

# IMPACT REPORT 2022-2023

WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND



# COMMUNITY IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

**W**AHHI's mission has endured over the 62 years of the Association. There have been many changes in our Hilton Head Island, Bluffton and Daufuskie communities, but the WAHHI mission remains constant:

**To facilitate communication among women, to encourage projects that benefit the community, and to promote the natural and cultural beauty of the Lowcountry.**

## **OUR VISION**

To be the heart and soul of the women's community in the Lowcountry, engaging our members to form connections, promote personal enrichment, and better our community.

## **OUR SHARED VALUES**

Welcome, support and engage women, encouraging them to share their strengths and experience. Enable greater physical and emotional well-being and intellectual growth. Foster friendships across the communities in which we live or work. Operate with mutual respect and care for each other. Positively impact our community with our hearts, hands, and financial resources. Promote environmental awareness and cultural stewardship of our Lowcountry home.





## OUR STRATEGIC PLAN AND HOW WE'RE WORKING TOWARDS IT!

In 2022, we launched a strategic plan. We've already made a significant amount of progress on the plan, including forming many new partnerships with other women's organizations and other groups that share a similar mission. This year's theme was **Find Your Joy!** As the community was coming out of a pandemic, we wanted to offer many opportunities for our members to find their own JOY. WAHHI offers many opportunities to socialize, make friends, connect with the needs of our community, and support each other. Whether you attend one of our events with a friend or by yourself .... you will always be greeted with open arms! Many women are new to the Lowcountry. They find their lives and routines changing as they retire, continue to build on their professional career, or care for aging family members. With choices to join 50 interest groups, sign up for monthly chef Series, Author Series, and four member meetings, we strive to be a source of engaging opportunities and connections for women to find their own JOY!

We're enjoying a membership of over 1,100 women. A full third of whom are "new" to the association this past year. In 2022 we offered 400+ different activities to our members. Our WAHHI women have a wide array of opportunities to socialize and have fun.

Sometimes this involves trying something new like golf or pickleball, joining a support

group, making crafts, volunteering in the community; all while sharing common interests with friends.



We've worked behind the scenes to make better use of technology. We've streamlined our calendar to make programs, events, and activities easy to join. We implemented QR codes for events; saving time from long lines at "check in". We

also used our technology to make online voting and surveys available for our members to register their votes and opinions. Lastly, we made all of this information available, as well as our member contact information, through our Wild Apricot phone app.

This year we put a Sponsorship program in place. The support and generosity from the community was incredible and allowed us to offer special programs and new venues to our members. Net proceeds from events with our sponsors helped fund our WAHHI Charitable Fund. We are grateful for the support from our community and for the businesses that supported us through their sponsorships.

## OUR COMMUNITY SUPPORT

WAHHI supports and enhances our Lowcountry community in many ways. We raise money and give grants from our **WAHHI Charitable Fund** to local nonprofit organizations whose mission is aligned with ours. We award special WAHHI Anniversary community gifts. We also have a thriving volunteer group called **Difference Makers** that leads volunteer projects in the community. Throughout the year we invite keynote speakers to member events whose presentations enrich our appreciation of local arts and culture. We partner with many organizations to build partnerships in the community. We also have a 23-year history of supporting the youth in our community with our **Youth Community Service Awards**.

Our members enjoy a women's community of smart, caring, and energetic women who have a positive impact on each other and where we live. Highlighted below are some of the ways WAHHI has been at work this year in our community through the generosity of the time, talents, and financial resources of our members.



## WAHHI CHARITABLE FUND

There are several visible and tangible gifts that our Association has contributed to the community in the past. Bike path maps, the bronze Walter Palmer statue on the grounds of the Coastal Discovery Museum as well as the front porch of the Gabled Farmhouse.

The 60<sup>th</sup> WAHHI anniversary gift of a garden labyrinth at the Coastal Discovery Museum opened to the public in May. To highlight these and other contributions over the years there is a booklet **Traveling the Island with WAHHI**. It can be found on our website for members and visitors to enjoy and discover WAHHI's history of giving.

This year **\$23,200** was awarded from the WAHHI Charitable Fund to local nonprofits in the community. We choose projects that were unique, where we could make a significant impact, and with organizations that align with our mission and values.

