



**THE POLICY
CIRCLE®**

INFORM. INSPIRE. DEVELOP CIVIC LEADERS.

WWW.THEPOLICYCIRCLE.ORG

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

FROM THE FOUNDERS

The Policy Circle was founded on the belief that the free market is the best means to unleash human potential. What started five years ago in two states has grown into a thriving women's network of more than 3,500 women in 40 states.

Inform. We founded The Policy Circle because we met so many intelligent, concerned women looking for a starting point to engage in dialogue about the impact of public policy. The Policy Circle model is built on a foundation of fact-based civil discourse. The Policy Circle Briefs are uniquely designed to drive conversation, ignite personal responsibility, question the role of government and increase civic engagement.

Inspire. The Policy Circle's strategic, grassroots framework provides a forum for women to lead in their communities and build confidence to voice their informed opinions on policy issues. The Policy Circle is a forum for women to go beyond the headlines and discuss ideas, enabling participants to find allies, and inspiring members to become influencers in their communities.

Develop Civic Leaders. The Policy Circle meets women where they live and work, provides a path to develop an ecosystem of relationships, and helps to establish them as civic leaders. We hear stories from across the country from our members who are taking on leadership roles that are transforming the conversations in their communities and helping to advance policies that provide greater opportunities and better lives for all Americans - especially the most vulnerable.

We thank you for your support and are pleased to share the 2019 Annual Report for The Policy Circle.

Sincerely,



**Kathy Hubbard,
Sylvie Légère &
Angela Braly**

EXPANSION & ENGAGEMENT

In 2019, The Policy Circle seeded 100 Circles and expanded to an additional six states as well as Egypt, Lebanon and Tunisia for a total reach of:



300 Circles



40 States



4 Countries

The growth of The Policy Circle is organic – largely fueled by recommendations and word-of-mouth. The Policy Circle Connector Program scales and optimizes this process by equipping Connectors to recommend women interested in becoming Circle Leaders.

A total of 53 Policy Circle Connectors provided 60 recommendations in 2019, which led to exponential growth.

The Policy Circle [Playbook](#) was introduced in 2019 to help Circle Leaders launch their circles using best practices. This new digital playbook allows for Circle Leaders to manage their own pace and path with the support of The Policy Circle onboarding team.

Through our growth, enthusiastic leaders have emerged with a desire for greater civic engagement. The Policy Circle provides these women with the tools to achieve that goal, providing more women with the opportunity to improve their understanding of the issues facing their community and, through that understanding, equip them to restore civil society and support public policy that promotes freedom and personal responsibility.

STATE LEADERSHIP COUNCILS

To deepen engagement in states and continue expansion, in 2018 The Policy Circle created the **State Leadership Council Program** and launched the **Indiana Leadership Council**.

In 2019, the **Indiana Leadership Council** added seven new Circles and hosted five policy and member engagement opportunities. There are now 24 Circles and 280 members in Indiana.

The Illinois Leadership Council was launched in the summer of 2019 and a third council is currently being formed in Wisconsin.

Additional State Leadership Councils will launch in 2020 in Colorado, Texas and Wisconsin.



Number of times a Policy Brief was read on the website in 2019.



The Policy Circle earned a 2020 Gold Seal of Transparency from [Guidestar](#). Now our community members as well as 10+ million GuideStar users can find in-depth information about our goals, strategies, capabilities, and progress. We're shining a spotlight on the difference we help make in the world.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019

Total Revenue: \$1,104,378

Total Expenses: \$1,145,733

Total Assets: \$314,786

Board of Directors

Sylvie Légère

Angela Braly

Kathy Hubbard

Laura Cox Kaplan

The Team

Janet Burt, Chief Operations Officer

Stacy Blakeley, Director of Strategic Partnerships

Molly Ervin, Director of Technology

Nicole Cline, Director of Circle Expansion & External Relations

Judi Willard, Director Circle Membership

Mary Schaper, Director of Communications

Corinne Winters, Policy Editor

Our mission is to
EMPOWER WOMEN
to become educated on the
impact of public policy on a
free society, and
BE INSPIRED
to develop themselves as
IMPACTFUL CIVIC LEADERS.

