In 2011 the Nobel Prize for Peace was awarded to three women, each a political activist. In making their selection, the Committee noted:

“We cannot achieve democracy and lasting peace in the world unless women obtain the same opportunities as men to influence developments at all levels of society.”

Our 2011 grantees are doing the hard work of ensuring that one day we will in fact achieve full equality for women as well as democracy and lasting peace through their work on such crucial issues as human trafficking, reproductive rights, preserving access to early childhood education, and safe, affordable housing. In keeping with Valentine’s core mission, they share a dedication to meaningful, lasting, social change for women and girls. Along with our grantees, our 2011 Visionary Leaders have chosen leadership development opportunities which will position them to become even more powerful advocates for the rights of women and girls.

This year marks the third year of our adoption of the Women’s Funding Network’s “Social Change Indicators,” (SCI) and the completion of our first foray into multi-year grantmaking. We’ve been energized by the clarity that the use of the SCI provides, and gratified by the accomplishments of our multi-year grantees.

The coming year will see changes in the Valentine Foundation Board. After serving two three-years terms, Linda White, Chair from 2009-2011 and I rotate off the Board. While Linda and I will both miss the Board, we are thrilled to be welcoming Tara Jones and Laura Morris as our newest Board members.

Grantmaking is a profound responsibility. I have been awed by my colleagues on the Board, and by the wise guidance provided by our Executive Director, Alexandra Frazier. I salute all our grantees, and am grateful to have been a part of the Foundation’s important work.

Peggy L. Curchack, Chair

EXCITING CHANGES IN THE VALENTINE FUND FOR VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

Just as the Foundation’s approach to our general grantmaking evolved with the adoption of the Social Change Indicators, the Valentine Fund for Visionary Leadership has evolved as well. In 2011 we instituted a new strategy for grantmaking around leadership. While maintaining our initial vision to: “strengthen the organizations that improve the lives of women and girls in the great Philadelphia region by making current women leaders more effective, developing the next generation of women leaders, and fostering a community of women leaders” we moved from limiting our funding to attendance at three specific leadership training programs to accepting applications to any leadership training initiative that applicants identify as being useful to them. Organizations can nominate a staff member to attend a conference and workshop, take a college or university leadership training course, and/or participate in formal leadership training programs; as long as it is relevant to building leadership skills, we welcome the application!

This new approach gives us, and our applicants, a more nuanced approach to grantmaking around leadership training. By allowing women staff of local women and girl-centered nonprofits to identify their specific leadership needs and select the program the most appropriately addresses those needs, the Fund for Visionary Leadership is truly visionary, and will have a lasting impact on the leadership capacity of organizations throughout the region.

We sincerely appreciate the generosity of the 2011 donors to the Visionary Leadership Fund:

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