



Ashton Hope Keegan Foundation

2024 Annual Impact Report

CELEBRATING A YEAR OF EMPOWERMENT & GROWTH

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A Letter From Leadership

CELEBRATING A YEAR OF EMPOWERMENT & GROWTH

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on 2024, I am overwhelmed with gratitude for the incredible support that has propelled the Ashton Hope Keegan Foundation to new heights. This year has been a testament to what we can achieve when compassionate individuals and organizations come together with a shared mission: empowering women to break the cycle of generational poverty through education.

We remain steadfast in honoring Ashton's legacy, ensuring her dream of lifting women through education continues to inspire action and change lives. The journey is not without challenges, but every obstacle reminds us of the importance of this work and the incredible resilience of the women we serve.

Thank you for being an integral part of this mission. Together, we are creating opportunities, restoring hope, and changing futures.

Warm regards,



Kim Keegan, CEO & Ashton's mom

Key Highlights of 2024

THIS YEAR HAS BEEN ONE OF GROWTH, INNOVATION, AND IMPACT FOR THE ASHTON HOPE KEEGAN FOUNDATION.

Some key highlights include:

- **Record-Breaking Fundraising Success:**
Our 2024 Hope Gala, A Golden Evening in Paris Where Our Students Shine, raised a remarkable \$143,000, more than doubling last year's total. With 60% of contributions coming from outside the Athens area, the Gala continues to expand its reach and influence.
- **Expanded Impact:**
In 2024, we directly supported 165 women—an increase of 34% compared to 2023—with scholarships and material support, helping them achieve their educational and professional dreams.
- **New Partnerships:**
We added four new educational partners, increasing our total to seven, ensuring more opportunities for women to access the training they need.
- **Operational Excellence:**
By integrating the Qgiv and Bloomerang platforms, we streamlined donor management and event coordination, enhancing our efficiency and outreach capabilities.

These achievements would not have been possible without our incredible community of donors, sponsors, volunteers, and partners. Your generosity and belief in our mission fuel every milestone we reach. We are deeply grateful for your continued support, and we look forward to building on these successes together in the years ahead.

Inspire Hope

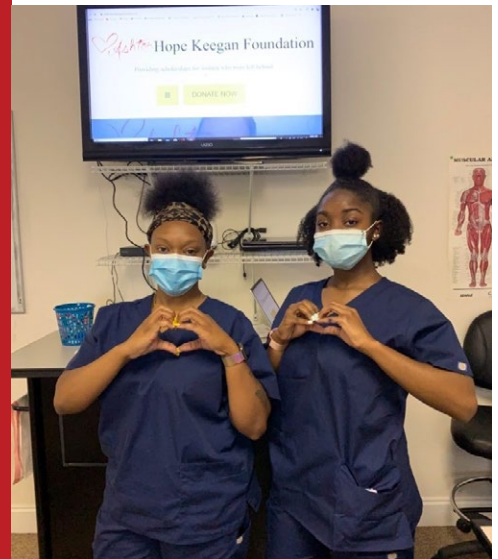
One story from this year stands out as a beacon of hope and determination. Diana H., a woman who came to us in 2020 seeking support, achieved a life-changing milestone in 2024. Diana overcame immense obstacles—including addiction, homelessness, negative interactions with the court system, and skepticism from those around her—to become a top-performing student in her nursing program. Through the support of the Ashton Hope Keegan Foundation, Diana has received three scholarships, completed her coursework with a 4.0 GPA, and been accepted into a Registered Nursing Program.

Diana's journey is a powerful reminder of why we do this work. Her unwavering resilience and drive to succeed inspire us all, and we can't wait to celebrate with her as she becomes "Nurse Diana." Her story embodies the transformative power of education and community support—a testament to the impact we can make together.



Our Mission

THE MISSION OF THE ASHTON HOPE KEEGAN FOUNDATION IS TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF GENERATIONAL POVERTY FOR WOMEN IN THE ATHENS, GEORGIA AREA AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES BY PROVIDING TECHNICAL TRAINING SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS FOR MATERIAL SUPPORT, AND ALIGNING WITH STRATEGIC PARTNERS. OUR VISION IS A COMMUNITY WHERE ALL WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN CAN PROSPER.



