

PARTNERSHIP
FOR WOMEN'S
PROSPERITY

Scaling Up
for Women's
Economic Security



WOMEN'S
FUNDING
NETWORK

the WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION
of CALIFORNIA

WOMEN
WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION
OF
MINNESOTA

WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION
OF MISSISSIPPI



WOMEN'S FOUNDATION
FOR A GREATER MEMPHIS

THE
NEW YORK
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FOUNDATION
Radical generosity.

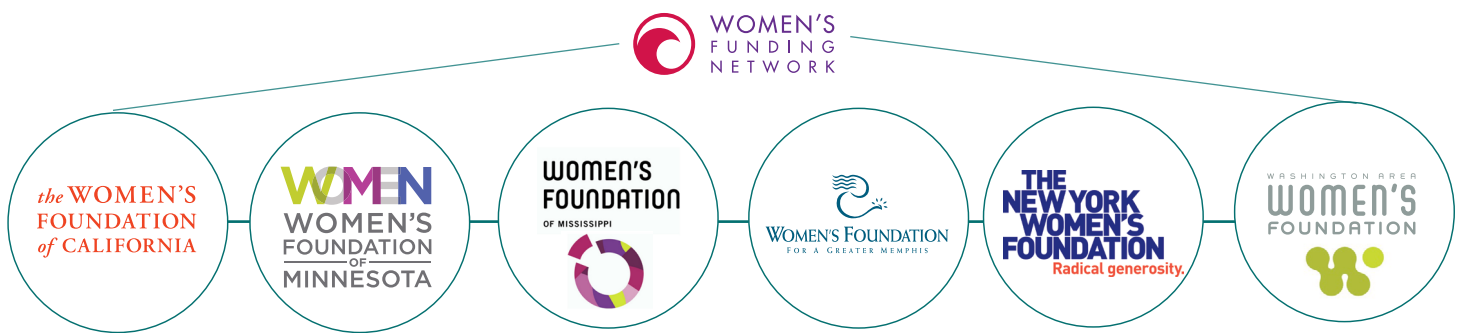
WASHINGTON AREA
WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION



SCALING UP FOR WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY

Since 2011, Partnership for Women's Prosperity (PWP) – a national initiative of six leading women's foundations and the Women's Funding Network – has channeled nearly \$11 million into women's economic security, resulting in significant gains for women, their families, and entire communities across the country.

From passing landmark legislation, like the Women's Economic Security Act in Minnesota in 2014, to dramatically increasing program effectiveness by investing in wraparound services, and directly impacting over 50,000 women and girls, PWP has proven that by learning together, leading systemically, and investing meaningful financial resources, real traction can be made to ensure women's economic security.



Now is the time to share PWP's learnings nationally and secure significant new financial resources to scale up women's economic security.

Working across geographies, PWP shares best practices, co-crafts new strategies, adapts them to their contexts, and pilots their application.

Applying a systems change approach is the game-changer.

Evidence indicates that when women are economically secure, their families are economically secure; when families are economically secure, entire communities are secure. However, unemployment among women is high — even higher for women of color and those with limited education. Securing a stable, financially sustainable job can be elusive for those who need it most.

PWP brings together recognized women’s foundations who are leaders in identifying and funding strategies that advance women, even in challenging contexts. Together they form a strategic community of practice to learn from each other’s successful approaches and work together to address common challenges that can be shared across the wider women’s funding landscape.

In coming together, they explore barriers women face in obtaining economic security, share research, compare notes on regional workforce trends, and discuss policy and institutional challenges. They investigate innovative strategies and practices to promote women’s economic security, share grantmaking approaches, and explore ideas to adapt best practices from one region in another.

Initial discussions revealed that they when they are most effective, they work across multiple scales and interwoven strategies. They benefit from thinking systemically, partnering beyond their grantmaking, and working towards bigger and longer-lasting outcomes for the women and communities they serve.

To elevate their work, PWP partners knew that their collaborative learning and funding strategies must be informed by a multidimensional approach. They adopted the Systems Change Framework,*

a conceptual framework and planning tool of five interconnected strategies that support organizations in advancing long-term change.

Applying a systems change approach proved to be a game-changer. Understanding the links between the Systems Change Framework strategies offers a holistic approach to addressing complex challenges. A focus on each strategy reveals the interdependency of all efforts to reinforce, deepen, and leverage successes for bigger, more sustainable results.



PROGRAMS

Establishing high-performing programs and services within the system that produce results for system beneficiaries.



