



**WOMEN'S FOUNDATION  
OF ALABAMA**

**2024**

**IMPACT  
REPORT**

# ABOUT US

## MISSION

Women's Foundation of Alabama is a community-driven foundation impacting the world around us by accelerating economic opportunity for women.

## VISION

We envision a society where power and possibility are not limited by gender, race, or place.

## VALUES

Insight, Advocacy, Impact, Equity, and Inclusion

## A Letter from Our Board Chair



As we reflect on an extraordinary year, I am filled with profound gratitude for each of you—our donors, partners, and advocates—who stand with Women's Foundation of Alabama in our unwavering mission to advance economic opportunity for women. Your generosity and commitment fuel our impact, ensuring that women across our state have the power to create lasting change.

This year marked a true watershed moment in our history. Together, **we raised nearly \$10 million through the Watershed Campaign**—the largest fundraising initiative in the Foundation's history. These transformational dollars will accelerate our mission in powerful ways: expanding access to high-quality child care, investing in workforce development for women across Alabama, and ensuring we can lead boldly on the policies that shape our lives. Because of your investment, we are not just building programs—we are building systems that empower women today and for generations to come.

**2024 was a milestone year for our organization**, marked by both progress and transition. We witnessed the incredible impact of our investments in women, celebrated groundbreaking policy wins, and expanded our reach to ensure that every woman in Alabama has the resources she needs to thrive. At the heart of this progress is our **outgoing President and CEO, Melanie R. Bridgeforth, MSW**, whose transformational leadership has positioned Women's Foundation of Alabama as the leading voice for women in our state. Under her guidance, we have grown in influence, deepened our impact, and ignited a movement that will carry forward for generations.

As we honor **Melanie's legacy**, we also celebrate you—our steadfast supporters. Your belief in our vision makes our work possible, and together, we are building a future where every woman in Alabama can reach her full potential.

With gratitude and anticipation for all that lies ahead,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lajuana Tucker Bradford". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**LAJUANA TUCKER BRADFORD, 2024 CHAIR**

Board of Directors

# A CHAMPION FOR WOMEN, A LEGACY THAT ENDURES

Six years ago, Melanie R. Bridgeforth, MSW stepped into leadership at Women's Foundation of Alabama with a bold vision: to build the state's most powerful philanthropic and leadership voice for women. Through her unwavering advocacy and transformational leadership, that vision became a movement—one that changed the trajectory of our organization, our state, and countless lives.