Last Year

HOW 2024 ALIGNED WITH OUR MISSION

In 2024, the Ashton Hope Keegan Foundation made tremendous progress in advancing its mission to empower women through education and support services:

- **Empowering Through Scholarships:** We awarded scholarships to 165 women this year—an increase of 34% over 2023—ensuring access to skills-based training programs that prepare women for middle-class careers in fields like nursing, phlebotomy, and early childhood education.
- **Breaking Barriers to Success:** By funding secondary and tertiary expenses, such as application fees, licensing costs, and bulk purchases of professional gear, we removed financial roadblocks that often prevent women from completing their educational journeys.
- **Expanding Reach:** Our partnership network grew to include four new educational institutions, bringing the total to seven. These partnerships broadened access to high-quality training programs and career pathways for women in need.
- **Strategic Collaboration:** We strengthened alliances with local nonprofits like Lydia's Place, the Acceptance Recovery Center, and The Food Bank to provide holistic support to women facing multiple barriers, ensuring no challenge goes unmet.
- **Operational Growth:** By integrating advanced tools like Qgiv and Bloomerang, we enhanced our ability to manage donor relationships and coordinate events. This allowed us to align resources with our mission more effectively and grow sustainably.

Each of these initiatives reflects our unwavering commitment to breaking the cycle of generational poverty and creating a future where women and their children thrive. To stay true to our vision, we've not only provided financial support but also built pathways for lasting change—one scholarship, one program, and one partnership at a time.

2024 Accomplishments

MILESTONES ACHIEVED

1

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED:

In 2024, we supported 165 women with scholarships and material support, a 34% increase compared to 2023. Since our inception, we have empowered 445 women to pursue education and career opportunities.

2

TOTAL FUNDING DISTRIBUTED:

This year, we provided \$212,143 in direct financial support to women in need, surpassing the \$136,000 distributed in 2023 and marking our most impactful year yet.

3

EVENTS ORGANIZED:

- 2nd Annual Stiletto Stampede 5K: This event raised critical funds and brought the community together to celebrate empowerment and resilience.
- 2024 Hope Gala: Held under the theme A Golden Evening in Paris Where Our Students Shine, the Gala raised a record-breaking \$143,000, with over 60% of funds coming from outside the Athens area.

4

PARTNERSHIPS ESTABLISHED:

We expanded our collaboration with four new educational institutions, increasing our total to seven. These partnerships allow us to connect more women with the resources and training programs they need to succeed.

5

TESTIMONIALS AND SUCCESS STORIES:

Diana H., one of our scholarship recipients, shared her inspiring journey:

"I am absolutely most proud that I have been accepted into the Registered Nursing Program at Athens Technical College. There have been so many people throughout my educational journey who said I would not make it this far, and yet here I am—accepted with a 4.0 GPA! This was not luck; this is what hard work and determination look like."

6

RECORD-BREAKING FUNDRAISING SUCCESS:

In 2024, we raised a total of \$230,462, including \$143,000 from our Golden Evening in Paris Hope Gala. This event, one of the highlights of the year, was the talk of the town for months. The elegant Parisian theme set the stage for an unforgettable night of community, generosity, and inspiration. Over 60% of the funds raised came from outside the Athens area, underscoring the expanding reach of our mission, and bringing net new funds into the Athens community.

Featured Story

A JOURNEY OF RESILIENCE AND TRIUMPH

For much of her life, Diana fought to break free from a cycle of hardship that seemed impossible to escape. Born into a family struggling with poverty and addiction, she had no role models to look up to—no one who had finished high school, let alone pursued a career. But despite the obstacles, she had a deep love for education.

At 16, she became a mother and was forced to leave school. Determined to provide for her daughter, she worked tirelessly to maintain stability, but life threw her more challenges. At one point, she lost her home, lost custody of her daughter, and fell into addiction, using substances to numb the pain of separation. Her lowest point became her turning point when a “Nudge from the Judge” led her to rehab, where she not only regained control of her life but also rediscovered her love for learning.

Seven years sober, Diana has defied every expectation. She earned her GED in 2020, in the midst of the pandemic, and was awarded an Ashton Hope Keegan Scholarship to continue her education. Though doubts and discouragement surrounded her—school administrators told her the nursing program was “too hard” for someone with her responsibilities—she refused to give up. With grit and determination, she excelled, earning a 4.0 GPA and securing acceptance into the highly competitive Registered Nursing Program at Athens Technical College.

