

# 2017 December Newsletter

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The mission of WiD is to empower, connect, and engage women in a community that fosters professional growth and leadership while advancing the field.



December 2017

## Happy December WiD Members

WiD has had an exciting fall of programming and we're gearing up for a productive winter -- we hope you are too.

For those of you who attended one of our October or November events, Thank You.  
For those of you who attended in spirit, see below for what you missed.



*Left to right, Nicole Thigpen Felix, Hattie Jutagir, Laura Aden Packer*

*Photo Credit: Saul Robbins*

## A PASSION FOR THE ARTS

WiD October Luncheon Featuring  
Laura Aden Packer, Howard Gilman Foundation

Who better to interview Laura Aden Packer, Executive Director of the Howard Gilman Foundation, than a recipient of a Gilman Foundation grant? Hattie Jutagir, Executive Director of Development and Planning at Lincoln Center Theater, a Gilman grantee, was happy to do the honors at the first WiD luncheon of the year.

Hired in 2014 to head a Foundation that had been dormant for a dozen years, Laura's goal was to reboot - setting strategy to bring the Foundation back to life, utilizing her 30 years experience working in the arts, both at non-profit theater organizations and at The Dodge Foundation, the largest private funder of the arts in New Jersey. With a newly developed mission, website, logo and staff of four, Laura has guided the Foundation to success in ways she is happy to share.

- Laura and her staff communicate with grantees in person and in their space and are respectful of the grantees' time in the grant application process. The staff also tries to go to at least one performance of the grantee throughout the year.
- They encourage grantees applying for the first time to be transparent with their needs.
- They are sensitive to organizations they do not fund by taking the time to explain why.
- The staff works as a team and makes recommendations to the Board together.

When asked how she saw the role of the Arts in these uncertain times, Laura drew on her admiration of Tom Kean, past Governor of New Jersey, who was known as the "Arts Governor." He often said, "Food and shelter are necessities, but the Arts are what make life worth living." That is a quote of which Foundation founder Howard Gilman would certainly approve.





*Left to right, Brooke Bryant, Cathy White O'Rourke, Yolanda F. Johnson*

*Photo Credit: Saul Robbins*

## **DONORS MATTER!**

Insider Breakfast - October 17  
Hosted by Kaufman Music Center

**The mission of Kaufman Music Center is to stimulate appreciation of and participation in music through music performance and education in ways that awaken creativity, advance innovation and create a sense of wonder among performers, students, teachers, and the public at large.**

### **Music Is the Universal Language at Kaufman Music Center**

Home to the Lucy Moses School, Special Music School, Merkin Concert Hall, and Face the Music, Kaufman Music Center is a mid-size non-profit founded in 1952. Kaufman's programs are centered on two pillars: music performance and education.

On October 17, Kaufman Music Center welcomed a sold-out crowd to a panel featuring Cathy White O'Rourke (President), Lydia Kontos (Executive Director), Brooke Bryant (Director of Development), Katharine Reece (Manager of Institutional Giving), and Marc Nykolyszyn (Manager of Individual Giving). The panelists gave proof of a strong team that is tasked with growing fundraising as part of the Center's five-year strategic plan. As part of this plan, the team is shifting from an events-based to a relationship-based fundraising model. This donor-centric model is yielding significant results.

High points of the presentation:

**Relationship-Based Fundraising Strategy Basics** include:

- Transform ticket buyers into ongoing supporters, using events as a "gateway" to building meaningful, sustained relationships.
- Have a plan! Create a strategy for regular touch points with donors at all levels, in order to help them feel connected to your organization's work over the course of the year. This includes email updates, stewardship letters, and solicitations.
- Emphasize one-on-one, face-to-face personal relationship building, which helps donors feel more connected to the programs they are supporting.
- Find ways to report to donors at all levels, enabling donors to understand how their generosity is making a difference. It is especially helpful to use metrics to demonstrate the tangible impact of programs.
- Use the phone! Relatively few non-profits call to thank their donors – and personal outreach makes a world of difference.
- Arrange site visits as much as possible. Nothing compares to the experience of meeting students and teachers and seeing the joy of music education firsthand.

- Help enhance your Board's fundraising capacity. Kautman's Board members reach out to their collective networks and bring in new lists and new people.



Left to right, Vivien Hoexter and Linda C. Hartley

Photo Credit: Demetriad Studios

## TRUST WOMEN AND TAKE A RISK: H2Growth Strategies and the Robin Hood Foundation Unlock Impact at Fall Luncheon

**“We’re only as strong as our membership.”** So says Nicole Thigpen Felix—Board Chair of WiD—to the hundreds of attendees at WiD’s November 6 Luncheon.

