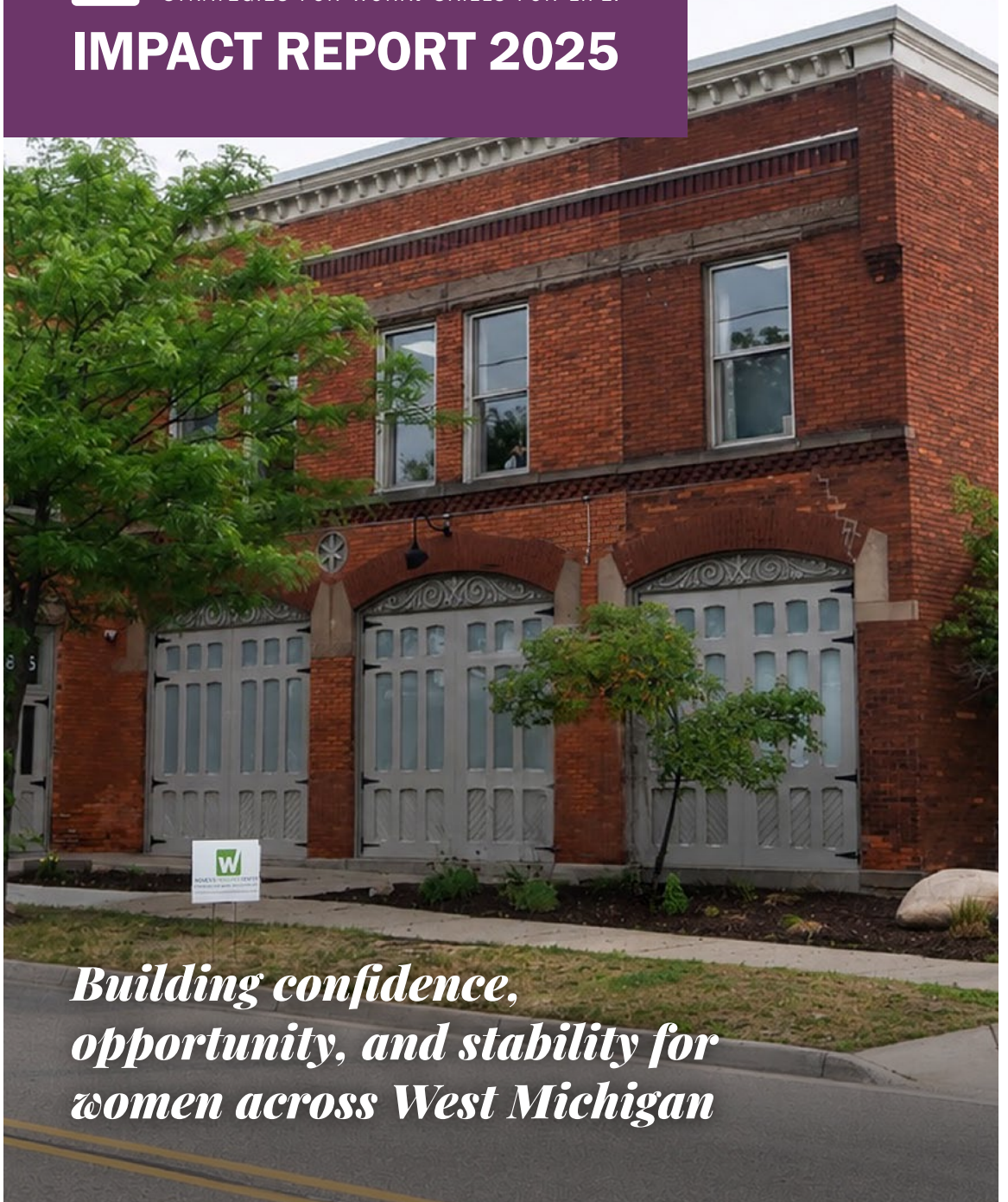




WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER
STRATEGIES FOR WORK. SKILLS FOR LIFE.

IMPACT REPORT 2025



*Building confidence,
opportunity, and stability for
women across West Michigan*

Dear Friends & Community Partners,

When women have access to opportunity, support, and confidence, entire communities grow stronger.

Over the past year, I have had the privilege of stepping into the role of CEO at Women's Resource Center and spending time listening to the women we serve, our staff and volunteers, and the many community partners who believe deeply in this work. What I heard again and again was simple but powerful: this work matters.

Every day, women walk through our doors seeking opportunity, stability, and a path forward. Some are navigating career transitions. Others are rebuilding after setbacks or searching for the confidence to take the next step in their professional lives. What they share is determination and a desire to build a stronger future for themselves and for those who depend on them.

We have the privilege of walking alongside them in that journey.

Through career coaching, digital literacy training, mentorship, and practical support such as scholarships, financial assistance, and professional clothing, women gain the tools and confidence needed to pursue meaningful employment and long-term stability.

The impact of this work extends far beyond one individual. When a woman gains confidence in her skills, secures employment, or reaches a personal

milestone, the effects reach her family, her workplace, and the broader community.

