

The Importance of WIF Values

By Anne Essaye, Board Member
And leader of Strategic Planning Task Force

Last spring, I went to an “in-home social” with about 30 other WIF members. Even though I’ve been a member for years, I only knew about 10 women there. For me, there is always some awkwardness when I’m at a party and don’t know a lot of the people.

We eventually gathered in the kitchen, and all answered one question. “What is your passion in the community?” As each woman spoke, I realized I actually had a lot of connections with many of the women I had not met before. Suddenly, I had quite a lot to talk about with them, and I did. The experience made me feel so engaged and energized.

This is what I love about the Women’s Impact Fund. At our core, what we all share is a passion for improving our community.

Our connection is not that our kids go to the same school or that we work in the same office building, or that we shop at the same Harris-Teeter. Our connection is that we all have the same passion for our community.

When the Strategic Planning Task Force was writing the Values Statement, the value “Connections” was one of the values we had the hardest time capturing. When I presented our draft Values Statement to the 45 women on the Board and Advisory Board, this value generated some of the most discussion. The feedback was that it sounded “too corporate” and didn’t get at the “deep and meaningful” friendships that, really, all of us who were in the room have developed with different WIF members. So, we revised it.

With thoughtfulness and passion, we are proud to share the Values Statement. The values reflect what we believe in as an organization of women who share a passion for improving our community.

Over the next several months, WIF members will talk more about the importance of WIF values.

WIF Values Statement

Connections

We believe in building strong relationships and meaningful friendships among women who are united in their passion for improving our community. We value the connections created among our members, grantees, and the broader community.

Education

We believe in providing compelling education opportunities to our members, creating a membership of knowledgeable and effective philanthropists who are inspired to strengthen our community.

Equality

One woman, one vote. We believe in using a democratic process to select the nonprofits to which we award our grants. Each member makes an equal contribution to our grant pool and each member has an equal vote in awarding our grants.

Inclusion

We believe in being an actively diverse and inclusive organization. We welcome all women who wish to join.

Leadership

We believe our organization should provide bold leadership on emerging issues and critical needs in our community and be a pipeline for philanthropic, nonprofit, and community leaders.

Stewardship

We believe in being responsible and thoughtful stewards of our human and financial resources and holding ourselves accountable to the same standards to which we hold our grantees.

Strategic Impact

We believe in achieving strategic impact by harnessing the power of our collective intellectual and financial resources and by collaborating with other community organizations. We believe our organization should be part of the long-term solutions for our community.