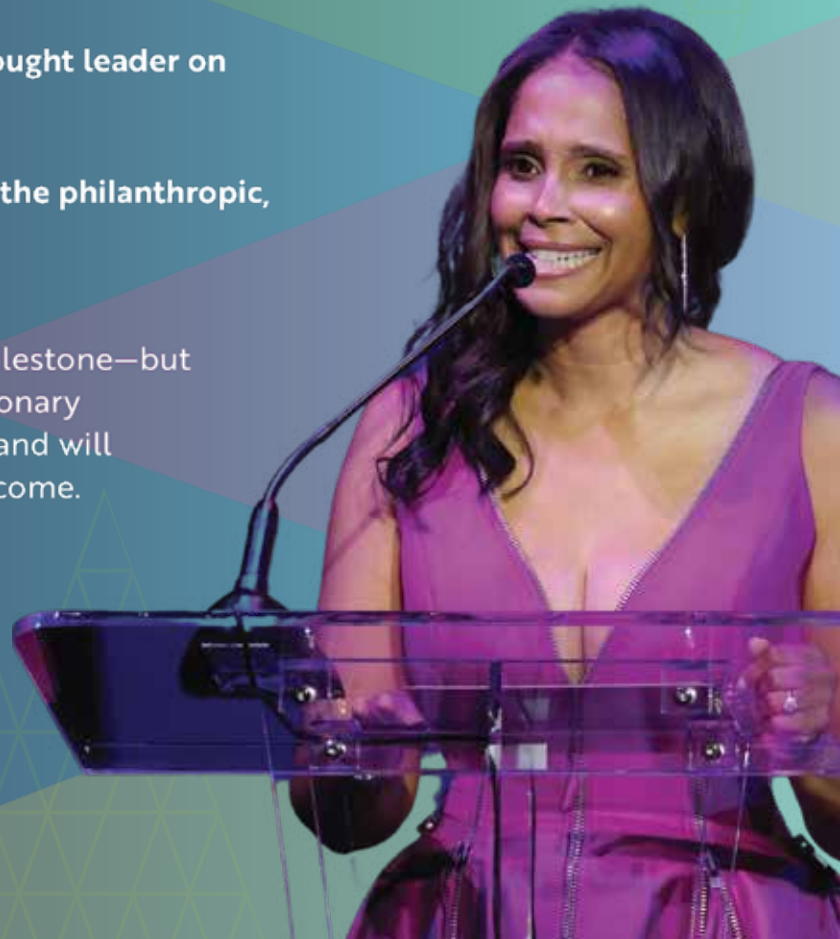


## LEGACY BY THE NUMBERS AND BEYOND:

- Led the Foundation's largest-ever capital campaign, raising nearly \$10 million through the Watershed Campaign to support child care, workforce training, and advocacy.
- Secured six major public policy wins, including Alabama's first Equal Pay Statute and a \$67.5M Child Care Tax Credit.
- Doubled annual grantmaking and expanded investments to women-serving organizations across 40+ counties.
- Positioned WFA as a trusted statewide thought leader on gender, race, and economic equity.
- Elevated WFA's voice and visibility across the philanthropic, corporate, and civic sectors.



Melanie's legacy is not defined by a single milestone—but by the movement she sparked. Her bold, visionary leadership is now embedded in WFA's DNA and will continue to fuel progress for generations to come.



# A YEAR OF MILESTONES & MEANINGFUL CHANGE

In 2024, Women's Foundation of Alabama made transformative strides, fueling change for women across the state through strategic investments, advocacy, and groundbreaking initiatives. Thanks to the generosity of our donors and partners, we've achieved unprecedented growth and impact in advancing women's leadership, economic mobility, and well-being.

## 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

- + Awarded \$500,000 in grants to 24 organizations across all 67 counties, impacting nearly 8,000 women and reaching over 305,000 Alabamians.
- + Launched a historic workforce initiative in partnership with the City of Birmingham, placing 250-300 women in high-demand healthcare careers.
- + Invested \$679,500 in the 2-Gen Community College Initiative, empowering 140 women to pursue high-wage careers in industries like welding, nursing, and construction.
- + Expanded childcare access and support through the Advancing Alabama Child Care Accelerator, impacting 425 new childcare seats and creating 50 new jobs.
- + Led the passage of the 2024 Child Care Tax Credit bill, ensuring increased access to high-quality childcare and driving workforce growth for women and families.
- + Engaged 335 attendees at the Clearing the Path 2024 event, spotlighting the vital link between childcare access and workforce participation.



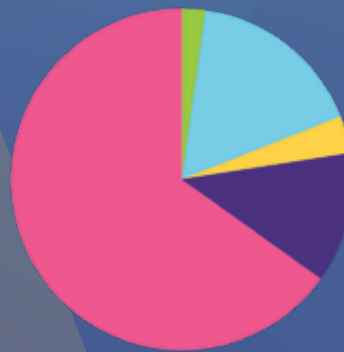
## 2024 EXPENSES



GRANTMAKING	\$2,113,443.64
RESEARCH	\$185,046.30
ADVOCACY	\$214,177.65
DEVELOPMENT	\$161,489.64
ADMINISTRATIVE	\$1,528,908.66

**EXPENSE TOTAL**  
**\$4,203,065.89**

## 2024 INCOME



CORPORATE	\$133,114.66
FOUNDATIONS	\$1,011,621.94
EVENT INCOME	\$213,420.78
INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$745,656.04
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN	\$3,927,892.11

**INCOME TOTAL**  
**\$6,031,705.53**

# RESEARCH & ADVOCACY:

DRIVING SYSTEMIC CHANGE FOR ALABAMA'S WOMEN

## CLEARING THE PATH 2024: *THE BUSINESS CASE FOR CHILDCARE*



Our signature research event, **Clearing the Path**, reached new heights in 2024. With a record-breaking **335 attendees**, this year's convening focused on the **critical intersection of child care and workforce development**—highlighting how access to quality, affordable child care fuels labor force participation and economic growth. Featuring **U.S. Chamber of Commerce EVP Michelle Russo** and **Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth**, the event reinforced the urgent need for investment in child care as an economic necessity.

## HISTORIC CHILD CARE TAX CREDIT VICTORY

After years of dedicated research, advocacy, and coalition-building, we secured a historic **bipartisan legislative victory**: the passage of the **2024 Child Care Tax Credit (CCTC) bill**. Introduced in 2023, this landmark legislation was passed unanimously in both chambers and signed into law on **May 9, 2024**.

