



# Mary's Pence News

Funding Women. Changing Lives.

Fall/Winter 2020 Edition

## Equity in Philanthropy: Looking at Mary's Pence Grants Through Gender and Racial Lenses to Ensure Justice, Dignity and Solidarity for All



*Defend Glendale & Public Housing Coalition is dedicated to protect and build more public housing, and minimize racial and economic inequities currently facing residents of Minnesota.*

The year 2020 has brought dramatic visibility to the huge inequities and discrimination experienced by people — particularly women of color — in the U.S. We can no longer be in denial; we have to make radical change.

### Equal Access to Funding

Philanthropy needs to play a crucial role in making the change we need. The capacity of philanthropy to help create social and economic change for women and people of color is tremendous, but only if the focus of grantmaking takes on strong gender and racial-oriented lenses and ensures movements are adequately funded to increase their scope and influence.

Consider these numbers from a 2019 report from the Women & Girls Index Report from the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University:

- Only 3.3% of all non-profit organizations in the U.S. are dedicated to helping women and girls.
- Only 1.6% of total U.S. philanthropic dollars go to organizations that exclusively support women and girls.
- Only 0.5% of U.S. philanthropic donations go specifically to women and girls of color.

In contrast to the national data on funding of women and girls, Mary's Pence reports:

- 100% of organizations that receive Mary's Pence grants are dedicated to helping women and girls.
- 100% of Mary's Pence grants support cis women, trans women, and non-binary people.
- 40% of organizations that receive Mary's Pence grants are led by women of color.

## Grants

### Room for Improvement

The work to fully live our values of dignity, justice, and solidarity is on-going. At Mary's Pence we are having intentional discussions about how we can more effectively support women and their communities. From the language we use to talk about grantees' work to ensuring access and flexibility in acquiring funding, we remain committed to doing what we've always done: support emerging organizations that are working for justice in the lives of women and their communities.

After careful analysis of our goals to promote social justice through strategic financial support of women's organizations and causes, Mary's Pence staff and board have committed to improving Mary's Pence Grants in the following ways:

**Make Mary's Pence Grants more visible to women of color and make it more explicit that all cis women, trans women, and non-binary people of color are welcome.**

**Redesign the application process to request an initial Letter of Interest that efficiently allows potential grantees to apply for funding.**

**Emphasize that Mary's Pence provides grants for operating funds, not solely project funds, helping small organizations be sustainable.**

**Continue to encourage 3-time granting to allow for sustainability and growth of emerging organizations.**

**Review communications materials to ensure language that uplifts grantees and promotes the sharing of lived experiences.**

**Remain committed to trusting that women know the issues affecting their lives and they are capable of addressing them.**

### Commitment to Being A Model

Mary's Pence has been working for more than 3 decades to empower women to work for justice and

### Models of Grantees Led By and For Women of Color

#### Alerta Migratoria

Carrboro, North Carolina

Co-Founder and Director: Viridiana Martinez

A community organization founded by undocumented womxn activists, *Alerta Migratoria* responds to the challenges faced by undocumented



*Alerta Migratoria facilitates and promotes the self-determination of undocumented immigrants and refugees by working to stop deportations by engaging directly with affected communities and conscientious allies.*

immigrants and refugees living in North Carolina. As immigrant womxn of color are the most affected by anti-immigrant laws and deportations, it's intentional that *Alerta Migratoria's* leadership reflects the voices of those on the front lines demanding immigrant rights.

There are currently 120 members of *Alerta Migratoria* who participate in organizing strategies and campaign activities. Members engage in several organizational activities such as conducting outreach in their immigrant communities, gathering signatures, writing letters, and attending vigils and press events.

#### Defend Glendale & Public Housing Coalition (DG&PHC)

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Founder and Director: Ladan Yusuf

*DG&PHC* is a grassroots community organizing campaign for low-income residents living in public housing. Their mission is to protect public housing from privatization and to prevent the displacement of low-income and poor residents who rely on public housing, the majority of whom are Black (immigrants, Muslims, East Africans), families with children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

## Grants (continued)

dignity, and we are committed to being a model within philanthropy for supporting those who are too often marginalized from equal funding opportunities.

