

Women to Women

GIVING CIRCLE

Administered through the Illinois Prairie Community Foundation
Serving McLean, Livingston, Logan and Dewitt Counties

Making a Difference in Central Illinois

The Giving Circle concept encourages women's philanthropy to make a difference in their own communities. As the IPCF Women to Women Giving Circle began, most of its members, and thus most of its work, was undertaken in McLean County.

We are, however, very aware that the Community Foundation is set up to serve a four-county region, and we would like to enlarge the Circle by gaining members in the other counties. As we expand, two logical questions arise: How does the Giving Circle work? and Where does the money go?

The Women to Women Giving Circle seeks members who contribute annually beginning at \$100 a year, the Circle also accepts IRA distributions, gifts of stock or mutual funds, estate gifts and larger one-time gifts. Because we are part of the Community Foundation, investments are well-managed and gift stewardship is an administrative strength.

Gifts to the Giving Circle are distributed as follows:

- 10% of the gift covers administrative expenses which includes printing, mailing and Circle events such as the Summer Celebration
- 45% of the gift goes into the Women to Women endowment fund which will provide an ongoing stream of income in perpetuity
- 45% of the gift goes into the Grants fund, available for annual distribution to causes benefitting women and children

As of June 30, 2021, the Circle has distributed \$376,991 in grants and has \$444,542 in its endowed fund. The funds available for grant distribution in 2021 will total about \$40,000 to \$45,000 (FY2021 figures not finalized yet).

Check out our website: www.ilprairiecf.org/women-to-women

How are the funds distributed?

The Giving Circle Steering Committee oversees the direction of funds based on its assessment of community needs. A subcommittee of Steering, the Grants Committee seeks proposals, holds workshops, assesses proposals, and recommends allocations. Final grant approval is made by the Community Foundation's board. To date, it has agreed with all recommendations of the Steering Committee.

Member input is sought throughout the process, and forums on community issues are sponsored by the Circle. Forums could be held in multiple locations. Additionally, informal small group lunches stimulate friendships and ideas for service.

The Steering Committee now has a Livingston County member, Judy Donze Kilbride, and the Committee will seek to increase its geographical diversity. The Giving Circle has stressed collaboration among social service agencies in proposals, and collaboration across county lines could also be invited.

What is different about the Women to Women Giving Circle?

The Circle seeks to actively involve women in philanthropy. While major donors are important, the Circle welcomes women of all economic levels. The Circle supports a variety of organizations, not just one, and encourages organizational collaboration.

The needs of women and children in our community are addressed through the support of women who learn about the issues and give their dollars to local agencies.

Three words have guided us: **Come, Learn, Grow**