Suzanne, Alysha and Jenny: Teamed up to find solutions.

When YW Career Woman Student, Alysha Yard took center stage at the launch event for Aurora’s Essential Equity report, she shared how hard the pandemic had been for her and her nine-year-old daughter. Asked what she would tell legislators and decision-makers on the call about what would help her most, Alysha answered, “Supportive housing for single moms going back to college—rent, childcare, technology—they are all so expensive and it keeps us from reaching our goals and graduating.” Aurora Giving Circle member Suzanne Levere was so moved by Alysha’s words, that she reached out to Jenny. Since February, the three women have connected with organizations across Hartford and even across the country to investigate potential partners. Wanting to include community voices and gather data from other students like her, Alysha organized, promoted, and moderated Aurora’s Housing Forum on June 3rd. 20 single moms struggling to complete their educations shared their stories—many of them are working 2 and 3 jobs while putting themselves through school to pay for housing that is often inadequate and unsafe. Suzanne helped draft questions and attended practice sessions, building Alysha’s confidence to take on this leadership role. As we continue to explore solutions, Alysha and Suzanne make a formidable team and their commitment to women and girls and the friendship that has grown from working together truly inspires us!

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 desks of legislators and decision makers in January. Aurora also shared the insights with special presentations to the Women’s Caucus of the CT legislature, the offices of Chris Murphy, Jahana Hayes and Mayor Bronin, through a Data Launch event with 200 attendees and special events with The Village for Families and Children and the CT Women’s Hall of Fame. Read the report here: aurorafoundation.org/essential-equity

49% of CT’s workforce is female

48% of female workers are essential workers

56% of unemployment claims were filed by women

75% of women applying for unemployment did NOT have a college degree

Over 1 in 3 initial unemployment claims were filed by women of color

76% of parents who stayed home to provide childcare were women

The Aurora Foundation is a catalyst for positive change in the lives of women and girls in Greater Hartford.
When we called on men in the community, YOU answered. We didn’t just have 100 Men step up, but 145! It isn’t too late to join the amazing team led by Co-Chairs Lee Hoffman and Dr. Jennifer Pennoyer.

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—we hope you’ll view and share them on our social media and make these Great Guys go viral!

So far we have raised $39,000 but with YOU we can go even further. Please join the 100 Men Team and donate today!

**DATA LITERACY TRAINING: Building Nonprofits’ Capacity**

In February, 31 nonprofits serving women and girls learned how to use our updated Women and Girls Data Platform 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 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 Training.

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**WOMEN’S GIVING CIRCLE: 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. The Giving Circle members once again responded, answering suffering with empathy and generosity.

Donations Ranged from $25–$3,800

$23,000 Raised

51 Giving Circle Members

100% Directly to Community Organizations

$12,000

$7,000

$4,000

Make a difference and support women and girls in Greater Hartford

Two ways to give:

1. Mail your donation to:
   PO Box 370537
   West Hartford, CT 06137

2. Make your gift online at
   AuroraFoundation.org/donate
AURORA EMPOWERS

GRANT FUNDING to College Success Programs Awarded: $80,000

Students of LEAD Program team building.

Asnuntuck Community College:
Launch Your Leadership Journey - $10,000

Tunxis Community College:
Launch Your Leadership Journey - $10,000

University of Hartford:
LEAD Program - $12,000

YWCA Hartford Region:
YW Career Women - $20,000

Charter Oak State College:
Women in Transition Program - $28,000

Your Generosity Makes a Difference:
“The women in our WIT program are struggling with not only taking college courses and raising their children, but with meeting household expenses due to lack of work and stay-at-home mandates. This funding has helped us to adjust by upgrading students’ wifi, purchasing hotspots and providing gift cards to help with other expenses such as Chrome-books/laptops.”
— Charter Oak State College

STUDENT SUCCESS STORY
Deborah* is a single mother and grandmother who financially supports her entire family. She began her educational journey at MCC in 2016, while working full time in the Hartford Public School systems. In 2020, she approached the YW Career Women Program for support in hopes of finally completing her studies. The pandemic resulted in a resurgence of academic & financial hurdles and mental illness within the family. Thankfully, Deborah had the YWCW team in her corner! The program provided her the structure and support to get through the toughest emotional and educational days.

We are thrilled say that in 2021 Deborah attained a new job with a 26% pay increase and graduated this spring from Manchester Community College!

*name changed

WELCOME AMBER!
Amber Anthony, Development Manager, joins Program Manager, Marie McNamara and Executive Director, Jenny Steadman to build an even stronger team for Greater Hartford’s women and girls! Please be sure to welcome her - amber@aurorafoundation.org

GATES FOUNDATION HIGHLIGHTS AURORA

YOU are in great company—the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation thinks Aurora is doing amazing work, too! The Greater Giving Summit, a philanthropic conference hosted by the Gates Foundation, connected nonprofits across the globe to share best practices and increase equity in philanthropic efforts. Aurora was one of 6 nonprofits highlighted! We are building on this relationship, by taking advantage of a special year-long program funded by the Gates Foundation to build our social media presence and increase online giving—look for us on a screen near you! You can watch the Gates Greater Giving Summit for yourself on the media page of our website!
Save the date!

AURORA
Women and Girls Foundation

Luminary Luncheon
October 22, 2021 • 12:00 noon • Virtual Event

LOVE WINS

What do Oprah Winfrey, Vice President Kamala Harris, Greta Thunberg and Nelba Marquez-Greene have in common? They are all honorees of People Magazine’s 2019 Women Changing the World.

Nelba Márquez-Greene founded The Ana Grace Project (AGP) in 2013 to honor her 6 year-old daughter, Ana Grace Márquez-Greene, whose life was taken in the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy along with her classmates and staff members in December 2012.

LOVE. CONNECTION. COMMUNITY. OPPORTUNITY.

LOVE WINS is the tagline for The Ana Grace Project, which partners with schools to foster love, connection and community for every child and their families. Among its many accomplishments, The Ana Grace Project has adopted classrooms, brokered partnerships with mental health organizations and districts to support social and emotional learning, fundraised endlessly for scholarships, hosted higher ed/community programs and much, much more. AGP has additionally designed and or participated in mental health conferences and professional learning opportunities across the United States and Canada.

Like the Aurora Foundation, The Ana Grace Project places a premium on unlocking the potential of young lives and their families to ultimately improve the outcomes for these families and their communities.

The Aurora Foundation is proud to welcome Nelba Márquez-Greene as the Keynote Speaker for the Annual Luminary Luncheon, taking place virtually on October 22, 2021. Márquez-Greene will share inspirational stories of her leadership journey, 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.

For tickets visit aurorafoundation.org/luminary-luncheon

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

For sponsorship opportunities or to host a table contact: amber@aurorafoundation.org