The spot-on comment was welcome by the range of development professionals gathered in the Princeton Club dining room. From recent graduates with newly minted Master’s Degrees to executive leaders with decades in the non-profit world, guests took in highlights from the newly published book, *BIG IMPACT: Insights & Stories from America’s Non-profit Leaders*.

***BIG IMPACT*** is the brainchild of Linda C. Hartley (a former WiD President) and Vivien Hoexter, **H2Growth Strategies** co-founders and leads. The duo distilled gems from interviews with roughly 50 game-changing non-profit leaders (representing the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Ford Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Goodwill Industries International, New York City Opera, and PBS, to name just a few).

Those leaders responded candidly to probing questions on how to implement change in their communities; the best/worst experiences in their lives (and what they learned); and many more. Hartley and Hoexter also asked interviewees about the non-profit sector’s larger role in society, including bridging the growing ideological divide between America’s cities and small towns. *BIG IMPACT* distills their answers into **Seven Principles**, including:

- **“To Make Positive Social Change, Be a Sharp Leader.”** These passionate leaders advocate on-the-ground work early in one’s career. They urge at least an attempt at work-life balance in this fast-paced, dynamic field. All of them are

proponents of mentorship. Aria Finger (CEO of DoSomething.org) describes her first boss taking her out for hot chocolate to announce she was grooming her to be CEO—the position she holds today.

- **“Make Sure Your Own House is in Order.”** Hiring talented, passionate employees and then giving them decision-making autonomy—are recipes for success. In fact, *BIG IMPACT* quotes Michael Capasso of New York City Opera as saying: “Everybody on my staff is smarter than I am, and I’m not ashamed of it.”

Hartley and Hoexter advise non-profits to **“Campaign on Many Fronts”** and **“Build Broad-Based Coalitions”** that convene cross-sector collaborations for corporate and government entities. Regarding another Principle, **“Be in It for the Long-Haul,”** Evan Wolfson of the Freedom to Marry Campaign humbly suggests, “You are always going to have losses...When you can’t win, you should at least fight and engage so you lose forward.”



*Amy Houston*

## **THE ROBIN HOOD EFFECT**

Amy Houston, Managing Director of the Robin Hood Foundation, joined H2 for the Luncheon’s Question and Answer session, having been interviewed in *BIG IMPACT*. Robin Hood was an obvious value-add to the book, as New York City’s largest poverty-fighting grant maker offering measurable help in the poorest neighborhoods.

But Houston’s earliest career experiences carry weight, too. Years ago, when she was Development Director of a small arts organization in Chicago, she was inspired by her “incredible board of directors’ use of big corporate ideas. We were a little lab for them to make impact.” One board member—an executive with Quaker Oats—streamlined the non-profit’s planning strategies. Another—the CFO of Leo Burnett & Company—sharpened its budgeting practices. That brand of strong early work ultimately inspired Houston to earn her MBA, explore consulting, and step into her Robin Hood role where the thinking is “smart and supportive.”

Smart and supportive.

Luncheon guests also engaged Houston on key questions in the fundraising space. Asked what young people should know about careers in the social sector, she advised, "Find somebody who sees your potential. Find an organization thinking about the issues you care about. That's a great place to be." In terms of "the one thing you would say to non-profit colleagues seeking funding right now," Houston quips, "I'm sorry! Forgive us," garnering applause and laughter across the room.

But she quickly added, "Foundations are a lot more pliable than you think. Have a clear mission and vision, and be thoughtful, deliberate and specific." She mentioned that even when Robin Hood seeks grants for itself, "When we're more specific and driven we get better results from our donors. These days, for us, it is a question of ensuring people in poverty are not the subject of the conversation but are driving the conversation."

### THE ULTIMATE TAKEAWAY

The Luncheon concluded with attendees at each table asking and answering big impact questions of each other—about succession planning, the benefits of multi-year funding for deeper, lasting results, and, yes, impact.

Hartley ended the program with powerful advice from Teresa Younger of the Ms. Foundation for Women, who in **BIG IMPACT** says, one of the most effective advancement strategies is to "trust women and take a risk. Trust that women have the answer to help and heal communities. Many of the greatest leaders are women in non-profits."

#### WiD PROGRAMMING SURVEY

WiD wants to know what YOU think! Please take a moment and complete our short survey so WiD can better serve our members. Thank you!

Click [here](#) for the Programming Survey.

For questions please feel free to email WiD at [widny@widny.org](mailto:widny@widny.org)

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

##### WiD LUNCHEON

- 5 Feb 2018
- Location: Princeton Club:  
**15 W 43rd St, New York, NY 10036**

##### I TO I: A STRUCTURED NETWORKING EXPERIENCE

- 15 Mar 2018
- Location: The Cosmopolitan Club:  
**122 East 66th Street (Park & Lexington)**

LEXINGTON

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