

# WIC FOR YOU



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

# DEAR FRIENDS



**Victory.** At Women Employed, when we celebrate a victory, it means more women are safe and respected at work. It means more mothers can take care of their kids when illness strikes, without fear of losing a job. More people working in low-paid jobs have better control and predictability over their schedules and access to the training and education they need to take the next step to something better. It means food on the table, bills paid, money in the bank to cover an emergency. It's peace of mind. Dignity.

This year, we have some huge victories to celebrate, and that's good news for us all. Our work led to advances for working women, and in this report, we dive into a few significant wins led by Women Employed and championed by supporters like you. We made a major advance in the fight for equal pay when we won a No Salary History amendment to the Illinois Equal Pay Act. We scored

a huge win for low-income students when we secured a \$50 million increase to need-based financial aid in Illinois. And our bridge and Career Foundations programs delivered by more than 12 partnering organizations and City Colleges of Chicago are helping low-skilled adults get on a pathway to economic sustainability.

Thank you for fueling our relentless support of equity. With you, we are making systemic change for women, families, and communities.

Be assured, we're not resting on our laurels. We will not stop advocating for change because there's so much more to be done to achieve equity for all. So, join with us as we continue the charge. Let's keep claiming those VICTORIES!

Cherita Ellens, CEO

**Thank you.** The victories outlined in this report could not happen without you—your commitment, your financial support, and your advocacy. Women Employed is turning your contributions into tangible changes that are removing barriers to economic equity and allowing more women to advance and achieve their aspirations.

Together, we are changing systems. And in doing so, we are improving the circumstances of women in Illinois and across the country. Our \$50 million financial aid victory means an additional 7,000 students will have access to college this year, and 130,000 more will get funding increases. Our work on bridge programs and Career Foundations helped almost 1,500 students gain the skills they need to succeed. The Fair Workweek legislation we championed in City Council means that women across the city of Chicago will now know their work schedules at least two weeks in advance—allowing

them to plan for child care and elder care and manage their households. Our equal pay victory will help ensure that millions of women are paid based upon their skills and experience, and not upon what they earned at some prior job. These wins take time, long-term vision, and determined, dogged pursuit. But when they finally come, our successes alter the possibilities available to women and their families.

That's the power of advocacy. That's the power of people speaking out for change.

Thank you for using your power to speak out with Women Employed. The positive impact of these victories—YOUR victories—will be felt for generations.

Lisa Pattis, Board Chair



# EQUITY



## Equal work demands equal pay.

These five words have been a cornerstone for Women Employed since our inception in 1973. This year, we stood proud alongside Governor Pritzker as he signed the **No Salary History** amendment to the Illinois Equal Pay Act. Under this law, millions of people will no

longer be required to disclose their current or past salary when they apply for a new position.

On average, women in Illinois earn just 79% of what men earn. The disparity is even wider for women who face the compounded effects of sexism and discrimination based on factors like race and ethnicity, gender identity and expression, age, disability, sexual orientation, and even motherhood. No Salary History is essential in narrowing

the wage gap. It prevents pay inequity from following women from job to job, lifting individual earnings in the process. Research shows that the best way to fight poverty is to improve the well-being of women, especially women of color. **Eliminating the wage gap will cut poverty rates in half for working women in Illinois.**

This hard-won victory was built on years of determined advocacy, fueled by support from people like you. We worked closely with partners and lawmakers to draft the bill and to stand strong against competing, less progressive versions. We mobilized thousands to educate their networks and influence their elected officials. And we rallied bipartisan support

in the Illinois General Assembly—not once, but three times, persisting even when our former governor vetoed the bill twice.

Our work has never been easy, but it's always been worth it. Together, we're creating lasting change that working women can count on.



When I decided to champion a No Salary History bill in Illinois, I knew I'd need a strong advocacy partner to get it done and that's exactly what I found in Women Employed. It is thanks to their leadership, determination, and strategic knowhow that we were able to make No Salary History the law of the land in Illinois."

State Representative Anna Moeller, co-sponsor of the No Salary History bill





# ACCESS



**It IS about the money.** For many women, education is a pathway out of poverty. In 2019, Women Employed led the charge to secure **\$50 million dollars in increased funding for need-based financial aid** through the Illinois Monetary Award Program (MAP). This much-needed funding will provide 130,000 students with larger grants and will allow almost 7,000 additional students to go to college this year alone.

