

AURORA

Women and Girls Foundation

You...

ARE THE LUMINARIES



OF OUR COMMUNITY.

YOUR IMPACT REPORT 2021

Together we are a catalyst for positive change in the lives of women and girls in Greater Hartford.

EMPOWER • EDUCATE • ENGAGE



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

Over
\$1.2 Million
invested in women
and girls awarded
since 2000

Over **70**
Organizations
supported
since 2000

Over **6,000**
Women & girls
reached in
Greater Hartford
since 2000

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.

AURORA

Women and Girls Foundation

Dear Luminaries,

2021 may have continued to be a year of “virtual” connection, but for this amazing community that connection was real even through a screen. YOU responded to the continuing crisis with empathy, generosity, and a conviction that philanthropy targeted to women and girls was the solution. Who could forget our 100 Men who became a viral fundraising sensation with their videos that shared the stories of their daughters, their single moms, and all the women in their lives who inspired them to support Aurora? We were still virtual for our Luminary Luncheon, but I am continually inspired by Nelba Marquéz-Greene calling us to the grand dining room, inviting us to imagine a world of abundance for women and girls.



Jennifer Streadman

As isolated as we may have all felt, we came together with each other and with the largest coalition that Aurora has ever led—women’s funds and nonprofits serving women and girls across the state, legislators and community leaders. We brought them the data they needed to make the case for a pandemic recovery centered on women and girls of color. *Essential Equity: Women, Covid-19 and Rebuilding Connecticut* led the nation in providing real-time data on the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women of color. And we took the show on the road, presenting from the Women’s Caucus of the CT Legislature, to the Connecticut Council for Philanthropy to the Gates Foundation’s international Greater Giving Summit.

And even as we were sharing our work on an international stage, we made sure programs supporting women and girls impacted by Covid-19 got dollars they needed to address the childcare crisis, lack of affordable housing, and increased need for mental health services from our Women’s Giving Circle. *Essential Equity* revealed that for the first time in Connecticut’s history, women surpassed men in applying for unemployment benefits. Of those women, 75% did not have a college degree. It is clear that Aurora’s focus on funding programs that help women pursue their education is a strategy that can increase their economic security and help to protect them from the effects of the pandemic. The students in our Aurora-funded College Success programs got the resources they needed to stay in school and prepare for careers that will provide for them and their families.

We are building an abundance of research, of support, of education, of possibilities for women and girls with the help of YOU, our amazing supporters, volunteers and staff. In 2021, Aurora’s board members led the organization by focusing on community impact under the leadership of Chair Evelyn Johnson. Program Manager Marie McNamara provided both the heart and the logistics we needed to meet virtually and truly connect. Amber Anthony joined Team Aurora, first leading the 100 Men Campaign and then joining the staff to help us bring more resources to women and girls in our community—welcome, Amber! Social Media Coordinator Trinitee Williams helped us share all Aurora’s work online—we’re lucky to work with such an amazing young woman.

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. See you in the grand dining room.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jenny".

Jennifer Streadman, Ph.D.
Executive Director

AURORA EMPOWERS AND EDUCATES

Aurora Goes Global at the GATES FOUNDATION Greater Giving Summit

Last March, Executive Director Jenny Steadman was a Featured Presenter at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's Greater Giving Summit! This was a



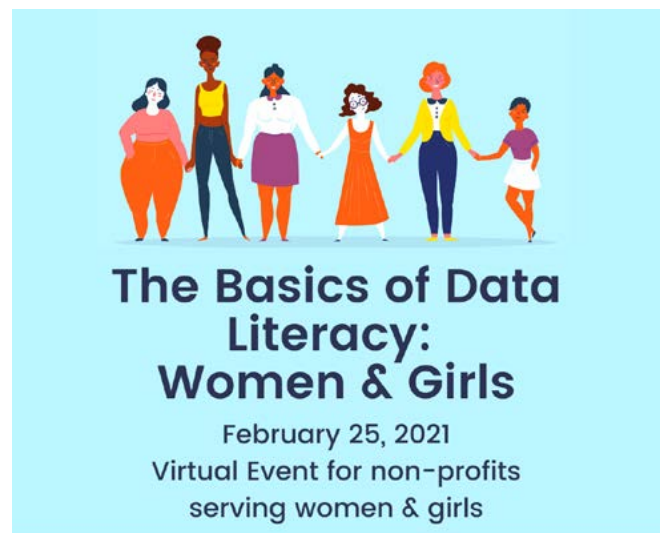
philanthropic conference hosted by the Gates Foundation that brought together 200+ leaders from around the world who work to improve charitable giving by everyday donors: researchers, innovators, product developers and practitioners. Aurora was one of 6 nonprofits highlighted! Attendees heard about our groundbreaking *Essential Equity* report, as well as all the impressive work Aurora has accomplished.

