



WISH

Women Investing in Shepherd

2020 IMPACT REPORT

The Importance and Power of Our Collective Giving

The isolation brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic inspired the WISH advisory team to be creative in sharing the WISH story with not only potential members but also with current WISH supporters. This brainstorming brought about the creation of an infographic that showcases how our members have made our high impact grants possible, and...wow! The end result is an amazing comprehensive picture of just how powerful our grants have been since we began giving them in 2015.

Your support as a WISH member is invaluable. Without your help, we would not have been able to make such a difference in the lives of our community—both at Shepherd University and

in the tri-state grant region. Now more than ever, that continued support is vital. Many of our local nonprofits have struggled to just keep day-to-day operations afloat in the midst of COVID-19, and our Shepherd University partners are not only navigating a world of virtual learning and restricted in-person teaching, but many Shepherd students are trying to pay for an education after being unemployed during the pandemic.

Thank you once again for your support of WISH, and thank you for continuing to make such a huge difference in the lives of our Shepherd students, faculty, staff, and in our community at large.

Members Make Grants Possible

**MADE
POSSIBLE BY
YOU**

283 members in 2019

584

patients served with total of 1,752 wounds in 2019 due to wound care certification for initial six nurses (Wound Care Initiative, Panhandle Home Health 2015)

150



children in Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan counties receiving one-on-one or group mentoring from Shepherd University and other area college students (Boys and Girls Club of Eastern Panhandle 2017)

157%

increase in domestic violence survivors and human trafficking clients served from 2015-2019 (Eastern Panhandle Empowerment Center 2016)

\$30,750

used as a down payment on the purchase of a sober-living house for women in addiction outpatient recovery program (Ashley House 2019)

\$617,000

in **WISH** Grants since 2015

500

girls participated in innovative annual conference from 2015-2019 geared toward the encouragement of women in STEM fields (Seeding Your Future Initiative 2015)

72%

increase from 2018 of children served who have active abuse and neglect cases in court (CASA of Eastern the Panhandle 2018)

27

rising 9th graders in Appalachian region able to attend 2017 Washington Gateway Academy designed to encourage the pursuit of higher education (Washington Gateway Academy 2016)



2

distinct programs that support veterans and provide veteran services to Shepherd students (Veteran Transition and Support Initiative 2017 and Tabler Farm Initiative 2018)

235

average enrollment for domestic abuse education classes (2017-2019) and three-year recidivism rate

of **12%** (Community Alternatives to Violence 2017)

\$108,875

to support capital projects in areas of equine therapy for disabled students, environmental science enhancements, historic preservation, and health sciences (Horses with Hearts 2016, Tabler Farm Initiative 2018, Catherine Weltzheimer House Restoration 2018, and Health Promotion Expansion 2019)

**19
32**

new beds
new mattresses purchased

to support homeless women and children in Berkeley and Jefferson counties (Bethany House 2019)

\$20,625

to develop two new robotics classes at Shepherd University and fund competitive teams at robotics competitions both nationally and internationally (Developing a Robotics Curriculum 2016)

WISH 20/20:

A Message from Grant Committee Chair Bonnie Brannon '63

Bonnie Brannon '63 (l.) pictured with member Eileen Davis at the 2019 WISH Grant Award Ceremony

When WISH members looked ahead in March to the deliberations for another exciting grant year, they probably never dreamed what the distant, intervening months would bring. The grant committee, with leadership from Shepherd University Foundation Executive Vice President Monica Lingenfelter and Director of Donor Relations Meg Peterson, adjusted the typical process quickly, limiting access to one another and to the applicants. Committee meetings and site visits became virtual.

Hindsight has taken over now; we are declaring survival and victory because WISH members' 20/20 visual sharpness has given us five grant winners that range from purchasing lab equipment to assisting with payroll and family food expenses. "Foresight, hindsight, oversight" are all words with pandemic significance, but the word "insight" is probably the most valuable word that WISH members can apply to their 20/20 experience.