Stronger women lead to stronger families. Stronger families build stronger communities.

In 2025, nearly 500 women participated in WRC programs. Together, we conducted thousands of coaching sessions, helped women start new jobs, supported career growth, and celebrated milestones in housing, financial stability, and personal wellness. Behind every number is a woman taking a step forward and a community choosing to walk alongside her.

We often say, "She's the why." She is the reason this work exists and the reason so many people across West Michigan continue to invest their time, resources, and energy in making opportunity possible.

Thank you for being part of this work. Your support helps create the conditions where women can build confidence, pursue opportunity, and shape stronger futures for themselves and their families. [w](#)

Sincerely,



Dr. Darlene Lee
Chief Executive Officer

Our Mission and Approach

Women's Resource Center equips women to achieve purpose, fulfillment, and financial stability through meaningful employment. Every woman's path forward is different, but the goal remains the same: confidence, opportunity, and stability.

Women take steps toward that future with the support of a community that believes in their potential. Through career coaching, digital literacy training, mentorship, scholarships, financial assistance, and practical resources such as professional clothing through the Business Boutique,

women gain the tools and confidence needed to pursue meaningful work.

This work begins with a simple belief. Women already carry resilience, strength, and potential within them. With the right support and access to opportunity, those strengths grow into lasting change.

When women thrive, families grow stronger and communities grow stronger with them.

Every woman's path forward is different, but the goal remains the same: confidence, opportunity, and stability.



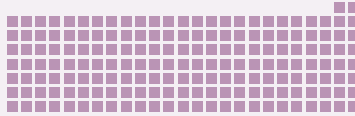
By the Numbers

Progress often happens one conversation, one opportunity, and one moment of encouragement at a time. Behind every number is a woman building confidence, pursuing new possibilities, and creating greater stability for herself and her family.

In 2025, women across our community took meaningful steps toward employment, financial stability, and personal growth with the support of the programs, partnerships, and people who make this work possible.

51% of individuals served had a household income of less than \$5,000

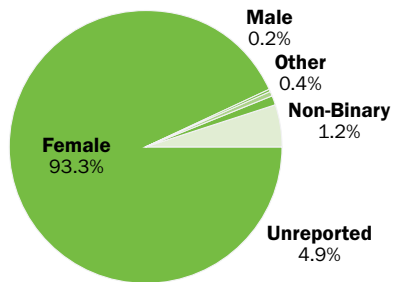
177 participants were single parents



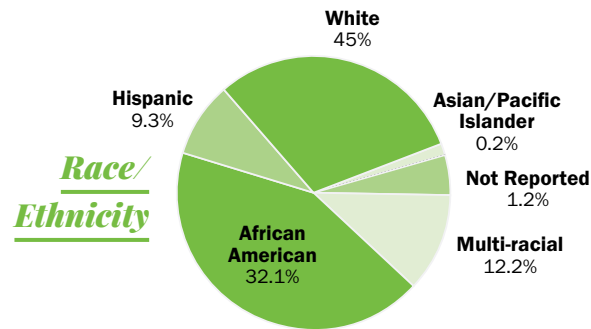
Participants came from **74** different zip codes



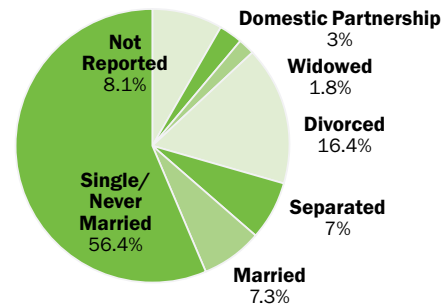
Gender



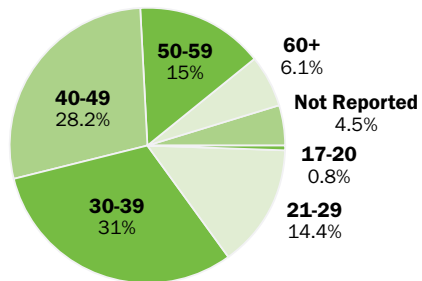
Race/Ethnicity



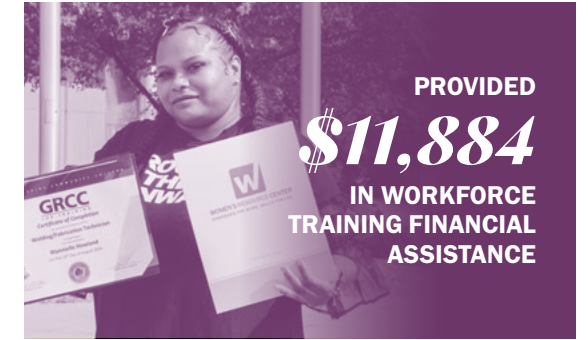
Marital Status



Age



SERVED
493
PARTICIPANTS



PROVIDED
\$11,884
IN WORKFORCE
TRAINING FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE



ASSISTED
46
WOMEN IN
STARTING
NEW JOBS



CONDUCTED
2,954
COACHING
SESSIONS



CELEBRATED
56
WOMEN REACHING
365-DAY EMPLOYMENT
RETENTION



DISTRIBUTED
\$13,433
IN SCHOLARSHIPS



SUPPORTED
48
WOMEN THROUGH
WRC'S BUSINESS
BOUTIQUE


Stories of Impact

Pam's Story

After facing unemployment, Pam connected with Women's Resource Center through the Empower program, where she found guidance, encouragement, and renewed confidence during a difficult season.