We built on this relationship by having Development Manager, Amber Anthony, take advantage of a special year-long program funded by the Gates Foundation to build our social media presence and increase online giving. You can watch the Gates Greater Giving Summit for yourself on the media page of our website!



Data Literacy Training: Building Nonprofits' Capacity

Aurora is proud to continue the collaborative efforts of women's funds across the state to continue updating and adding information to grow the Women and Girls Data Platform (WGDP). Offering data across 17 geographic areas in Connecticut, the WGDP can be accessed by visiting womenandgirls.ctdata.org.



We aren't only collecting and sharing this vital data, but we're also teaching nonprofits how to use it. In February and September, **50 nonprofits** serving women and girls learned how to use our updated Women and Girls Data Platform and *Essential Equity* report to identify community needs, improve programs to address those needs and secure funding. We've heard back from participants including the YWCA Hartford Region and Horizons at Ethel Walker that they've used our data in successful funding applications since the workshop! *Special thanks to the Richard P. Garmany Fund at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for supporting the update of the WGDP and the Data Literacy Trainings and to the Sari A. Rosenbaum Fund for Women and Girls of the Community Foundation of Middlesex County for support of the updating of the WGDP.*

LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND BEYOND

RECOGNIZING AURORA'S 2021 GRANTEES

Asnuntuck/Tunxis Community Colleges 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. The program culminates with the implementation of a social action project. Funding continued to support the programs at both Asnuntuck and Tunxis Community Colleges and enabled them to empower students to lead and advocate for themselves and their communities, as well as reach their academic goals.



Charter Oak State College Women in Transition Program

The Women in Transition (WIT) program assists low-income single mothers with the completion of an Associate and/or Bachelor's degree(s). The grant was used to cover tuition and fees, textbooks, internet access, career workshops, networking programs, and individualized academic counseling and coaching for 6 to 7 students from the Greater Hartford area. The goal of the Women in Transition Program is to provide access to education and services that will enable single mothers who are or have been welfare recipients, or are in low paying jobs, the ability to build a foundation for continued upward mobility. This program has been operating for over 20 years. The program has always been fully online, because transportation and childcare are significant barriers for these women as they pursue their education.



YWCA Hartford Region YW Career Women

YW Career Women provides comprehensive support services to women seeking Associate Degrees at Capital Community College and Manchester Community College to assist them with obtaining their degree and a career in high-growth, high-income fields including healthcare, business, information technology and manufacturing. Dedicated program staff provide 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. Graduation rates for this program are 90%—an incredible outcome.



University of Hartford Women's Advancement Initiative

This program provides resilience and opportunity coaching, leadership and professional development training and structured life skills curriculum for undergraduate female students. The funds will serve 100+ area women involved in LEAD. Mentoring, career exploration, resume and mock interviews, community service, and support from staff and peers are offered to students, all strategies that Aurora has identified as best practices for College Success programming for women.





WOMEN'S

2021 GENEROSITY BREAKS RECORDS

The 2021 Women's Giving Circle, informed by the data from our *Essential Equity* report, identified **childcare, housing, and mental health** as key areas of need that would continue as the pandemic recovery begins. And the Giving Circle members once again responded, answering suffering with empathy and generosity.

**\$23k
Raised**

**51
Giving Circle
Members**

**100%
Directly to
Community
Organizations**



\$12,000 Donation



\$7,000 Donation



\$4,000 Donation



GIVING CIRCLE IN ACTION

Members of Aurora's Board and Giving Circle gathered to support Dignity Grows (2020 Giving Circle Grantee) at their Thanksgiving weekend pack—hundreds of totes were filled with a month's supply of sanitary and hygiene items that were distributed throughout Hartford to address period poverty for women and girls in need.

