



# IMPACT REPORT 2023

STANDING FOR THE RIGHTS AND EMPOWERMENT OF ALL WOMEN.



## PLENTY DOORS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTER: EMPOWERING APSÁALOOKÉ WOMEN, BUILDING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Charlene Johnson, Crow Tribal Member, wanted to spend her career making her people healthier. While she began as a nutritionist with the Indian Health Service, she quickly realized that true health goes well beyond food. It's about stable economies for families and communities, affordable housing, clean environments, social support, and healthcare. After retiring, she founded Plenty Doors Community Development Corporation, a nonprofit focused on community economic development and a Women's Foundation of Montana (WFM) grantee. Charlene's vision is a healthy community where Apsáalooké people can maintain and celebrate their uniqueness while using their skills and talents to be successful in a major economy.

Since its founding in 2018, Plenty Doors has provided technical assistance to small businesses, financial literacy and wealth management classes, and water sanitation projects. In 2021, Plenty Doors established a Community Development Financial Institute (CDFI) to offer small business loans, and in 2013 started offering Individual Development Accounts that help people reduce debt, save for education, purchase a home, or start a business. CDFIs exist to better the economic conditions in markets underserved by traditional financial institutions, private investors, and mainstream philanthropy.

Crow Agency hasn't had a new building in over 20 years. Plenty Doors knows physical infrastructure is needed to

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Top photos of Plenty Doors staff (left to right): (1) Carla Catolster, Jacy Hogan, Charlene Johnson, Joen White, (2) Roberta Glenn, Zac Birdinground, Wesley Stops (3) Plans for Crow Innovation Center, (4) Jonathan Jefferson, Charlene Johnson, Lesley Kabotie (Facilitator), Roberta Glenn, Teatta Plainfeather, Jacy Hogan, Charitina Fritzler, Wesley Stops



*Plans for the Crow Innovation Center. 7 Directions Architects and Planners.*

support new businesses, so they purchased and are renovating an existing facility as they design and construct the Crow Innovation Center. The Crow Innovation Center, scheduled to be completed in 2026, will incubate businesses, provide meeting and training spaces, host a market space, commercial kitchen, and vendor areas, and have office space for the Plenty Doors loan and technical assistance staff. Plenty Doors is creating the physical infrastructure needed to nurture the potential of every individual in their community.

The heart of Plenty Doors resides in its team. The 13-person staff (full and part-time), predominantly women, is a group of strong and dedicated people. “They support businesses in a way that considers the specific situation of the people and how we can help them be successful. They are doers. Our whole crew comes together to support each program lead to stand up a successful program,” Charlene says of the Plenty Doors team.

In the Native CDFI industry, women play integral leadership roles, holding 72% of leadership positions. They are modeling more inclusive and just financial institutions.

Plenty Door’s impact is immediate and profound. In two years, they have created nine good jobs, created space, and provided support for three new businesses and one new non-profit to thrive in Crow Agency. They have quadrupled the number of clients and are keeping money in the local economy.

Under Charlene’s leadership, Plenty Doors wants to impact Apsáalooké traditional lands, extending far beyond the current Crow Reservation boundaries. Native CDFIs know how to ensure sustainable, long-lasting economic change that doesn’t compromise cultural values. Plenty Doors is looking for partners that recognize the numerous opportunities for investments in infrastructure and the untapped potential in their community. WFM is honored to partner with Plenty Doors as they provide education, training, fulfilling work, and access to capital for women. We are inspired by Charlene’s leadership as she cultivates new, equitable, approaches to finance.

## What is a CDFI?

Historically, access to basic financial services, affordable credit, and investment capital has been limited for low-income communities and individuals. Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) exist to better the economic conditions in markets underserved by traditional financial institutions, private investors, and mainstream philanthropy.

Native CDFIs promote a relationship based, holistic approach to business and economic development.

The Mountain | Plains Regional Native CDFI Coalition, formed in March 2020, comprises nine Native-led CDFIs supporting Native households and businesses in North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana. Seven of nine Coalition members are led by Native women.

