

## Women helping women

In the coming months, two consultants from the Amigos program will be better able to bridge the language gap when interpreting in medical situations and the DIPLOMAS program will be able to meet its licensing requirements because five staff members have earned all or most of their required training hours.

Those are just two examples of how the grant money awarded Saturday by the Women's Fund of the Wayne County Foundation will be used. The Women's Fund makes grants to area organizations that support women and girls and presents grants that empower and enrich women who work with or volunteer for not-for-profit organizations.

Eleven area organizations received a dozen grants totaling about \$10,000 during the eighth annual Women's Fund luncheon at the Lamplight Inn at the Leland in Richmond. The sold-out event, attended by more than 160, was themed "Her Story."

Additionally, the Women's Fund recently granted \$4,000 toward the Richmond High School Challenge Day workshop and granted \$10,000 for two local teachers to attend the Freedom Writers Institute in California. Freedom Writers Foundation founder Erin Gruwell, whose teaching experience and methods were made famous in the film "The Freedom Writers,"

will make appearances May 1 and 2 in Richmond.

The grant presentations bring the Women's Fund's eight-year gift total to more than \$85,000. More than \$100,000 has been raised for the Women's Fund since Mary Jo Clark and Pat Heiny co-founded it in 2001.

In addition to the grant announcements, there was a silent auction of artwork to help replenish the Women's Fund, raising more than \$5,000.

More than 40 works were available and were judged for cash prizes.

The Best of Show winner, who received \$500, was Fonda Wilds, for an untitled print that judges said was well executed, with strong lines, prismatic color, motion and energy.

Wilds said the print is part of a continuing theme, the Community of Hope, that she has been using as inspiration. She said the print includes images about a woman's

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journey, including compass points, that spoke to the "Her Story" theme.

A Richmond Community Schools art teacher, Wilds created several "Community of Hope" pieces with her students and with Girls Inc. of Wayne County participants that also were part of the fundraiser's silent auction. One of those pieces also received an honorable mention from the judges.

"It seemed natural to invite children to be part of that story," Wilds said. "They have voices. The more we hear their voices, the more they'll speak to us and remind us where home is, where hope is."

Wilds said the youth were thrilled that their creations would be sold to benefit women in the community. Two artists split the \$250 prize for best communicating the theme.

Michele Walker was honored for her necklace and earring set, "She Makes Time," which was created by layering magazine clippings with watch pieces and resin. Walker said she was honored, especially to be part of a community of artists that are so creative, they inspire her to do better work.

Debbie Shake was honored for her painting, "Their Stories: A Family History," which featured a group of women seated talking together. Shake said it took her a while to get the piece just right. She said she does genealogy and that helped inspire her.

The People's Choice Award of \$250 was given to Ben Clark for a large bowl.

Honorable mentions were awarded to artisans Clark, Gary Cox, Marcia Pendley, Ann Cashner and Judy Thornburg.

Organizations receiving grants were:

- Amigos: \$900 for two consultants to attend a medical interpreter training program called Bridging the Gap;
- Communities in Schools: \$1,000 to provide professional development to site coordinators during all-staff training in November and February;
- Cope Environmental Center: \$315.80 to send a staff member to the National Science Teachers Association Conference to collaborate with science education leaders and peers;
- Cope Environmental Center: \$344.40 to send a staff member to the United Way of Central Indiana's non-profit training

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workshops in volunteer management;

- **DIPLOMAS:** \$1,000 for five staff members to attend the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children Inc. conference to obtain service training hours required for licensing and Level 4 Paths to Quality facility requirements;

- **Richmond Friends School:** \$700 for a staff member to attend the Friends Council on Education's Development and Public Relations Joint Peer Gathering;

- **Girls Inc. of Wayne County:** \$1,000 for a staff member to attend the Girls Inc. Region 1 and 2 Conference;

- **Habitat for Humanity of Greater Richmond:** \$1,000 to send the executive operations officer and the executive assistant to the Habitat for Humanity International Summit;

- **HELP the Animals Inc.:** \$900 for a personalized, hands-on, full-day, in-house training session for the staff, volunteers, board members and other area shelter employees;

- **Minority Women's Network:** \$500 to prepare to play host to the 2013 Networking Together Regional Conference by sending four members to the 2012 conference;

- **Noah's Ark Day Care Center:** \$1,000 to send the staff to the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children Conference;

- **Wayne County Minority Health Coalition:** \$603 for a staff member to attend a workshop focusing on women sharing wisdom and a job, with the goal of developing programming that helps adolescent women understand their value.

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