

WELLMET GAZETTE

January 2020



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WELLMETPHILANTHROPY

at THE NEW YORK COMMUNITY TRUST



INSIDE WELLMET

Dear Friends of WellMet,

We have just celebrated 20 years of supporting nearly 200 emerging nonprofit organizations in NYC and are now setting our sights on 2020. As always, our laser focus is on our grantees so please look at the new edition of the WellMet Gazette and learn from the WM class of 2018 about how they are putting their grant money to use. Also, take time to read about “What’s new” with other grantees and be inspired by their remarkable work on behalf of vulnerable New Yorkers.

WellMet Philanthropy is a living, breathing testimony to the generosity, commitment, and passion of a group of women working together to help others. Please know that all of the WellMet members have already turned our gaze to our third decade.

Thank you for all of your encouragement and support.

~ Nancy Talbot, Chair



WHO WE ARE

WellMet members are determined women of all ages and backgrounds, proud to join together to be actively useful to our NYC neighbors. We target nascent 501(c)(3) orgs who have ideas, big and little, to help their communities become more self-reliant, equality-based and vibrant.

WellMet has four full membership evening meetings (October, January, March, June) plus one site visit in the spring. We welcome kindred spirits. If you are interested in learning more, please contact us at the email address below.

INSIDE WELLMET

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Last fall, WellMet welcomed several new members including one who was already part of the "family." Lynne Holden's organization, *Mentoring in Medicine*, was a 2007 grantee. Recently, Lynne was featured as NYer of the Week on NY1. We asked Lynne to share her experience as grantee and, now, member with us.



How did you become interested in joining a giving circle?

There are so many social justice organizations that have meaningful missions created by passionate individuals with great intentions that do not succeed or have a rocky course because of the lack of resources. WellMet is very instrumental in providing financial resources for this group of potentially impactful organizations. My struggle to find resources to kickstart Mentoring in Medicine, Inc. is a successful example largely due to the boost by the WM Group. Therefore, in my effort to support truly passionate individuals with a calling to make the world a better place, I immediately thought of the organization that I had experience with—WellMet. It was important to me to join a well established, mission-driven, successful giving circle along with building camaraderie with like-minded women with an established similar goal to improve the lives of others.

What has your experience as a member been like so far?

It has been exciting to join such personable and passionate women who are dedicated to supporting hard working individuals dedicated to social justice issues. I have felt very warmly embraced --and seen as a valuable team member with a unique perspective (grantee and grantor). I love that I can roll up my sleeves and help out!

Your advice to women about how and why this type of philanthropic work is important?

I was inspired by a short quote from Maya Angelou during my college days at Howard University. "When you learn, teach. When you get, give." At Howard, I was immersed in social justice causes! A spark was lit to help make a positive change using a diversified approach. I wanted to be the feet on the street in communities, to create policies on a systems level and to one day participate in a dedicated, group of like-minded movers and shakers to help provide financial support to promising, results-oriented organizations. Indeed, joining WellMet and contributing to its mission is fulfilling my goal!

Check out the NY1 feature story about Lynne's work:

<https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/nyer-of-the-week/2019/11/11/bronx-doctor-lynne-holden-mentoring-in-medicine>

UPDATES FROM OUR 2018 GRANTEES

EMMA'S TORCH

Emma's Torch, which empowers refugees through culinary education, has had a successful and transformative fifteen months. WellMet's grant helped retain key staff and expand its operation, in order to serve even more refugees, asylees, and survivors of human trafficking through culinary career training and job placement. The grant also helped support a new partnership with the Brooklyn Public Library, opening a café and catering classroom in their Main Branch last April. The grant from WellMet allowed the organization to grow their Apprenticeship program and they are on track to graduate 60 students this year, compared to 25 in 2018.



PRISON WRITES

Prison Writes, a therapeutic writing program for justice-involved individuals, told us the WellMet grant was the most significant single contribution they had ever received from a foundation. The grant has been essential to the continuity and expansion of their programs. It not only helped provide critical financial support to their dedicated teachers, but also allowed them to continue working with young adults at Rikers Island Jail and youth in placement at Children's Village. This money was also used to expand their partnership with the John Jay College Prisoner Re-entry program. They recently received two Department of Corrections contracts to provide writing workshops for young adults on Rikers Island.



UPDATES FROM OUR 2018 GRANTEES

NAVIGATE THE MAZE

Navigate the Maze to Achievement, which supports Brooklyn youth as they prepare for the Selective High School Admissions Test, has more than doubled the number of students it serves in the last year and has expanded into Staten Island. The grant from WellMet helped pay teachers and offered NTMA the critical institutional endorsement that has led to additional recognition and funding. They have also expanded their student cohort to include Latinx students. Their goal for 2020 is to expand to the Bronx.