Congratulations to the 2023 WAHHI Charitable Fund Recipients:

- The Celebration Projects
- Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park
- American Heart Association
- Born to Read
- The Children's Center
- Family Promise of Beaufort County
- Foundation for Educational Excellence
- Memory Matters
- Neighborhood Outreach Connection (NOC)
- Pregnancy Center and Clinic
- Sandalwood Community Food Pantry
- The Sandbox



## WAHHI DIFFERENCE MAKERS

Our Difference Makers Interest Group expanded in 2022. This group started in 2016, quickly becoming one of our most popular interest groups with over 200 volunteer-minded members. In 2022 we incorporated the Difference Makers into our WAHHI programming and expanded their reach to all WAHHI members. We take on a project, giving our hearts, hands, and time, while also learning more about the nonprofit and how vital they are to our community. Many WAHHI members continue to support these nonprofits as volunteers long after our project is completed. Several leaders from the nonprofit community have joined our WAHHI leadership team - bringing their knowledge and talents to help shape our association and deepen our connection to the community.

When we provided cleaning and bathroom supplies to **Hopeful Horizons** and prepared kits for families, we also learned about domestic violence in Beaufort County and how our efforts will help women and children who are hoping for a fresh start. We did a landscaping project for **Volunteers in Medicine** that involved clearing out an overgrown

area and creating a pathway between the medical buildings and the new Wellness Center on the campus. We learned the importance of providing fresh and



healthy food options along with all facets of healthcare. And our pathway made it easier for patients to connect from their healthcare visit to healthy food. Our combined efforts of many women working together brought joy all around!

This year we completed the following projects:

**Help teach children about the environment by gathering recyclables for The Sandbox.**

The Sandbox is an interactive children's museum that conducts art classes and teaches children to make art projects with recyclables donated by our members.

**Address food insecurity in our community** through a food drive to support the new wellness store at Volunteers in Medicine.

**Bring joy and laughter during the holidays**

to the families of The Children's Center. This year our neighborhood teams gathered over 400 gifts that were sorted to create a full package for every family member of all the children from The Children's Center.



**Supported awareness of domestic violence** and collected personal items for women and their families in emergency shelters for Hopeful Horizons.

Helped create Christmas ornaments with the Rays at Pockets Full of Sunshine.

**Cleared the campus and built a walkway** to link the medical offices to the new Wellness center at Volunteers in Medicine. Learned about the importance of the need to supply healthy food and vegetables to our community.







**Worked with the American Heart Association**

and other medical professionals to have open conversations about health and wellness issues for women.

**Promote environmental awareness** by filling 150 bags of oyster shells used to build oyster habitats and promote oyster shell recycling efforts in collaboration with The Outside Foundation.



**Clean up our beaches and keep the environment** beautiful and safe with The Outside Foundation.

## WAHHI YOUTH COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

This program, organized in 1980, continues to recognize high school seniors who excel in community service. This year a \$1,000 cash award was made to each of seven recipients. We congratulate the following outstanding students who demonstrated an active commitment to community volunteerism:

Samantha Reilly – John Paul II Catholic School  
Sam Rembold – John Paul Catholic School  
Whitney McGuire – Hilton Head Island High School  
Caroline Denckhoff – Palmetto Classical Academy  
Julia Delgado – John Paul Catholic School  
Audrey Perry – Hilton Head Island High School  
Daniela Lopez – Hilton Head Island High School

## The Kiwanis Chili Cook Off of 2022

WAHHI was honored to win the **People's Choice Award** at the 2022 Kiwanis Chili Cook Off. This was our first time participating in the event and we received incredible support from the community! The Board and Council prepared and served the winning recipe for our chili. As the first place winner in the People's Choice category, we were able to select a non profit to receive \$2,500. The WAHHI Board selected **The Outside Foundation** as our recipient. Our award enabled the Foundation to provide scholarships for students to attend the **Kids in Kayaks** program. With our ongoing partnership with The Outside Foundation, we also filled oyster bags, which will be used to build oyster reefs and provide a precious barrier for oysters to grow and flourish in our ecosystem.



## YOUR VOLUNTEERISM

WAHHI Charitable Fund Grants and Youth Community Service Awards are funded through the generosity of our members. This may include enrolling as a WAHHI Diamond member, or through individual member donations to the WAHHI Charitable Fund - held by The Community Foundation of the Lowcountry.

We have a high-energy and creative interest group called **Fun Raising Funds** who create numerous fundraising events throughout the year. Events from 2022-2023 included special shopping events at J. Banks and J. McLaughlin, participation in the Hilton Head Island Lantern Parade, along with a Halloween Dinner, a St. Patrick's Day Dinner, High Tea at Hewitt Oaks, a spring Garden Tour, and a Golf Scramble and Silent Auction.