GIVING CIRCLE

Members of the Giving Circle

Kate Bittenger-Eikel	Cynthia McKenna
Nuchette Black-Burke	Amy Miller
Karen Brand	Diane Mineck
Shari Cantor	Carle Mowell
Chloe Carlson	Leah Murchie
Anne Carroll	Ann Newbury
Ann D'Auria	Rita Ortiz
Karen Diaz-Meaike	Linda Pierce
Jill Dulitsky	Sharon Pope
Amy Eisler	Alison Scherer
Gretchen Fountain	Emma Simon
Kathleen Francalanga	Christina Smith
Catharine Grady-Benson	Donna Stout
Kathy Hanaway	Michelle Strawder
Margaret Heiner	Ann Thomas
Princess Hyatt	Janet Tracy
Donna Jolly	Chris Traczyk
Elizabeth Kendall	Sharon Ware
Annie Lazarus	Maggie Willard
Suzanne Levere	Trina Williams
Sherry Manetta	Ilicia Winokur
Mickey Mattei	



In June, Giving Circle Steering Committee Members were invited to tour The Women's League Child Development Center in the North End of Hartford. We were all impressed at the amazing work Executive Director, Karen Lott and the staff have achieved! What a gift it was to take a tour and see the smiling faces of our future. You could feel the positive energy while walking the halls and hear the love in the teacher's voices.

Past Giving Circle Recipients:

2017 – Family Life Education

2018 – Girls for Technology

2019 – Strong Girls Camp - Hartford Public Library

2020 – Interval House, Journey Home, The Village, Horizons, Malta House of Care, CRT, Dignity Grows

“

“When I found out we were receiving the Giving Circle grant, I was focused on the potential of the kids, but also of the amazing women of color who make up our staff. How could we lift them up? The answer is to offer them educational opportunities and support as they continue their schooling. The impact of the Giving Circle sends ripples through the community—a message of care, support, belief in the power and possibility of these children and the women who are educating them to be the next generation of leaders and citizens.”

— Karen Lott, Executive Director,
The Women's League
Child Development Center

100 MEN CAMPAIGN GOES VIRAL

When we called on men in the community, YOU answered. We didn't just have 100 Men step up, but 145! Thanks to the amazing team led by Co-Chairs Lee Hoffman and Dr. Jennifer Pennoyer, the 100 Men Campaign raised record funds in 2021.

A Host Committee that doubled in size shared their reasons for supporting Aurora and women and girls in videos—being a role model for their daughter, impressed by the scope and importance of Aurora's research, realizing how supporting women and girls lifts communities—and they created a viral sensation that raised over \$42,000.



Thank you to all our video stars—and to those who supported their fundraising efforts.

Lee Hoffman, Co-Chair

Dr. Jennifer Pennoyer, Co-Chair

Committee Members

Bilal Afolabi
Edward Binder
Gordon Binkhorst
Scott Burns
Sam Caligiuri
TJ Clynch
Dallas Dodge
Eric George

Reginald Freeman
Steven Hernandez
Nkosi Lee
Jerry Leshem
Jeffrey Macel
Tim McNamara
James Michel
Eduardo A. Miranda

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Myron Stewart
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Vincent Williams

Sponsors

Gold Sponsors

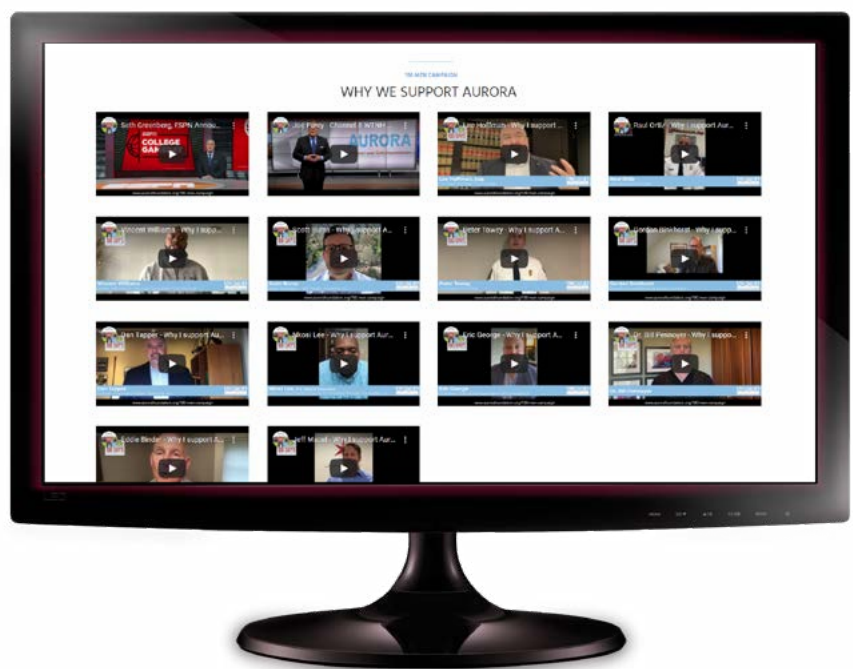
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Family First Life

