

Wheeling Heritage, Women's Giving Circle Partner to Benefit Female Entrepreneurs

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WHEELING, W.Va. – Dec. 10, 2019 – Wheeling Heritage is seeking female entrepreneurs for its next Show of Hands event on Jan. 22. The organization has partnered with the Women's Giving Circle in an effort to benefit women-owned businesses. With a \$3,000 contribution from the Women's Giving Circle, the winner will leave with more than \$7,000 – the largest Show of Hands prize yet.

Show of Hands applications are due by Jan. 3, 2020, and can be completed at wheelingheritage.org/show-of-hands. A committee will review applications, and four will be chosen to move on to the presentation round.

The Women's Giving Circle, a group of women that raises funds to support other women through philanthropy, has made a \$5,000 donation to Wheeling Heritage's entrepreneur programs. Three-thousand will go to the next winner of Show of Hands, and \$2,000 will go to female applicants' participation in CO.STARTERS, an entrepreneur-training program. The next CO.STARTERS session is set to begin in March, and applications are available at wheelingheritage.org/costarters.

"The Women's Giving Circle strives to empower women and girls in the Upper Ohio Valley through its strategic grantmaking. One area where we felt we could do more is in economic development," said Suzanne Rohrig Gaiser, president of the Women's Giving Circle. "Contributing to programs that empower female entrepreneurs, like Show of Hands and CO.STARTERS, is just another way that we are helping to improve the lives of women in the region."

According to the Small Business Administration, women-owned businesses employ over 8.4 million workers and generate \$264 billion in payroll. Almost all women-owned businesses are considered small businesses, with fewer than 500 employees.

"We're hoping to bring attention to women who are looking to either open or expand their business in the Wheeling area," said Alex Weld, director of operations at Wheeling Heritage. "Small businesses are an integral part of West Virginia's economy, and the percentage of small businesses owned by women is increasing. We're excited for the opportunity to have a larger conversation about this changing business landscape, while also highlighting four women-owned businesses and ultimately awarding one with an impactful cash award."

At Show of Hands, four presenters explain their ideas to community members in attendance. Attendees vote on their favorite, and the presenter who receives the most votes will receive \$7,000, plus door donations, to put towards the project.

The next Show of Hands event is scheduled for Jan. 22 at 6 p.m. on the third floor of the Artisan Center, located at 1400 Main Street in Wheeling. Attendees pay \$5 at the door, which is added to the winner's prize.

To date, Show of Hands has given more than \$64,000 to 22 projects. Recent winners include SMART Centre Market, who is using the award for new, eye-catching signage, and Hangover BBQ, who used the funding for new equipment.

Orrick, the program's corporate sponsor, donates \$1,000 for each event. The Friends of Show of Hands, which consists of community members and business owners, also contribute to each event.

About Wheeling Heritage:

[Wheeling Heritage](#) is a catalyst for the revitalization of Wheeling. Through historic preservation, community development, and the arts, we help to tell Wheeling's story and shape its future. We seek to improve the quality of life in Wheeling by preserving and investing in our city, collaborating with others, and engaging the citizens of Wheeling in our work.