary and establishing credit. One presenter offered students an important message: “You are not your credit score, and you are not defined by your mistakes with money. Take the opportunity to learn and get better.” Keynote Speaker Medina Jett shared her own story of growing up without financial resources and how it drives her determination to succeed.

LEADERSHIP FORUM “COLLABORATION AND CONNECTION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS”

Held last spring, the Women’s Leadership Forum at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford offered attendees insight into the importance of collaborations and connections to effectively address women and girls’ issues in Greater Hartford and beyond. Moderated by Hartford City Council President Glendowlyn L.H. Thames, panelists included Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, Eleni Kavros De-Graw, Co-Founder, 100 Women Who Can Farmington Valley, Kate Farrar, Executive Director, CWEALF, and Brittney Yancy, Ambassador, The United State of Women Greater Hartford.

GALVANIZE CT – STATEWIDE SUMMIT FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Aurora was proud to partner with the United State of Women, the Connecticut Collective for Women and Girls, and the Governor’s Council on Women and Girls to bring Galvanize CT to East Hartford on December 7th. Hundreds of women and girls gathered to hear from an inspiring combination of local and national experts at the forefront of the fight for gender equity. Highlights included Valerie Jarrett, former Senior Advisor to President Obama, and in-depth training for participants on leadership, running for office, advocacy and organizing, advanced manufacturing and workforce development, entrepreneurship, and a special girls leadership training.

WOMEN FUND 2019 IN SAN FRANCISCO

Aurora’s Executive Director, Jenny Steadman attended the Women’s Funding Network biennial conference, Women Funded 2019, in San Francisco in September. Jenny said, “After spending 3 days at a gathering of women’s funds from every corner of the globe, I found so many connections to our work here at home. There was a common shared focus on education as a strategy for economic opportunity and gender equality. Every opportunity we offer women and girls in our back yard is connected out to that world-wide effort—an important piece of changing the world!” Jenny presented on the new Women and Girls Data Platform with Michelle Rierdon-Nold from Connecticut Data Collaborative to a packed conference session with special guest Carle Mowell, former Aurora board member.

WOMEN’S WORK SCREENING AND PANEL

Aurora, along with the Women’s Leadership Center at University of Saint Joseph and CPTV, hosted a screening of the documentary Women’s Work. Panelists included Heather Dawson, Executive Producer of Women’s Work; Marci Moreau, Entrepreneur, Naked Baking Ladies; Chief Ellen Murray, Fire Chief, Naugatuck Fire Department; and Janee Woods Weber, Director of Organizational Culture, William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund on their strategies for career success. Chief Murray admitted that she’d “rather be crawling around a burning building than on this stage,” but she wanted to “spend her energy to improve” on her self-confidence. Ms. Moreau pointed to the need for more funding for women entrepreneurs, but she remains hopeful, “I love the idea of women empowering other women. It is through those networks that we will make change.”

All of Aurora’s 2019 programming was supported in part by a generous gift from the Richard P. Garmany Fund at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving in memory of Lydia Garmany.
Thanks to the leadership of Co-Chairs Eric George and Jim Ruel, Aurora’s 100 Men Campaign marked its fourth year with a Kick-Off event in September at the Mandell Jewish Community Center. Special guest, Brianna Fraser, a student in the Aurora-funded Women in STEM program at Manchester Community College, was an inspiration to the full house of attendees that morning. Brianna shared how the experience of attending a conference panel featuring women who had attended community college and gone on to pursue PhDs in STEM fields helped her chart her academic aspirations to earn an Ivy league PhD to study the effects of climate change on coral reefs.

Featured speaker, Hartford Athletic Coach Jimmy Nielsen, shared that “outreach to the community was a key priority” for the city’s newest professional sports team and he invited them to join him in supporting Aurora.

The Aurora Women’s Giving Circle is a group of women who pool their resources and work collaboratively to address community needs pertaining to women and girls. The group, which meets several times throughout the year, engages in in-depth discussions around a specific focus area, hears from local experts and learns about the grantmaking process from start to finish, culminating in a grant awarded to one or more organizations supporting women and girls in Greater Hartford. The group dynamic of a giving circle provides social networking, leadership development, peer support, personal engagement, learning opportunities and the chance to connect with other women who share similar values.