Each year, thousands of people rely on MAP to afford their education. MAP is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis and each year thousands of students who are eligible do not receive the grant.

This victory opens the door for students like Linda, who has big dreams. Determined to build a better future for herself and her family, Linda excelled in academics and athletics throughout high school. But her scholarships and her family's contributions

weren't enough. Linda's college dreams would have fallen from reach if it weren't for the aid she receives from MAP.

To date, Women Employed has helped win tens of millions of dollars of vital student assistance, making college more accessible to more than 200,000 low-income students. We work in coalition to educate legislators about the importance of MAP in Illinois. We mobilize students and others to raise

their voices and share their stories. And we spur policymakers to address the crisis of college affordability and to make financial aid a top priority.

We work tirelessly as the leading advocate in Illinois for students like Linda to achieve their dreams. We want all working women to have access to the education and training they need to reach their goals and improve their economic security.



My future depends on my education, and it means so much that Women Employed is fighting for my success just as hard as my family is."

Linda Arroyo, MAP recipient



Women Employed is bringing a critical voice to policy conversations: the student's. I can't think of another group that has been as steadfastly committed, articulate, and effective in advocacy for MAP and for low-income, working students over the years."

Erik Zarnikow, Executive Director, Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC)

**2** out of **3 adult students** drop out because they lack financial support



# SUCCESS

**Research continues to show that a post-secondary degree increases earning potential.** But for low-paid women seeking to improve their opportunities through education, the traditional college system can be challenging. Women Employed champions career pathways programs that help these students succeed in reaching their goals, and this year, **we helped nearly 1,400 students take the next step to something better.**

Many college programs were not designed for adult students who are more likely to be working parents and who may need to build or brush up on academic skills. Career pathways meet these students where they are on their educational journey and put them on a solid track to build their skills, develop an academic plan, and access better jobs. Women Employed is a trusted expert on career pathways, and we focus on two types: Career Foundations and bridge programs.

**Bridge programs** prepare adults with limited academic or English skills to enter and succeed in college or training leading to employment in high-demand industries. Women Employed has partnered with City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) to design bridge programs and develop lesson plans in six industries; we also work with community organizations to deliver these programs.



For students who don't know what career field they want to enter, **Career Foundations** provides a missing link. Students learn about career options and local education opportunities, and create personalized plans to get to college or training. Women Employed and CCC developed the programs

and this year we partnered with 12 community-based organizations and CCC campuses to deliver Career Foundations.

Thanks to our leadership on career pathways, thousands in Chicagoland have the tools to successfully build a brighter future.

## Thank you to our community partners in this work:

- Albany Park Community Center
- Asian Human Services
- Centers for New Horizons
- Centro Romero
- Central States SER
- Cook County Health
- Erie Neighborhood House
- Goldie's Place
- Heartland Human Care Services
- Howard Area Community Center
- Innovations High School
- National Able Network
- North Lawndale Employment Network
- The YWCA Metropolitan Chicago

**The programs that Women Employed has helped create are making a big difference for students because they're showing them what they can do after this initial goal is met. It opens up the idea that this is a step that leads to the next credential and to a career."**

Michael Matos, Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition

**In my mind I just wanted to get my GED and get a job. I wasn't even thinking of continuing on to college. Then one thing led to another. The bridge program was an awesome first step of faith. It was the beginning of a journey that is still going."**

Madelin DeJesus, bridge student



# ADVOCACY

Grounded in our values. Backed by the support of people who believe that equity is—and always has been—worth fighting for. This year we pushed tenaciously to ensure that all women are treated fairly in the workplace, are able to attain the skills they need, and are respected for the work they do. **This is how WE pursue equity for ALL.**



**Advocated for Chicago's Women & Girls:** WE served on the Steering Committee for **Chicago City Clerk Anna Valencia's Status of Women and Girls Working Group**, shaping Chicago's "Pink New Deal"—a set of 20 recommendations to make Chicago a safer and more equitable city for women and girls. And we're already realizing the vision. One of the top four recommendations highlighted in the "Pink New Deal" is to support a fair and predictable scheduling ordinance, a policy that WE worked successfully to pass this year.