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Insurance Association of CT
CWCSE&O
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Bronze Sponsors

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Roy and Leroy



BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES THAT CHANGE LIVES AND STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES

Please take a moment to hear directly from students of Aurora's 2021 Funded Programs:

Empowered students in Aurora-funded **college success programs** got the support they needed as they navigated new Pandemic-driven challenges. A participant in the YW Career Women program, Alysha, lost her job because she had to stay home with her daughter when schools closed. She and her daughter took turns sharing one computer for both of their on-line schooling. Alysha also worried whether the few shifts she could get working as a nurse's aid would bring Covid-19 home to her daughter. The YW Career Women program gave Alysha the support she needed to stay in school and support her and her daughter's future. At the launch event for the *Essential Equity Report* Alysha said, "without this program I would have been lost."



"To the donors and supporters of Aurora, I thank you for making a program like Launch Your Leadership Journey available to a person like me. Ten years ago I didn't think I was going to make it out of the abusive relationship I was in, so for me to be able to experience this leadership program deeply means a lot to me. Now I'm able to continue on with my journey of helping those who are experiencing homelessness and domestic violence and that is my dream."

— Anggriyani, Launch Your Leadership Journey,
Tunxis Community College



"I thank you for all Aurora does for women like myself who did not think that a degree was possible. My daughter is so proud of me and she is only seven. I feel like she works hard in school because she sees how hard I work in school. She looks forward to seeing my grades at the end of every class. I feel like a future is truly possible now."

— Tamara, Women in Transition Program,
Charter Oak State College

AURORA
Women and Girls Foundation

AURORA'S VIRTUAL

On October 22, 2021 we hosted our second Virtual Luminary Luncheon. With over 600 viewing the event and with the hard work of our Luncheon Committee we were able to surpass our goals by raising over \$130,000. In a combination of live Zoom and recorded messaging, Aurora was able to focus on our mission and hear from students of our programs, as well as donors and leaders in our community. Our supporters inspired us with their generosity and dedication by shining a light for women and girls.



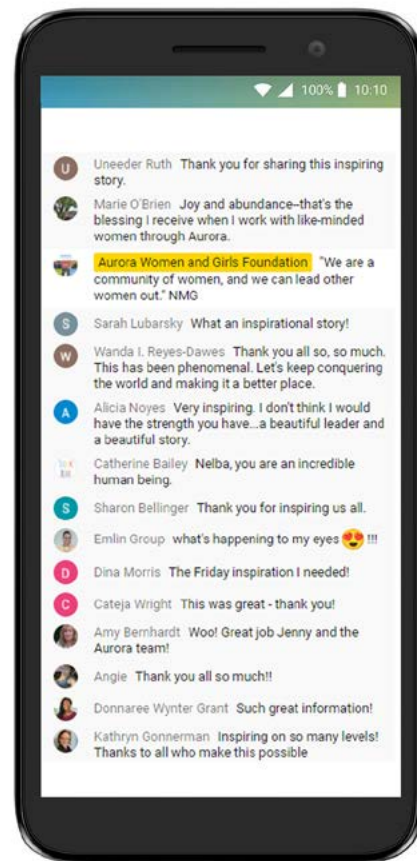
Our Keynote Speaker, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, **Nelba Márquez-Greene**, founder of **The Ana Grace Project**



“Show up as you are, and you can change the world that way”

(AGP) shared inspirational stories of her leadership journey, — Nelba Márquez-Greene her vision for a world with abundant resources for girls, women, their families and surrounding communities, and how love truly can win...even in the midst of grief.

