

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Business Women's Giving Circle Grants \$45,000 to Support STEAM Education,
Leadership and Entrepreneurship Programs for Girls**

Community Foundation for Northern Virginia's Giving Circle Supports Local Women's Philanthropy

December 19, 2016 (Oakton, VA) – **The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia's Business Women's Giving Circle (BWGC)** announced the winners of its third annual grant cycle today. **A total of \$45,000** has been awarded to five organizations providing STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math), Leadership and Entrepreneurship programs to girls in Northern Virginia, **making total awards granted to date \$125,000. In addition, the BWGC added \$1,000 to its endowment for future giving.** This giving circle is comprised of accomplished women who are community leaders drawn together by a passion to empower girls and young women through collective philanthropy. The group will celebrate the 2016 grantees on January 31st at Refraction in Reston, VA, and community members interested in joining are welcome to attend. <http://www.cfnova.org/bwgc>.

"Collaborating with the women of the BWGC to review and analyze such impressive programs as were presented in the 2016 grant applications has, once again, been awe-inspiring, humbling and so gratifying," said Autumn McCulloch, Attorney at McCandlish & Lillard and co-chair of the Grants Committee. "I am honored to have been a part of this process and am so excited to see the impact this year's grantees will have in our community."

The winning organizations are as follows:

SHINE For Girls: \$15,000

Serving all of Northern Virginia

Funding will help provide innovative, curriculum-based after-school programming for 5th-8th grade girls from disadvantaged backgrounds in Northern Virginia. Utilizing kinesthetic learning, SHINE combines formal dance training with rigorous math instruction to improve girls' math and confidence scores and spark their interest in STEM.

"SHINE For Girls is so excited to be a part of the BWGC 2017 grant cycle, allowing us to continue to expand our presence in Title I schools in the Northern Virginia area, and empower both students and mentors in this program, said Tara Hally," Regional Director of SHINE for Girls. "With the help of BWGC, we are able to bring this program to girls who, otherwise, may not have the exposure to these opportunities."

Hillsboro Charter Academy: \$5,000

Serving Loudoun County

Funding will help launch Girls in G.E.A.R. (Guiding Engineering, Aerospace, and Robotics), an exploratory after-school STEAM program where girls become role models and guides to teach all 125 students (K-5) about engineering, aerospace and robotics through hands on lessons and real world application using technology tools.

“The BWGC grant will allow Hillsboro Charter Academy to provide 4th and 5th grade girls with an increased awareness of the STEAM fields using technology tools to help develop their confidence in these areas,” said Megan Tucker, STEAM Specialist/Gifted Teacher/Technology Resource Teacher at Hillsboro Charter Academy. “The program will spark more school-wide excitement related to the power of STEAM as well as provide motivation for the students to excel in the classrooms and understand the ‘why’ of what is being taught in school, and we are so thankful to have this support of the BWGC to make this dream become a reality!”

Kashmir World Foundation: \$5,000

Serving all of Northern Virginia

Funding will support the DaVinci Challenge: Build a Drone Workshop for SuperHERo Girls, a hands-on, innovative STEM drone workshop that empowers middle to high school girls with leadership and entrepreneurial skills including critical thinking and collaboration via design, fabrication and operation of a drone with a mission focus to develop solutions for real world challenges.

“Thanks to the generosity of the BWGC, Kashmir World Foundation is able to give female students at Glasgow Middle School the opportunity to combine STEM education with innovation and entrepreneurship in an innovative, hands-on workshop in which they will learn to build and operate drones,” said Nicole Weatherholtz, Director of Public Relations and Resource Development at the Kashmir World Foundation.

STEAMd, Inc.: \$10,000

Serving Loudoun County

Funding will support STEAMd YOUiversity Girls, a program that will develop underserved girls in grades 3-12 with critical 21st-century skills that will prepare them for post high school education entrance to pursue careers in STEAM fields.

“We are honored and deeply grateful to receive this grant which will help us increase the number girls in our program in both title one and public schools,” said Norma Henry, Founder & CEO of STEAMd Inc. “STEAMd is dedicated to initiating programs designed to create awareness and excitement as well as educate and inspire girls about the vast array of career opportunities available to women in science, technology, engineering, arts and math.”

Space of Her Own, Inc. (SOHO): \$10,000

Serving Alexandria

Funding will support this creative mentoring organization by providing 6 new fun and engaging STEM projects to 36 vulnerable 5th grade girls in Alexandria and Arlington and developing new STEM-related activities for over 64 girls and their mentors to enjoy throughout their middle school years through the SOHO Club.

“SOHO is over-the-moon thrilled to receive this grant from the Business Women's Giving Circle, which will enable us to implement our new STEAM Anchor Projects for 5th graders and expand our SOHO Club to better serve girls throughout their middle school years,” says Linda Odell, Founder & Executive Director of Space of Her Own, Inc.

The members of the Business Women's Giving Circle reviewed twenty-one grant applications to select the winners. "This year's grantees came from a group of diverse, well qualified applicants and we are confident we selected top notch organizations to deliver high quality STEAM, Entrepreneurship, and Leadership programs to the young women of Northern Virginia," said Mara Desmedt, Senior Regional Sales Director of PlanSource and co-chair of the Grants Committee. "We couldn't be more excited for our grantees and to see the impact the BWGC's grant money will make on all of the lives touched by each of the programs."

Members of the Business Women's Giving Circle are looking forward to engaging with these winning organizations throughout the year as consultants and mentors.

"The BWGC offers our members the opportunity to work together to leverage knowledge, learning, and funding to create change in the lives of young girls and women," said Faith Boettger, Community Volunteer and Consultant and Chair of the BWGC. "Over the past three years, our grants have had a ripple effect on our community – directly impacting girls in our programs and indirectly the mentors, teachers, parents, classmates, and our own members."

Annual membership in the Business Women's Giving Circle is \$1,100, and includes a vote in the annual competitive grant cycle. All contributions are pooled for a greater collective impact. To learn more about the group, please visit the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia's website at www.cfnova.org/bwgc, or contact Sari Raskin, Director of Grants and Community Leadership, at (703) 879-7641 or sari.raskin@cfnova.org.

About the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia:

The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia helps grow philanthropy to respond to need and seed innovation in our region. Comprised of donor advised funds, permanent funds, giving circles, and other charitable endowments, the Community Foundation connects donors to community and helps meet community needs with community resources. During 2016, the Community Foundation awarded more than \$4.6 million in grants and scholarships and reported \$36 million in managed philanthropic assets.

Find more information at www.cfnova.org.

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