



new hampshire
WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

Media Release

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**Women's Fund of NH and the NH Women's Initiative Create the
New Hampshire Women's Foundation**

Announcement made during the 2014 Women Building Community Luncheon

October 16, 2014 – Manchester, NH, Today, the Women's Fund of NH and the NH Women's Initiative formally announced their intent to join forces to create the New Hampshire Women's Foundation.

The announcement was made to a sold-out audience of 600 leaders from across NH who attended the 10th annual Women Building Community Luncheon at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester, featuring keynote speaker and filmmaker Jennifer Siebel Newsom.

According to Marianne Jones, Executive Director, Women's Fund of NH, "After nearly two years of exploring the opportunities for a partnership, it was a unanimous decision across both, the boards of the Women's Fund and the NH Women's Initiative to join forces to create the NH Women's Foundation."

Jones added, "The collaboration to create the NH Women's Foundation combines nearly 100 years of shared history focused on advocating for women and girls in NH." She explained that the NH Women's Initiative was created in 2012 with the consolidation of three NH organizations that included, the Commission on the Status of Women (1969), the Women's Lobby and Alliance (1980), and the Women's Policy Institute (2002).

The mission of the NH Women's Foundation is to promote opportunity and equality for women and girls in NH through research, education, philanthropy, and advocacy. The vision of the organization is to seek social, political, and economic gender equality in the state of New Hampshire.

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Mary Johanna Brown, Board Chairperson of the NH Women's Initiative, explained the rationale for the need to create a single organization to focus on advancing gender equality in the Granite State. She said, "We are at a critical juncture with the status of women and girls in our state, the country and across the globe. Time, change, and progress have all led to the advancement of gender equality, yet we find that there is still more work that needs to be done."

Brown added, "Despite the progress that we've made, there are still many obstacles to overcome. In New Hampshire, the income of women still lags significantly behind that of their male counterparts. Additionally, a "granite-ceiling" prevents representation of women in key leadership areas, even with recent high-profile accomplishments such as NH having the first all-female delegation in the US Congress."



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Both Brown and Jones expressed optimism about the partnership between their organizations to build a single, state-wide organization focused on women and girls. Focusing on the theme of “better together”, the creation of the NH Women’s Foundation will build the leadership required to meet the challenges faced in the state, providing a bold, empowered vision for the future. Combining the organizational strengths of the Women’s Fund and NH Women’s Initiative will create greater efficiency, enable progress on an ambitious, yet focused agenda, and establish a new path for gender equality for future generations.

“The response at the Women Building Community Luncheon to today’s news was overwhelmingly positive and enthusiastic,” said Brown. An important part of the announcement included the immediate commitment from businesses and individuals from across the state

According to Brown, “Pax World Funds of Portsmouth was the lead sponsor for today’s Women Building Community event. The company is also making a significant investment to support the work of the NH Women’s Foundation over the next few years.

Additionally, a ‘Fund the Future 2014 Challenge’ was announced by Jo Lamprey of North Hampton, NH.” This challenge will match up to \$25,000 in donations made to the New Hampshire Women’s Foundation by December 31, 2014.

Inspired by this lead gift, an additional challenge was made by Sue and Bob Thoresen of Portsmouth, NH to match contributions to fund the endowment of the NH Women’s Foundation through December 31, 2014. Together, these funding challenges offer both, short-term operational support, and long-term endowment support for the new organization.

To learn more about the announcement of the New Hampshire Women’s Foundation and the other announcements made during today’s Women Building Community Luncheon, please visit www.nhwomensfoundation.org

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About the New Hampshire Women’s Foundation

With nearly 100 years of shared history, the New Hampshire Women’s Foundation will be established by the end of 2014. The organization is the result of a recent partnership between the Women’s Fund of NH and the NH Women’s Initiative. The mission of the NH Women’s Foundation is to promote opportunity and equality for women and girls in NH through research, education, philanthropy, and advocacy. To learn more about the organization, visit www.nhwomensfoundation.org (CONFIRM URL)

About the Women’s Fund of New Hampshire

The Women’s Fund of New Hampshire is a statewide foundation dedicated to encouraging philanthropy for and among women and girls; advancing the lives of women and girls through research, policy, advocacy and social change grant making; and educating the community about the potential of women and girls. Since 1998, the Women’s Fund has invested over \$1million throughout NH. We know when women and girls succeed, entire communities prosper. To learn more about the Women’s Fund, visit www.wfnh.org.

About the New Hampshire Women’s Initiative

The New Hampshire Women’s Initiative (NHWI) was formed in 2012 through the merger of three partnering organizations: The Commission on the Status of Women, the Women’s Lobby and Alliance, and the Women’s Policy Institute. The NHWI is a 501c3 non-profit organization whose mission is to advance social, economic and political opportunity and equality for women in New Hampshire. For more information, visit <http://nhwi.org>.