

# New grant available for women

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Huddled in a conference room in early spring of 2012, the 15-member steering committee of the Burke Women's Fund decided to include a focus grant in its general grant cycle.

The next decision to be made was the purpose of this new grant opportunity. Should it be about independence, should it spotlight education, should it require collaborative partnerships between nonprofits, should it be for children ages 6-12 or ages 12-18, should it be for girls or boys or both?

The decision was made to focus the grant opportunity on projects that instilled independence in young women between the ages of 12-18. On March 2, the BWF membership awarded its first focus grants to Burke United Christian Ministries' Project Independence and to Foothills Service Project's Women Building for Women.

Project Independence was provided funds to assist young Hispanic women in the development of Sweet Delights bakery. Women Building for Women was provided with funds to teach young women the skills to build ramp for women in need.

Back in that same conference room in early spring of 2013, the steering committee determined that, once more, the focus grant opportunity was worthy of inclusion in the general grant cycle.

The success from the prior year's focus grants made it an easy decision for the committee. The agreement for the grant purpose came quickly and it was determined that building



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**The BWF membership sponsored an educational opportunity at the STEAM Academy for a select group of Burke County middle schoolers Oct. 10.**

children's self-esteem would be the focus.

To demonstrate its deep commitment to building children's self-esteem, the BWF membership sponsored an educational opportunity at the STEAM Academy for a select group of Burke County middle schoolers Oct. 10. Supported by professionals from Blue Ridge HealthCare, Burke Economic Development, Inc., Burke Middle College, Motion Capture Technologies, PT On-Site, and Western Piedmont Community College, the students were encouraged to explore various career options and to develop the confidence needed to achieve such goals.

The membership of BWF will vote in the next few weeks on which nonprofit agency will receive funds for a project that best demonstrates its commitment to building children's self-esteem. Since 2009, the BWF membership has awarded \$116,240 in grants to nonprofit agencies whose projects have benefited Burke County women and their families. BWF has also increased its endowment to more than \$65,000. A Chinese proverb states, "When sleeping women wake, mountains

move."

The BWF membership is moving mountains in Burke County.

For more information, visit [www.burkewomensfund.com](http://www.burkewomensfund.com) or [www.cfburkecounty.org](http://www.cfburkecounty.org) and click on the Burke Women's Fund tab.