

How Did We Support Montana Women and Girls in 2021?

We Advocated



During the 2021 Montana legislative session, WFM advocated in support of increased access to quality childcare and paid family and medical leave. House Bill 624 would have established a task force of business leaders to make recommendations to improve childcare access and affordability for employees. House Bill 228 would have passed the FAMILY Act, a paid family and medical leave plan. Though neither of these passed into law, WFM continues to join in advocating on these issues with our partners to create a more equitable state where women and girls have what they need to succeed.

We Built Resources

This year, WFM benefitted from the generosity of two legacy gifts to make lasting impact in Montana and triple WFM's resources. WFM was honored to be the recipient of a \$1.1 million gift from the estate of Mardele Maryott, a music teacher from Red Lodge with a passion for her community.

Another donor has committed a \$1 million estate gift to support WFM after her passing.



Meet Mardele

Mardele Maryott was born and raised in Red Lodge. Upon graduating high school, she moved to the Midwest to pursue her love of music and earn a bachelor's degree in piano performance and later a master's degree. "She did a teaching stint in Mississippi after her education but her beloved Montana was beckoning her back. She loved the Montana mountains." Mardele shared her love of music with hundreds of students and will be remembered for kindness and love of people.

We Listened



Montana Women, Work, & COVID-19

With a dramatically different landscape for gender equity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we listened to the changing needs of Montana women. We hosted 2 webinars with 5 leaders from across the state, interviewed women from 8 communities, facilitated 6 focus groups, and are collecting surveys from women across the state. The results showed the incredible capacity of women to care for their loved ones and their communities, the continued struggle to find a new "normal," and a desire to find hope and connection with others across our state. The results of these conversations will also inform our programs in 2022. Stay tuned!



WFM Welcomes New Program Officer, Kylie Gursky

Kylie joined WFM as the new Program Officer in May of 2021. Kylie has over 15 years of experience in the nonprofit industry. Before joining WFM, Kylie served as Deputy Director at Montana Women Vote. She also previously worked at the Montana Human Rights Network and the Social Justice Fund (Seattle). Kylie holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science, Economics, and Philosophy. She also received a professional certificate in Nonprofit Administration from the University of Montana.



The Women's Entrepreneurship and Leadership Lab Women's Business Center (W.E.L.L. WBC) was launched this year and WFM was excited to be able to support the new center. W.E.L.L. WBC is headquartered in Missoula, based out of MonTEC, and serves women business owners statewide with a specific focus on supporting Indigenous and rural women entrepreneurs. W.E.L.L. WBC offers an online community, a series of online courses, business counseling, and in-person community-based events. Ashley Metesh-McCoy is the Program Manager and has a deep passion for helping women entrepreneurs succeed at all levels and is always looking for ways to contribute to the rising tide of women-owned businesses. The disadvantages women face in starting and maintaining small businesses- along with the hardships of COVID-19- will make the center more beneficial than ever. We are honored to partner with W.E.L.L. WBC to support women in Montana as they start and grow businesses that support themselves, their families, and benefit their communities. Learn more about W.E.L.L. WBC at www.wellwbc.org.

Grantee Highlight

Thank you for investing in Montana women and girls

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Gail Carter in Honor of Quincy Carter
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