



Impact Austin Newsletter

October 2006

Dear Dina,

This newsletter includes the following articles:

*Message from the President *Spotlight on 2005 Grant Recipient, Communities In Schools, XY-Zone *Girls Giving Grants *110% Campaign Update *Impact Conference and CBS Evening News with Katie Couric *2006 Nonprofit Survey Results *Membership and Coffee Update *Dear Daisy *Join a Focus Area Committee

Message from the President

So, what happens when Colleen Willoughby comes to Austin? You listen, and take notes! She started her 'women giving together' initiative ten years ago as the Founder and President of the Washington Women's Foundation (WWF), which will have put more than \$6.6 million to work in the Seattle area by the end of 2006. During her keynote address at the Impact Conference, Colleen shared the history of the WWF and the growing importance of women in philanthropy. When she started in 1995, women didn't see themselves as philanthropists. That situation is systematically evaporating across the country. Women are finding their philanthropic voices and are now giving forward, by pooling financial resources, to make high-impact investments in their communities where they can see the results of their giving. And, the educational component of the grant review process ensures that every dollar given is an *educated* dollar. Colleen applauded our efforts and challenged us to consider ourselves formidable new assets in our communities as we continue to grow and mature. We can learn so much from the pioneering efforts of women like Colleen and



Impact Conference and CBS Evening News with Katie Couric



Lots of learning took place at the Impact Conference held in Austin in September. The photo above shows women interacting during one of several breakout sessions covering topics such as communications, board development and membership growth.

A CBS Evening News crew visited the conference to get a bird's eye view of women 'giving together'. During the week of Thanksgiving, Katie Couric will air a segment about the growing trend of women's giving circles across the country. CBS will feature Impact Austin and LifeWorks in the story. We will let you know when we have a firm air date...stay tuned!

Many thanks to former Impact Austin board member, Karen Frost, for creating this opportunity for us!

2006 Nonprofit Survey Results

Last month we shared the results of the 2006 member

Wendy Steele (founder of Impact 100), and I believe it's our responsibility to build upon the foundation they have laid. In fact, Impact 100 in Cincinnati will host the next conference to be held in 2007!

The Impact Conference was a huge learning opportunity with ideas being shared in all facets of our operations. It made me think about the possibilities. How many Impact organizations will spring up in the next five years? How far will this grassroots, word-of-mouth, joyful epidemic spread? How many women will participate across the country? That's what excites me—making philanthropy an everyday occurrence in everyday life with ordinary women who can make an extraordinary impact! Thanks for joining me on this journey!

"How wonderful it is we don't have to wait a single moment to change the world."

---Quote from Colleen Willoughby

Gratefully,
Rebecca Powers

survey. This month we are pleased to share the results of the survey we sent to the 131 nonprofit organizations that submitted proposals for our 2006 grants. Of the 131 initial Letters of Inquiry, 22 nonprofits were invited to complete a full grant application, ten of these received a site visit, and five finalists were chosen. Our members voted and three non-profit organizations – Children's Wellness Center, EmanciPet, and Literacy Austin – each received grants of \$108,000.

Here's a summary of what we learned:

- Barry Silverberg's ACC Listserv continues to be the top source for information about the grant opportunity. The second most common source was the media, an Impact Austin member, or another nonprofit. The internet was cited as the primary channel through which nonprofits learn about grant opportunities in general.
- 97% of the respondents said they had enough information to understand Impact Austin's grant process. The most common request for more information was regarding additional insight into our evaluation and decision-making criteria.
- 92% of the nonprofits who did not receive a site visit and 100% of the nonprofits who did receive a site visit felt our overall process to be reasonable. The areas of concern were: the challenge of competing between focus areas until such time as Impact Austin can fund grants in all five categories; the complexity of the process, in particular for smaller nonprofits; and the organization's willingness to fund a grass roots nonprofit. (Editorial comment: Impact Austin will consider any program or project from any size organization as long as it meets our guidelines).
- 93% of the applicants preferred the online LOI submission process. We plan to use this process again in 2007 with some additional constraints on the amount of information requested and submitted.
- Based on written comments, the organizations receiving site visits felt the Impact Austin teams were well-prepared and efficient, and characterized their experience as a good one. One of the participants again asked for feedback on how the committee ultimately made the decision between them and the other candidate.
- 70% of the respondents had no suggestions for improving the grant process. Of those who provided a written suggestion, the most common were: increase interaction/feedback through the process and after finalists are chosen; simplify the applications and make sure all information requested is necessary for decision-making; give more advance notice on deadlines, and give more time to prepare submissions. (Editorial comment: Impact Austin will continue to seek ways to streamline and simplify our application while retaining our focus on educating women in philanthropy. We are also evaluating several requests to provide feedback to those organizations whose applications are declined).
- 61% of the respondents will apply again if they have a program or project that fits within our guidelines. The most common feedback from those who are unsure was whether the odds of receiving the grant justified the effort required.

Impact Austin values learning in all facets of our organization. Thanks again for sharing your thoughts so that we can continue to grow in a way that benefits all

Spotlight on 2005 Recipient: Communities In Schools, XY-Zone



The XY-Zone Male Involvement Project is back for another year at both Crockett and Lanier High Schools, the two schools funded by the Impact Austin grant.