The 2019 Aurora Women’s Giving Circle learned about the needs of teen girls in our community and met with local non-profits working to serve them. They voted to award a $5,500 grant to the Hartford Public Library’s Strong Girls Camp, a 6-week summer program held at the Albany Avenue branch designed to allow 25 young women to identify social and emotional obstacles and find healthy ways to address them. The program provides role models, field trips to cultural centers and colleges, crafting, video creation, meditation and yoga. We are proud to support these young women!
Thank you to everyone who supported Aurora’s Luminary Luncheon on Friday, November 1st. More than 500 people were in attendance. From our generous sponsors and their guests...to table hosts and ticket buyers...to those who could not attend but still donated...to our first timers and those who have attended for years...ALL OF YOU enabled us to raise $110,000, to support our Community Grantmaking in 2020.

Luminary Luncheon Committee
Evelyn Johnson, Co-Chair
Meghan Sweeney Burns, Co-Chair
Lindsay Baghramyan
Kathy Binder
Karen Binkhorst
Kyra Dorsey
Kate Farrar
Carolyn Gitlin
Tenniel Hacker
Michelle Hagan
Dana Keller
Mickey Mattei
Karen Diaz-Meaike
Amy Miller
Lee Reynolds

Luminary Luncheon Table Hosts
Francine Austin
Lindsay Baghramyan
Beverly Baker
Melody Bernard
Kathy Binder
Karen Binkhorst
Ellen Brown
Shari Cantar
Susan Clemow
Kyra Dorsey
Anne Dranginis
Kate Farrar
Janet Bailey Faude
Ann Gowdy
Carolyn Hoffman
Horizons at Ethel Walker School
Karen Jarmoc
Evelyn Johnson
Dana Keller
Estela Lopez
Becky Lowry
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YWCA Hartford Region

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Trinity College
The following women were honored at Aurora’s Luminary Luncheon for their outstanding commitment to community service and philanthropic spirit.

**PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR**
FRANCINE AUSTIN is a visionary, entrepreneur and philanthropist who is dedicated to mentorship and volunteerism in the Greater Hartford community. As the proud owner of Francine’s Salon and Day Spa for over 20 years, she has leveraged her connections in the business community to promote community investment and engagement. In 2018, Francine launched A Giver’s Heart – An Evening of Philanthropy at the Bushnell, which raised funds for organizations that have made a significant impact through economic development, scholarship and service. Francine’s communications and marketing expertise has benefited successful fundraisers including the Walter “Doc” Hurley Legacy Scholarship Weekend and Becoming Book Talk at the Wadsworth Atheneum. Her volunteer work includes the YMCA’s Y Achievers, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving’s Black Giving Circle, Hartford Youth Scholars and the Farmington Valley Chapter of the Links, Inc.

**YOUNG PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR**
SANMATI CHAUDHARY, a senior at Farmington High School, is a passionate leader in her community. From an early age, it became her goal to spread philanthropic ideals and make STEM accessible to all ages, genders, and races. One of her first steps was completing her Girl Scout Silver Award by creating a program called MEETS (Mentoring Elementary Education using Technology and Science), a chain of mentor-mentees to disseminate STEMness further in the community. Sanmati holds positions within several international non-profit organizations such as coderGirls and ProjectCSGirls which all look to bridge the gender gap in STEM. She also co-founded Coding Club with Scratch which exposed elementary students to MIT Scratch. With this, NCWIT, National Center for Women in Technology, has recognized her twice as a National Honorable Mention for the Aspirations in Computing Award.

**EMERGING YOUNG PHILANTHROPISTS**

SARAH ACKELS
Simsbury High School

NINA FAYNSHATAYN
Hall High School

Save the Date:
Aurora’s Luminary Luncheon
Friday, October 16, 2020
11:30am-1:30pm
Hartford Marriott Downtown
200 Columbus Blvd., Hartford, CT

Join us in commemorating Aurora’s 20th Anniversary and $1,000,000 in grants awarded!
AURORA PROVIDES ACCESS TO GENDER BASED RESEARCH

Aurora is proud to have spearheaded the collaborative efforts of women’s funds across the state to launch the Women and Girls Data Platform (WGDP).