Balancing school, work, and caring for her three children—along with her significant other, who is recovering from a severe injury—has not been easy. She works two jobs to support her family and has saved what little she can to make it through the program. Despite the financial uncertainty, she remains focused on the goal: becoming a nurse, working in public health, and using her story to inspire others who face similar struggles.

Today, she coaches youth sports, giving back to her community and proving that perseverance can rewrite even the most difficult chapters. She dreams of using her nursing career to support those in addiction recovery, showing them that hope, hard work, and education can pave the way to a brighter future.

As she drives past the church where Ashton Keegan once volunteered, she is reminded that there are people who believe in women like her—people who see potential beyond circumstances. Whether she receives another scholarship or not, she is grateful for the support that has helped her come this far.

“This was not luck,” she says. “This is what hard work and determination look like.”



Statistics & Impact

\$230,462

TOTAL FUNDS RAISED IN 2024

Raised a record-breaking \$230,462, reflecting significant growth compared to \$225,730 in 2023 and \$132,442 in 2022. This growth was fueled by the success of the 2024 Hope Gala, new corporate sponsorships, and additional fundraising events like the Stiletto Stampede 5K.

BREAKDOWN OF DONOR SOURCES

- **Individual Contributions:** 5% of total funds, with virtually all of the donations being \$250 or less. This highlights the broad support from members of our community.
- **Corporate Sponsors:** 5%, including a new naming sponsor for the Hope Gala that contributed \$30,000.
- **Fundraising Events:** 62%, driven by the Hope Gala and Stiletto Stampede 5K, as well as a few other small fundraisers.
- **Grants and Foundations:** 28%, reflecting our efforts to diversify funding sources.

165

WOMEN DIRECTLY SUPPORTED IN 2024

445

WOMEN SUPPORTED SINCE INCEPTION

- **165 women directly supported** through scholarships and material assistance in 2024, a **34% increase** from 2023.
- **Total women supported since inception:** 445, with additional benefits provided through bulk purchases of professional gear and resources like the Ashton Hope Keegan Learning Lab.

2,000

VOLUNTEER HOURS

- **6 Board Members:** All volunteers, contributing countless hours alongside their full-time jobs.
- **15 Additional Volunteers:** Actively involved in executing events like the Hope Gala and Stiletto Stampede 5K.
- **Total Volunteer Hours:** Estimated at over 2,000 hours in 2024, showcasing the dedication and hard work of a small but mighty team.

SOCIAL MEDIA GROWTH:

- Increased followers by **20%** across platforms, with notable engagement rates on Facebook and Instagram for event promotions and donor outreach.
- Campaigns like Giving Tuesday and the Hope Gala announcement posts reached over **6,642 impressions**, increasing awareness and engagement with our mission.
- Engagement rates on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram increased **449.25%** showcasing the dedication of our online audience.

Financial Summary

HIGH-LEVEL BREAKDOWN OF REVENUES AND EXPENSES

REVENUE STREAMS:

- **Individual Donations: ~\$12,000 (~5%)**
Individual contributions were made by 45 people, demonstrating the generosity and commitment of members of our community.
- **Corporate Sponsorships: ~\$11,800 (~5%)**
Includes donations from companies ranging from Fortune 50 companies to local area businesses.
- **Grant Revenue: ~\$60,000 (~28%)**
Includes 12 grants ranging from large national Foundations to local Foundations.
- **Event Revenue: \$146,480 (~62%)**
Proceeds from our two signature events, the 2024 Hope Gala and the Stiletto Stampede 5K, played a vital role in funding our programs.

\$230,462

TOTAL REVENUE

EXPENSE CATEGORIES:

- **Program Costs: \$227,429 (98.7% of total expenses)**
Direct financial support for scholarships, material assistance, bulk purchases, and operational costs for the Ashton Hope Keegan Learning Lab.
- **Operational Expenses: \$3,033 (1.3% of total expenses)**
Administrative costs, such as office supplies and our annual audit.

