

WAHHI

2023 - 2025 IMPACT REPORT



STRATEGIC PLAN
UPDATE

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COMMUNITY IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS



WAHHI's mission has endured and thrived over the 64 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 UPDATE!

In 2022, we launched a strategic plan. I'm happy to say over the past two years we have completed all actionable objects of the plan. Three of the significant changes made included:

- Updating the constitution and bylaws (this endeavor took an entire year to complete in order to ensure it was current and reflected our growing and thriving organization)
- Adding a Sapphire membership level (this allowed an additional opportunity for our members to donate directly to our Charitable Fund)
- Establishing our first organization chart (to illustrate the restructuring of the organization to a more modern "Team Concept")

The themes of "Connection" last year followed by "Engagement" this year enabled our more than 1,200 members to make lasting friendships all while impacting our community in significant ways.

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 40 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 of our community! In 2024 we offered more than 550 different activities to our members. We included our first-ever pickleball tournament, annual golf fundraiser and a fashion show!

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

The past two years, we continued the sponsorship program initiated in 2022. 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 award grants from our **WAHHI Charitable Fund** to local nonprofit organizations whose missions are 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 25-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 in this report 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 and the front porch of the Gabled Farmhouse.
- The 60th WAHHI anniversary gift of a garden labyrinth at the Coastal Discovery Museum opened to the public in May 2024.

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, **\$59,463** was awarded from the WAHHI Charitable Fund to local nonprofits in the community. We chose projects that were unique, where we could make a significant impact, and with organizations that align with our mission and values.

Congratulations to the 2025 WAHHI Charitable Fund Recipients:



- Arts Center of Coastal Carolina – \$5,000
- Boys & Girls Club of the Lowcountry (Bluffton) – \$7,500
- The Children's Center – \$4,463
- Foundation for Educational Excellence – \$3,500
- Hopeful Horizons – \$7,500
- Lowcountry Legal Volunteers – \$7,500
- Memory Matters – \$5,000
- Mirasol Health – \$7,500
- Neighborhood Outreach Connection – \$4,000
- Special Olympics South Carolina Area 8 – \$7,500

And to the 2024 Recipients totaling \$40,500:

- Arts Center of Coastal Carolina - \$5,000
- Bluffton Self Help - \$5,000
- Boys and Girls Club of the Lowcountry – Bluffton Unit - \$5,000
- The Children's Center - \$5,000
- Foundation for Educational Excellence - \$4,000
- Hopeful Horizons - \$1,500
- Lowcountry Legal Volunteers - \$5,000
- Memory Matters - \$5,000
- Volunteers in Medicine - \$5,000

WAHHI DIFFERENCE MAKERS

Our Difference Makers Interest Group continued to increase their community impact. This group started in 2016, quickly becoming one of our most popular interest groups with more than 200 volunteer-minded members. In 2022, the Difference Makers interest group was transformed into an all-member group. Now all members can 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 kitchen and bathroom kits to **Hopeful Horizons** 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 cleaned out the retail thrift store at the **Litter Box** ensuring maximum dollars could be earned on donated items, stocked the **Bluffton Food Pantry**, provided hundreds of families with holiday gifts, donated books and bagged oyster shells to name a few of the ways we gave back and made an impact on our community.

WAHHI YOUTH COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

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



2024-2025

- Caroline Thomas - Hilton Head Christian Academy
- Ava Elizabeth Rios - Bluffton High School
- Christopher Nguyễn - Hilton Head Christian Academy

2023-2024

- Grace Boylen – Hilton Head High School
- Ella Christie – Hilton Head High School
- Emilie Fister – Hilton Head Island High School
- Susana Mogil – Hilton Head High School
- Garrett Simmons – Hilton Head High School
- Payton Ward – Cross Schools

YOUR VOLUNTEERISM

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

Our fundraising has also expanded over the last two years. We have partnered with several local businesses to host fun and educational events. This year alone we have had our first ever online raffle for an e-bike and our second online raffle was a round of golf at Berkeley Hall! Both events were well received and a lot of fun for the members! We shopped at Shop! Boutique, Collage J. McLaughlin, to name a few, and participated in the Hilton Head Island Lantern Parade, along with a Halloween Party, a St. Patrick's Day celebration, a 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 members for their hard work to make these events possible. WAHHI members raised more than **\$47,437** this year and **\$48,879 last year** to help with our grants and community outreach efforts.

Every membership year is the result of many women joining 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.

