

WOMEN'S fund

R H O D E I S L A N D

2024

ANNUAL REPORT



A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Hello all,

2024 was a year of remarkable growth and impact for Women's Fund of Rhode Island. As we continue our advocacy for gender equity through research, policy work, and community programs, we remain unwavering in our belief that advancing gender equity benefits everyone.

While we use a gender lens to address the challenges we see in our communities, our work is about creating a world where all people—regardless of gender—can thrive. Equity is not a zero-sum game; when we break down barriers for women and girls, we open doors for everyone to enjoy a more just and prosperous society. This belief drives everything we do, from expanding paid family leave to strengthening protections for reproductive and gender-affirming health care.



This year, thanks to growing funding and staff, we launched new programs and events, including Elevate Your Career and the Feminist Activist Book (FAB) Club. We partnered with girl-serving organizations to begin work on this state's first report on girls, while supporting local programming. We updated our *Women's Well-Being Index* and *Census of Directors & CEOs* report. Our advocacy efforts led to key legislative wins, such as the Healthcare Provider Shield Act and expansions to Paid Family Leave, directly benefiting thousands of Rhode Islanders.

None of this would be possible without you—our dedicated network of volunteers, Women's Policy Institute fellows, board members, funders, and donors. We welcome and encourage people of all genders to join us in this work. Whether you attend our events, support our initiatives, or advocate for systemic change, your participation is vital to building a more equitable future.

Together, we are creating a Rhode Island where equity isn't just a vision—it's a reality that uplifts us all.

In solidarity,

Kelly Nevins, Chief Executive Officer

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR, SUSAN RITTSCHER

2024 was both a year of triumphs and challenges.

As we navigate an increasingly complex landscape for gender equity, our board remains steadfast in its commitment to the mission of WFRI. We are incredibly proud of the milestones we achieved this year, from legislative victories to expanding our leadership initiatives for women and girls.



Looking ahead, we recognize the importance of securing funding to support the growth of our programs, particularly for girls across Rhode Island. We are grateful for our dedicated community and partners who share our vision of a more just and equitable world.

Thank you,
Susan Rittscher, Board Chair

A SNAPSHOT OF OUR YEAR OF IMPACT



1,000+ individuals engaged through leadership training, policy advocacy, and workshops



9 organizations funded through strategic grants



28 bills supported at the State House, with 5 major legislative wins



24 women speed-coached at our first-ever Elevate Your Career event



4 research publications and indexes released



81% of our budget went directly to programs and grants



135% increase in event income, fueling more opportunities for outreach



3,000+ Rhode Islanders reached through community events, briefings, and media engagement

FINANCIAL REPORT

Income

RI Foundation Endowment:
\$187,603 / 5% increase

Event Income:
\$121,860 / 135% increase

Interest:
\$14,968

Total: \$698,424
25% increase
from 2023

Donations & Grants:
\$373,993 / 19% increase



Net Income: \$49,931

Expenses

General Management & Fund Development:
\$114,781 / 9% increase

Salaries & Benefits:
\$374,368 / 18% increase*

*In 2024, WFRI grew its staff and conducted a salary study to ensure staff were being paid wages consistent with the industry in our area. The increase in this budget area allows us to be competitive in the market while ensuring that donated dollars are being used effectively.

Total: \$648,492
29% increase
from 2023

Strategic Initiatives & Grants:
\$159,343 / 97% increase

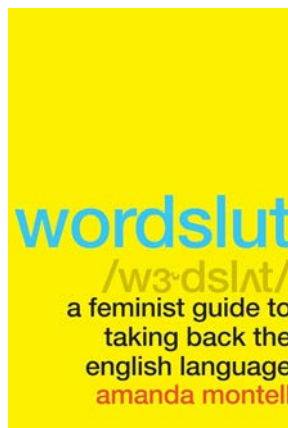
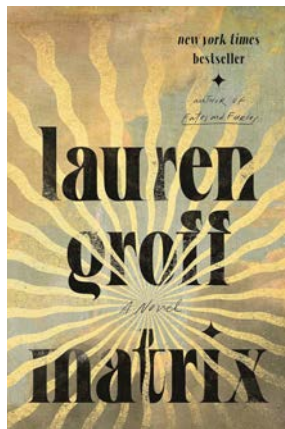
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Hosted International Day of the Girl celebration to inspire young activists.