INVESTING IN THE POLICY CIRCLE

An investment supports continued expansion of The Policy Circle model, which informs women on complex policy issues; unites women through membership, meetings and events that build their confidence; and ignites potential by providing actionable steps to become a leader.

As a financial partner of The Policy Circle, you gain access to exclusive resources and become part of national and regional networks of business, community and civic leaders committed to increasing the number of women supporting policies that foster creativity and personal responsibility.

A gift to The Policy Circle is an investment in your own leadership development and, ultimately, in your community.

Recognizing the need for more effective development of impactful leaders, The Policy Circle has created an Enterprise Experience for our corporate partners. The Policy Circle Enterprise Experience equips emerging leaders with the knowledge and skills to develop as civic leaders who can build effective public-private relations. Our Enterprise Experience provides unique programming and client acquisition opportunities built on The Policy Circle model.

THEPOLICYCIRCLE.ORG/INVEST

HOW TO BECOME A CIRCLE LEADER

Circle Leaders gather for meaningful conversation about public policy around the beliefs that limited government and free markets create the best opportunities for all to pursue their dreams and improve their lives. A Circle Leader doesn't need to be a policy expert; the role is that of a "respectful facilitator" who brings women together to talk policy and get engaged to take back the conversation.

[Recommend a Circle Leader](#) today, or [start a Circle](#) of your own.



The Policy Circle is pleased to collaborate with more than 100 think tanks, associations and research institutions to provide reliable, data-driven research, statistics and engagement opportunities.

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THE NEED FOR THE POLICY CIRCLE

Though women make up 51 percent of voters, they comprise a significantly smaller portion of U.S. elected offices. Out of the 11,000 people who have served in Congress, only 358, less than one half of one percent, are women.

Five states have never sent a woman to represent them in the U.S. House, and 21 states have never been represented by a female in the Senate.

In 23 states, no woman has ever been elected governor. In 7 states, women comprise less than 20% of the legislature.

Women make up 29% of the state legislatures with 1,453 Democrats, and 671 Republicans.

Source: 2020 Rutgers Center for American Women in Politics

Most women's organizations focus on specific issues, or teach them how to run a campaign. Few of these groups meet women where they live and work, providing a forum for them to connect with others in their communities.

The Policy Circle empowers women to speak up about the limited role that government should have, and the value of personal responsibility in a free society.

"What makes The Policy Circle unique is the fact that we bring our own experience as practitioners and apply lessons in real time. **This group has been a way to strengthen our approach to public sector challenges through gaining perspectives from multiple angles**, and it has provided new and deepened friendships through our shared passion for this work."

- **Rebecca TeKolste**, *Women of Circle City Co-Founder*



About the Policy Circle

Founded in 2015, The Policy Circle is a cultural, educational, non-political organization that provides a fact-based, nonpartisan framework that inspires women to connect, learn about and discuss public policies that impact their lives. This grassroots movement is fueled by our local leaders who gather women in small groups to facilitate productive and welcoming conversations.

The Policy Circle has a point of view - that public policy should foster human creativity in an entrepreneurial economy, and that the government should spend tax dollars responsibly.

At the heart of The Policy Circle operations are the following core values:

- We believe humans flourish in a free society and entrepreneurial economy.
- We are a welcoming world class organization.
- We inspire civic engagement with truth and details.
- We are purposeful in our actions to connect and convene with people and organizations.
- We lead by stepping out of the box.

The Policy Circle's roundtable discussions empower women to become more vocal in public policy dialogue and civic engagement within their community, their state and their country.

The nexus of the meeting is The Policy Circle Brief that provides the basis for a fact-based discussion about the most pressing issues affecting families and local communities today. The format frames the issues with facts, provides historical background, challenges the role of government, features successful private enterprises, and provides suggestions on how to engage locally on the issue.

How it works



"I am particularly interested in the work of The Policy Circle. Not only am I the father of a teenage girl, but as a Green Beret I've witnessed firsthand during my tours in the Middle East and Africa how increasing women's inclusion leads to better governance and advances democracy and long-term stability within societies.

