

2018  
ANNUAL REPORT



# DOUBLING DOWN



# TOGETHER



NATALIE WYATT-ALDANA



# DEAR SUPPORTERS,

**Our work is not easy. And we can't do it alone.** Since 1973, Women Employed has been making change in the workplace to elevate us all. We have stood up for equal opportunity and economic advancement. We have paved the way for millions to get their degrees.

And we have leveraged partnerships to make it happen. By forging relationships with community and business leaders, policymakers, organizations, working people, unions, advocates, donors, and funders, we are bringing people to the table to build a movement that—even in these tumultuous times—is improving the lives of working women and their families *every single day*. In this report, you will read about some of the advances we have made—together—in just the last year.

And there is still a long way to go, as we have seen from the groundswell of women rising up to say #MeToo, and marching in the streets. Women Employed turned 45 this year, and we are not slowing down. With our partners, our supporters, our donors, our advocates—with YOU—we are *doubling* down. Our experience has taught us that change doesn't happen overnight. But we don't give up. We are tenacious. We move forward even when the waves try to push us back. We weather the storms and come out stronger. We are uniting people around a shared cause—equity for *all* working women. We know we will change the world.

## SHARED UNDERSTANDING, SHARED SUCCESS

More than ever, students are juggling work and caregiving responsibilities while also trying to gain the higher education and training they need to compete in today's job market. Across the country and here in Illinois, education practitioners are helping students, an increasing number of whom are non-traditional, advance their education through career pathway programs. These programs meet adults where they are on their educational journey and put them on a solid track to build their skills and meet their education and career goals. But without a unified understanding of what these programs should look like, they weren't as connected—or as effective—as they could be.

We needed a solution. So Women Employed (WE) connected with our partners at the Chicago Jobs Council, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and Illinois Community College Board to convene a wide group of stakeholders in career pathways. Working together, we developed a single definition of "career pathways" for the entire state of Illinois. The definition was adopted this spring by state agencies and education policymakers and even received praise from the Center on Law and Social Policy, a national leader on strategies to promote economic opportunity. Now all Illinois agencies, providers, and policymakers are on the same page, students have a clearer pathway to success, and it happened because WE brought together the experts who could lead the charge.

## RISING UP THE LADDER

Many adults dream of better careers, but they don't have enough education to pursue those dreams and they don't know where to start. That's why Women Employed developed Career Foundations with the City Colleges of Chicago. It's a curriculum that helps students with basic skill deficits assess their skills, identify their interests, and map out a plan to get to college so they can secure well-paying jobs in high-demand industries like information technology, healthcare, and manufacturing. Key to making Career Foundations work are on-the-ground practitioners who bring the information to the low-income learners who need it. WE partners with 12 community-based organizations who do just that.

Ranging from human service agencies to community centers, these organizations offer the course to help students visualize a future with higher education and financial security. And the results are phenomenal: WE set an ambitious goal for the number of Career Foundations students who transition into the higher education system this academic year, and with 4 months left in the year, we had already surpassed our goal by almost 13 percent! That's a testament to the power of partnerships and how WE leverages the strength of our connections to make a real difference in people's lives.

## WE AND THE ERA: FROM 1973 TO TODAY

This year has shown us that the gains women have won cannot be taken for granted. Since our earliest days, WE has been on the frontlines advocating for Congress to affirm equal rights for women in our nation's Constitution. The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is a vital measure to removing barriers to economic equity for America's working women, which is why Women Employed joined forces with our organizational partners when it was first introduced four decades ago to push it to the forefront of the national conversation.

This year, propelled by the momentum of women coming together to win change, WE worked with our partners and mobilized our supporters to get our home state of Illinois to finally ratify the ERA—and we were successful! That victory came in the midst of WE's 45th anniversary celebrations, a fitting culmination to a journey that began when Congress originally passed the ERA in 1972.

Now only one more state needs to ratify to make the ERA the law of the land. The next step for WE? Working with our partners across the country to make it happen.

## THE CHORUS THAT CREATED THE COUNCIL

Women Employed tackles gender inequity by winning systemic change, and the federal government's unwillingness to address structural issues that hold women back has galvanized us to make change closer to home. With women making up only 35 percent of the Illinois legislature, we need more room at the table for the voices of working women to be heard. When community leader Kina Collins proposed the creation of an Illinois Council on Women and Girls, with a mandate to inform and advise on laws that will impact the women and girls of the state, WE jumped into action to help make it reality.