CONNECTIONS

Creating strong and effective linkages across system components that further improve results for system beneficiaries.



CONTEXT / POLICY

Improving the political environment that surrounds the system so it produces the policy and funding changes needed to create and sustain it.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Developing the ongoing support systems needed to function effectively and with quality.



SCALE

Ensuring a comprehensive system is available to produce broad and inclusive results for beneficiaries.

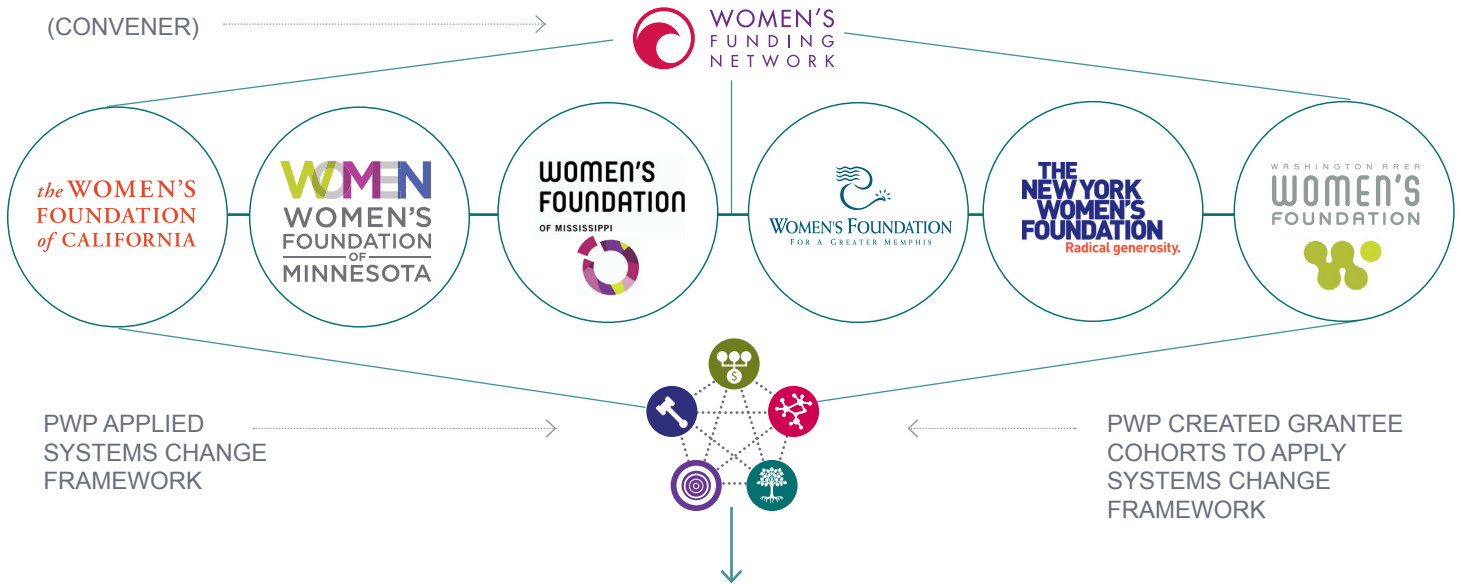


The following pages share PWP’s results to date and how systems change approaches have been piloted by each foundation with great success.

*For more information, see: *A Framework for Evaluating Systems Initiatives*, written by Julia Coffman on behalf of Build Strong Foundations for our Youngest Children.

PARTNERSHIP FOR PROSPERITY

Investment + Results to Date



\$10,794,498

in economic security grantmaking
across all six foundations



100
communities served in five
states and Washington, DC



99
organizations supported



52,220
women and girls impacted

21,976
received job training

4,483
secured a job

13,162
earned credits, credentials and/or degrees

5,602
increased financial knowledge and assets

5,195
completed leadership training



PROGRAMS

Robust wraparound services have been integrated including childcare, transportation, emergency funds, and mentoring.



CONNECTIONS

Broad-range linkages have been made between grantee partners, employers, educational institutions, and many others.



CONTEXT

Policy approaches have been employed across PWP, notably the passage of MN's Women's Economic Security Act of 2014.



INFRASTRUCTURE

A gender lens has been introduced into institutional cultures to create welcoming and strategic environments for women to thrive.



