

2021 South Side Giving Circle Awards

A Long Walk Home	Freedom from Violence	Recommendation: \$10,000
<p>Project Name: General Operating Support</p> <p>Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds: A Long Walk Home, a national, Chicago-based art organization that advocates for racial and gender equity and an end to violence against all women and girls. Founded by Black feminist artists and sisters, Salamishah Tillet and Scheherazade Tillet in 2003, ALWH is an expert leader in the movement to end domestic violence and sexual violence in black communities. ALWH evolved out of the creation of the Story of Rape Survivor performance produced in 1998 — more than 20 years before the #MeToo movement — to document Salamishah’s journey after she was raped in college and provide rare insight into the arc of healing on which many survivors of color embark.</p> <p>ALWH is committed to increasing resources and opportunities for girls and young women in our society who are most vulnerable to—and affected by—violence: low-income people, Black girls and women, those with disabilities, and gender-expansive people of color. A Long Walk Home’s Girl/Friends is a leadership institute launched by A Long Walk Home that empowers Black girls and young women in Chicago to find their voices and advocate for justice in their schools, neighborhoods, and city as a whole. Created as a safety net for adolescent girls who live at the intersection of racial and gender oppression, Girl/Friends has been at the forefront of Chicago’s most recent campaigns to end violence against girls and young women—including sexual and domestic violence, crimes against queer, non-binary, or gender non-conforming youth, gun violence, and police brutality</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More Black girls and young women in Chicago (ages 12 - 17) experience growth, healing, and liberation through participation in our projects, programs (training), and externally-facing organizing and advocacy work. We are able to evaluate these short- to mid-term outcomes through conversations with our Girl/Friends, experiencing their life changes alongside them, and witnessing the impact they have on others. 2. More families, organizations, and institutions in Chicago join the movement against gender-based violence. And along the way, center artists and cultural work inside of the movements for justice. We seek to accomplish these goals in the mid-to long- term in various ways, including: Building Coalitions with groups that otherwise would not center Black girls or issues of gender-based violence (see an example of “Protect Black Girls” in the section about 2021 accomplishments) Influencing and educating institutions, including schools, museums, public agencies, and funders through direct training, collaborative projects, and ongoing engagement (e.g. MCA and SAIC) Shifting narrative by presenting stories and images that center the experience of Black Girls and young women, making individual experiences connect to broader social trends and universal needs for healing, wellness and power. And normalizing accountability. 3. There will be more resources for racial and gender justice work. We seek to accomplish these goals in the mid-to long- term in various ways, including: Influencing Institutional philanthropy through speaking engagements, participating on advisory boards (public sector, private sector, and academic), and in pooled funds. 		

Girls Like Me Project	Freedom from Violence	Recommendation: \$10,000
<p>Project Name: Digital Innovative Voices of Advocacy Sisters</p>		

Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds:

The GLMPI methodology implements the 3E approach to our programming; the focus is on Exposure, Examination, and Engagement. Our programming is executed via workshops, girl circles, excursions, film screenings. We infuse social-emotional support and women's history into all facets of our curriculum, with an intentional focus on cultural relevancy and response for social detriments. Learning from the COVID-19 survey responses we now offer hybrid programming, provide mutual aid including feminine hygiene products and groceries to our participants and their family members. Perhaps the greatest shift in our approach is to align health priorities with our program outcomes. Girls have grown their own garden for healing crops and chickens. COVID taught us the importance of emphasizing self-reliance.

GLMPI is expanding our DIVAS in the City Storytelling program which focuses on the maintenance of our mobile app, as well as the production of our girl-led podcast and talk show. Our goal is to scale this program so that we establish intern partnerships with companies. Funds will also be used to support our strategic plan which includes fundraising as well as curriculum development and evaluation. With support from DePaul graduate students, we have already created a fundraising tool for our Chicago Girl podcast.

Gyrls In The HOOD Foundation	Health	Recommendation: \$10,000
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Project Name: General Operating Support

Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds:

Our mission is to improve reproductive health outcomes amongst adolescent females residing in urban areas considered "hood" and to redefine negative stereotypes that are placed on gyrls based on their zip codes. We take pride in meeting the basic needs of adolescent gyrls in Chicago. Degrees B4 Diapers is our signature program and is a three month course that provides free comprehensive, medically accurate, age appropriate sexual education, to adolescent gyrls in addition to post secondary guidance. Upon completion gyrls are empowered to make informed and responsible choices about their health and higher learning pursuits.

