

2025 Annual Report



WINGS is a 100% volunteer-led grassroots network of women who pool their resources to improve the lives of women and youth in the Northfield area. Since its founding in 2000, WINGS has contributed more than \$1,645,087 to local nonprofits – making it one of the largest local grantors to local nonprofit organizations.

Joining WINGS brings you into a community of local women who are making a difference. In 2025, WINGS awarded \$115,000 for fifteen grants serving women and youth in greater Northfield.

Women in Northfield
WINGS 
Giving Support

GIVE TO WINGS

WINGS
P.O. Box 845
Northfield, MN 55057
Email: president@wings-mn.org
www.wings-mn.org
www.facebook.com/nfldwings/

Please join this dynamic organization!
Simply send a check to:
P.O. Box 845, Northfield, MN 55057 or donate online at: wings-mn.org/donate



Voting membership begins at \$120

WINGS MISSION

WINGS educates and expands the number of women in philanthropy, builds and strengthens community through pooled investments, and improves the lives of women and youth in the Northfield area through focused giving.



Leave a legacy that empowers women and youth in Northfield. Join WINGS Forever by designating a legacy gift to WINGS. Click on the Legacy Giving tab on our website at wings-mn.org/donate/legacy-giving.

STAY CONNECTED

Are you receiving emails from WINGS?
If not, please contact us at Communications@wings-mn.org

WINGS 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



PRESIDENT:
Kathy Olson



VICE PRESIDENT:
Julie Zaruba Fountaine



SECRETARY:
Jan Ensrud



TREASURER:
Liz Ciner



COMMUNICATIONS:
Pam Tidona



OUTREACH:
Leah Rich



MEMBERSHIP:
Kim Decker



EX-OFFICIO:
Vicki Dilley



GRANTS:
Emily Blumhoefer



AT LARGE:
Gretchen Ehresmann



AT LARGE:
Angelica Koch



AT LARGE:
Laura Turek



AT LARGE:
Susan Quinnell

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Wow, 2025 flew by! The highlight of 2025 was celebrating our 25th anniversary! The planning committee, led by Nancy Carlson and Kim Briske, put together a wonderful, meaningful, celebration on October 9. The upper level of Reunion was filled with women sharing a passion for our community and a belief in the power of our longstanding impact for our neighbors. The energy was motivating and a number of women became new members as a result. A heartfelt thank you to the celebration committee!

WINGS is always trying to find ways to “tell our story.” This year the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation provided us with the funds to have a beautiful, compelling video created that describes the essence of WINGS. In case you haven’t had a chance to see it, you can watch it at wings-mn.org/news-events.

Also in 2025, we awarded our fifth Dare to Dream Grant to the Community Action Center’s Domestic Violence Prevention Partnership for \$25,000. This was in addition to the \$90,000 in annual grants awarded to fourteen organizations for a grand total of \$115,000. Your financial gifts, volunteer time, and service on the Board and committees makes a valuable difference in our community. And of course, we are grateful for the dedicated grantees who do their work every day.

WINGS believes in the importance of legacy giving and members are invited to include WINGS in their will and/or estate planning through the WINGS Forever program. Late in 2025, WINGS received a legacy gift from Laurie Cowles, a WINGS founding member. Laurie gave faithfully every year, believing in the power of women coming together to support women and youth in our community. This legacy gift captures her spirit of dreaming big and her desire to pass on her values and goals for years to come. A heartfelt thank you to Laurie and William Cowles!

You will recall that last year Kelli Podracky, Executive Director at the Northfield Union of Youth, was the speaker at our annual meeting. She shared her thoughts about supporting and fostering relationships, taking actions that bring opportunities and creating a sense of belonging to those who call Northfield home. These thoughts align with the focus of WINGS as we continue to elevate and expand our impact for the next 25 years.

As the WINGS Board and committee members continue to lead us forward, we invite you to be a part of this effort in new and different ways. Would you like to serve on a committee, work on a special project, coordinate a social gathering, or share your technical skills? Send an email to president@wings-mn.org. I’d love to connect with you!

Thank you for your dedicated support!



Kathy Olson
WINGS President



WITH GRATITUDE

WINGS HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025

- ◆ Youth Board members and their ability to provide fresh perspectives and ideas
- ◆ 17 new members
- ◆ \$25,000 Dare to Dream grant plus \$90,000 in annual grants given
- ◆ Having the anniversary video crew on site to capture the grant celebration, connection, and fun in the room
- ◆ Learning about how our grants are directly supporting childcare options for children and families in the Northfield area
- ◆ Working with such capable and caring women to carry on the legacy of WINGS
- ◆ The 25th anniversary celebration! The turnout was excellent and many women of all ages were introduced to WINGS. It was the first in-person general celebration for WINGS since the pandemic.
- ◆ WINGS 25th anniversary video created with the support of the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation. The video tells the WINGS story about the power of women in philanthropy.
- ◆ New WINGS website
- ◆ Receiving a legacy gift