We were mesmerized while listening to the voices of students and their stories. We heard virtual cheers from the audience via zoom chat, with shout outs including:



LUMINARY LUNCHEON

2021 Luminary Luncheon Committee

Karen Diaz-Meaike, *Co-Chair*
Karen Binkhorst, *Co-Chair*

—————
Kathy Binder
Chloe Carlson
Michaela Devoe
Kate Eikel
Kate Farrar
Tenniel Hacker
Mickey Mattei
Stacy Silk-Rome

Luminary Luncheon Table Hosts

Lindsay Baghramyan
Kathy Binder
Sara Binkhorst
Karen Binkhorst
Elena Bowman
Ellen Brown
Meghan Burns
Shari Cantor
Isabel Ceballos
Maureen Cooper
Karen Diaz Meaike
Kyra Dorsey
Kate Bittinger Eikel
Lisa Ellovich
Kate Farrar
Janet Bailey Faude
Carolyn Gitlin

Ann Gowdey
Carolyn Hoffman
Evelyn Johnson
Martha Kalen
Dana Keller
Elaine Leshem
Michele Maresca
Lindsay Martin
Mickey Mattei
Marie McNamara
Amy Miller
Leah Murchie
Jennifer Pennoyer
Gilda Roncari
Christina Smith
Jenny Steadman
Ann Thomas

THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 LUMINARY LUNCHEON SPONSORS

VISIONARY SPONSORS



PILLAR SPONSORS

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Max Cares Foundation

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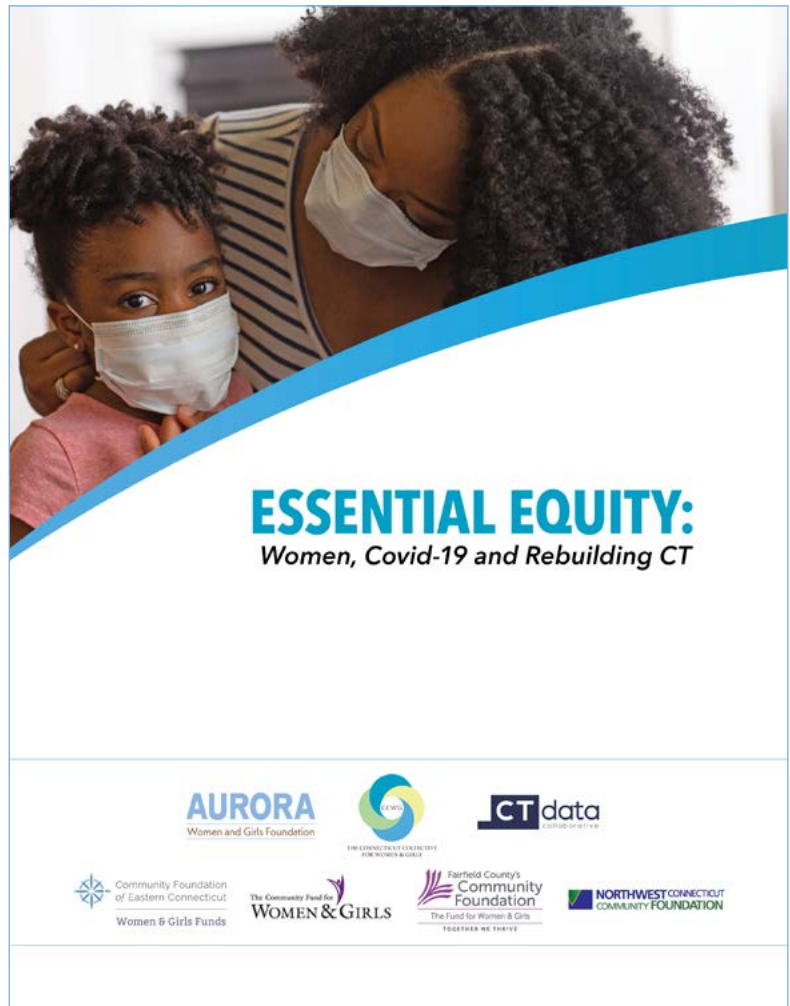
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Children
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Whittlesey
Baronet Coffee Roasters

ESSENTIAL EQUITY: WOMEN,

Aurora's Essential Equity: Women, Covid-19 and Rebuilding Connecticut led the state and the nation in documenting the disproportionate harm to women of color and their families caused by the pandemic. This vital information, along with key recommendations for equitable recovery hit the desk of legislators and decision makers in January, and Aurora has shared the insights with a special presentation to the Women's Caucus of the CT legislature, with the offices of Chris Murphy, Jahanna Hayes, and Mayor Bronin, and through a Data Launch event with 200 attendees and special events with The Village for Families and Children, the CT Council for Philanthropy and the CT Women's Hall of Fame.