SCALE

Programs are being adapted and replicated within foundation geographies and across PWP members.

the **WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION
of CALIFORNIA**

The Women's Foundation of California leads a Women's Policy Institute (WPI) at the state and county levels, building a cadre of historically underrepresented women and transgender leaders to develop and advocate for strategic legislation on behalf of women and girls. The WPI program successfully codified the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, which ensures access to basic labor protection for a population that is mostly women or immigrant women with very low wages. Grantee partners have influenced the workforce sector to have a stronger gender analysis, taking into consideration what is required for a woman to get to work and stay in work — such as coaching, financial literacy, and childcare logistics. Providing these wraparound services have dramatically improved completion rates and better

"We want to make sure we are addressing the root cause of the problems. You might be providing good things such as money, services, training for people, but different people are going to keep coming through that door if you do not address the underlying, root cause of problems. A systems change approach is needed."

WOMEN
WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION
OF
MINNESOTA

Women's Foundation of Minnesota integrated policy, research, and grantmaking strategies to educate policy makers about the systemic issues women face. These efforts led to the successful passage of the Women's Economic Security Act of 2014, which includes 14 separate laws covering job protections for pregnant and nursing women, an increase in the minimum-wage, increased state funding for the Department of Education and Economic Development, and more. This act is now used as a model for other states and even Federal legislation. Grantee partners are now bringing a gender lens to their approach and have integrated tailored, wraparound services and proven that these provide the support women need to attend, persist, and succeed in workforce training programs.

"Most programs are developed to serve as a filler or Band-Aid for some kind of systems or policy inequity. We feel if we're actually changing the system or policy that's creating the need for these programs, in the long run, we're not going to need the programs anymore. Many more women will be affected by that larger policy or systems change than the individuals being served by a program."

**WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION**
OF MISSISSIPPI



Women's Foundation of Mississippi has focused on building long-term relationships with community colleges, recognizing them as critical gateways for women seeking employment and providing information and resources to help them create welcoming and successful environments for low-income women. This was the first PWP partner to pilot offering emergency funds to ensure women's program participation, such as purchasing textbooks and clearing up educational debt. In collaboration with other community partners, the Foundation also championed legislation to cap the interest rate of payday loans 36 percent. While the "original" initiative failed, it garnered extensive support by decision makers and raised awareness of the issue, ultimately leading to recent passage of legislation restricting harmful payday lending practices.

"Without systems change, you are just doing social work. You are providing temporary alleviation of a systemic problem or issue. The institutions you are working with must recognize that there is a systemic default or systemic deficiency in their programs or things they are implementing, it is like the adage: Give a woman a fish and she eats for a day, teach her to fish and she eats for a lifetime."



Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis developed its Vision 2020 Strategic Plan with systems change at its core to reduce poverty in Memphis. They identified a zip code with dramatic poverty in the city (38126) and aim to reduce poverty by one percent per year — over five years — by leveraging the most effective strategies of community organizations, agencies, and grantee partners. It employs a two-generation approach, intentionally integrating support for services for children and adults to tackle intergenerational poverty. The Foundation also leverages new employer-driven partnerships to support increased job placements, including developing a Workforce Development Curriculum responsive to challenges expressed by local employers.

“Changing to a systems change framework has helped us think about how we review grants, how we award grants, and how we think about the collaboration and linkages that can happen between grantee partners when we are making decisions about grants. It has given us a different way to think about effective programming needed to support our families in economic security.”



The New York Women's Foundation is piloting a *place-informed* approach (as opposed to place-based) to address concentrated levels of need within the city, taking into account the complex nature of people's lives — living in one area, accessing services and working in another, and having children attending school in yet another. They invested in research to better understand the impacts of the criminal justice system on women's economic security, both going through the system as well as those who were incarcerated. Grantee partners are testing new approaches, such as paying for certificate programs for formerly incarcerated women to access higher education, with strong results. The Foundation also acts as a convener and thought leader, bringing together stakeholders across the private, public, and nonprofit sector, to learn directly from grantee partners.

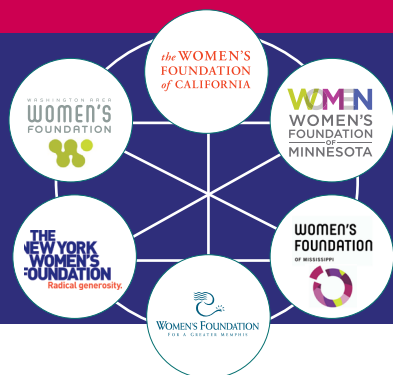
“Our Partnership for Women's Prosperity work falls under our *accelerating change* strategy. These investments build on previous investments the Foundation has made, accelerating change for low-income women and increasing their access to middle-scale and living wage jobs.”