Launched a new annual networking event, "Elevate Your Career."



Established the Feminist Activist Book (FAB) Club to foster discussions on gender justice.



Partnered with local universities to expand programming, advocacy, and research efforts.

EDUCATIONAL TOPICS INCLUDED:

Panel Discussions

- ♥ Improving Paid Family Leave
- ♥ Women in Mentorship
- ♥ Pushing Back on Media Bias Towards Women during Elections
- ♥ Getting on Board: Addressing the Need for Diversity on RI State Boards & Commissions

Workshops

- ♥ Campaign Manager Training Day
- ♥ Advocating for Gender Equity
- ♥ Salary Negotiation
- ♥ #IamRemarkable

GRANT IMPACT

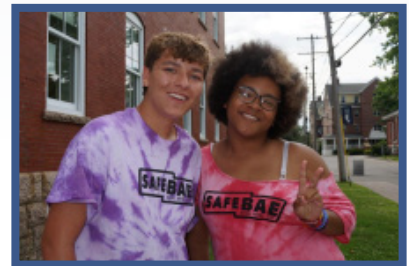
WFRI Granted Funds to the Following Organizations:

- ★ Amos House
- ★ ARISE (Alliance of RI Southeast Asians for Education)
- ★ Coalition to End Homelessness
- ★ Planned Parenthood of Southern New England
- ★ Refugee Dream Center
- ★ Rhode Island Abortion Fund
- ★ RI for Community & Justice
- ★ SafeBAE
- ★ Young Voices



“The RI Coalition to End Homelessness hired a new Constituent Engagement Coordinator to create more in-person gathering and speaking opportunities as requested by the Voices Of Homelessness (VOH) members. In-person meetings allowed for crucial planning for the group to dig deeper into planning short- and long-term goals that contribute to their vision. Three VOH members traveled to California to attend the National Lived Experience Leadership Conference and two VOH members received scholarships to participate in the Storytelling for Change course.”

“The funding from WFRI has been a critical lifeline, enabling SafeBAE to sustain operations, strengthen relationships with school communities, and lay the groundwork for future initiatives in Rhode Island. This support has been pivotal in allowing us to continue our mission to prevent sexual assault and promote youth leadership.”



WOMEN'S fund

R H O D E I S L A N D

OUR RESEARCH



- ★ Updated *Women's Well-Being Index*
- ★ Produced 2024 *Census of Directors & CEOs of RI's Largest Nonprofit Organizations*
- ★ Produced 2024 Policy Briefs on Education, Economic Well-Being, Poverty, and Health & Safety
- ★ Produced 2024 report on *Paid Family Leave* in collaboration with the RI Economic Progress Institute

- ★ Convened a working group to produce the state's first *RI Girls Report* (released in 2025)
- ★ Reports were downloaded from our website hundreds of times by legislators, key community leaders, and those interested in seeing our data



- Petra J.

"Thank you for sharing both the *Women's Well-Being Index* 2024 and 2024 *Census of Directors and Chief Executives of RI's Largest NP Organizations*. This information is so incredibly interesting and really points to the need of your work. Some of the stats are shocking and many are quite sobering."

ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

Our **Women's Policy Institute** trains individuals to become grassroots advocacy leaders at the state level using a feminist framework. Participants learn how bills become laws, to write bill language, find sponsors, and campaign to pass legislation. Many participants go on to find jobs in public policy roles and run for office. In addition, a passionate group of volunteers support WFRI's legislative priorities through our Policy & Advocacy Committee. Together with these groups, we are proud to have had a part in passing the 2024 Healthcare Provider Shield Act and expansions to Paid Family Leave, in addition to advocating for 28 separate bills.



The WPI Class of 2024 Celebrates Their Graduation

Melissa's Story: From Participant to Advocate

Melissa K. was a 2023-24 Women's Policy Institute Fellow with a personal passion but little experience navigating the policy world. What she found was not just information—it was inspiration.

"You ignited a love of legislative action in my heart," she says. "Thanks to your programs, I had the confidence to meet with Senator Jack Reed and advocate for a cause I care deeply about."

Melissa has since joined local advocacy efforts and continues to connect with elected officials. She credits WFRI for sparking a new chapter in her civic life.

"I never imagined I could be this engaged. Now I know I belong in these conversations."