The She's So H.O.O.D Initiative recognizes and rewards teen gyrls who are excelling despite their circumstances. This program used to be a traditional award show but when COVID hit the scene we were focrcce to pivot. Now we ask the community to nominate gyrls based on our critiera. Once selected we suprise the young lady with a certificate of acheivement, cash prize, shoes, and more goodies. It's our way of saying we see you and we are proud.

The H.O.O.D Kit program is very popular and provides teen gyrls with a bundle of hygiene supplies, period products, and beauty items. We also include masks, sanitizer, and food gift cards when funding allows.

H.O.O.D House is our newest program. It is a transitional residence for young ladies experiencing homelessness. Right now we have two ladies (19) and (20) who are occupying the unit for one year without the burden of rent and bills. They receive wraparound services from community partners on their path to self sufficiency.

As you can tell from our organization description, we do a lot of work in the trenches. In addition to the programs and services provided to gyrls in the city we also have gyrls that we serve in Chicago Heights, South Holland and Ford Heights. It is not uncommon for us to visit multiple homes, schools, and centers all in one day. We are submitting the proposal to ask for general operating support to purchase an organization vehicle. A designated vehicle would allow us to improve our outreach services, especially the following.

- Transport gyrls to doctor appointments
- Deliver H.O.O.D Kits to more schools and families in need.
- Resume our condoms and cupcake street outreach services
- Recruitment of new gyrls.

Our current vehicle is on it's last leg. We are in desperate need of an reliable organization vehicle.

Ladies of Virtue	Economic Security	Recommendation: \$10,000
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Project Name: General Operating Support

Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds:
LOV programming and participants were greatly impacted by the pandemic. We had to quickly pivot to online program delivery. Although the shift to virtual programming has been challenging for everyone, we already can see collateral benefits. The quick pivot builds resiliency (a key indicator of success for Black female C-level executives according to the Harvard Business Review) and project management skills among our participants, and the reliance on technology ensures they are proficient with the technology that most will need in their future education and jobs.

LOV participants enter programming with talent, drive, and interest, but major barriers can prevent them from meeting their potential. All are Black girls, facing the impacts of systemic racism, exacerbated by living in some of Chicago’s highest-poverty communities. For example, many live in Greater Grand Crossing, with a median income of \$27,000 (Chicago’s is \$55,000); 83% of participants qualify for free or reduced lunch. And, while 38% of Chicagoans hold a college degree, only 17% of residents of the neighborhoods where our girls live have degrees.

LOV matches girls with mentors and prepares them for leadership through character development, career readiness, and civic engagement. LOV offers several options, including our signature Power to the Professional career readiness program, STEMuTiful, Saturday Institute, and more. After high school, typically 80% continue with mentoring through our LOV for Life Alumni Program, which provides workshops on building generational wealth and supports alumni through their post-secondary education. Power to the Professional prepares young, low-income Black women to become successful professionals with our 9-month evidence-based career and civic engagement curriculum, which incorporates the Illinois Social Emotional Learning Standards and 21st Century Skills. It includes career exploration, summer youth employment, STEM courses, public speaking and interviewing skills, project management, financial literacy, dress for success, and resume development.

LOV has integrated mental health supports into all our programming and is expanding these supports to offer a consistent menu of options that include 8 weeks of weekly small group counseling provided in 5 annual sessions and 5 topic-specific workshops for 100 girls; one-on-one counseling for girls; monthly workshops for 50 parents; and training for 50 LOV mentors to recognize signs of trauma and depression and how to respond to girls’ mental health and social-emotional needs.

Furthermore, LOV leadership works to address systemic issues that harm Black women and girls and hinder their ability to meet their full potential through participation in networks and strategy groups such as Greater Bronzeville Network, City Clerk Valencia’s Chicago Status of Women and Girls Working Group, Thrive Chicago Opportunity Youth Working Group, and Coalition on Urban Girls.