2020 Grant Award Recipients

The 2020 WISH grant awards were presented to three nonprofits totaling \$29,835 each and two Shepherd Learning Projects totaling \$35,375 each.

Shepherd Learning Project Winner: School of Education Collaborative Technology Innovations

The Shepherd University School of Education's Collaborative Technology Innovations initiative is one of two Shepherd Learning Project grant recipients for 2020. Headed by Dr. Jennifer Penland, the initiative will provide an updated space for student teachers to receive appropriate technology training for real-world application, especially in a growing virtual teaching environment. The WISH Shepherd Learning Project grant will be used to update the laboratory space through the purchase of Apple TVs, MacBooks, Chromebooks, Swivel Bundles, and iPads.

"There is no better instructional venue than to provide students with a collaborative space model in which they may practice such requirements between and among each other before exiting as highly marketable, certified teachers. With this WISH grant, the School of Education will be able to accomplish this. We are so honored to have received this award."

—Dr. Jennifer Penland, Director,
School of Education, Shepherd University



Pictured (l. to r.) are Dr. Dawne R. Burke '94, Dr. Jason Allen, Helen Baker, and Dr. Jennifer Penland



Cecelia Mason

Dr. Jacqueline Cole

Shepherd Learning Project Winner: Chemistry Department Instrumentation for Success

Chemistry students, including chemistry majors/minors, most science majors, pre-med and nursing students, are engaged in hands-on laboratory experiments that few other universities can offer—small lab sizes with experienced professors performing the labs alongside them. Because technology, particularly instrumentation, changes at such a rapid pace, new state-of-the-art equipment is needed in the teaching labs to better prepare Shepherd students for direct-entry into the workplace or graduate/professional school. The WISH funds will be used to upgrade the equipment in the chemistry lab. This one-time request will provide updated equipment that is smaller, more portable and tied to existing technology.

“The chemistry department is so grateful to WISH for this funding opportunity for student laboratory instruments which will be used to train future scientists now and for years to come. In chemistry, there is a gender gap between women and men, especially beyond the bachelor’s level where men earn around twice as many graduate degrees than women. I am excited that students will see the women of Shepherd investing in their education and hope it will inspire them to help fund the future.”

—Dr. Jacquelyn Cole, Chair,
Department of Chemistry, Shepherd University



Cecelia Mason

Community Nonprofit Winner: A Farm Less Ordinary

A Farm Less Ordinary provides employment opportunities for intellectually or developmentally disabled teens (or older) to work as “growers” at the farm located in Bluemont, Virginia. The farm was developed by owners and founders Maya Wechsler and Greg Masucci as a way to provide job experiences for their disabled son, and others, who find few job training or employment possibilities. The WISH grant will provide monies displaced by COVID-19 that will allow for payroll throughout the growing season and continue operations through 2023 and beyond.

“The intellectual/developmental (ID/DD) disability community currently suffers from an unemployment rate of over 80% in the United States. Thanks to this generous grant from WISH, A Farm Less Ordinary will employ adults with ID/DD as growers, working with them to develop good habits, social skills, and workplace behaviors that they will use in a variety of workplaces over the course of their lives. Thank you for helping us transform lives and give these people a stepping stone from school to employment.”

—Maya Wechsler, Owner and Co-founder,
A Farm Less Ordinary

LEFT: Owner and co-founder Greg Masucci

Community Nonprofit Winner: Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities is a social services organization run with a focus on inclusivity in regard to the clients they serve, mainly working with low-income and homeless individuals. The WISH grant will allow the Martinsburg office to renovate a first floor space into a handicap-accessible laundry and shower facility. This will help alleviate demands for services, which have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Individuals and families who are living in poverty struggle to meet their basic needs, including doing laundry and taking a shower. The Martinsburg office offers these services on the second floor, but they are not available to anyone who is unable to climb stairs due to physical disabilities or illness. The Catholic Charities staff is grateful that the WISH grant is providing funds to renovate our laundry and shower facilities so they are available to everyone regardless of physical limitations."