Bottomline: in societies where women thrive, extremism doesn't. The Policy Circle model clearly aligns with this vision to ensure more women are in key leadership roles in local, national and international governing bodies."

- U.S. Congressman Michael Waltz,
Florida-06

PROGRAMMING & EVENTS

The Policy Circle's core programming encompasses five elements designed to enable women to learn more about policy, share the message with their neighbors and influence institutions that shape their communities:

- **Building New Circles:** Building New Circles is the core activity of The Policy Circle, gathering women who wish to be more engaged in issues and public policies affecting their values, their families and their community.
- **Informing and Equipping Circles:** Through policy and civic engagement education, The Policy Circle inspires the local circles to explore a wide range of policies in their circle discussions.
- **Providing Organizational Capacity and Infrastructure:** The Policy Circle has achieved great growth using a sustainable model through efficient operations.
- **Developing Community Leaders:** The Policy Circle's proprietary website allows us to build custom programs for the benefit of our members. As the interest in civic leadership develops amongst members as a result of their participation in Policy Circle discussions, members have turned to the Policy Circle, asking for guidance about how to get involved.
- **Activating and Engaging Circle Members:** As The Policy Circle membership grows, a need has emerged for leadership at the state, regional and national levels. This specific leadership opportunity creates a sense of ownership among our leaders.



Our programs provide reliable information and builds leadership and critical thinking skills, which are imperative for our country to move forward with hope and a plan. With a focus on the economic impact of policy and responding to the needs of Policy Circle members, events provide an opportunity for members and partners to connect and cover timely topics with special guests, experts and policy leaders.

Inform. Inspire. Develop Civic Leaders.



2019 LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

The Policy Circle hosted its **fourth Annual Policy Circle Leadership Summit** on November 15, 2019 in Chicago.

This day-long event brought together more than 350 Policy Circle leaders, members and supporters to learn from and engage with world-class speakers and panelists to explore the theme of ***Living and Leading in a Connected World***.

Outstanding speakers included:

- **Admiral Mike Rogers**, former director of the National Security Agency
- **Seema Verma**, Administrator for Medicare and Medicaid Services at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- **Ambassador Nancy Brinker**, founder of the Susan G. Komen Foundation and the Promise Fund of Florida
- **Dr. Hadiyah-Nicole Green**, Cancer treatment researcher and founder of the Ora Lee Smith Cancer Research Foundation
- **Denise Morrison**, former president and chief executive officer of Campbell Soup Company

Afternoon panels explored *Strategic Questions Leaders Ask*, *Facilitating Complex Discussions and Expanding Influence*, *Interacting with your Representatives*, *Building Your Brand and Your Network* and *Establishing Yourself as a Civic Leader*. The Summit combined valuable networking opportunities with informative plenary sessions and practical workshops. Attendees returned to their communities energized and ready to share their experience with their friends and neighbors.



WHAT ATTENDEES SAID

"I thought it was an excellent day. The speakers were outstanding and the staff was so welcoming. This was first time attending a Summit and it was so inspiring."

"I really enjoyed all the speakers, most especially the final speaker. A lot of good information; I feel like I have a lot to think about and can and will incorporate these ideas into my professional life."

INFORMING WITH POLICY BRIEFS

At the heart of The Policy Circle are national level policy briefs that Circles use as the basis for their discussions. Each Policy Circle Brief is developed in collaboration with universities, think tanks experts and Policy Circle members. The Policy Circle briefs curate public policy information to provide an overview of the issue, historical context, gaps to be addressed, thoughts for reform and avenues of engagement. The Policy Circle briefs are designed to drive conversation and each brief comes with a discussion guide that leaders use to facilitate the discussion.

In 2019, the library grew to 35 Briefs with the publication of four new Briefs: Digital Landscape, Stitching the Fabric of Neighborhoods, Aging in

the 21st Century, and The U.S. Constitution. In addition, Deep Dives have been made available allowing more detailed discussions on popular topics: Janus vs AFSCME and Government, Community and Sports Teams: Tax Credits. Our complete [library](#) of Policy Circle Briefs can be found online as well as a guide on [How to Choose a Brief](#).