Allied with our partners in advocacy across the state, we showed up, spoke out, and activated our supporters to tell Illinois lawmakers to establish the council. Our collective voices made the difference, and we were victorious.

The council has hit the ground running with an intersectional agenda that includes ending workplace discrimination, combatting sexual harassment, and expanding access to education among its priorities. It reflects the expertise of the wide cross-section of groups—like Women Employed—that contributed to its creation.

The movement for gender equity is no stranger to struggle. Throughout Women Employed's 45 years, we've been on the front lines, advocating for equal opportunity, economic advancement, and access to the education and training that allows people to change their futures—and we've won major victories along the way that have elevated us all.

We are in a challenging time for working women. The stakes are high and raising our voices is critical.

Know that Women Employed is meeting this challenge and energizing more people to be activists for change. You can feel that energy in the fiber and the vibrancy of this report, beautifully illustrated by local artist Natalie Wyatt-Aldana. We've been through hard times before, and—together with you—we'll keep pushing ahead until we achieve equity for all working women. Your support keeps us moving forward. So keep standing along with us as we double down.

Lisa Pattis, Board Chair

# DOUBLING DOWN ON RISING UP TOGETHER

## A SUMMER OF CONNECTIONS

The next generation is already leading activism, and WE helps foster that passion for advocacy with The Pattis Family Foundation Summer Leadership Program. Each summer, a diverse group of 10 college students and recent graduates gather at WE for the internship of a lifetime. The interns learn the ins and outs of non-profit work, gender equity advocacy, careers in public service, and leadership. But the true magic lies in the connections they forge in their eight weeks with Women Employed.

By tapping into our network of civic leaders and organizations across the city, WE demonstrates to this next generation of leaders the power of partnerships in winning social justice gains. They meet with non-profit professionals, union leaders, judges, and full-time advocates. They bring energy and a variety of perspectives that help inform WE's work. They work closely with the WE staff and learn from each other. Soon, the interns begin to see all the different ways they can use their passion for activism to build a career that makes a difference. And when the summer comes to a close, they are well-equipped with the tools and connections needed to start on a path of their own.

## STANDING WITH STUDENTS

Supporters like you are among Women Employed's strongest partners. You answer the call to take action when it's needed the most, and that was the case when Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner vetoed a Student Loan Bill of Rights. Women hold two-thirds of the country's \$1.5 trillion in student debt, and that burden is hard to lift when lenders aren't as transparent with student borrowers as they should be.

The Student Loan Bill of Rights sets basic protections for borrowers in Illinois, like requiring that loan servicers are licensed and that they inform students of all their repayment options. When the governor vetoed the legislation, WE worked quickly with the Illinois Attorney General's office and partner organizations to push for an override. Key to that successful effort were supporters like you who heeded our call, contacted legislators with the power to move it forward, and rallied friends and loved ones to do the same.

Now Illinoisans can pursue higher education knowing they have the protections they need to avoid a lifetime of debt.

## PRIDE IN PARTNERSHIPS

When WE helped secure a paid sick time law for the workers in Chicago, we knew it was important that it was inclusive—giving this basic right to *everyone* who may need it. Hundreds of thousands of adults in Chicago identify as LGBTQ, and many depend on the care they receive from loved ones who are not blood relatives but are their chosen family.

The paid sick time legislation WE helped draft specifically addresses the needs of the LGBTQ community, allowing workers to take time off for their own illness or that of a family member—chosen or otherwise. After a successful public education campaign that informed over a million Chicagoans about their right to paid sick time, WE doubled down on outreach to LGBTQ workers by collaborating with Pride Action Tank, a group that advocates for and with the LGBTQ community. With fact sheets, appearances in the media, and even a presentation at Chicago's annual LGBTQ job fair, we broadcast loud and clear that no matter who you love, your right in Chicago to take time off from work to care for them is guaranteed.