The appreciation for the evolution of that model is apparent in feedback received from grantees on GrantAdvisor.org, a website that solicits anonymous reviews from grantees. One reviewer in February 2020 shared:

*Mary's Pence is the most woman-focused funder we have encountered. They address social justice issues with none of the rigidity of other funders in that arena. Their approach is simple, logical and well-organized. They are incredibly accessible and supportive in their interactions with applicants but also in their funding processes...Our experience with Mary's Pence is the best we have had with any funder.*

#### Native Justice Coalition Manistee, Michigan

Founder and Executive Director: Cecelia Rose LaPointe

*Native Justice Coalition* is a platform for Native American people to find healing justice, racial justice, restorative justice, and gender justice. The *Anishinaabe Healing Stories on Racial Justice Program* works to break down the invisibility Native people experience in racial justice and social justice work through story sharing sessions. It provides a grassroots and community-based event that has a strong cultural foundation for the Anishinaabe communities in the area.



*Native Justice Coalition's Healing Stories Project emphasizes public story sharing on racism to bring voice and visibility to Native people and their communities.*

### Mary's Pence Welcomes New Grants Program Manager

Mary's Pence is happy to welcome and introduce Grace Gbolo as the newest member of our St. Paul-based team. Grace was hired as the Grants Program Manager in August.

With a background in advocacy, community organizing, and international education, Grace appreciates the opportunity to use her skills to help women-focused organizations create social change within their communities.



*Mary's Pence welcomes Grace Gbolo to the team as our new Grants Program Manager. She most recently served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Zambia.*

Having just participated in the selection process for Mary's Pence Fall 2020 grantees, Grace is now excited to connect with the grantees to better understand ways their staff and work can be supported throughout the upcoming year. She plans to continue with many of the same initiatives developed by her predecessor, including webinars and potential funding resource assistance, as well as explore new ways of supporting grantees.

The role, Grace says, combines both her personal and professional interests of contributing to social change and sustainability to ensure that diverse groups of women and girls are able to access funding for programs that, by their own design, promote dignity and justice for all.

Join us in a virtual meeting on December 3<sup>rd</sup> to learn more about our grant application process and funding priorities. Email [gracegbolo@maryspence.org](mailto:gracegbolo@maryspence.org) for more information.

Initial Funding Inquiries due January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020, required for invitation to apply for our February 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

### Standing in Solidarity With Women: How ESPERA Loans for Tienda Owners Generate Earned Income for Families and Safe Options for Communities

It was March 2020 and the coronavirus pandemic was beginning to hit El Salvador. The media and official communications in the country were issuing alerts encouraging the population to stay at home

Knowing that government-imposed quarantines were imminent and anticipating economic difficulties for both ESPERA partners and the women in their communities, the ESPERA team wanted to act quickly to provide as much assistance as possible. The question was: *What could they do to most effectively respond?*

From the onset of the pandemic, one of the greatest difficulties facing people in El Salvador was the ability to purchase basic supplies. To address this problem, ESPERA staff Gilda Larios, Eva Martinez and Brenda Valladares decided to support local tiendas owned by ESPERA women that could serve as supply centers for their communities. By stocking their tiendas with essential goods, it would eliminate the need for customers to travel farther away to larger markets.

The ESPERA team developed a distribution plan that would eventually work with 5 tiendas owned by ESPERA women in 5 different towns. The plan provided each woman with a \$300 interest-free loan from ESPERA to purchase the most essential supplies to meet the demand of people quarantined to their homes.