2024 CORPORATE & INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

We extend our gratitude to our key funding partners who make our work possible:

AAA Northeast
Adler Pollock & Sheehan
Bally's Twin River
BankNewport
BayCoast Bank
Better Business Bureau of Eastern MA, ME, RI & VT
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island
B Street Foundation
Bristol County Savings Bank
Brown Medicine
Brown University Health (formerly Lifespan)
Butler & Messier Insurance
Cameron & Mittleman, LLP
Care New England
Cetrulo, LLP
City of Central Falls
City Personnel
Coastal1 Credit Union
commonFont
Cox Communications
D.F. Pray General Contractors
Delta Dental of Rhode Island
Distinctive Success Solutions
Duffy & Sweeney, Ltd.
Employee Community Services Association
Falvey Insurance
FLY Initiative
Fuse Energy
Gilbane Building Company
Greenwood Credit Union
HarborOne Bank
Hassenfeld Family Initiatives
Hinckley, Allen & Snyder, LLP
IGT

Johnson & Wales University
J.P. Morgan Chase
KPMG
Landmark Medical Center
Mooring Companies
Navigant Credit Union
Neighborhood Health Plan of RI
New York Women's Foundation
Papitto Opportunity Connection
Partridge, Snow & Hahn
Prospect Hill Foundation
Providence Pirates
Providence Plantations Club Memorial
Rhode Island Foundation
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Robinson + Cole
Rykat Fund
Traverse Landscape Architects
United Way of Rhode Island
USI Insurance Services, LLC
Verizon
The Washington Trust Company
Westerly Credit Union

"Thank
you for the wonderful
work that you do to lift women up.
We think it is an imperative at so many
levels and especially because it will lead
to a more just and equitable future for all
of us. Please know that you do great
work!" - Steve & Kathy K.

THE 2024 TEAM

Staff

Deb Honor, Development Director
Angela Lima, Policy & Advocacy Program Director
Kelly Nevins, Chief Executive Officer
Beth Thompson, Special Projects Coordinator
Annemarie Fioroni, Intern
Devon Garvey, Intern
Andrea Gruttadaria, Intern
Dannielle Rammal, Intern
Sarah Van Scoten, Intern



Board of Directors

Maryam Attarpour
Christina Castle
Julie DiBari
Christy Durant
Sean Holley
Susan Killenberg
Kelly Kincaid
Ana Martins
Adam Ramos
Susan Rittscher
Etie-Lee Schaub
Lysa Teal
Sandra Victorino
Bev Wiley



Volunteers

Cathy Andreozzi
Megan Bell
Abigail Brewer
Tamara Burman
Mary Kate Byrne
Genna Colonnato
Aimee Davidson
Jessica DeJesus
Melody DeMers

Carmen Diaz-Jusino
Susie Draine
Kate Farrell
Carie Ferriera McGrane
Paris Flynn
Cailin Gallagher
Mae Gammino
Jodi Glass
Melissa Gonzalez
Sarah Hilton
Patrice Jean-Philippe
Petra Jenkins

Lisa Jones
Susan Kostas
Ruth Leber
Amber Mangione
Stephanie McNamara
Sucely Murillo
Dianne Newman
Christine Paige
Alyson Panzarella
Maridel Perron
Amy Peters
Nicole Picard

Nicole Planko
Jessica Purcell
Chelsea Scholl
Linda Shaw
Stacey Silva
Barbara Slover
Alexandria Testut
Libby Tuttle
Lori Viner
Tina Wright
Ashley Zechello

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025

As we enter **2025**, we are facing significant headwinds, with federal backlash against diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts threatening hard-fought progress. Now more than ever, our commitment to advancing gender equity must be strong and steady.

The *RI Girls Report*, published in February 2025, has already sparked critical conversations about the challenges young women and girls face in our state. Moving forward, we seek funding to support statewide initiatives that empower girls through education, mentorship, and leadership opportunities.

We remain dedicated to our mission to drive systemic change through research, policy, and leadership development. Your support is crucial in ensuring that progress continues, despite the challenges ahead.



Get involved by:

- Joining our Feminist Activist Book (FAB) Club
- Volunteering on our Policy & Advocacy or Events Planning Committees
- Attending one of our great events
- Donating to ensure we have resources to continue leveling the playing field!

Together, we will rise and persist.

WOMEN'S FUND OF RHODE ISLAND 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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