Washington Area Women's Foundation sits at numerous strategic workforce development tables throughout the D.C. region, challenging partners to analyze data with a gender lens and investigate the impact of their decisions and programming on women, influencing how they collect data and how they approach their work overall. They are leading a regional network for the early childhood and education sectors, with a vision to create a regional credential that is portable across all jurisdictions of the region. Grantee partners are educating potential funders and the broader community about the complex challenges women face by creating steady messaging and bringing real stories, numbers, and analytics to demonstrate the need for multiple interventions and partnerships that can address deep need.

“Focusing on systems allows us to reach more women and leverage funding and support in a way that focusing on one family, one individual, or one client wouldn't have been able to do. We are able to influence policies that impact a larger number of women and families and advocate for economic security policies that we feel will benefit women across the state or thousands of women and families is the impact of this work.”

PARTNERSHIP FOR WOMEN'S PROSPERITY: Ready to Scale Up



As a result of working together, PWP has put women's economic security on the local, state, and national stage.

The collaborative and cumulative work of PWP to date has illuminated and centered women's economic security on institutional and policy levels throughout PWP geographies, and nationally.

Together partners developed and rolled out strong educational messaging to create new narratives to shape this work. By sharing best practices, they identified those that unleash the most potential, notably that bringing a gender lens to community college institutions generates the culture, programs, and support needed for women to thrive. This approach started in Mississippi and now all partners have adopted community college strategies creating shifts across institutions. The PWP learning model has been so

successful, it has been replicated for its grantees, fostering collaboration and leveraging shared learning with results beyond anything seen to date.

On a national scale, PWP's work catalyzed *Prosperity Together (PT)* which brought together 29 women's funds to raise awareness with the White House Council on Women under the Obama administration. This initiative is now committed to investing \$100 million over five years to support pathways to economic security for low-income women and their families. This work is being deepened through the newly launched Young Women's Initiative (YWI), a national multi-sector partnership aimed at creating sustainable prosperity for young women of color and other marginalized young women.

THE TIME IS NOW TO
SCALE UP
WOMEN'S
ECONOMIC
SECURITY

We are ready.
The work is proven.

We invite you to invest
in PWP to scale up women's
economic security nation-wide.

PWP is a major success and the time is now to leverage its learnings.

Today's political environment has rolled back or put hard-earned legislative and social services funding gains that support women at risk. Accessible, affordable childcare continues to be the biggest challenge and opportunity to support women. Housing, domestic violence, immigration, and the criminal justice system are significant obstacles to women accessing stable employment. Race, class, and gender discrimination remain pervasive.

PWP has proven that by learning together, leading systemically, and investing meaningful financial resources, real traction *can* be made to ensure women's economic security. The innovative, holistic approaches piloted and proven by PWP across six foundations are ready to be shared and scaled — and time is of the essence.

In March 2018, PWP's primary financial support from the Walmart Foundation will draw to a close. PWP is excited to forge new funding partnerships to continue its work together, to scale successful strategies in its respective geographies, and to roll out its learnings across the Women's Funding Network community, comprising over 100 women's funds across the United States.

For more information on Partnership for Women's Prosperity and how to scale up women's economic security, feel free to contact any of the Foundation CEOs below:

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For more information on PWP and the Systems Change Framework, go to:

www.womensfundingnetwork.org/initiatives/pwp/

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- Jennifer Lockwood-Shabat, President and CEO and C. Nicole Mason, Vice President of Programs, *Washington Area Women's Foundation*

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METHODS

Korwin Consulting conducted interviews with PWP partners and grantees in April, July, and August, 2017. Interviews with partners and grantees were coded for main themes and analyzed for insights regarding PWP partners' integration of systems change strategies. Data was also gathered from progress reports submitted to Walmart by PWP partners in April 2016, November 2016, and May 2017. The analysis was supplemented with notes from discussions and convenings with PWP partners and grantee partner case studies developed by Korwin Consulting for the Women's Foundation of Mississippi in March 2016.

This report was prepared by Korwin Consulting, an evaluation and planning firm that advances social justice solutions by identifying community strengths, building organizational capacity, and evaluating impact. We thank Ginger Daniel of Orange Strategies for her design, writing, and contributions to this report.

More information on Korwin Consulting is available at

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