The Women and Girls Data Platform (WGDP), developed by the Connecticut Data Collaborative, is a cutting-edge tool to share information and equip nonprofits, government, and community members with data for the advancement of women and girls in Connecticut. An online, interactive tool, the WGDP provides access to publicly available data specific to regional, city, and statewide levels that is aggregated for gender and race. The data compares trends across regions and the state and aids in better understanding of local needs.

The Platform is funded collaboratively by the Aurora Women and Girls Foundation, Fairfield County’s Community Foundation’s Fund for Women & Girls, Main St. Community Foundation’s Women & Girls Fund, and Community Foundation of Middlesex County’s Sari A. Rosenbaum Fund for Women & Girls.

Offering data across 17 geographic areas in Connecticut, here’s just some of what you’ll find when accessing the Platform.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

In Connecticut, 2 in 3 women have at least some college education. In the cities of Norwalk and Stamford, as well as in Fairfield and Tolland counties, there are more women with Bachelor’s degrees than those with a high school diploma. In comparison, 1 in 4 women in Bridgeport, and 1 in 5 women in Hartford, New Britain, and Waterbury do not have a high school diploma.

ECONOMIC SECURITY

47.8% of female-headed households in Connecticut age 65 and younger are below the ALICE threshold. 52.2% of female-headed households age 65 and older are below ALICE. The ALICE Threshold represents the minimum income level necessary based on the Household Survival Budget (estimate of the total cost of household essentials—housing, child care, food, transportation, technology, and health care, plus taxes and a 10 percent contingency). It is calculated for each county by the United Way.

HEALTH & SAFETY

The preterm birth rate in Hartford is 10.4%, the highest when compared to New Haven, Middlesex, New London, Litchfield, and Fairfield counties.

CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Fairfield, Hartford, and New Haven counties have similar numbers of female State Representatives at the State Capitol (37, 36, 37 respectively), but it means that New Haven has 51% female representation compared to only 24% and 28% in Fairfield and Hartford counties.

Check out our full range of data at womenandgirls.ctdata.org
Asnuntuck/Tunxis Community College – Launch Your Leadership Journey
This tuition-free, 6-month, leadership development program is designed to help women students develop leadership skills to assist with classroom and job success, and ultimately, with campus engagement and retention. Program session topics include communication, building leadership skills, neutralizing gender bias, problem solving, networking, assertiveness and leading teams. Funding will continue to support the replicated program at Tunxis Community College and the program at Asnuntuck Community College.

Goodwin College – Women Investing in Securing an Education (WISE)
WISE is a college retention program that provides financial aid, proactive academic advising and tailored student services, including career exploration and personal counseling, for young women at risk of dropping out of college. The program enrolls 20-25 women annually who commit to full-time study and are considered economically and/or educationally disadvantaged. Funding will support supplemental enrichment activities including workshops, networking opportunities and attendance at a national leadership conference.

Grace Academy – Pathways Through College
Grace Academy is an independent middle school for inner-city girls living in Hartford. Their mission is to support and mentor girls throughout their education. As the first Grace Academy students entered college, staff realized that they could and needed to provide additional support to ensure college completion for all their students. The Pathways Through College Program offers mentoring, practical assistance, a series of seminars on navigating college and career preparation, and a dedicated staff member for college student counseling. Funding will enable the program to continue to build on career readiness opportunities.

Manchester Community College – Women in STEM (WISTEM)
WISTEM helps young women prepare for the rigors of college-level science through academic support and targeted advising. Students will learn what it means to be a college student, succeed as a STEM major at MCC and be prepared to transfer to a four-year institution and/or work in a STEM field. In addition to classroom study, the program requires “try it” field experiences that may include research projects, internships, or other job shadow or experiential learning.

YWCA Hartford Region – YW Career Women
YW Career Women provides comprehensive support services to women seeking Associate Degrees at Capital Community College to assist them with obtaining their degree and a career in the high-growth, high-income field of healthcare. A dedicated program Navigator provides individualized coaching services that help alleviate barriers to college completion, especially for students who have proven themselves academically but are “at-risk” of not continuing with their studies due to economic or family circumstances. Funding will allow for expansion of the program for students attending Manchester Community College and pursuing degrees in allied health, business, information technology, and manufacturing. This program is made possible through a matching grant from the Farmington Bank Community Foundation.

