

Headline: Exploring WIF Values



Connections:

We believe in building stronger relationships and meaningful friendships among women who are united in their passion for improving our community. We value the connections created among our members, grantees, and the broader community.

By Kim Cornelson

I am a hugger living in a digital age. Looking directly at someone's face when we talk, laughing together as a group, and greeting friends with hugs are necessary for me to feel fully connected with other people. Visiting community groups on site, attending their performances, and celebrating successes at their events help me understand and relate to our multi-textured community and its needs.

Today we are both more connected and more isolated than in the past. With the Internet and social media, we can instantly communicate our thoughts and "likes" to others with a simple click. In many cases we substitute convenience for deep personal connections with individuals and our community.

The Women's Impact Fund helps fill this void for me. Many of my friends and I joined WIF in its first year. Being a part of WIF together deepened our ties and made our relationships richer. By serving on the Board as well as on various WIF committees, I have met and become lasting friends with dozens of diverse, interesting women. We all come from different places and viewpoints, but we come together with a shared commitment and passion for philanthropy and community.

Currently, I serve on the board of one of our first grantees, Pat's Place Child Advocacy Center. I am not unusual in my journey from WIF membership to increased community engagement. Many members build upon the connections they make with the nonprofit community through WIF -- becoming Executive Directors, board members, volunteers, employees and fundraisers. Indeed, WIF has become a vital community resource and important connection for women's leadership.

Working together for a common enterprise has given me an enduring connection with our members and our grantees. The communal experience of the grant review process, the excitement of grant award announcements at the Annual Meeting, the educational and moving site visits with our community partners and the deeply rewarding mentor relationship are some of the many personal connections at the heart of the Women's Impact Fund. I encourage all members to seek and grab those opportunities with both hands. If you do, you will find warmth, friendship and, yes, an abundance of hugs.