—Trina Bartlett, Eastern Regional Director for Catholic Charities



Cecelia Mason

Pictured (l. to r.) are Trina Bartlett, Eastern Regional Director, Catholic Charities West Virginia; Siobhan Bertone program assistant; and Luci Hernandez, case manager.



Cecelia Mason

Pictured (l. to r.) are James Hersick, communications and marketing support; Candace Sutphin, program manager; and Dr. Mark Cucuzzella, project lead. Not pictured are Fiona Harrison, Charles Town market manager, and Cindy Marzullo, Shepherdstown market manager.

Community Nonprofit Winner: WV Freshealty Bucks

WVFreshealty Bucks/Physician's Farmacy is a double value coupon program that allows Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients to "double" their money if they shop at local farmer's markets in Martinsburg, Shepherdstown, and Charles Town. The WISH grant funds will be used to not only double the client's SNAP allocation, but it will provide stipends for volunteer market managers and will provide advertising and marketing dollars to reach more clients, help develop partnerships with underserved community organizations, and help share healthy eating information in medical clinics, community centers, WIC offices, food banks, and local schools.

"We are in the early miles of the COVID marathon. Our poor nutritional health and food insecurity are making us vulnerable as a nation, especially in West Virginia. We are proud to partner with WISH to make it easier for families to eat healthy local foods while supporting our local farm economy simultaneously."

—Dr. Mark Cucuzzella, Program Director,
WV Freshealty Bucks



2019 Grant Award Recipients

Sam Levitan

LEFT: The 2019 WISH Grant award recipients pose with Shepherd University President Mary J.C. Hendrix. Front row (l. to r.): Dr. Jonathan Hartiens of Semper Li "Ashley House," Katie Zakrzewski of Shepherd University Speech and Debate Team, Dr. Mary J.C. Hendrix, Dr. Stacey Kendig of Shepherd University Health Promotion Expansion, Teresa Shumate of Community Networks Bethany House, Bunny Shaw of Community Networks Bethany House, and Susanna Henderson of Community Networks Bethany House. Back row (l. to r.): Krisandra Joia of Semper Li "Ashley House," Kara Herber of Semper Li "Ashley House," Ilynn Brennan of Shepherd University Speech and Debate Team, Aubree Duckworth of Shepherd University Speech and Debate Team, Jessica Graham of Shepherd University Health Promotion Expansion, and Christi Bentley of Community Networks Bethany House.

Community Networks/Bethany House Purchases Vital Supplies for Women and Children Clients



Cecelia Mason

2019 nonprofit winner Bethany House, an outreach by Community Networks, Inc., provides emergency shelter services 24 hours a day, seven days a week to homeless women and children in Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan counties. Through their WISH grant funding of \$30,750, the agency was able to address some much-needed upgrades to the facility, as well as invest funding into providing clients with the necessary tools that are needed to sustain housing.

In addition to 20 storage totes for clients' belongings, 19 new beds, 32 mattresses, and two cots for the overflow room were purchased.

Community Networks was also able to purchase materials such as workbooks for budgeting and life skills classes that are taught weekly. These life skills classes teach clients how to create and maintain a budget and have proved beneficial in boosting self-esteem. Other items purchased through the WISH grant include hygiene items and toiletry kits for Bethany House clients; transportation and bus passes for job interviews and to/from work; dress clothes, shoes, uniforms, and steel-toed boots for job interviews and employment; and healthy snacks for children participating in the after-school program.

"The agency has had many success stories that I could share, but one of our clients was really impacted by the WISH grant. This single mother with six children came into Bethany House around the holidays. She had just lost her job and had fallen into a deep depression. Through encouragement of staff, the client began participating in the life skills and budgeting classes and befriended women in similar situations to her. She was able to obtain a job interview, and with the purchase of new work appropriate clothes, was hired and able to begin working within a week. She now has moved into her own home with her children and still sends regular updates to let us know she is faring well!"