Read the report here: aurorafoundation.org/essential-equity

“Connecticut women’s funds and partners have demonstrated how, by working together, it is possible to meet even the most daunting challenges,” said Elizabeth Barajas-Román CEO of the Women’s Funding Network. “By centering the experiences of marginalized women and their families, these partners were able to gather data to make a case for effective relief and recovery centered on equity. This is a crucial strategy in the work of dismantling systemic oppression and inequities so women and girls don’t shoulder the burden of the current crisis or the next crisis.”

COVID-19 AND REBUILDING CT



CHILDCARE CRISIS THREATENS ECONOMIC RECOVERY

- 50% loss of CT's childcare supply expected
- 94% of families of color can't afford high quality child care
- 92% of childcare businesses are women owned

RECOMMENDATIONS:
Expand eligibility for Care 4 Kids to parents in job training, education programs or unemployed seeking jobs. Pay childcare providers adequate wages and provide PPE. Implement universal early education and childcare in CT.

ESSENTIAL EQUITY:
Women, Covid-19 and Rebuilding CT



WOMEN AS ESSENTIAL WORKERS AND CAREGIVERS

- 1/3 of women lost income, with greater impact for women of color
- 56% of continuing unemployment claims were filed by females
- Unemployment applications by women outpaced men
- 70% of females who identify their race or ethnicity as Black experienced a loss of income since March
- Economic impact of women leaving workforce—up to 500 million in lost wages in CT
- 49% of Connecticut's labor force is female

RECOMMENDATIONS:
Guarantee sick leave, implement Paid Family Leave, continue and extend increase in minimum wage, support job training and educational opportunities for women.

ESSENTIAL EQUITY:
Women, Covid-19 and Rebuilding CT



WOMEN AS ESSENTIAL WORKERS AND CAREGIVERS

- 52% of initial unemployment claims and 56% of continuing unemployment claims have been filed by females
- 75% of initial and continuing unemployment claims were made by females without a college degree

RECOMMENDATIONS:
Fund investments in equitable pathways to high-wage, high-growth jobs targeted to women and particularly women of color; commit to closing gender and racial wage gaps; and support legislation that prevents discrimination and harassment to create economic security for women and their families.

ESSENTIAL EQUITY:
Women, Covid-19 and Rebuilding CT



EVICTON CRISIS THREATENS WOMEN AND CHILDREN

19% of women and 32% of Black women have no confidence in ability to pay rent or mortgage. Between 66,273 and 133,000 households at risk of eviction in CT.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
Extend eviction moratorium, cancel rent arrearages. Increase federal housing choice vouchers.

ESSENTIAL EQUITY:
Women, Covid-19 and Rebuilding CT




MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS INCREASE FOR WOMEN OF COLOR

- 70% of females reported experiencing mental health concerns
- 75% of Hispanic females report experiencing mental health concerns

RECOMMENDATIONS:
Extend and expand access to telehealth and reimburse on par with in-person visits.

ESSENTIAL EQUITY:
Women, Covid-19 and Rebuilding CT




HOME UNSAFE FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

- 30% increase in calls to Safe Connect domestic violence hotline
- 43% increase in costs for housing domestic violence survivors in hotels due to inadequate socially-distanced space in existing shelters

RECOMMENDATIONS:
Provide funding for housing domestic violence survivors in hotels. Increase funding for domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual assault programming and shelters.

ESSENTIAL EQUITY:
Women, Covid-19 and Rebuilding CT



HUNGER HURTS WOMEN AND CHILDREN

- 1 in 5 Hispanic females sometimes or often did not have enough food in the last 7 days
- 4x increase in calls to 211 about help buying food
- 300% increase in SNAP applications

RECOMMENDATIONS:
Expand eligibility for SNAP and increase and maximize benefits. Center voices of SNAP recipients and low income people in SNAP program administration.