Many thanks for the creativity, time, and energy of our **Fun Raising Funds Interest Group** members for their hard work to make these events possible. WAHHI members raised over **\$24,600** this year to help with our grants and community outreach efforts.

Every membership year is the result of many women coming together and committing their time, talent and resources. We are a **100% volunteer-based organization**. We encourage you to join these women who are dedicated to making a difference in our communities, while enjoying the WAHHI benefits of camaraderie, team spirit and just plain FUN. There is always room for more hearts and hands, so please **get involved** by contacting [President@wahhi.org](mailto:President@wahhi.org).



# WAHHI PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

Our members had the opportunity to attend outstanding programming throughout the year. Some of the highlights and new favorites were:

Girls Night Out cruises with the **Salty Dog**

**Fall KickOff** and Interest Group Expo with special musical guest: **Deas Guyz**

Engaging **Member Spotlights** featuring **Lola Campbell**, owner of Binya HHI and author of “Writings on the Wall”; **Julie Martin**, owner of RetireReady on “Finding Joy in Retirement”; and **Dr. Janet Porter**, Board Chair of Hospice of the LowCountry on “Giving the Gift of the Conversation”.

Special tickets to events with **TedX “Making Waves”** and **Lean Ensemble Theater** matinee productions. Lean Ensemble held special pre-show discussions for WAHHI members and their guests. Our members also enjoyed a **Broadway Series** hosted by **Myla Lerner**, Tony Award winning producer, WAHHI member, and President of Lean Ensemble.

A **Salute to Veterans** with special guest speakers: WAHHI member **Kathryn Boudreau**, retired Air Force intelligence officer, **Colonel Jennifer Nash** from the United States Marine Corps, and a special composition produced by lyricist **Luanne Rosenfeld**, WAHHI member.

Our Holiday Member meeting at Hilton Head Beach and Tennis Resort with **Hilton Head Symphony violinist Mario Incorvaia, Harpist Lucy Scandrett** and holiday performances from **Debbie and Daniel Cort**. We also celebrated **The Children's Center** with generous gifts and donations from our members for their Toy Drive.



Our WAHHI Charitable Fund Awards Celebration held at the Arts Center of Coastal Carolina with special guest speaker **Scott Wierman, President and CEO of Community Foundation of the Lowcountry** followed by a WAHHI Dine Around in various Shelter Cove restaurants.

Spring Cocktail Party and Youth Community Service Awards at Hilton Head Beach and Tennis Resort with Guest speaker: author and Disney Executive, **Jody Dreyer "Finding Your Happily Ever After."**

Participated in the **HHI Lantern Parade, Health and Wellness Fair**, our popular spring **Garden and Landscape Tour**, two **Golf Scrambles**, and a lovely high tea in the gardens of **Hewitt Oaks**.

## 2022-2023 HIGHLIGHTS

### Membership

1166 members  
23% increase  
394 NEW members

### Diamond Members

Includes \$25 contribution to the Charitable Fund  
349 members  
27% increase

WAHHI is an amazing organization and I am so fortunate to be involved in a professional AND personal capacity.

*Leslie Vargas-Prada,  
Donor Services  
Associate-Community  
Foundation of the  
Lowcountry*

### Interest Groups

50 active groups  
Most Popular:  
PickleBall  
Nature Exploration  
Out to Lunch Bunch  
Golf Nine and Wine  
Apple Tips

### Ambassadors

Welcoming new members @ 30 neighborhood meet and greets

### Programs & Activities

496 events  
4 member meetings  
Chef Series  
Author Series  
Speaker Series  
Broadway Series

So inspiring to hear about all the good works on this island and know our WAHHI money helps support them.

### Fundraising

\$24,670 raised through Raffles, Silent Auctions, Dinners, Garden Tour, High Tea and many more activities!

### Grants & Awards

\$23,200 Grants  
12 Local Non Profits  
\$7,000 Youth Service Awards  
7 Local High School Students  
\$2,500 Kiwanis Award for Kids in Kayaks

Your continued connection allows us to keep our doors open and bring hope to so many people who stopped believing hope was possible.

*Dr. Nannette Pierson,  
Founder-Sandalwood  
Community Food Pantry*



## THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS AND EVENT PARTNERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT IN 2022-2023.



Christina Forbis

Realtor/Broker

*Community Connections...  
Client Commitments*

Direct Line: (843) 301-7339

Email: Christina@ChristinaForbis.com