Crafted in collaboration with key partners, including **Manufacture Alabama** and the **Business Council of Alabama**, the bill was a centerpiece of the Governor's **"Working for Alabama"** workforce package. **The CCTC law establishes two tax credits**—one for employers expanding child care access for employees and another for high-quality child care programs—along with grants for nonprofit providers. By reducing barriers to child care, this legislation will unlock workforce potential, particularly for women and working families.



### *Shifting the Conversation for Women*

65+ earned news media mentions  
230,000+ social media impressions  
125,000+ newsletter engagements

### GRANTEES:



## A YEAR OF PROGRESS: **WOMEN LEADING, ADVOCATING, AND THRIVING**

In 2024, Women's Foundation of Alabama was on the ground, mobilizing, advocating, and celebrating the power of women across the state.

### CAPITOL HEELS ADVOCACY DAY

More than 150 advocates, policymakers, and community leaders gathered for our sixth annual Capitol Heels event to advance the Child Care Tax Credit. The day included an issue briefing with **Representatives Barbara Drummond and Terri Collins**, a rally led by House Speaker Nathaniel Ledbetter and Minority Leader Anthony Daniels, and a grassroots panel featuring WPI alumni. Together, we strengthened the movement for high-quality, accessible child care.



### WOMEN'S POLICY INSTITUTE

The 2024 Women's Policy Institute (WPI) Fellowship welcomed our largest and most diverse class yet—37 fellows from 14 counties, ages 23–55. Over seven months, they explored key issues like economic mobility, maternal health, and Medicaid expansion, culminating in a powerful graduation where they presented real policy solutions to experts. These leaders are shaping Alabama's future.

### UNLEASHED 2024

*Unleashed*, presented by Renasant Bank, raised \$297,187 to fuel women's leadership and philanthropy across Alabama, featuring inspiring voices like **Barbara Pierce Bush** and **Michelle Miller**. More than a fundraiser, *Unleashed* spotlighted real stories of impact—from Kelly Weeks forging a new path in welding to Rachel Holifield's early learning center launch—*Unleashed* became a rallying point for change.



# PHILANTHROPY IN ACTION

## THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE GENEROSITY

Through the power of collective giving, Women's Foundation of Alabama's Giving Circles are fueling change across the state. In 2024, Morgan County Giving Circle, Society of Clotilda, and The Brilliant Black Girl Collective mobilized over \$63,000 to fund grassroots initiatives, provide scholarships for young women, and support local nonprofits—demonstrating that when women come together, their generosity creates lasting impact in their communities.

## COMPETITIVE GRANTMAKING: INVESTING IN IMPACT



Through our competitive grant cycle, we awarded \$500,000 in funding to 24 organizations, selected from 109 applicants requesting over \$4.3 million in support. These grants are expected to directly impact nearly 8,000 women, with policy efforts potentially benefiting 147,000 more and a ripple effect touching over 305,000 Alabamians.

Our grants span all 67 counties and focus on two key areas:

- Women & Leadership (8 grants) – Elevating women's voices, representation, and opportunities.
- Women & Well-being (16 grants) – Advancing economic security, healthcare, and safety.

## EXPANDING WORKFORCE PATHWAYS

Our Good Jobs Challenge partnership with the City of Birmingham is fueling a historic workforce initiative. As a sub-awardee of the \$10.8 million Good Jobs Challenge grant, we are funding training and support services to place 250-300 women in high-demand healthcare careers. This work ensures women not only secure jobs but thrive in family-sustaining careers with competitive wages, benefits, and pathways for advancement.

Through our 2-Gen Community College Initiative, we awarded a historic \$679,500 in funding to support women pursuing high-wage careers. By addressing barriers like childcare and transportation, we are helping 140 women access credentialing programs in CDL, welding, construction, and nursing—industries critical to Alabama's future.

## ADVANCING ALABAMA CHILDCARE ACCELERATOR: A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN SOLUTION

Quality childcare is essential for a thriving workforce. Through the Advancing Alabama Child Care Accelerator, we are empowering women entrepreneurs to expand high-quality child care options while strengthening their businesses.

- Cohort 1 & 2 Impact: 23 women graduated, expanding up to 425 new child care seats and creating an estimated 50 new jobs.
- Sustained Growth: Since completing the program, 3 new centers have opened, 1 has expanded, and 2 more are set to open in 2025.



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