ESSENTIAL EQUITY:
Women, Covid-19 and Rebuilding CT

Make a difference, support women & girls in Greater Hartford

TWO WAYS TO GIVE:

Mail your donation to:
Aurora Women & Girls Foundation
PO Box 370537
West Hartford, CT 06137

— OR —

Make your gift online at
Aurorafoundation.org/donate

Save the Date

AURORA

Women and Girls Foundation

Luminary Cocktails for Community

Wednesday, October 12, 2022 5:00–7:00 p.m.

at Dunkin' Donuts Park

1214 Main Street Hartford, CT 06103



We're back **in person** for 2022 and we're expecting 600 guests to join us for something new—a **cocktail hour** at Dunkin' Donuts Park. We'll light up the Jumbotron with stories of the incredibly inspiring women your support empowers with educational and economic opportunities. Your partnership helps Aurora to shine a light on the needs of women and girls in Greater Hartford. Your leadership will help us inform, inspire and impact our community—**thank you!**

AURORA FINANCIAL REPORT FY 2021

Income

Capacity Donor Gifts	\$118,507
2021 Luminary Luncheon	\$131,001
Other Contributions	\$143,909
Women’s Giving Circle	\$22,442
100 Men Campaign	\$37,580
SBA Paycheck Protection Program	\$28,213
Total Revenue	\$481,652

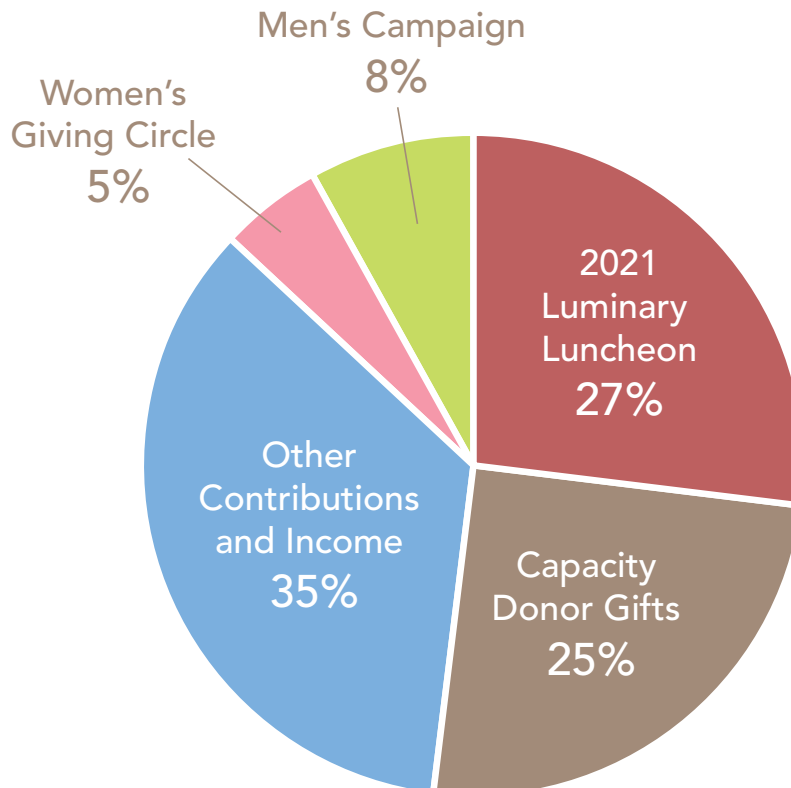
Expenses

Grant Disbursements	\$103,000
Research and Women and Girls Data Platform	\$20,000
Operating Expenses	\$278,506
Total Expenses	\$401,506

Assets

Designated Endowment	\$702,009
Cash and Operating Reserves	\$314,383
Total Assets	\$1,015,482

2021 Income



YOUR GENEROSITY LIGHTS THE

2021 CAPACITY DONORS

Special thanks to those who gave unrestricted gifts of \$1,000 or more in 2021.

\$100,000

Widows' Society of Hartford

\$20,000+

William O. & Carole P. Bailey Family Foundation
Richard P. Garmany Fund at Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
in memory of Lydia Garmany

\$10,000-\$19,000

Carleton N. Mowell
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\$5,000-\$9,999

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\$2,500-\$4,999

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WAY FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

2021 DONORS

\$500-\$999

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Thomas Smith
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