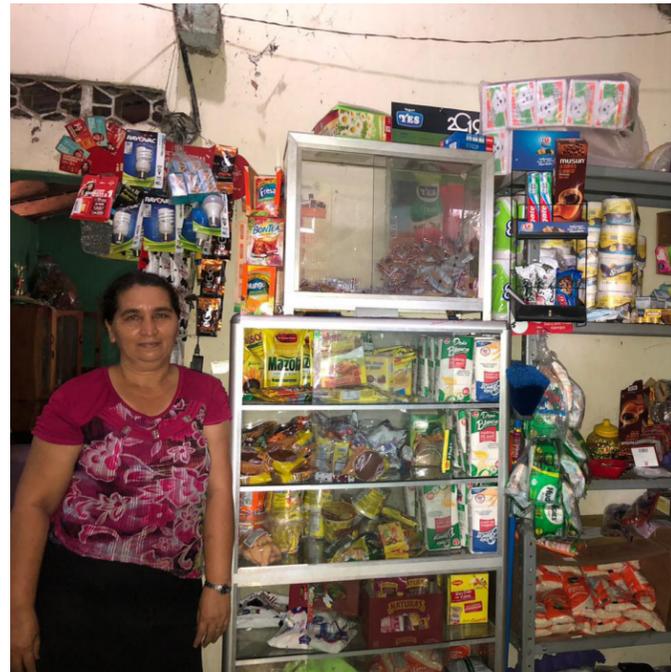
Initially the program supported 2 tiendas located in La Mora and El Sitio Zapotal in alliance with Concertación de Mujeres de Suchitoto, an ESPERA partner in Suchitoto, El Salvador. The 2 women who own the small stores created a list of products they needed to best serve their communities' needs, and ESPERA helped to obtain the most urgent items to stock the women's tiendas.

Soon after, a third tienda was added to the program, this time in El Aceituno. The 3 ESPERA participants-Carolina Martínez, Mirna López and Aída Castro-worked to keep close administrative records and share their experiences of implementing the distribution plan.

As a result of the program, people in the communities could rely on the tiendas to buy their supplies locally. They didn't have to venture far from their homes to purchase essential supplies, which allowed them to respect the enforced quarantine measures and avoid an increased risk of contracting COVID-19. In addition, they spent their money locally and the increased sales at the tiendas provided a

steady income for the ESPERA women and their families.

Eventually 2 more tiendas owned by ESPERA women joined the initiative. Ofelia Velázquez and Lourdes Castellano each received interest-free loans to purchase more supplies for their stores. They followed the same guidelines that the ESPERA team set forth to benefit the tienda owners and their communities. ESPERA staff continue to communicate with all of the participating small business owners.



*Ofelia Velázquez purchased more supplies for her tienda with an interest-free loan from ESPERA.*

The loans from ESPERA have done much more than provide steady incomes and fully stocked shelves for owners; they have offered new opportunities and created stronger communities in times of hardship.

In the spirit of accompaniment and solidarity, Gilda, Brenda and Eva set aside time to talk with ESPERA women and learn about the reality of their struggles. Despite the anxiety and uncertainty ESPERA women are experiencing, they stand in solidarity with one another, confident that together they can create better opportunities for everyone.

*Written by ESPERA staff Eva Martinez and Brenda Valladares with interpretive translations by Mariana Amescua, Treasurer of Mary's Pence Board of Directors.*

# Welcome

### Fall 2020 Mary's Pence Grantees!

#### Ayada Leads

*Minneapolis, Minnesota*

**Ayada Leads** empowers all women, specifically first and second generation East African immigrants, to become engaged citizens and community leaders, regardless of political affiliation.

#### CloseKnit

*Minneapolis, Minnesota*

Prioritizing the deep need for human connection and belonging, **CloseKnit** catalyzes system change for youth facing homelessness by facilitating lasting relationships with caring adults to fortify life-giving connections.

#### The Don't Look Back Center

*Aurora, Colorado*

**The Don't Look Back Center** serves justice-involved women and trans women by helping them to develop life skills to rebuild their lives from the grip of addiction, trauma, PTSD, & domestic violence.

#### Heartspark Press

*Olympia, Washington*

Dedicated to supporting and developing the creative voices of transgender girls, transgender women, and non-binary people, **Heartspark Press** amplifies their life experiences through storytelling and book publishing.

#### Immigrant Rights Action

*Doylestown, Pennsylvania*

**Immigrant Rights Action** is a neighborhood collective that documents ICE activity and advocates for undocumented immigrants who have been detained or are at risk of deportation.

#### Institute for Research on Male Supremacism

*Berkeley, California*

**IRMS** unites organizers to address male supremacy and its intersections with racism, xenophobia, and transphobia movements, and educates the public about it.

#### Pennsylvania Domestic Workers Alliance

*Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

A worker-led organization, **PDWA** empowers low-income women of color and immigrant women to win workplace protections and to ensure all work is dignified and safe.