RECOGNIZING AURORA’S 2019 GRANTEEES

AURORA CHANGING LIVES
The Launch Your Leadership Journey program helped recent Tunxis Community College graduate Angelica focus on her studies and chart her future. Despite her past personal experience with gun violence, gang intimidation and working poverty, Launch Your Leadership Journey equipped Angelica with the skills to lead for social change. “I’m focused on my future now, but that future leads me back to my past. Back to the community and city where I grew up.” For Angelica, her relationship with her mentor Julie and the example of the facilitators who were candid about their experiences of gender bias, racial inequality and the demands of career and family convinced her that “If they could do it, so can I!”
AURORA FINANCIAL REPORT FY 2019

Income
Capacity Donor Gifts $122,622
2019 Luminary Luncheon Net $110,000
Other Contributions $83,235
Women’s Giving Circle $11,081
100 Men Campaign $24,477
Investment Income $20,138
Total Revenue $371,553

Expenses
Grant Disbursements $115,500
Operating Expenses $240,348
Total Expenses $355,848

Assets
Designated Endowment $470,954
Cash and Operating Reserves $222,390
Other Assets $2,000
Total Assets as of 12/31/19 $695,344

2019 INCOME
2019 Luminary Luncheon Net 30%
Women’s Giving Circle 3%
Capacity Donor Gifts 33%
Other Contributions and Income 27%

2019 CAPACITY DONORS
Special thanks to those who gave unrestricted gifts of $1,000 or more in 2019.

$10,000+
William O. & Carole P. Bailey Family Foundation
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Carleton N. Mowell
100 Women Who Can Farmington Valley
Richard P. Garmany Fund at Hartford Foundation for Public Giving in memory of Lydia Garmany
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$5,000-$9,999
Janet Bailey Faude*
Fairfield County’s Community Foundation’s Fund for Women and Girls
Margaret Heiner**
Ann E. Thomas**

$2,500-$4,999
Susan B. Clements**
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$1,000-$2,499
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Aurora Women & Girls Foundation
Community Investment History

$0 $20,000 $40,000 $60,000 $80,000 $100,000 $120,000
$20,000 $40,000 $60,000 $80,000 $100,000 $120,000
$10,000 $20,000 $30,000 $40,000 $50,000 $60,000 $70,000 $80,000 $90,000 $100,000 $110,000 $120,000
THANK YOU TO ALL THE VOLUNTEERS WHO MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE

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Gifts were made in honor of the following individuals
Francine Austin
Jenna Binkhorst
Susan Clemow
Janet Bailey Faude
Eva Mae Grantt McCoy
Jan-Gee McCollam
Marissa Mounds
Jennifer Steadman

Gifts were made in memory of the following individuals
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We have worked hard to acknowledge the generosity of all our donors. If by some chance you see an error or omission, please contact our office at (860) 881-4926 to help us correct our mistake. Donors listed made gifts as of 12/31/19.

*These donors supported the Aurora Foundation’s 100 Men Campaign.

**Member of the 2019 Aurora Women’s Giving Circle.

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Isabel Ceballos
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Founding Executive Director
Horizons at The Ethel Walker School

Susan Clemow
Managing Partner
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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Attendees at the Financial Literacy Conference; attendees at Aurora's Luminary Luncheon; Board Member Evelyn Johnson thanks departing Board Member Carolyn Gitlin for her service to Aurora at the Annual Meeting; Jenny Steadman and Board Chair Karen Jarmoc with the 100 Men Campaign Co-Chairs Eric George and Jim Ruel; attendees at September's 100 Men Kick-Off event; Women's Leadership Forum panelists Glendolyn Thames and Eleni Kavros-Diogracia; Jenny Steadman pictured with Luminary Luncheon Honorees and Keynote Speaker Minda Harts, grantee speaker at Aurora's Annual Meeting; attendees at Aurora's Annual Meeting; MCC WiSTEM program leader at Aurora's Annual Meeting.