**Passed Chicago Fair Workweek:** WE have been a long-time leader in calling out unstable schedules as a barrier and exploring solutions. This year, WE worked with advocates, council members, the mayor, and the business community to uplift the voices of working people and **we won the Chicago Fair Workweek Ordinance.** This victory will benefit Chicago workers—especially women working in low-paid industries like retail, food service, hospitality, and healthcare—by restoring a stable and predictable workweek. The ordinance, which goes into effect on July 1, 2020, will require employers to provide two weeks advance notice of schedules, ten hours of rest between shifts, compensation for last-minute schedule changes, and an offer of extra hours to part-time employees before hiring additional help.

**WE's expertise and advocacy deeply influenced the set of recommendations that came out of the Status of Women and Girls Working Group. With their help, we can make Chicago the best city in the country for women and girls."**

Chicago City Clerk Anna Valencia

## Expanded Financial Aid Eligibility:

This year we leveraged our partnerships and expertise to **successfully advocate for the RISE Act.** This law will expand eligibility for the Illinois need-based financial aid grant to three groups of students who have historically been excluded: undocumented students, students working towards an associate's degree who have used up a portion of their financial aid for remedial classes, and transgender students who do not qualify for federal aid if they haven't registered for selective service in the U.S. military. Thanks to the RISE Act, Illinois will see more dreams realized.

## One Step Closer to an Illinois

**Fair Tax:** The lowest-income Illinoisans spend more than three times as much of their income on state and local taxes than the wealthy do. This year, Illinois legislators approved **a resolution WE supported that will bring a Fair Tax constitutional amendment to voters.** The proposed system would raise \$2 billion in revenue while providing a tax cut to 97 percent of Illinoisans.

## Reduce Remediation for College

**Students:** Each year, more than 60,000 Illinois students start college deemed "not college ready." These students are required to take a remediation (or developmental education) class—or sequences of classes—that uses their financial aid, does not count toward their credential or degree, and slows them down. Too many students get stuck and never to get their college degrees.

**This year, we built, fought for, and won a resolution, SJR 41,** that created a task force—on which Women Employed serves—to address the problems with Illinois' post-secondary remedial education system. We aim to improve how students are placed into remediation and develop new models to accelerate student learning and success. The SJR 41 Task Force will ensure every public college or university in the state has a plan for improving remediation, creating a clearer path through college for thousands of students in Illinois.

WE's Sarah Labadie presents on reducing remediation





# MOBILIZATION

**Building Tomorrow's Leaders:** WE coached ten college students and recent graduates through our annual **The Pattis Family Foundation Summer Leadership Program**. Each summer, we welcome a diverse group of interns to our office for an eight-week program that fosters their passion for activism and teaches them the ins and outs of non-profit work, gender equity advocacy, careers in public service, and leadership. One of the leaders' favorite memories was meeting Governor Pritzker and standing alongside him when he signed No Salary History into law.



2019  
Summer  
Leaders

**Educating Voters:** WE helped spearhead a coalition of 50+ organizations to host a **Women's Mayoral Forum** that engaged candidates on the issues that matter to working women.



Women's  
Mayoral Forum,  
February 2019

TAction #ChiMayor19 #WomensAgenda #CWTAalliance #MayoralForum #WomensMayorC

**Organizing In the Streets:** WE spoke truth to power, rallied support, and took the stage at dozens of events, including the **Chicago March to the Polls** where we organized hundreds of people to register to vote and make their voices heard. At every event and every opportunity, we centered the voices of low-paid working women of color who face the compounded effects of sexism and racism.



Chicago March  
to the Polls,  
October 2018

**Partnering to End Harassment:** On the one-year anniversary of #MeToo going viral, WE and a handful of national partners led a coalition of nearly 300 organizations nationwide to mobilize for **strengthened protections against sexual harassment and violence**. We co-wrote an open letter published in the *New York Times* demanding concrete advances in "20 states by 2020." In Illinois, **we made history by winning** one of the most sweeping employment-related civil rights reforms the state has seen in years—an **Anti-Workplace Harassment Bill** that will protect workers against all forms of harassment.