## EQUITY FOR ALL OF US

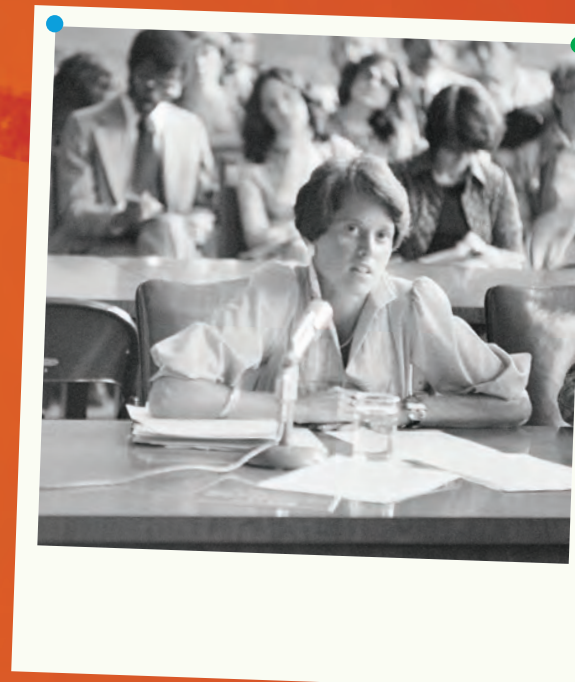
Today's political climate has underscored an undeniable truth: discrimination based on a person's race, immigration status, sexual orientation, faith, or disability remains a deeply rooted reality. And those kinds of discrimination often intersect with the challenges women face in the workplace to create additional roadblocks to equal opportunity. This requires us to think expansively about all the communities that working women belong to, and how systemic inequities may impact those communities differently.

WE is reaffirming our commitment to understanding those intersections, recognizing them in our work, and intentionally listening to the voices of the women who experience them. We've convened an internal taskforce of staff and board members dedicated to promoting racial equity and inclusion. We're building strong connections with diverse partners. And we're ensuring women of color are front of mind as we tackle issues like the wage gap and illustrate how much wider pay disparity is for most women of color—because we won't truly reach wage equity until all women are paid equally for equal work.

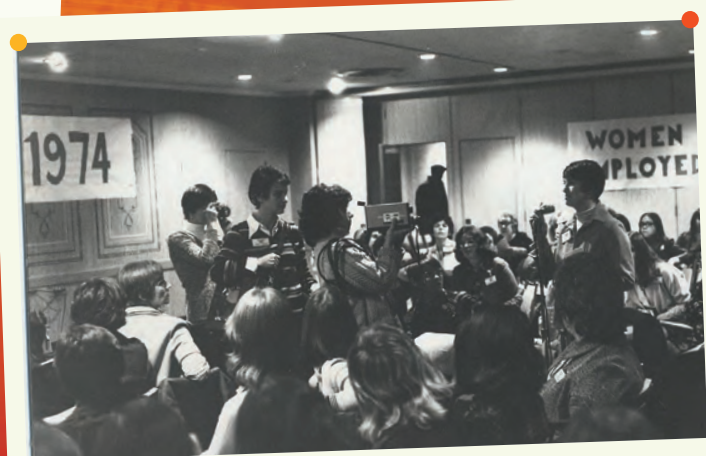
This approach is necessary to realize our dream of economic equity for *all* working women and families. We're counting on you to join us on this journey as we strive to make our world a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive place.

**W<sub>e</sub>**  
Women Employed  
**URNS 45**

LEARN MORE  
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doubling down, hear  
from people uniting  
around our cause, and  
see how you can make  
a difference.  
[womenemployed.org/  
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**ABOUT THE ARTIST:** The cover art for this report was created by local artist Natalie Wyatt-Aldana. Natalie is passionate about using art and design to impact social change. As she finishes her education, Natalie has been honing her talents with Women Employed as our graphic design intern. Visit her website at [natalie-wa.com](http://natalie-wa.com).



**FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:** Women Employed protests discriminatory hiring, pay, and promotion practices in the early 1970s; Policy Associate Jessie Gotsdiner speaks in support of the Student Loan Bill of Rights at a press conference in 2017; Women Employed joins our partners to rally for the passage of the ERA in Illinois in May 2018; WE advocates for financial aid for students in 2009; WE was a partner for the Women's March Chicago in January 2018; WE calls for rights and respect for female office workers in 1974; Former longtime Director of Research Nancy Kreiter testifies before the U.S. Senate Banking Committee about affirmative action enforcement in 1976; WE protests budget cuts that would harm women and families in 1992; WE's 2018 class of The Pattis Family Foundation Summer Leadership Program; WE Program Coordinator Aisha Ismail (left) joins Kina Collins (center), the leader of the Illinois Council on Women and Girls, and Chloe Barnes (right), President/CEO of Elle Grace Consulting, LLC, at the 2018 Women's March Chicago.



THANKS TO OUR DONORS AND PARTNERS FOR STANDING TOGETHER WITH US.