WINGS COMMITTEES

Membership Committee

Kim Decker, Chair
Candace Godfrey
Lana Reich
Laura Turek
Colleen Vitek

Communications Committee

Mary Douglass
Gay Eggers
Diane Kuhlmann
Mary Loven
Maria Richert
Ronica Roberson
Julie Sullivan
Pam Tidona, Chair

Grants Committee

Members not listed for privacy reasons

Nominating Committee

Vicki Dilley, Chair
Mary Dunnewald
Susan Quinnell

Outreach Committee

Judy Carlson
Barbara Crouter
Joan Higinbotham
Margit Johnson
Leah Rich, Chair
Corinne Smith
Ann Sullivan



25th Anniversary Celebration

Comments Received

Thank you and all the people who arranged the celebration of twenty five years of WINGS. It was a great gathering of wonderful women. Your presentation of WINGS history was a good refresher.

When I joined WINGS via a Giving-Circle, I knew it would come to pass and be significant. I knew the founders, e.g. Molly Woehrlin, and knew them to be women who got things underway and going. What I never could have imagined is how important WINGS impact is and its magnitude in our community.

I love the premise of local money supporting local benefiting agencies.

-Lin Bruce

It was wonderful to be back together in person for the anniversary celebration.

I had no idea WINGS did all of this!

I'm joining, sign me up!



GRANTS UPDATE: DAKOTA PRAIRIE ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

Dakota Prairie Adult Basic Education (ABE) provides free English language and basic literacy classes to adults 17 and older in the Northfield area who want to learn English, improve their English skills, or attain a high school credential. Virtually all of the students served are women who live near, at, or below the poverty line; 80% are between the ages of 19-44 and have children. Together, they represent 17 different countries and speak nine different first languages.

Recognizing that many students are coming to class hungry, and with laws prohibiting Dakota Prairie ABE from spending state funds to purchase food for students, leaders turned to WINGS for help. A \$3,000 "Classroom Cupboard" grant from WINGS allowed Dakota Prairie ABE to have a small, regular supply of snacks on hand such as fruit, nuts, cheese sticks, crackers, or protein bars.

The impact is multifaceted:

WINGS' commitment has significantly enhanced our students' learning experiences and well-being. Since launching this project, we've seen how providing healthy snacks has made a meaningful difference—not only for students arriving from long shifts, but also in creating community and connection in a time of uncertainty.

Students often gather to enjoy healthy snacks, during which they engage in conversations, practice language skills, and build relationships. These moments are especially meaningful for newcomers, offering a welcoming space that fosters a sense of belonging and encourages continued participation.

Thanks to WINGS' generous support, we've even been able to extend some classes from 2.5 to 3 hours, and our attendance is up 28% from this time last year – a clear sign that students value our classes, are learning, and that they feel safe, supported, and welcome.

Thank you, Dakota Prairie ABE, for the opportunity to partner with you in your transformative work!





WINGS is an affiliate of the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation

WINGS Membership
the sky's the limit!

\$1 - \$119	\$120 - \$299	\$300 - \$599	\$600 - \$1,199	\$1,200 +
\$10 + month	\$25 + month	\$50 + month	\$100 + month	\$100 + month
Friend/Student	Bronze Wings	Silver Wings	Gold Wings	Blue Wings

**WHY JOIN WINGS?
YOU WILL ...**

- Simply donate or choose your time commitment - join a committee, if you'd like
- Pool your money with others to have a greater impact
- Focus your giving locally
- Expand your network of contacts in the community
- Connect with a thriving, active group of women
- Help this dynamic organization grow

2025 WINGS GRANT RECIPIENTS



WINGS awarded \$115,000 in this year's grant cycle.

WINGS has granted \$1,645,087 through 2025 to Northfield-area nonprofits to support projects and programs that benefit local women and youth.

**Wings 25th Anniversary Dare to Dream Grant
Northfield Healthy Community Initiative
Domestic Violence Prevention Partnership**

2025 ANNUAL GRANT RECIPIENTS

- ◆ Area Learning Center – Backpack Food Program
- ◆ Dakota Prairie Basic Adult Education – ABE Classroom Cupboard
- ◆ Healthy Community Initiative – Higher Education Empowerment in Recovery
- ◆ Healthy Community Initiative – Northfield YouthBank
- ◆ Healthy Community Initiative – Supporting Early Learning Efforts in Northfield
- ◆ Hope Center – Continuing HOPE
- ◆ Northfield Union of Youth – Mental Health Outreach, Planned Activities
- ◆ Northfield Community Action Center – Diaper and Hygiene Bank
- ◆ Northfield Youth Sport Collaborative – SY25-26 Youth Sports Scholarships
- ◆ Northfield Community Action Center – Housing Stability Fund
- ◆ Northfield Public Schools – Camp FRIENDS (Fun, Recreational and Inclusive Experience Necessary During the Summer)
- ◆ Project Friendship – Guiding the Way
- ◆ Ruth's House of Hope – Strengthening Recovery: Funding a Dedicated Case Manager for Lasting Impact
- ◆ TORCH at Healthy Community Initiative – Youth Mental Health and Community Building

WINGS FINANCIALS

DETAILS COMING SOON