Polished Pebbles	Economic Security	Recommendation: \$10,000
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Project Name: Mommy and Me Entrepreneurship Program

Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds:
Mission: Create communication competencies that ensure the employability of young women in the future workplace. We fulfill our mission primarily via our Polished Pebbles Girls Mentoring Program (PP) , through

which we replace the school-to-prison pipeline with a school-to-career pipeline for low-income African American and Latina girls.

We seek support for our Mommy and Me entrepreneurship program. For the past four years, we have grown this program from a “Friday Hangout” that provided a safe space for girls and their mothers in the summer to, in response to their vision for the program, a year-round program that teaches the necessary skills to start a business, provides technical assistance, and help mothers and daughters raise seed money. The program is based in Donoghue School, in Bronzeville, at the request of our partners Bright Star and CHA, combining our in school PP program with out of school time Mommy and Me programming.

Mommy and Me also includes motivated mothers and daughters from other PP schools on the South Side. Mothers and their daughters create a business plan based on their interests with the support of our partners, focused on (a) mentoring and career networking for mothers, (b) social emotional learning/violence prevention for girls/conflict resolution strategies for mothers, (c) soft/21st Century skills development, and (d) entrepreneurship and business development. Each session includes a mother and daughter SEL lesson, mentoring by women from a variety of careers, focused on life choices, opportunities, and career ladders, and networking with these mentors for mothers and daughters in a safe, trusted space, exposing and connecting them to career paths outside their disinvested communities. Will provide moms the opportunity to expand their personal and professional networks with representatives (AARP, BCBSI, LIFT, etc) of partner organizations and guests who encourage vulnerability and hold similar values and beliefs. This year will continue on all aforementioned skills but will also include a focus on entrepreneurship allowing local female entrepreneurs to serve as guest speakers highlighting their pathways to business ownership, partners will include Bronzeville Mid South Business Area Resource. Blue Cross Blue Shield will provide their entrepreneurship bootcamp.

At the end of the summer, participants present business plans in a Shark Tank style competition and receive feedback from coaches, mentors, and entrepreneurs. After incorporating this feedback, participants (some mothers, some daughters, some pairs) receive seed funds and launch their business with continued technical assistance, coaching, and mentoring. Last year, participants launched successful nail, dog-walking, video production, and photography businesses.

Mommy and Me Annual Conference: The annual program cycle begins in March with a city-wide conference focusing on financial planning, parent engagement in school, mothers supporting their daughters academically, resume and interview skills, daughter-mother relationships, and career connections for mothers and similar workshops to deepen mother/daughter relationships, improve economic opportunities for mothers, and prepare girls for their college and career choices ahead.

Sisters Network Chicago Chapter	Health	Recommendation: \$6,000
<p>Project Name: General Operating Support</p> <p>Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds: As a result of ongoing health disparities within the Black Community, Sisters Network Chicago Chapter maintains a sobering zeal for equity and education surrounding the impact of Breast Cancer survivorship in Metropolitan Chicago. Since 2000, SNCC has maintained its commitment to service by upholding three principles: to provide a strong support base and emotional safe haven for women diagnosed with breast cancer, to emphasize the importance of early detection through routine screenings within local communities, and lastly, to provide education and advocacy for the underserved.</p> <p>SNCC has committed our support to address the immediate and prospective needs of Black Women impacted by breast cancer. The mandate for proper access to quality care has propelled us to provide education and outreach to low-income minority women across Chicagoland. The Breast Cancer Assistance Program (BCAP) was created to cover expenses that are typically excluded from other local and national</p>		

resources such as surgery, chemotherapy and/or radiation. BCAP supports the provision of medical prosthetics including bras and lymphedema sleeves, prescription co-pays, utilities, and rent/mortgage assistance among others.

Lastly, SNCC hosts the Gift of Life Black Walk annually to increase local access to culturally sensitive breast cancer education. The chapter has hosted more than 100 workshops, health fairs, and events for underserved communities.

2021 South Side Giving Circle Leadership Awards

Camesha Jones, Sista Afya Community Mental Wellness, \$2,000

Erin Barnett, Black Girls Dance, \$2,000

Brianna Lawrence, Coalition on Urban Girls, \$2,000