WAHHI PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

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

Fall Kickoff and Interest Group Expo with renowned geriatrician, Dr. Jonathan Evans (2024), and Author Patti Callahan Henry (2023).

Special tickets to events with **TedX “Shift Happens”** 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 2023. Members view productions at the Art Center of Coastal Carolina.

In December, 2023, we were entertained by the host of Very Vera, Vera Stewart, and in 2024 by Deas Guyz founder, Reggie Deas. We provided [The Children’s Center](#) with generous gifts and donations from our members for their toy drive.





We revised the way we presented our WAHHI Charitable Grant recipients by visiting each recipient's place of business with their check. As a follow-up an article was written for the Pink Paper and posted on social media highlighting each winner. Additionally, each recipient provided a six-month follow-up to a grant committee member who then shared the update with WAHHI.

February/March Signature events were based on fun, fashion and wellness. In 2024, we were entertained by three dynamic speakers: Dr. Debi Lyons, Dr. Ardra Davis-Tolbert and Kathryn Mademann, who focused on stepping into our best selves. In 2025, we held a resort-themed fashion show highlighting WAHHI members as the models.

Our Signature Events wrapped up with the entertaining Alligator Dixieland Band (2024) and a Cinco de Mayo-themed event with DJ Royce providing the entertainment in 2025.



2023 – 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

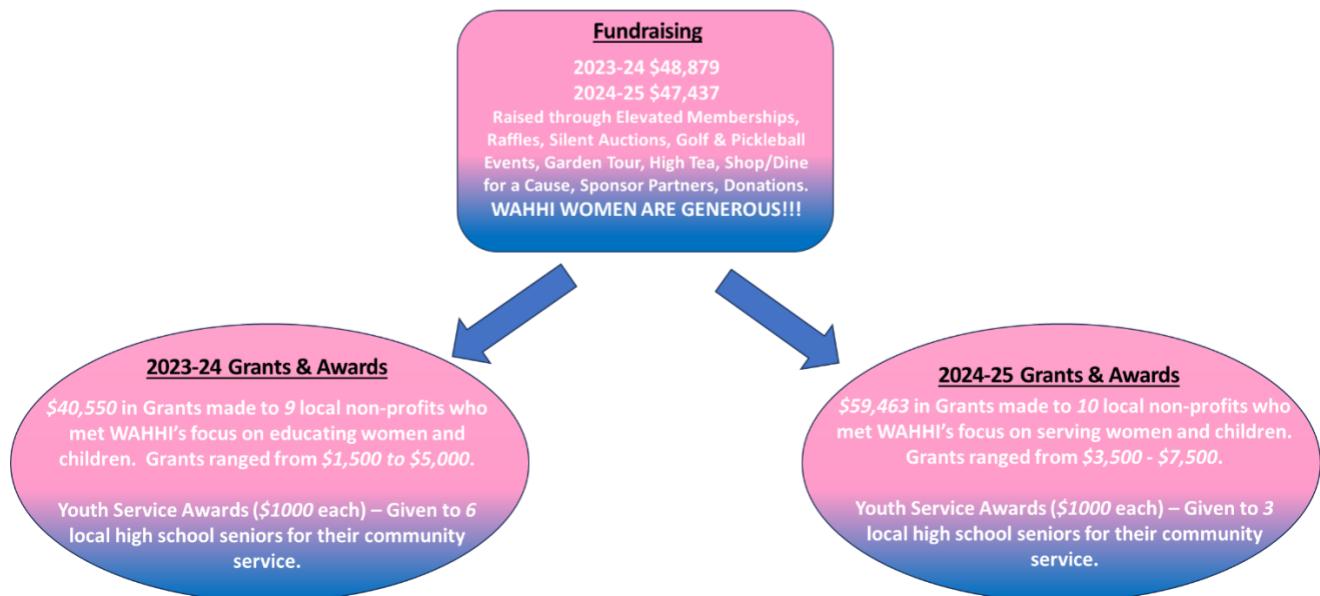
Our Members Define WAHHI



Our Members Are Busy!!



Our Members Are Generous!!



**THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS AND EVENT PARTNERS
FOR THEIR SUPPORT IN 2023 – 2025.**



Christina Forbis
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Client Commitments*

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- Rollers
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- Collage
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- Shop!
- Billy Wood Appliance
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- Low Country Periodontics
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- Sea Pines Resort
- Humbug Holiday Lighting