

# Burke Women's Fund



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Local nonprofit groups that were recipients of the Burke Women's Fund's fifth year of giving campaign.

# Supporting Women

## Group celebrates fifth year of giving

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS HERALD

The membership of the Burke Women's Fund celebrated its fifth year of giving March 1 in Valdese at Waldensian Presbyterian Church.

The group welcomed home one of its natives, Kesha Nichols, as guest speaker. Born and raised in Burke County, Nichols discovered her passion for dance at Sherri's School of Dance.

After receiving a degree in dance education, Nichols headed to New York City to pursue her dreams. She has established her own dance company, performed in numerous productions, and was a cast member of the TV show "Basketball Wives."

Nichols is a national speaker who focuses on promoting awareness of the bullying epidemic and the empowerment that can come from embracing one's multicultural background.

The group's goal is to improving the lives of women and their families in Burke County.

It has awarded \$146,679 in grants to local nonprofits and grown the Burke Women's Fund Endowment to \$80,534 since 2009.

During the celebration, Susan Pollpeter, co-chair of the Burke Women's Fund grants committee, announced the following grant recipients for the 2013-14 year:

- » **Options** — "Searching for Success" — \$3,175
- » **First United Methodist Church** — Valdese — "The Children's Feeding Ministry" — \$4,000
- » **The Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club of Morganton** — "After School Program" — \$5,000
- » **Burke Hospice and Palliative Care** — "Footprints on My Heart" — \$2,098
- » **Burke United Christian Ministries** — "Forklift Purchase" — \$5,539
- » **Burke County Circles Initiative** — "Teen Circles Initiative" — \$927
- » **Blue Ridge Healthcare Foundation / Forest Hill Elementary School** — "Lean In, Go Far" — \$3,000



Kesha Nichols (center), who was the speaker at the Burke Women's Fund annual giving campaign, stands with her mother and grandmother.



Honorary members for 2014 Kaitlyn Howell, a senior at Draughn High School and volunteer at BRHC, and honorary adult member Ann Carr, who volunteers weekly at the Habitat ReStore.



# Women

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» **Burke United Christian Ministries** — “Sweet Delights Bakery” — \$5,000

Laurie Miller and Mary Ellen Wiese, co-chairs of the Burke Women’s Fund Membership Committee, announced the Honorary Members for 2014.

This award is given to women who have committed to service and to volunteer their time, talents and treasures to make a difference in our community.

The Honorary Youth Membership was awarded to Kaitlyn Howell, a senior at Draughn High School, whose passion is health care.

She has been active in her church, East Valdese Baptist Church, was a member of the Blue Ridge HealthCare Medical Explorers, has served as a Blue Ridge HealthCare volunteer and is completing her nursing assistant certification.

The Honorary Adult Membership was awarded to Ann Carr, who has volunteered weekly at the Habitat Restore in Morganton since 2002.

Carr has been instrumental in the development of the Habitat Restore Christmas Shop, has repackaged and repurposed items into affordable gifts for teachers and loved ones, and has created a monthly silent auction.

The Habitat Restore is an integral part of Habitat for Humanity Burke County because it funds two houses per year from the profits of the store.

For more information about the Burke Women’s Fund, visit [www.burkewomensfund.com](http://www.burkewomensfund.com); visit the Community Foundation of Burke County’s website at [www.cfburkecounty.org](http://www.cfburkecounty.org) and click on the Burke Women’s Fund tab; or call Nancy Taylor, executive director of the Community Foundation of Burke County at 828-437-7105.