- Teresa Shumate, Executive Director,
Community Networks

Shepherd University Debate and Forensics Team Continued Success in Face of Adversity

The Shepherd University Debate and Forensics team has achieved tremendous success over the last few years as they have competed regionally and nationally. In August 2019, the organization was awarded \$30,750 to assist in three main areas: the recruitment of students to Shepherd University for the express interest of competing with the team, the provision of stipends to the coach and assistant coach, and travel to local and national competitions.

In fall 2019, two top high school debate recruits—Ethan Shaffer and Ben Haines—committed to Shepherd. However, COVID-19 travel

restrictions resulted in the cancellation of the National Championship Tournament in Whitewater, Wisconsin, scheduled to be held April 16-20, 2020. Regardless, the team was able to still find success in other ways—they placed second in the West Virginia state championship and took first place in debate sweepstakes for the third consecutive year. Additionally, they continued to do extremely well in the American Forensic (AFA) and Collegiate Forensic (CFA) Associations. Team advisor Dr. Samuel Greene, along with student leaders such as Jordan Jalil, have been active in fall 2020 and are already planning for spring 2021.

Human Performance Lab at Shepherd Gets Major Renovation

As part of the Health Promotion and Exercise Science curriculum at Shepherd University, students use the Human Performance Lab on campus to gain practical, applicable, and visual teaching techniques in the area of health assessment for future clients. Since receiving a 2019 WISH Shepherd Project grant in the amount of \$30,750, the Human Performance Lab was able to receive a complete makeover: new gym flooring that is conducive to daily scrubbing for sanitation purposes, much needed paint work, and a purchase of a second testing treadmill that allows for more accurate and timelier VO2 testing for approximately 200 students.

By January 2020, the majority of the proposed equipment was ordered, assembled, and installed, allowing students use of the lab January through March 2020. Unfortunately, COVID-19 resulted in the inability to open the HPL to the public as planned. During the shut-down, the HPL staff members were able to design lectures and outreach



programs for Shepherdstown Middle School and are ready to begin that community outreach once restrictions are lifted.

"We are an updated, functional lab that is excited to offer our services to the community. West Virginia does not have to rank as one of the unhealthiest states, and our lab is taking steps towards that change, one person at a time, through education, direction, and encouragement."

-Jessica Graham, Director,
Human Performance Lab, Shepherd University



Semper Liberi, Inc. Creates Ashley House—A Transitional Recovery Residence for Women

Semper Liberi (Semper Li), a Martinsburg-based nonprofit, was established to help those in early addiction recovery navigate through the challenges of transitioning back into mainstream society. After being awarded a 2019 WISH nonprofit grant in the amount of \$30,750, Semper Li began the process of purchasing a recovery residence named the "Ashley House" for female patients immediately following their discharge from the newly opened Mountaineer Recovery Center.

"Ashley," the Irish word for vision, was chosen as a representation for the vision the residence will give to women to see their future through a structured sober living environment. The name was also chosen based on Father Martin's Ashley, one of the country's preeminent recovery programs located in Havre de Grace, Maryland. Father Martin was a Catholic priest who suffered from alcoholism and, through his own recovery, impacted many by helping them establish their own sobriety.

An original house was identified in December 2019, but structural issues proved too costly to repair, and the contract was eventually voided. In late February 2020, the Semper Li board found a home immediately adjacent to the Mountaineer Recovery Center. The WISH grant funds were used to cover the home inspection, appraisal, closing costs and fees, and the down payment. The remaining WISH funds covered home updates in summer of 2020 such as painting, remodeling, and furnishings, and the Ashley House was scheduled to open for its first residents in September 2020.



"The WISH grant funding was great leverage because not only did it enable us to buy our first recovery residence, it also enabled us to win an additional grant to acquire funding for a second recovery residence to be purchased in summer 2020. Additionally, the compounding effect allowed us to apply for three additional grants that will allow us to open 10 more houses over the next three years. These will spread out across the seven counties of the Eastern Panhandle. All of this couldn't have been possible without the 'seed' money so generously provided by WISH."

-Dr. Jonathan Hartiens, Semper Li Program Director



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