DOUBLING DOWN
ON RISING UP
TOGETHER
Dear Supporters,

Our work is not easy. And we can’t do it alone. Since 1974, Women Employed has been making change in the workplace to elevate all we have. We have stood up for equal opportunity and advancement. We have paved the way for millions to gain 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—just as 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 groundwork 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—equality for all working women. We know we will change the world.

SHARED UNDERSTANDING, SHARED SUCCESS
More than just worker-empowering laws and programs—equal opportunity and policies enabling us to give the higher education and training they need to compete in today’s job market. Across the country and in Illinois, education providers are helping students, an increasing number of whom are not traditional, advance their education through career pathways programs. These programs help adult learners who are out of educational education and pathways to build their skills and meet their education and career goals.

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. The new definition passed the Illinois legislature by a vote of 100-0. Now, all Illinois agencies, groups, and policymakers are on the same page; students have a clear pathway to success, and it happened because WE brought together the experts who could lead the charge.

RISING UP THE LADDER
When a lack of education is a barrier, many adult learners start with basic education to pursue those dreams and they don’t know where to start. That’s why Women Employed developed Career Focus with the City Colleges of Chicago—it’s a curriculum that helps students with basic skills assess their skills, identify their interests, and map out a plan to get started. They take in our career and job sites, high-demand degrees, and other career strategies. Students are introduced to job opportunities by making Career Focus work on the ground level by assisting the local information to the low-income learners who need it. WE partners with 18 community-based organizations who do the work.

Rising from human service agencies to community centers, these organizations are working to solve the problem of higher education and financial security. And the results are promising. WE saw an astounding 33 percent of the World of Career’s students who transition the higher education systems this academic year, and with 9 months in the year, we have already surpassed our goal by almost 5 percent. That’s a win in 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 front lines advocating for Congress to affirmative real rights for women in our nation’s Constitution. The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is a critical measure to removing barriers to economic security for America’s working women, which is why Women Employed joined forces with our organizational partners when it was introduced into Congress decades ago to push it to the forefront of the national conversation.

This year we celebrated the invention of women coming together to change WE worked with partners to mobilize our supporters to get the ERA over the finish line, and finally, our ERA effort was successful! That victory came in the month of WE’s 45th anniversary celebration, a fight fueled across 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 CHURCH THAT CREATES THE COUNCIL
WE is the only organization in America that creates and supports the Legislative Council, the only organization in the country that provides access to state lawmakers for women who advance legislation to address systemic issues that hold women back. WE has leveraged our influence to make change closer to home. 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 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-Adana. We’ve been through tough times before—and, together, we’ve kept 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.

A SUMMER OF CONNECTIONS
The next generation is already leading activism, and WE helps make that transition possible through WE’s Future Leaders Summer Program. Each summer, a diverse group of 10 college students and recent graduates gather for immersion in a lifetime. The mentors take on the key issues of paid work, gender, and advocacy in a hands-on and collaborative learning environment. The experience is challenging, but the results are lifelong friendships. By engaging our network of civic leaders and organizations across the city, WE demonstrates the next generation of leaders of the power of partnerships in working 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 chart a path of their own.

STANDING WITH STUDENTS
Supporters, like you, are among Women Employed’s strongest partners. You answered the call to take action when it was needed the most, and that was the case when Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner vetoed a Student Loan bill of Rights. Women had two-thirds of the country’s 35 million students in debt, and that burden is chaotic. When leaders aren’t transparent with student borrowers, they are silent.

The Student Loan bill of Rights was basic protection for borrowers in Illinois. We kept the conversation. We worked quickly with the Illinois Attorney General’s office and partner organizations to push for an overriding veto, to no avail. In the final analysis, the issue was quelled by the student loan bubble and forgetful voters. So we turn our efforts to other states that struggle with student loan bills.

PRIDE IN PARTNERSHIPS
When WE helped secure a paid sick time law for workers in Chicago, we know it was important that it was inclusive—going beyond basics to rethink the way people 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. When a successful education campaign generates the interest of nearly 500 million Americans and an employee benefit marketplace of over $100 billion, WE helped craft a framework that allows non-discrimination and equity for the LGBTQ workers. The legislation was authored by working 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 one who loves you, right in your Chicago of overtime or work time from work for care is there guaranteed.