Development of new Policy Circle Briefs and Deep Dives is already underway and includes the following topics:

- Human Trafficking
- Data Privacy
- Census
- Electoral College
- Socialism and Capitalism
- Criminal Justice Reform

The library of briefs is organized into a series of 5 conversations. Circles may pick from one of the following series, or develop one of their own from our library.

Circles often begin by exploring our five foundational briefs. Others include the following: 5 for 2020 | 5 that Impact Business | 5 that Impact Communities | 5 that Impact Your Wallet | 5 for Active Citizenship | 5 for a World View

Visit thepolicycircle.org/share-briefs to see the full library of briefs.

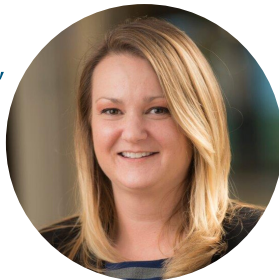


STORIES OF IMPACT

Circle co-leaders, **Amanda Muldoon and Lindsey Hannah**, met at a Policy Circle launch in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Together they started a circle after the 2017 Policy Circle Leadership Summit in Chicago.

Lindsey and Amanda have become close friends and allies – encouraging one another to pursue leadership opportunities. Lindsey decided to run for county office, with Amanda as her campaign manager. Amanda attended a local campaign school where she connected with state senate campaign chairs. Today, Amanda is precinct captain, grassroots campaign director, an Indiana delegate, and a sought-after campaign operative in Fort Wayne and across Indiana. Amanda and Lindsey's story is the perfect example of how The Policy Circle builds strong connections among women, building their confidence to lead.



“

I want to say thank you for creating a platform where we can learn, feel a little more empowered and confident, reach out to others who want to share their voice, discuss sensitive topics without fear while staying fact based and spend purpose-filled time with friends (and people who will become friends).

Stacy S., Texas

”

“Finally a venue that allows me to discuss my concerns among other women who also seek solutions to our most profound state and federal issues.”

– Barb, IL

Beth Feeley is an informed mother of three, living in a north suburb of Chicago.

Four years ago, Beth started the first Policy Circle in Wilmette with Sylvie Legere Ricketts (one of the Co-Founders of The Policy Circle). Since then, Beth has launched a citizen watchdog organization called New Trier Neighbors with two other Policy Circle members. The group challenged the local school board on their curriculum and budget. Beth volunteers on congressional and state campaigns, is an Illinois delegate, and she also leads an initiative to inform citizens on the impact of the graduated income tax in Illinois. Recently, Beth has been working closely with Bob Woodson to launch the 1776unites.com initiative.



The Policy Circle platform and resources equipped Beth to identify and understand the issues that she is passionate about, and enabled her to build a strong network to influence policy and lead in her community.

2020 FOCUS

In 2020, our focus will be the continuous enrichment of The Policy Circle membership experience. **The goal of the Policy Circle is to ignite civic engagement and become the premier destination for local, state, and national leadership talent to engage in public service.** With that in mind, we plan to implement the following initiatives and events in 2020:

- **State Leadership Councils** expanding to include Colorado, Texas and Wisconsin.
- **Leadership development opportunities** through live and virtual regional leadership training to support the growth of states in which there are ten or more Circles.
- **The Policy Circle Leadership Summit** will be held in 2021 built around the theme of Power, Energy and Water Policy. Promotion and development of materials for the summit will take place in the fourth quarter of 2020.
- **The Policy Circle Civic Leadership Roadmap** is a formalized program providing education, action items and connections designed to empower, track and recognize Policy Circle members who become active civic leaders.
- **Virtual Experiences** will play a significant role in our growth and engagement strategies by providing busy women with virtual circle experiences and calls for members and supporters.

Together, these initiatives will help us reach more members with our proven model to inform, inspire and develop civic leaders.

Become a supporting member today - visit:

[THEPOLICYCIRCLE.ORG/INVEST](https://thepolicycircle.org/invest)

SPREAD THE WORD

Visit www.thepolicycircle.org to recommend a circle leader or start a Circle.

Follow us on social media: @ThePolicyCircle



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