



## *News Release*

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*For Immediate Release*

### **Women's Giving Circle of Harford County Awards Over \$54,000, Bringing Total Giving to Nearly \$565,000**

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families and children since its founding in 2010*

**Bel Air, Md., June 26, 2023** -- The Women's Giving Circle of Harford County awarded \$54,724 to 13 nonprofits in the county in 2023, bringing its cumulative giving to \$564,924.14 in its first 13 years.

Since its founding in 2010, the Women's Giving Circle has provided 162 grants to 60 nonprofits that serve women, families and children in Harford County. The 2023 Grant Committee was chaired by Hillary Smolenski.

“We received over \$100,000 in grant requests this year, so the need is great,” said Donna Kreis, chair of the Women's Giving Circle of Harford County. “Our philosophy is simple—give, guide and grow. We give to those in need. We guide the next generation. We grow our community. We welcome members of all ages and from all areas to join the Women's Giving Circle to further our ability to serve women and children in Harford County.”

In 2023, \$5,000 grants were awarded to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Harford and Cecil Counties, to run a summer camp designed to promote and sustain learning in youth of all ages during the summer months; CASA of Harford County, for tutoring services for children; Coming of Kings, to allow boys to meet with mentors on Sunday afternoons and to secure speakers and field trips with a focus on leadership development, college preparation and work readiness; and Girls on the Run of Central Maryland (Harford County Program Expansion Initiative), to grow participation among Title 1 schools in Harford County and to purchase running shoes for participants in need.

Also receiving grants for \$5,000 were the Homecoming Project, to cover the cost of a 20-week life-skills group for eight participants and licensed counselors; Improving Education, to provide low-income families with books and health care materials to establish a nightly routine that supports each child's health, sleep and early learning; The Sexual Assault/Spouse Abuse Resource Center (SARC), to purchase new car seats, strollers and bedding and to provide childcare and ride share assistance; and The Sharing Table, to provide meals and groceries to those in need in the Edgewood community.

LASOS, Inc., received a \$4,500 grant to cover the cost of renting the Bel Air Armory on Fridays to run their summer camp five days a week during the summer for children who are enrolled in school in Harford County but who do not speak English as their first language.

Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding received a grant for \$3,849, for a Micro Rain M25 water wheel to reduce the amount of dust in the air making riders and volunteers more comfortable.

The HOPE Center of Maryland, Inc., was awarded \$3,000 to provide 75 low-income students with backpacks filled with shelf-stable meals to ensure students don't go hungry over weekends and over the holidays.

A \$2,000 grant was provided to The Forgotten Initiative-Harford for a weekly life-skills class for transitional children (ages 14-21) in foster care that will teach cooking, preparing a resume, finding affordable homes, financial literacy and identifying career goals.

Harford County Family Assistance Fund received a grant for \$1,375 to provide 25 children who are entering out-of-home care with luggage in order to help their transition go as smoothly as possible and to ensure that their special items will come with them.

Two of this year's grantees--Coming of Kings and The Forgotten Initiative--are new recipients of Women's Giving Circle grants. Coming of Kings provides cultural, social and educational programs for young men to transition into adolescence and adulthood. The Forgotten Initiative supports the foster care community through awareness, encouragement and advocacy.

The Members' Choice Award, established in 2020, invites Women's Giving Circle members to nominate a nonprofit serving women, families and children in Harford County to receive a grant. Each nominator is featured in a video, explaining why their nonprofit should receive the award. The amount awarded each year is based on the Women's Giving Circle's endowment fund.

After watching the videos, members vote on a winner. Last year's honoree, The Brandon Tolson Foundation, nominated by Debbie Lynch, received \$5,517.28. This year's nonprofit honoree will receive \$5,991.61. The winner will be announced on Giving Tuesday, November 28.

Founded in 2010, the Women's Giving Circle of Harford County is dedicated to engaging women of all generations in the power of community philanthropy to address the needs of women and families. More information may be found at [harfordwomengiving.org](http://harfordwomengiving.org).

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