We salute all the corporations, foundations, organizations, and individuals who made a gift between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018, and regret that we cannot list those who donated less than \$250. A heartfelt thank you to all our supporters!

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Amy Rosenow  
Heather Ross  
Mary Rychener  
Katie Schreiber  
Ava George Stewart  
Theresa Strayer  
Karen and Tom Terry  
Kristina Van Liew  
Emily Wessel Farr  
Angela Whiteside-Smith

+ Deceased

**INVESTORS FOR CHANGE** / With the generosity of our *Investors for Change*, who make unrestricted gifts of \$1,000 or more annually, Women Employed is able to pursue the best opportunities to improve workplace conditions and build pathways to higher education so more women can succeed economically.

**ANNE LADKY LEADERSHIP FUND\*** / Thank you to these donors who have designated the total or a portion of their gift to the fund created in Anne Ladky's honor. All donations will support initiatives aimed at empowering the next generation of women to lead the work of Women Employed and strengthen the future for all women.

**NANCY B. KREITER ADVOCACY FUND\*** / Special thanks to the donors of this fund that supports Women Employed's work to strengthen federal equal opportunity policies.

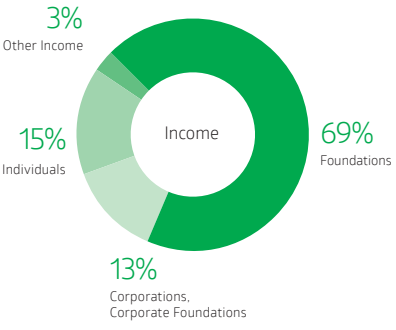
**PARTNERS IN PROGRESS & BARRIER BREAKERS** / We are so fortunate to have donors who are committed to making lasting change by designating a level of giving each year of at least \$240. Whether through twelve monthly gifts or a one-time gift during the year, our Partners in Progress and Barrier Breakers provide essential funds that support our ongoing work.

**GENERATIONS CIRCLE** / Thanks to our supporters who have included Women Employed in their estate plans, future generations of women will have meaningful opportunities to achieve their aspirations for themselves and their families.

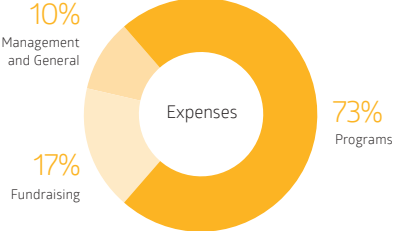
**DEDICATIONS** / Honor a loved one with a gift in their name to Women Employed for a birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion. Donations in memory of a special person honor their life and continue their legacy. The tribute gifts noted are donations of \$150 and above.

For more information about these special giving opportunities, call Linda at 312.782.3902 ext. 245 or visit [womenemployed.org](http://womenemployed.org).

FINANCIALS



INCOME	
Foundations	1,577,300
Corporations, Corporate Foundations	300,108
Individuals	350,852
Other Income	65,680
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,293,940</b>



EXPENSES	
Programs	1,711,150
Fundraising	411,199
Management and General	234,816
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,357,165**</b>

\*\* Unrestricted cash reserves were utilized for strategic program expenses

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kate Boege	Nancy Hannon	Sharmili Majmudar	Lisa J. Pattis	Teresa Soppet
Lydia Bueschel	Harriet Hart	<i>Interim CEO</i>	<i>Chair</i>	Debbie Thorne
<i>Secretary</i>	Shannon Hobbs	Tameshia Bridges Mansfield	Anjali Reddy	<i>Vice Chair</i>
Gabrielle Cummings	Fern Josephs	Jennifer Mason	Elena Robinson	Lynn Watkins-Asiyanbi
Mary Gardner	Elizabeth Kenefick	Jennifer McMahon	Laurie Rompala	<i>Vice Chair</i>
Deborah Golden	<i>Co-Chair, Advocacy Council</i>	Susan Mendelsohn	Lisa Snow	
<i>Vice Chair</i>	Marjorie Loeb	Ambar Mentor-Truppa	<i>Treasurer</i>	

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Linda Ballard	Mary Kay Devine	Valerie Harris	Sarah Labadie	Ishena Robinson
Shirlondra Brooks	Bridget Duffy	Jemyra Ingram	Jessica Lawson	Christina Warden
Amanda Collins	Tina Erickson	Aisha Ismail	Sharmili Majmudar	
Elizabeth Cunneen	Jessie Gotsdiner	Melissa Josephs	Judy Miyashita	