- [Akiptan \(SD\)](#)
- [Black Hills Community Loan Fund \(SD\)](#)
- [Four Bands Community Fund \(SD\)](#)
- [Montana Native Growth Fund \(MT\)](#)
- [Wind River Development Fund \(WY\)](#)
- [NACDC Financial Services \(MT\)](#)
- [Plenty Doors Community Development Corporation \(MT\)](#)
- [Native American Development Corporation \(MT\)](#)
- [People’s Partner for Community Development \(MT\)](#)

# GRANTEE HIGHLIGHT: INSPIRE. ENGAGE. MOBILIZE!



*Montana Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence (MCADSV) is a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations working together to uproot violence and oppression in order to end domestic and sexual violence in Montana.*

Coalitions and support organizations are essential to the nonprofit sector. They bring funding to other nonprofits, connect organizations to one another, disseminate vital information, foster communication, and mobilize organizations for advocacy. MCADSV plays a vital and often unseen role in Montana.

## FOSTER COLLABORATION:

MCADSV prioritizes authentic relationship-building, empowers local programs, and creates a unified front. Through shared resources, skill-building, and strategic advocacy, the coalition promotes a culture of collaboration that maximizes impact.

Victim services organizations benefit from working together through increased impact, resource sharing, unified advocacy, holistic support, enhanced visibility, capacity building, strategic planning, improved outreach, innovation, and mutual support.

## MOBOLIZE FOR ADVOCACY:

The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Fund provides federal support to state and local programs that assist victims of crime. VOCA grants have decreased in small amounts over the last several years and in 2023, Montana programs faced a 40-50% cut in services, disproportionately affecting rural victim services programs. Cuts would make programs unsustainable, causing many to shut their doors.

MCADSV engaged their membership organizations including Domestic and Sexual Violence Services of Carbon County (DSVS), and jumped into action to address this financial threat to serving survivors in Montana. DSVS Co-Director, Jenn Battles, spoke about the value of the Coalition this way, "One of the Coalition's most important roles is to alert our organizations to proposed policy changes that affect survivors and assist us in developing strategies we can execute together to respond – their work amplifies our message and our missions in legislative spaces."

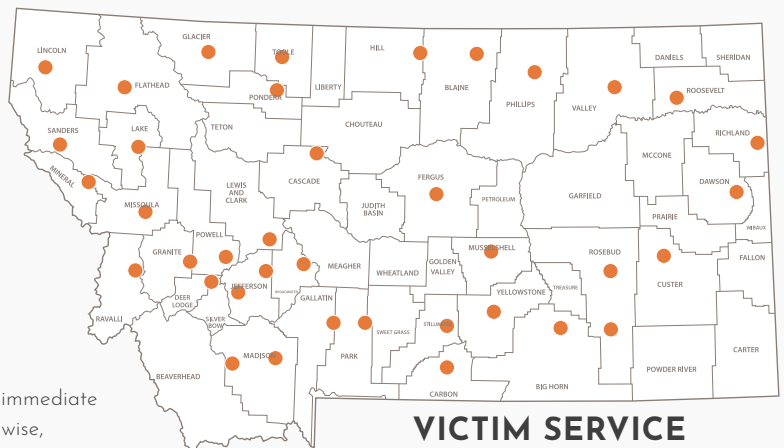
With MCADSV's expertise and leadership, domestic and sexual violence organizations from across Montana, including DSVS, knew to focus their precious time and resources during the 2023 Montana State Legislature on helping legislators correct their assumptions that victim services are fully funded and will always be available to those in need. MCADSV and their members made a compelling case to their representatives and secured \$4 million in one-time-only funding from the state, primarily working with women legislators serving on the Senate Finance and Claims and House Appropriations Budget Committee. Montana is one of a handful of states that does not permanently allocate a portion of their state budget to supporting survivors. MCADSV will work to renew funding to support survivors during the 2025 legislative session.