KINGS COUNTY TENNIS LEAGUE

Kings County Tennis League, which offers tennis instruction to underserved communities in Brooklyn, has earmarked their WellMet grant to renovate their location in the Lafayette Gardens Housing Development. They are currently awaiting approval from the Parks Department. In the meantime, they have expanded to their sixth housing development and served over 300 children in 2019. They have increased their summer programming and now offer six days of instruction a week. They also grew their team by adding a new development director and program manager.

UPDATES FROM OUR 2018 GRANTEES

UPBEAT NYC

UpBeat NYC provides musical training and instruments to students in the south Bronx. The grant from WellMet helped them continue offering free instruction to students ages five through high school. They reported that all four of their students in their 2019 graduating class were accepted to college, including three students who received scholarships because of their participation in UpBeat's program. Several students have also been accepted, by audition, into NYC's top performing arts high schools. They are now partnered with the New York Philharmonic which offers their families free tickets as well as the chance for students to receive coaching from Philharmonic musicians.



ALEX HOUSE

Alex House supports pregnant and parenting young mothers who reside in underserved neighborhoods in New York City. The WellMet grant went to hiring new staff, which allowed them to operate at maximum capacity at their current facility. In 2018, they were able to support 33 mothers and 13 fathers with their programming. They also used the WellMet grant for software which now enables them to more effectively train staff, collect data, and measure outcomes. They are particularly proud of their efforts to track the gains made in their Socio-Emotional Learning program, which they see as critical in their support of youth.



UPDATES FROM OUR 2018 & 2019 GRANTEES!

CUSTOM COLLABORATIVE

Helping women from low-income and immigrant communities learn to create and sell sustainable fashion, Custom Collaborative used their grant to expand their Training Institute with audio/visual equipment and an increased student stipend. They also expanded their recruitment efforts and hired new staff. They credit the WM grant with raising their visibility, allowing them to attract other funders, which helped them double their fundraising from 2017 to 2018. They just received a grant from the 2020 Gucci Changemakers Fund. Notably, they have engaged a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion consultant to help them continue their great work.



OUR 2019 GRANTEES!

Our newest cohort of grantees features seven incredible organizations:

- ***Tech Kids Unlimited***
- ***Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees***
- ***Street Lab/Uni Project***
- ***The Kite Zine***
- ***Read 718***
- ***GoodCall***
- ***Jeremiah Program (Brooklyn)***

Since receiving their grants, **Street Lab** reports they have provided their pop-up programs 152 times in the city (the most ever) and **Tech Kids Unlimited** has piloted their first afterschool program and increased their internship cohort group. Learn more about our newest members of the WellMet family on our website at www.wellmetgroup.org.

NEWS & NOTES



WE TURNED 20!

On May 3, 2019, 180 WellMet grantees and members, past and present, gathered at Harlem Childrens' Zone to celebrate our 20th birthday party. A special film (currently on our website), explaining how we got started and what we do, plus close looks at three of our 160 (and counting) grantees, was shown. Five raffle door prize-grants, totaling \$35,000, were awarded. But mostly, grantees from all boroughs mingled and networked and strategized how they were going to continue to better our world. Someone asked me what all these grantees had in common and without thinking I answered "hope". I was kind of surprised for a second but then I thought, "Nope, that is exactly it. That is what we are all working for."

~Deborah McManus, Co-Founder

"Indeed, that room looked like the city I want to live in: diverse in a myriad of noticeable and important ways with a warmth that created a sense of true community."

~Arbor Brothers



NOTES FROM PAST GRANTEEES

- Now in their fifth year, **The Knowledge House** (2016 grantee) reported that they enrolled 287 students in 2019 with 86% of students successfully completing their programs. CEO & Co-Founder, Jerelyn Rodriguez was invited to speak at The Atlantic's #FutureofWork summit to discuss ways the tech industry can create a more inclusive workforce.
- Last year, **Urban Dove** (2002 grantee) was selected by Champion Athleticwear to be part of their 100th year anniversary campaign. Champion featured a select group of teams around the world "to share their passion about teamwork and what it means to them to be a team." They also received a 2019 Sport for Reduced Inequalities Collective Impact award from Beyond Sport.
- Ana Martinez de Luco, who runs **Sure We Can** (2013 grantee), was recently quoted in the New York Times. In an article about people who collect cans and bottles, Martinez de Luco talked about how the cost of living in New York has affected those earning below the minimum wage.

Learn more about these organizations and all of our grantees on our website: www.wellmetgroup.org/grantees/