\$230,462

TOTAL EXPENSES

TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

The Ashton Hope Keegan Foundation is proud to maintain an exceptional level of financial accountability. In 2024, **98.7% of our funds directly supported our mission**, with only 1.3% allocated to general and administrative expenses.

As an all-volunteer organization with no brick-and-mortar facilities, we maximize the impact of every dollar raised, ensuring that the women we serve receive the support they need to break the cycle of generational poverty. Our financials are reviewed annually through a rigorous audit process to ensure transparency and adherence to best practices in non-profit management.

Programs in Focus

KEY PROGRAMS FUNDED BY SCHOLARSHIPS

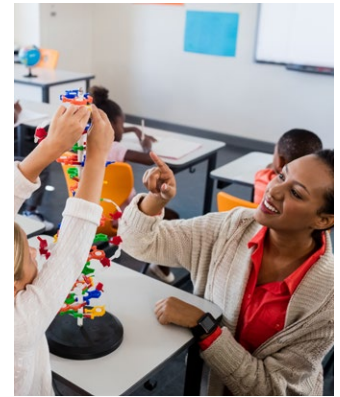
The Ashton Hope Keegan Foundation provides scholarships to empower women through skills-based training programs. We funded tuition, books, supplies, and material assistance for women enrolled in 41 program areas, such as:



Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA)



Phlebotomy Technician



Early Childhood Education Specialist



PC Repair Technician



Interior Design Specialist



Industrial Welder

These scholarships ensure that women can access the education and training needed to secure stable, well-paying careers, lifting themselves and their families out of poverty. Additionally, we addressed critical secondary and tertiary expenses, such as application fees, background checks, and certification costs, eliminating financial barriers that often prevent women from completing their education.

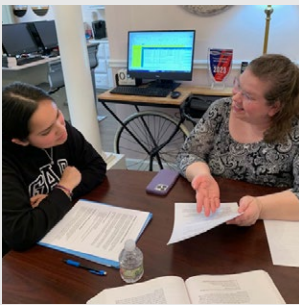
WORKSHOPS OR TRAINING PROGRAMS SUPPORTED

In collaboration with educational institutions and community partners, the foundation supported the following training programs in 2024:



Ashton Hope Keegan Learning Lab:

Equipped with 17 networked computers, this lab provides a technology-driven environment for GED education and career preparation. Women gain critical computer skills, develop resumes, and access job search tools, significantly improving their educational outcomes.



Professional Development Workshops:

Hosted in partnership with local organizations, these workshops cover topics such as interview preparation, resume writing, and workplace communication, equipping women with the tools they need to succeed in their chosen careers.



Angel Tree Program:

Addressing the unique challenges faced by impoverished women during the holiday season, this program supported students by ensuring their children received holiday gifts. This initiative reduced dropout rates during a critical time of year and reinforced our mission of lifting women and their children out of generational poverty.

OUTCOMES

The impact of our programs in 2024 is evident in the tangible successes achieved by the women we serve:

- **Certificates Earned:** Over 70% of scholarship recipients completed certification programs in high-demand fields such as healthcare, education, and skilled trades. Others are in training programs that span multiple semesters and are still on track to complete their training.
- **Jobs Secured:** Many recipients received job offers (or multiple job offers) before graduation, with many starting positions in industries offering salaries significantly above the poverty line.
- **Career Advancement:** Women like Diana H., who excelled in her nursing program with a 4.0 GPA, are on track to achieve life-changing professional milestones.

These outcomes demonstrate the transformative power of education and the vital role our programs play in breaking the cycle of generational poverty.

Donors & Sponsor Recognition

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

The success of the Ashton Hope Keegan Foundation in 2024 would not have been possible without the incredible generosity and commitment of our donors, sponsors, volunteers, and community partners. Together, you have helped us transform lives and empower women to achieve economic independence through education and support.

MAJOR DONORS AND CORPORATE SPONSORS

We are deeply grateful to our major donors and corporate sponsors whose contributions have been instrumental in advancing our mission. These major donors contributed at least \$2500 to Ashton's Foundation in 2024:

- Zoetic Global
- Frances Wood Wilson Foundation
- Ed & Kim Keegan
- David & Rachel Swartz
- Rich & Linda Crooks
- James Whitley
- Raytheon Technologies
- Natasha Gordon
- Athens Seed Lawn & Garden
- Parker Plastic Surgery
- Grant Grissom and Family
- GIVEBack Real Estate
- Linda Maples
- Five Points Psychiatry
- Parker Plastic Surgery
- Athens Area Chamber of Commerce
- Ashford Pain Solutions
- Best Versions Media
- United Way of NE Georgia
- AmFund

Your financial support has enabled us to provide scholarships, fund programs, and remove barriers for women striving to achieve their dreams. We celebrate your commitment to making a difference.