*"The work of the coalition, at a very tangible level, helps to ensure people are leading safer lives in Montana. It helps us leverage resources so more MTs are leading safer lives. And we need all the help we can get. I don't think you can put a value on that."*

—JENN BATTLES, DSVS Co-Director



MCADSV **does not** provide direct services. If you are in immediate danger, **call 911** and ask for emergency assistance. Otherwise, please contact your local program to learn about their services.



**VICTIM SERVICE  
PROGRAM LOCATIONS**





# ADVOCACY UPDATE



Robin Turner and Kylie Gursky

The 2023 Montana Legislative Session reflected a new and complex political landscape for WFM grantee priorities. WFM grantees faced challenges that required them to devote capacity to defend direct

attacks on sexual and reproductive rights, LGBTQ and trans communities, those on public assistance, and tribal sovereignty. During the 2023 session, WFM supported grantees around two primary priorities – child care and reproductive healthcare. We are grateful to Robin Turner, a dedicated and skillful advocate for women, children, and families, who worked alongside WFM grantees on legislative priorities.

We are proud to share the following victories as reported by WFM grantees.

## **CHILD CARE:**

This session, grantee the Montana Budget & Policy Center (MBPC) worked with the Montana Advocates for Children, a statewide coalition of child care providers and advocates to pass HB 648. This bill provides \$14 million to expand eligibility for the state's child care subsidy program to cover an additional 1,500 children, cap copay levels for 3,000 families on lower incomes currently, and stabilize

reimbursement payments for roughly 800 child care businesses. HB 648 represents the first meaningful state investment in child care beyond the federally required state matching funds.

## **REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE:**

Planned Parenthood and partner organizations worked to pass HB302 to ensure insurance covers a 12-month supply of birth. It's crucial to emphasize that legal and safe abortion care remains accessible in Montana, unaffected by recent legislative changes, and Medicaid recipients can continue to utilize benefits for abortion care.

## **FUNDING FOR VICTIM SERVICES:**

In the 2023 Legislative Session, Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCADSV), local victim services programs, and partners secured \$4 million in state funding, offsetting federal cuts and preserving vital programs for addressing violence against women. This funding will need to be renewed in 2025.

## **PAID LEAVE PROGRESS:**

MBPC led the efforts to push for paid leave, crafting the legislation to establish a statewide family and medical leave insurance program and gaining bipartisan support in committee. MBPC and partners will utilize the interim period to continue to gain support for the legislation leading into the 2025 session.

# 2023 Women's Foundation of Montana Grantees



Photo Credit: Yellow Bird Life Ways

## CREATING FINANCIAL STABILITY

Our grantees create access to education, training, capital, and fulfilling work with a livable wage and quality benefits.

- Code Girls United, (Kalispell, serves statewide) \$10,000
- Mountain | Plains Regional Native CDFI Coalition \$125,000
- Montana Native Growth Fund (Hays) \$2,500
- NACDC Financial Services Inc. (Browning) \$2,500
- Native American Development Corporation (Billings) \$2,500
- People's Partner for Community Development (Lame Deer) \$2,500
- Plenty Doors Community Development Corporation (Crow Agency) \$2,500
- Rocky Mountain Women's Business Center (Billings, serves statewide) \$10,000

## BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES

Our grantees provide direct services to meet basic needs including housing, nutrition, safety, and financial stability. They advocate for public policies that strengthen the social safety net, improve the availability of affordable childcare, and increase access to healthcare.

- Calling Our Spirits Forward (Lame Deer) \$1,000
- Domestic and Sexual Violence Services of Carbon County (Red Lodge) \$10,000
- Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies: The Montana Coalition (Helena, serves statewide) \$10,000
- Montana Budget & Policy Center (Helena, serves statewide) \$10,000
- Mountain Home Montana (Missoula) \$10,000
- Women's Resource Center of Dillon \$1,000
- YWCA Helena \$10,000

## DEVELOPING POWERFUL LEADERS

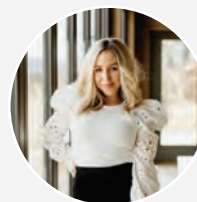
Our grantees increase leadership skills and opportunities for women and the participation of women in policy advocacy.

- Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (Helena, serves statewide) \$10,000
- National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (Lame Deer) \$10,000
- Planned Parenthood Advocates of Montana (Billings, serves statewide) \$10,000
- Pretty Eaglewoman Resource Foundation (Lame Deer) \$10,000
- Red Ants Pants Foundation (White Sulphur Springs, serves statewide) \$10,000
- Yellow Bird Life Ways (Lame Deer) \$10,000

## NOTE FROM A WFM COMMITTEE MEMBER

"Over the 9 years I served on the WFM Advisory Committee, my favorite work was establishing the Powerhouse Montana Program, working with women all over the state through a network of mutual support.

I believe in the work we are doing collectively at WFM, I love connecting with incredible people with the same vision for helping women and girls in our great state."

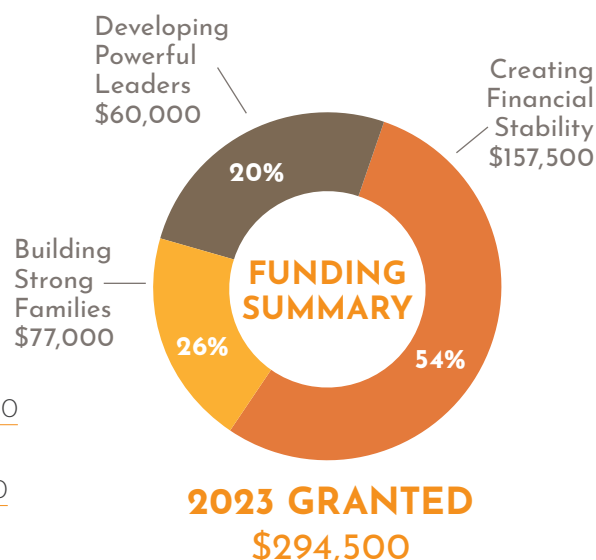


**HILLARY FOLKVORD**  
WFM Committee  
Member 2012-2023

## WFM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Amy Allison Thompson, *Chair (Missoula)*  
Jayne Morrow, *Vice-Chair (Chinook)\**  
Hillary Folkvord (Bozeman)\*  
Barbara Bessette (Great Falls)\*  
Erica McKeon-Hanson (Havre)  
Barbara Stiffarm (Harlem)  
Ashlie Wise (Kalispell)  
Karen Latka, *MCF Board Liaison (Helena)*

\* Outgoing Advisory Committee Members







## THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

*Women's Foundation of Montana gratefully acknowledges the significant contributions of our friends and supporters.*

*WFM annual and planned givers from November 1, 2022 - December 31, 2023.*

Anonymous (6)  
Sandra Anderson  
Sidney Armstrong  
Kelly and Steve Bruggeman  
Kelsey Butcka  
Lynda Caine  
Linda Carlson  
Eileen Carney  
Susan Carstensen and Larry Haferman  
Gail Carter  
Cathy and Ned Cooney \*  
Mary Craigle  
Cheryl Crawley  
Crowley Fleck PLLP  
Kristina and Maxon Davis  
Catherine and Bruce Day  
Dr. Janet Dietrich and Daniel Erikson  
Donald & Carol Roberts Fdn  
in Memory of Virginia K. Weston  
Dr. Diana Eck  
Jo Ann Eder \*  
Jennifer Euell and John Calsbeek  
Tom Facey and Maureen O'Malley  
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*\*Montana Community Foundation Legacy Society Members*

## ABOUT THE WOMEN'S FOUNDATION OF MONTANA

The Women's Foundation of Montana supports positive systemic change that benefits women and girls through strategic grantmaking, policy change advocacy, and WFM-led initiatives.



### GET IN TOUCH:

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Write: PO Box 1145 Helena, MT 59624