#### Planting People Growing Justice

*St. Paul, Minnesota*

**PPGJLI** offers leadership development for women by providing the tools necessary to advocate for social change and uses community outreach to form alliances.

#### Refugee Community Partnership

*Carrboro, North Carolina*

Through long term relationship-based support, language justice, and cultural stewardship, **RCP** builds vibrant, protective ecosystems of opportunities, resources, and relationships, while forging transformative solidarity among neighbors.

#### Women in Science and Engineering at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

*Cold Spring Harbor, New York*

**WiSE** is a grassroots network of scientists working to build a more supportive, collaborative and equal scientific community by focusing on the gender disparity in the sciences.



*WiSE's annual in-house retreat welcomes scientists-in-training at CSHL to attend lectures given by WiSE board members and invited guest speakers on gender disparity.*

#### Working Group on Girls of Schenectady

*Schenectady, New York*

**WGGS** helps middle school and high school girls build meaningful connections for healthy relationships and successful futures by providing social and emotional support to develop their own voices.

#### Youth Activism Project

*Washington, District of Columbia*

**Youth Activism Project** fosters teen-led advocacy campaigns to normalize young people's participation in decision-making processes by providing access to leadership and advocacy training for teens.

## St. Paul, Minnesota Staff

**Katherine Wojtan**  
*Executive Director*

**Kaye Cassidy**  
*Ignatian Volunteer*

**Laura Berglund**  
*St. Joseph Worker*

**Grace Gbolo**  
*Grants Program Manager*

**Christine Lian**  
*Office Coordinator*

**Sarah Mechtenberg**  
*Development and Communications Manager*

**Nadine Sehnert**  
*Bookkeeper*

## Central America & Mexico Staff

**Gilda Larios**  
*ESPERA Team Lead*

**Eva Martinez**  
*ESPERA Promoter*

**Brenda Valladares Escobar**  
*ESPERA Business Facilitator*

## Board Members

**Carol Fendt, PhD – Chair**  
*Chicago, Illinois*

**Amanda Steepleton – Associate Chair**  
*Minneapolis, Minnesota*

**Mariana Amescua – Treasurer**  
*Mexico City, Mexico*

**Meg Olson – Secretary**  
*Washington, D.C.*

**Sister Barbara Battista, SP**  
*Terre Haute, Indiana*

**Sister Julie Fertsch, SSJ**  
*Los Angeles, California*

**Rita Lampe, LCSW**  
*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

## Ways to Support Mary's Pence

### Legacy Giving

Members of the Mary's Pence Legacy Circle are committed to supporting women's work for justice for generations to come by naming Mary's Pence as a full or partial beneficiary of their will or trust.

Deborah Amatulli  
Marie Andrews  
Lucille Bernier  
Marie Hogarty  
Consilia Karli  
Mary Ellen McCarthy  
Roxanne Meshar  
Genevieve O'Hara\*  
Constance Miriam O'Hearn  
Barbara and Jack Reis  
Patricia Clemens Repikoff  
Judith R. Schiavo  
Mary Pat Sullivan  
Maureen Tilley\*

Bastiaan and Johanna Vanden Berg\*  
and 32 anonymous members

*\*indicates those who have passed away.*

To learn about legacy giving or other types of planned gifts, like Qualified Charitable Distributions or stock donations, please visit:

[www.maryspence.org/ways-to-help/planned-giving](http://www.maryspence.org/ways-to-help/planned-giving)

### Compañera Monthly Giving

Compañeras are people who stand in solidarity with women by making monthly donations at a level that is meaningful to them. This convenient way to donate ensures sustaining support for Mary's Pence programs. To join, please visit:

[www.maryspence.org/ways-to-help/companeras](http://www.maryspence.org/ways-to-help/companeras)

### Are You a Part of a Women's Religious Congregation – Sister or Associate?

Women religious were among the founders of Mary's Pence, and many congregations have supported us through the years. If you are a Religious or an Associate, we'd love to connect with you to explore grant or funding opportunities that your congregation has available. Many congregations require that a person connected to them provides a reference, and this is a special way for you to support Mary's Pence. Please email us at [inbox@maryspence.org](mailto:inbox@maryspence.org) if you can help.