We would also like to thank all of our individual donors, who chose to give some of their hard-earned money to a cause dedicated to helping others. We know there are almost 500 nonprofit organizations in the Athens area, and your choosing us is very meaningful to us!

For a full list of sponsors and grantors who have made 2024 such a success, please visit us online:

[2024 Hope Gala Donors](#)

[2024 Donors & Sponsors](#)

VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The tireless efforts of our volunteers and the support of our community partners have been essential to our success in 2024.

VOLUNTEERS:

Our events, such as the 2024 Hope Gala and the Stiletto Stampede 5K, were executed seamlessly thanks to the dedication of our volunteer team. With a core group of 15 volunteers and six board members, your contributions of time, energy, and expertise brought our vision to life.

We would also like to thank all of the event volunteers who worked tirelessly on our events and fundraising efforts. This includes those who assisted with the Hope Gala and Stiletto Stampede, as well as those who worked on efforts like the Aramark concession stand staffing at UGA games, and the UGA students in the MBA, Marketing, MSW, and Leadership classes.

COMMUNITY, NONPROFIT, AND EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS:

We extend special thanks to our partners who help us expand our reach and impact:

- Athens Technical College: For your continued collaboration in training and educating the next generation of skilled professionals.
- AmFund: For providing critical resources and expertise to enhance our fundraising efforts.
- Women to the World
- Innovative Healthcare Institute
- Connect Care Medical Training Institute
- One Breath CNA
- Medical Institute of NE Georgia

Your partnership ensures that no woman faces her challenges alone and that every “ask” for help receives a meaningful and comprehensive response.



CELEBRATING COMMUNITY SPIRIT

From individual donors and corporate sponsors to volunteers and community partners, each of you is a vital part of the Ashton Hope Keegan Foundation’s story. Together, we are building a future where all women and their children can thrive.

Goals for 2025

EMPOWERING WOMEN, TRANSFORMING LIVES

At the Ashton Hope Keegan Foundation, our mission is to break the cycle of generational poverty for women in Northeast Georgia by empowering them through education, removing barriers to success, and supporting their transition into the professional workforce. Our goals for 2025 reflect a bold vision for growth and impact, and we invite you to join us in making these goals a reality.

GOAL 1: EXPANDING ACCESS TO GED EDUCATION

We aim to increase the number of women completing their GED by 25% over the combined total of the past two years. Recognizing that financial barriers often prevent women from pursuing their GED, we have allocated up to \$9,000 in scholarships and funding assistance for application fees and testing costs. By partnering with organizations like Women to the World, Athens Technical College, and United Way of NE Georgia, we will ensure at least 20 women receive the support they need to achieve this critical milestone.

GOAL 2: SUPPORTING SKILLS- BASED TRAINING

Our goal is to increase the number of women attending technical or certification schools by 25%, providing \$1,000 scholarships to at least 195 women. Through collaboration with educational institutions like the Innovative Healthcare Institute and Athens Technical College, as well as ongoing engagement with GED graduates, we will help women transition seamlessly into skills-based programs that lead to sustainable careers.

GOAL 3: INVESTING IN HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

To support women transitioning directly from high school to technical training, we will provide \$1,000 scholarships to at least 10 students who do not qualify for the HOPE scholarship. Working with the Rotary Club of Athens and local high school representatives, we will identify and assist students with financial need, ensuring they have the opportunity to pursue further education and career preparation.

GOAL 4: REMOVING WORKFORCE BARRIERS

We are committed to ensuring that no graduate is prevented from entering the workforce due to financial obstacles. By providing bulk purchases of professional gear (e.g., scrubs, tools) and funding for Board Certification Tests, we will eliminate the final hurdles for women as they transition into their careers. Our target is to invest \$10,000 in these essential materials and certifications, leveraging partnerships with training schools to maximize impact.