Where  
do we  
go from  
here?

On the one-year anniversary of the mass disclosures of millions of individuals against them by family members, bosses, coaches, priests, strangers and others. We collectively mobilized to seek justice, care, and support for survivors and began to articulate a new 'me too' Movement platform (www.metoovmvt.org) now resources for individuals, connect those who are committed to violence, and provide tools for tackling this work from the community. We are recommitting to challenge ourselves, our communities, our schools, our institutions and our governments to enact policies to safety from sexual violence and other forms of harassment and ensure who are in their care are free from harm. We pose the following challenges to our workplaces, our schools, our institutions and our governments—and commit ourselves to being partners in this change:

- **Federal and international policy reform.** Lawmakers worldwide, including the U.S. Congress, must advance comprehensive reform to address child sexual abuse and sexual violence and other forms of harassment at work, in schools, homes and communities.
- **20 states by 2020.** By 2020, 20 states must pass laws to strengthen protections against sexual violence.
- **100 school districts.** Every school district in the country must pass laws to strengthen protections against sexual violence.

Open letter  
published  
in the  
*New York Times*

“Because of the tireless advocacy of Women Employed, Illinois has become a national leader in workplace harassment reform, helping to set the bar for progress for the rest of the country.”

Emily Martin, National Women's Law Center

At least  
**two-thirds**  
of minimum  
wage workers  
in the United States  
are women.

**Rallying to Raise the Wage:** WE rallied support to **raise the Illinois minimum wage** from the current \$8.25/hour, where it's been stuck since 2010, to \$15/hour by 2025—and we won! The typical worker in Illinois who is paid less than \$15/hour is an adult woman over the age of 25, working full-time, and likely to be a parent. Increasing the minimum wage to at least \$15/hour is necessary to begin to ensure the economic security of women and families.





**CEO Cherita Ellens  
speaks at the 2019  
Chicago Equal Pay  
Day rally**

# THANK YOU

We salute all the corporations, foundations, organizations, and individuals who made a gift between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019. Due to space constraints, regretfully we cannot list the many people who donated less than \$250. Heartfelt thanks to our donors and partners for fueling this year's victories!

**ORGANIZATIONS**

**\$100,000+**

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Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance  
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Barbara and Robert Taylor

In Honor of Rita Campe  
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Deborah Winton\*

In Honor of Nancy and  
Rick Kreiter  
Bobbi and Kenny Brown\*  
Kathy and Richard Kaplan\*

In Honor of Anne Ladky  
Kay McCurdy

In Honor of Lori Lightfoot  
Farr & Farr, LLC

In Honor of Dhiru Majmudar  
Deepak Majmudar

In Honor of  
Sharmili Majmudar  
Christian Murphy

In Honor of Jen Mason and  
City Colleges of Chicago  
Maureen Fitzpatrick

In Honor of Susan  
Mendelsohn and Lydia  
Bueschel  
Monica Weed

In Honor of Lisa Pattis  
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Kate Maehr and  
Sam Pickering  
Barbara Pearlman

In Honor of Laurie Rompala  
Jesse Reeves

In Honor of  
Josephine Sarafa  
Anita Sarafa

In Honor of  
Songbird Academy  
Amy Waldon

In Honor of WE Staff  
Catherine Dennis  
Sylwia Sokolowski  
Emily Wessel Farr

In Honor of WE Staff,  
Board and Volunteers  
Sharmili Majmudar

In Honor of Elizabeth Turley  
Diana White

In Memory of  
Arlene O. Battisfore  
Lisa Battisfore

In Memory of Jack Edling  
Julie Conner

In Memory of  
Michael Fishman  
Barbara Fishman

In Memory of Peggy Hillman  
Herbert Kirst

In Memory of Jeanne Ladky  
Tina M. Erickson and  
Michael A. Krutsch

In Memory of  
Joan McGovern  
Lynn McGovern

In Memory of Mary Schulte  
Elizabeth Kenefick

BARRIER BREAKERS

\$45 monthly/\$540 annually  
Hannah Costigan-Cowles  
Carol Lynn Coughlin  
Catherine Dennis  
Mary Kay Devine and  
Jason Coulter  
Amy Fahey  
Bridget Gavaghan and  
David Lawson  
Sharmili Majmudar  
Mary L. Pierson  
Anjali Reddy  
Jesse Reeves  
John and Kelly Snider  
Dana Suskind and John List  
Barbara and Robert Taylor

