



## About Stepping Stones

Stepping Stones, Washington Area Women's Foundation's premier grantmaking program, helps move low-income women and girls in the region out of poverty and onto a path of economic security. The target population includes women and girls living under 200 percent of the federal poverty level (currently \$40,320 for a family of three).

The initiative's strategies are based on the needs highlighted in the Foundation's groundbreaking research, with four focus areas:

-  **Asset Building**
-  **Workforce Development**
-  **Early Care and Education**
-  **Two-Generation Strategies**

## Accomplishments

Since its launch in 2005, Stepping Stones has:

- Invested nearly \$10 million in over 70 community-based organizations.

- Helped over 16,000 women increase their income and assets by \$53 million through higher wages, decreased debt, tax credits, increased savings and growing equity related to homeownership.
- Launched the Early Care and Education Funders Collaborative in 2008, through which corporate and foundation funders invest to increase access to, and the quality of, early care and education for low-income families.
- In 2013, launched an innovative two-generation strategy focused on middle school aged girls and their female caregivers. This initiative targets an underserved population and seeks to address intergenerational poverty.
- The latest round of Stepping Stones grants, made in December 2016 totaled \$825,000, are projected to touch the lives of more than 3,000 women and girls, and will enable women to increase their collective incomes and assets by about \$7.5 million in 2017.

Below are the organizations that received Stepping Stones funds for 2017 and descriptions of the specific projects being supported:

**Academy of Hope (\$30,000)** To support adult basic education and workforce development services for low-income women.

**Capital Area Asset Builders (\$40,000)** To support low-income women in business planning and development activities to achieve small business ownership.

**Community Tax Aid (\$35,000)** To help low-income women increase assets by reducing tax liabilities, accessing tax credits, and avoiding predatory products.

**DC Appleseed (\$50,000)** To partner with the DC Fiscal Policy Institute to advocate for high-quality child care for low-income families in the District of Columbia, building upon the findings of the organizations' cost study on quality child care.

**Doorways for Women and Families (\$50,000)** To support the intensive Financial Independence Track (FIT) for women experiencing homelessness and/or domestic violence. The program includes one-on-one financial education and employment counseling.

**Fairfax Futures (\$30,000)** To improve the quality of the family child care workforce in Fairfax County.

**Goodwill of Greater Washington (\$45,000)** To support job training and placement services for low-income women in the region.

**Greater Washington Workforce Development Collaborative (\$15,000)** To participate in the Greater Washington Workforce Development Collaborative and to strengthen regional workforce development efforts.

**La Cocina, VA (\$15,000)** To support workforce development services for 30 low-income immigrant women in the region.

**Montgomery Moving Forward (\$25,000)** To advocate for high-quality early care and education for low-income families in Montgomery County.

**Northern Virginia Community College Educational Foundation (\$40,000)** To support the educational attainment of low-income mothers of young children through the College Pathways Initiative's two-generation work.

**Northern Virginia Family Service (\$50,000)** To support the Training Futures program, which will help low-income women complete education and training, including college credits and internship experience, and secure entry-level

jobs with opportunities for advancement.

**Prince George's Child Resource Center (\$50,000)** To support Joining Voices, an advocacy project in Prince George's County that empowers parents and child care providers to articulate the importance of quality child care for family stability, school readiness and economic growth.

**Prince George's Community College Foundation (\$40,000)** To support the Women's Academic Success Advisory Committee to remove institutional barriers to college success for low-income women.

**Quality Collaborative (\$20,000)** To support a professional development pilot for pre-K teachers in the City of Alexandria. Evaluation will document the impact of different professional development models on teachers at different levels of development and proficiency.

**So Others Might Eat (SOME) (\$45,000)** To support job training, basic education, and career development for low-income women through the Center for Employment Training.

**The Training Source (\$30,000)** To support job training and supportive services for low-income women in Prince George's County, preparing them to launch careers in industries that offer family-sustaining wages and career pathways.

**Voices for Virginia's Children (\$30,000)** To promote public policies and investments that ensure all children in Northern Virginia, particularly those who are disadvantaged, enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

**Washington Region Early Care and Education Workforce Network (\$120,000)** To map competency-based career pathways for child care workers that are linked to quality and compensation and can be used across the region.

**Year Up National Capital Region (\$35,000)** To support young women, ages 18-24, with education and workforce development training, including up to 15 college credits, job skills development, and a six-month internship.

**YWCA of the National Capital Area (\$30,000)** To support the EMPOWER Generations program by providing dual-generation academic and life skills support for low-income girls and their female caregivers.