Results for the past school year highlight the difference the XY-Zone has made in the lives of young men who were part of the program. Several noteworthy statistics were reported in the annual program evaluation of the 308 young men who participated. Of these students:

- 84% improved in grades, attendance, or behavior
- 97% stayed in school
- 69% stopped or reduced at least one risk-taking behavior
- 81% demonstrated increases in developmental assets

Pre- and post-program surveys were completed by the students with the following changes noted. Participants were significantly more likely to do the following:

- "Do things that help my community, like volunteering."
- Report that they were "good at planning ahead and making decisions."
- Report that they believed "that my life has purpose" after participation in the program.

The impact of the program was made plain during a recent visit to Lanier High School by the program staff. One of the young men who was in XY-Zone last year stated: "Sometimes, it's like you're trapped in a box and you can't get out. The door may be there but you don't have the key. Mr. Cecilio is like the key master. He helps you unlock the door." Because of this student's comments, Mr. Cecilio Balderrama, the caseworker at Lanier High School, has been officially designated the Key Master of the XY-Zone.

The Communities In Schools staff has been working diligently to raise funds for the XY-Zone. CIS is seeking donations to help fund the community service projects and field trips that allow the young men in the program to make a huge difference in the community. To make an online tax-deductible donation or volunteer your time, click on CIS Austin below. Specify that the funds be directed to the XY-Zone.

[CIS Austin](#)

Girls Giving Grants Update

parties.

Representative Quotes

- "I feel like Impact Austin does a great job educating and training its members. Your grant process is definitely comprehensive but a gift of \$100K+ certainly warrants that. Your diligence shows the community that the project is worthwhile and significant."
- "Impact Austin is an organization that continues to learn and improve. Perhaps your greatest contribution will be in educating another generation in the art of philanthropy."
- "I was cautious at first about the motives of the members. I am happy to say that everyone I have dealt with has been personable, professional and "real". It's a pleasure to be associated with such a passionate group."

Membership and Coffee Update



Currently, we have 310 member commitments...on our way to reaching our goal of 400+ members by December 31. A special thank you to those who have hosted coffees like Karen Quinlan and Emily O'Connell did (as shown above). Keep spreading the word and inviting your friends to learn more about Impact Austin. Check the calendar on our website for upcoming coffees!

A special thanks to Grape Vine Market for hosting a coffee in October. Please invite a friend to attend our final Grape Vine Market Coffee on Thursday, November 30, at 6:30pm. Grape Vine Market graciously provides several unique wines and a variety of delicious appetizers.

Please contact Dawn Skinner if you have any questions. dskinner@impact-austin.org



As of Sunday, October 7, the girls finished grant review process training and financial training--both integral to the process of successfully choosing a worthy grant recipient. The girls in the photo above are hard at work learning how to evaluate grant applications. Also, Application Review Committee leaders have been chosen. The Chairs are: Brittany Burch, Miriam Kalk and Claire Powers. The Vice-Chairs are: Sarah Daly, Lauren Taylor and Oriana Wright. The three committees have begun reviewing grant applications from the following 13 nonprofit organizations:

- Pfriends Pfor Pflugerville's Pfuture
- Rude Mechanicals
- Family Crisis Center
- Reading is Fundamental of Austin
- Austin Public Library Foundation
- Austin Voices for Education and Youth
- Sustainable Food Center
- Regional Unit of Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic of Texas
- Any Baby Can Child and Family Resource Center
- Southwest Key Program, Inc.
- Youth InterACTIVE
- Center for Child Protection
- EmanciPet, Inc.

Our goal is to conduct site visits of three finalists in April, 2007.

On Thursday, September 28, KEYE aired a story about Girls Giving Grants! Claire Powers and Oriana Wright were interviewed. Check out the story below.

Stay tuned for more highlights of our adventures in grant-making. For more information on Girls Giving Grants, please contact Lisa Lyons at llyons@girlsgivinggrants.org

[KEYE Story](#)

110% Campaign Update

Dear Daisy,

I know Impact Austin has held member social events in the past. Will these continue? If not, is there a way to meet other members if I'm not participating on a Focus Area Committee?

Signed, Social Butterfly

Dear Social Butterfly,

Yes, we will continue to have events for our members to attend; however, in the future the emphasis will be on member education. We are working to find experts in our region who understand the most pressing local issues in our five focus areas. We will invite them to share their knowledge by giving presentations to our general membership. We invite every Impact Austin member to attend these educational sessions. We will advise you of specific offerings in future newsletters.

Regards,
Daisy

Join a Focus Area Committee

Are you interested in learning about the grant giving process? Do you want to know more about the various nonprofits serving the needs of the Austin community? Just want to get involved? Consider joining one of the Focus Area Committees (FACs) responsible for reviewing Impact Austin grant applications and choosing the finalists our members vote on to receive our funding.

Participation on an FAC requires a time commitment of approximately 35-40 hours beginning in mid-January and continuing through mid-May, including 6-8 meetings and 2 site visits. While there is no obligation to serve on a committee, many of Impact Austin's members find this to be a fun learning experience.

- SIGN-UP DEADLINE: December 15th
- TRAINING CLASSES: January 11th, 13th or 18th

If you are interested in serving on an FAC in 2007, please click on "Join Here" below.

[Join Here](#)



In true Impact Austin fashion, our members have been very generous in support of the 110% campaign. To date, we have collected \$11,700 with an additional \$11,150 pledged by 12/31/06. These additional funds, which are donated voluntarily by members over and above their \$1000 membership contributions, are used to help defray ongoing administrative costs. We are thankful for your support and look forward to a successful conclusion of this year's campaign!

Dina Mavridis, Director of Marketing Communications
Impact Austin

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