PARTNERS IN PROGRESS  
\$20 monthly/\$240 annually

Anonymous  
Barbara S. Adelman  
Linda and Fred Ballard  
Brenda and Martin Becker\*  
Teresa Becvar  
Sarah Bornstein  
Debra Bragg  
Elizabeth M. Cunneen  
Ami Desai Das  
Andrew Davis  
Selina Doran  
Lili Farrokh-Siar  
Ashlee B. Gabrysch  
Christine George  
Timothy R. Harmon  
Mary Kay Heffernan  
Rima Imburgia  
Jacqueline Kirley  
Savana Latimore  
Dana Lieberman  
Laura Luckman Kelber  
Sharmili Majmudar  
Judi Male\*  
Ann O'Connor McCready  
Wendy McCullough  
Jennifer Park  
Dana M. Pearl  
Wendy Pollack  
Kathryn Robertson  
Kelly Robertson  
Laurie Rompala  
Mary Rychener  
Jill Sickie  
Sylwia Sokolowski  
Dianna Sparacino  
Ava George Stewart  
Lorelle Swader  
Abigail Sylvester  
Susanna Walker  
Emily Wessel Farr  
Angela Whiteside-Smith  
Jodie Winnett

“ I support WE because they do what I can’t  
do in my day-to-day work as an attorney:  
proactively make the workplace fairer for  
women workers and provide them with opportunities  
for advancement. If my legal work puts a band-aid  
on a problem, the work of WE prevents the injury  
from happening in the first place.”

Teresa Becvar, Partner in Progress



**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**<sup>®</sup> / 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**<sup>\*</sup> / 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.

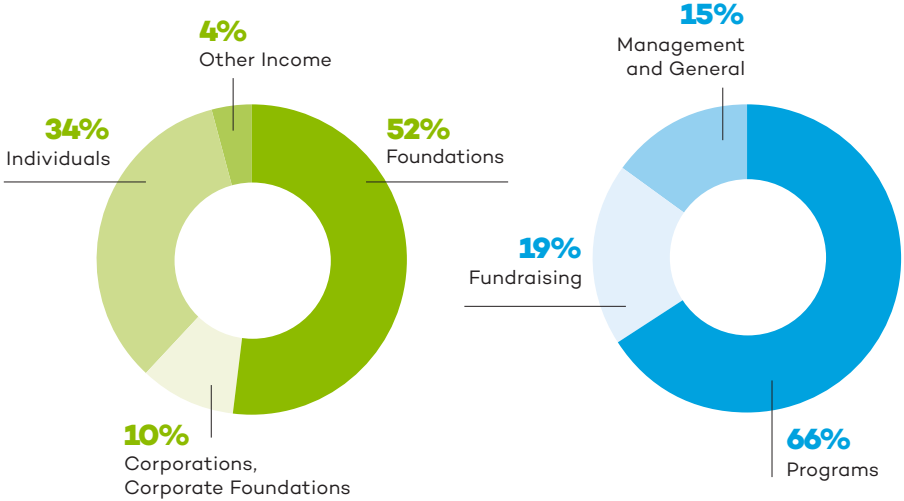
**GENERATIONS CIRCLE** / Thanks to our supporters who have included Women Employed in their estate plans, future generations of women will have meaningful opportunities to achieve their aspirations for themselves and their families.

**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 Ballard at 312.782.3902 ext. 245 or visit [womenemployed.org](http://womenemployed.org).



FINANCIALS



INCOME\*

Foundations	1,196,314
Corporations, Corporate Foundations	224,902
Individuals	773,879
Other Income	105,213
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,300,308</b>

EXPENSES

Programs	1,440,734
Fundraising	417,443
Management and General	321,794
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,179,971</b>

\*Unrestricted dollars

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Working Lunch in May 2019 brought together nearly 1,000 supporters and advocates to celebrate the Power of Women