Signature Events in 2025



THE STILETTO STAMPEDE 5K

JANUARY 18, 2025

A fun and empowering event where participants wear stilettos to raise funds for scholarships and material support. This unique 5K Run/Walk celebrates strength, creativity, and community while making a tangible impact on the lives of women in need.

THE HOPE GALA

AUGUST 2, 2025

An evening of elegance and compassion, the Hope Gala features a buffet dinner, silent auction, raffle, and entertainment. Funds raised at this event directly support our programs, ensuring more women can overcome barriers and achieve their dreams.

Inspiring Vision for the Future

These ambitious goals reflect our unwavering commitment to creating pathways for women to achieve economic independence and success. By investing in education, addressing barriers, and fostering community partnerships, we aim to transform lives, one woman at a time.

Your support—whether through donations, sponsorships, or volunteering—will help us turn these goals into reality. Together, we can empower more women, uplift families, and inspire hope for generations to come.

Are you ready to be part of this transformation? Visit us online at www.ashtonhopekeeganfoundation.org to learn how you can make a difference today.

[Click to Learn More](#)

Join Us

GET INVOLVED AND HELP EMPOWER WOMEN FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Your support is vital in continuing our mission to break the cycle of generational poverty for women and their families. Here's how you can make a difference:

DONATE TODAY

Every contribution helps us fund scholarships, provide critical resources, and create lasting change in the lives of women striving for a better future.

- **Online Donations:** Visit our secure donation page by clicking or scanning the QR code.
- **Recurring Gifts:** Consider becoming a monthly donor to provide ongoing support and ensure sustainability for our programs.



2025 HOPE GALA

One of the most anticipated moments of the year is our 2025 Hope Gala, returning on August 2nd. Following the record-breaking success of 2024's Golden Evening in Paris, this year's event will transport us into the magic and wonder of Vincent Van Gogh's *The Starry Night*—a theme brought to life by the talented interior design students at Athens Technical College. Their creativity, combined with the generosity of our community, will make this an evening to remember.

The Hope Gala is more than just a celebration—it is a catalyst for change. Sponsorships and ticket sales provide critical funding for scholarships, material support, and essential programs that remove barriers for women striving to enter the workforce. Sponsorship opportunities are now open, and tickets go on sale in May—secure your place early for what promises to be another sold-out event.

JOIN THE TEAM & SPREAD THE WORD

You can amplify our mission and inspire others to join our cause:

- **Follow Us on Social Media:** Stay updated on our programs and events by following us on Facebook and Instagram.
- **Share Our Story:** Tell your friends, family, and colleagues about the Ashton Hope Keegan Foundation and the impact we're making together.
- **Volunteer With Us:** Lend your time and talents to make an impact. Visit ashtonhopekeeganfoundation.org/volunteer/ to learn more and sign up for upcoming opportunities.

Empowering Women, Changing Lives – Together

As we reflect on the accomplishments of 2024, we are filled with gratitude for the incredible community that makes the work of the Ashton Hope Keegan Foundation possible. Your unwavering support—whether as donors, sponsors, volunteers, or partners—has fueled another transformative year, empowering women to break barriers and achieve their dreams. In 2025, we are excited to build on this momentum with a renewed focus on empowerment, education, and engagement. January marks the start of the year with the 3rd Annual Stiletto Stampede 5K, a celebration of strength, creativity, and community. With your help, we will turn strides into scholarships, ensuring more women have access to life-changing opportunities. Stay tuned for weekly updates on the race, stories of impact, and creative ways you can participate.

As we embark on the new year, our mission remains clear: to lift women out of generational poverty and into a future where they and their families can thrive. With initiatives like Women's Empowerment Month in February, Women's History Month in March, and the much-anticipated 2025 Hope Gala, there are endless ways to join us in making a difference.

Your continued involvement—whether through donations, volunteering, or sharing our mission—will help us create a brighter future for women in the Athens area and beyond. Together, we will celebrate milestones, champion education, and inspire hope every step of the way.

We look forward to partnering with you again in 2025. Together, we are changing lives—one woman at a time.

Margaret Mead once said, "Never underestimate the power of a small group of committed people to change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has."

Contact Us

STAY CONNECTED AND JOIN US IN
MAKING A DIFFERENCE



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