EQUITY FOR ALL OF US
Today’s political climate is characterized by an unbridled right extremism based on a person’s race, immigration status, sexual orientation, faith, or disability remains a daily reality. And these laws of discrimination often interfere with the challenges women face in the workplace to create additional obstacles to equal opportunity. This includes too many workplaces that are hostile, where systemic and unseen biases can affect our colleagues differentially. WE is reminding our colleagues to understand these intersections, recognizing that in our work, and intentionally listening to the voices of women who experience them. We need to continue to internal narratives of craft and boardroom narratives promoting racial equity and inclusion. We’re building strong connections with diverse partners. And we’re ensuring women of color are front and center as we develop this into the way we go and illustrate how much more value it adds for 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.

Women Employed celebrates its 45th anniversary in 2019 with a special program that highlights our successes since our founding in 1974. Our mission is to advance social justice gains by promoting fair and equal workplace protections for all workers. To learn more, please visit our website at womenemployed.org. And stay tuned for updates on our upcoming events and activities. Visit our website at womenemployed.org.
We salute all the corporations, foundations, organizations, and individuals who made a gift between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018, or visit womenemployed.org.

INVESTORS FOR CHANGE

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 Women Employed.

Thanks to our supporters who have included Women Employed in their wills. We are grateful for these investments in the future of our work.

FINANCIALS

In Honor of Anne Ladky

Paddy McNamara
Marjorie and Jeffrey Loeb
The Jastromb Family

In Honor of Betty Ross

Pamela Glass
Bill C. Stolte

In Honor of Lucy Holland

John Ranta
Mary and Howie Ranta

In Honor of Joan McGovern

Gary Zalefski, Ph.D.

In Honor of Vicki Curtis

Jean Hoffenkamp †
Alice Greenhouse
Rebecca Girvin-Argon

In Honor of Alice and Robert Altmeyer

Dr. Barbara Wilson

In Honor of Joan Berlin

Mindy Sircus

In Honor of Vicki Curtis

Laura Luckman Kelber
Cecilia Kukenis

In Honor of Mary Lou Damm

Sara Segal Loevy
Marilyn Lissner

In Honor of Mary Lou Damm

David Allen
Kathleen Almaney

In Honor of Susan Bragdon

Linda Myers
Lydia Bueschel and Karin and Tom Terry

In Honor of Kay Ginder

David Cutler

In Honor of Mary Lou Damm

Swati Mehta
Rebecca Bacon
Lisa Wolfe
Francesca Zucker
Monica Weed
Kay McCurdy
Ka y McCurdy

In Honor of Alice and
Meredith Weissman

Kim Morris-Johnson

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Lynn Watkins-Asiyanbi

In Honor of Alice and
Scott Block

Erik Stock

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Linda Beatty

In Honor of Bob Sperry and
Diana Sands

Ericka Powers

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Carol Sadtler

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Janet Schumacher

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Kathleen Dennis

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Davis Jenkins

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Bridget Gavaghan and Lili Farrokh-Siar

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Catherine Dennis

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Jill and Steve Gomberg*

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Molly and Matt Galo

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Sally and Vincent Anderson

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Robyn Wolfersnyder

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Kaitlyn Upton

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Vicki Curtis

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Elizabeth Cunneen

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Amanda Collins

Mindie Rees

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Sharon Terry

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Julie Hayes

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Nancy Hanson

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Timothy Hall

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Rachel Gross

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Joanna Greene

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Marilynn and Ron Grais

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Jill and Steve Gomberg*

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Michele Kurlander

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Judith Kossy

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Jill Iman

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Carol Switaj

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Lara W. Forman

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Erika Powers

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Nicole Linn

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Shana Shechtman

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Meghan Grober

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Andrea Lynn Acker

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Ben Wilson

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Heidi Groth

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Sharon Terry

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Kathleen Dennis

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Fern Josephs

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Harriet Harty

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Katharine Babcock

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Champions for Change

Jerry Newton

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

UNITE HERE Local 1

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Mujeres Latinas en Accion

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Loyola University Chicago

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Erie Neighborhood House

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Central States SER, Jobs Artisan

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Allstate Insurance Company

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

The Crown Family

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Chicagoland Workforce Leadership Initiative

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Anita Liu

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Paula Baseman

In Honor of Robert "Bob"

Kim Morris-Johnson

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Lynn McGovern

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Unrestricted cash reserves were utilized for the following purposes:

FINANCIALS

INCOME

FINANCIALS

17%

10%

5%

5%

20%

15%

10%

10%

10%

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90%

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