Working alongside Empower Coach Pat Akins, Pam received support as she navigated her job search and prepared for interviews. Through the Business Boutique, she selected professional clothing that helped her feel confident and prepared as she pursued new opportunities.

That support, combined with her persistence and determination, led to two job offers. Pam ultimately accepted a position that included benefits and long-term stability. Reflecting on her experience, she shared that the encouragement and practical support she received helped her take meaningful steps forward both professionally and personally. [W](#)



Through the Empower program, Pam found guidance, encouragement, and renewed confidence during a difficult season.

Robin's Story

Robin connected with Women's Resource Center during her educational journey, finding encouragement and support as she worked toward her goals. Through WRC's Empower program, she received guidance that strengthened both her confidence and her vision for the future.

In 2026, Robin graduated with honors from Cornerstone University with a degree in Ministry Leadership and a minor in Psychology. With support from WRC's career readiness services, she is now pursuing a master's degree in Clinical Social Work and continuing her path toward a career in clinical mental health.

Reflecting on her experience, Robin shared that WRC "has given me the support that I have needed throughout the years." Her journey is a reminder that encouragement, access, and belief in someone's potential can help open the door to meaningful opportunities and long-term growth. [W](#)



"WRC has given me the support that I have needed throughout the years."

Thank You

TO OUR PARTNERS

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Mojo Foundation
Shine Foundation
Steelcase Foundation
Steve and Amy Van Andel Foundation
The Meijer Foundation
The Sebastian Foundation
United Way of the Lakeshore
Warner Norcross + Judd LLP
Wege Foundation

Community Impact

The impact of Women's Resource Center reaches far beyond any single program or individual milestone.

When a woman gains confidence in her skills, secures employment, or reaches a personal goal, the effects extend outward. Families experience greater stability. Children see new possibilities. Employers gain dedicated team members. Communities grow stronger and more resilient.

The ripple effect benefits us all.

We are deeply grateful for the WRC Board of Directors, staff members, and many individuals whose generosity and service help advance WRC's mission and strengthen our impact in the community.

We also extend our gratitude to the generous donors who support WRC's Business Boutique, helping ensure women have access to professional clothing and resources that build confidence and support employment success. We are equally grateful to the dedicated volunteers who contribute their time and expertise through employability services, mentoring, workshops, and career development support. Together, these individuals play a vital role in helping women overcome barriers, prepare for meaningful employment, and advance toward long-term financial stability.



5 Focus Areas as We Continue the Work Together

Progress continues when women have access to opportunity, encouragement, and a community that believes in their potential.

Guided by our newly completed Strategic Framework, Women's Resource Center is focused on strengthening how we support women as they pursue meaningful employment and long-term stability.

In the years ahead, our work will focus on:

1 Expanding Pathways to Employment

Supporting women through career coaching, training, and wraparound services that address real-life barriers and open doors to stable, high-quality jobs.

Looking Ahead

2 Strengthening Partnerships

Deepening relationships with employers and community partners to create clearer pathways from training to employment and long-term success.

3 Elevating Women's Voices

Sharing stories and increasing visibility to strengthen understanding, reduce barriers, and advocate for systems that support women and families.

4 Investing in Organizational Strength

Building a strong, aligned organization with the people, structure, and culture needed to sustain this work over time.

5 Ensuring Long-Term Sustainability

Growing and diversifying resources to support women today and into the future.

With continued partnership from donors, employers, volunteers, and community organizations, this work will continue to expand opportunity, strengthen families, and build a stronger West Michigan.

Ways to Give

- Consistent giving helps us sustain our programs and plan for future needs. Join our **EMPOWER monthly giving program** by making a recurring gift at grwrc.org/donate or by scanning the QR code.
- Make an impact by donating **long-term appreciated securities**, including stock, bonds, and mutual funds. Contact your financial advisor to discuss the best option for you.
- Commit to lasting impact through the **5x5 Giving Program** — \$1,000 per year for five years. This sustained support helps strengthen programs, expand opportunity, and ensure women in our community have the resources they need to move forward.

SCAN TO
DONATE:



WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER

Wine, & Women & Chocolate

Mark your calendars for Wine, Women & Chocolate, an evening dedicated to celebrating the strength of women and the power of community. Together, we'll raise support for opportunities that help women build confidence, stability, and brighter futures. [W](#)



**Thursday, Oct. 1
6-8 PM**

**Studio D2D
401 Hall Street SW,
Grand Rapids**



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*Stronger Women.
Stronger Communities.*

INSIDE: Stories of opportunity, resilience, and the impact we're making together across West Michigan.