A LETTER FROM OUR CEO, KAREN STERK

Dear Volunteers, Friends and Supporters -

We hope you and yours are safe and sheltering in place.

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month. Thank You Thank You Thank You to our 300+ volunteers who are critical to JRF delivering our mission of empowering women through education. All month long we have been highlighting volunteers (via social media) who work with us performing every critical function of JRF. This includes providing strategic direction, reading applications, planning fundraisers, securing our long term sustainability and administrative help. We accomplish what we do - only because of you. A special shout out to Jinx Patel, our JRF Volunteer of the Year. Her passion and leadership was a big part of launching It's Time to Talk: Forums on Race as well as being an original member of our Planned Giving Committee. Thank you Jinx!

The onset of COVID-19 sparked a conversation with Volunteer and Supporter Elissa Perry. That conversation led to the JRF Emergency Fund. We did a survey of our Scholars and found out that over 63% of them were already out of funds, or would be within the week. We are humbled and touched by the outpouring of support from you. In a short amount of time, we raised enough funds to provide two Scholarship Stipends to all of our second semester Scholars. Here is a “Thank You” video from our Scholars and some written notes follow.

The silver lining of COVID-19 is that we have become so much closer to our Scholars during our weekly ZOOM calls. When several Scholars expressed their sadness at not being to celebrate their graduation, we asked Why not have a ZOOM Graduation? This will be a first ever opportunity for JRF Scholars and their families to celebrate with JRF Supporters. The date is May 30th at 1PM EST. Please join us if you are able. You can RSVP here.

Again, Many Many Thanks to our Volunteers and Supporters,

Karen Sterk, CEO

Click here to watch a video from our Staff!
Jinx Patel is our Volunteer of the Year because of her longtime support of JRF and commitment to its mission. She was one of the first co-chairs for our annual event It's Time to Talk: Forums on Race, and recently joined the Planned Giving Committee. Jinx and her husband, Gordhan Patel, have been the sponsors of the Jeannette Rankin Legacy Lecture for the past three years. Together they have endowed a $50,000 scholarship in the names of both their mothers and Jinx’s sister.

“We – Jinx and Gordhan Patel – invest in the Jeannette Rankin Women’s Scholarship Fund because we feel so strongly about the generational impact a scholarship has on multiple lives. The Scholar’s life is improved, but invariably, the lives of her children, and children’s children will be improved. We are dedicated to supporting our local Athens charities. JRF was started by five women in Athens, the first Scholar was from Athens, and while JRF is national, they have helped many many women in the Athens area and continue to have a positive influence on the Athens community.”

Thank you to our amazing 2019-2020 volunteers!

Board of Directors
Michelle Cook, Board Chair
Libby Pollock, Board Vice Chair
Michele Ozumba, Board Secretary
Jane Hale Hopkins, Board Treasurer
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Betsy Bach
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Susan Elkins
Tracy Cosgrove
Val Bell
Vashti Canty

It's Time To Talk: Steering Committee
Bertis Downs, Co-Chair
Valerie Bell, Co-Chair
Denise Farmer
Dominique Quarles
Erin Barger
Jinx Patel
JoAnne Hill
Julie R. Denton
Leslie Hale
Lindsay Brannen
Mamie Fike
Meyers, Dawn
Michele M Howard
Rachael Griffin-Jackson
Raye Rawls
Rose Dennis

It's Time To Talk: Racial Justice Facilitators
Abbi Flagg
Adrien Heim
Alison Eskildsen
Beth Staton
Charmeine Wilson
Christina Crespo
Deborah Gonzalez
Donna Brumby
Edward Heim
Greg Davis
Jamie Allen
Jane Russell
Jean Breyie
Jennifer Peck-Bailey
Jessica Keever
Julie Denton
Katherine Gower
Kathleen Cason
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Mary Miller
Maryann Locklin
Melvin Whitehead
Mimi Sadni
Patrice Green
Rachel Bailey
Rob Branch
Ruth Elizabeth Nakano
Sekita Stroud
Simone Moonsamy
Tiaasha Velasco
Tina Tinsley
Val Bell
Valerie Bell
Venus Jackson
Victoria Prevatt
William J. Breeding, Jr.
Vivienne Sturgill

Vivienne is a great help in our office and provides assistance with the many projects we have going on.

"I believe that if you educate women you are not only educating her, you are educating her children, her extended family and her community. She will be a role model for all of them. Volunteering for the Jeannette Rankin Women's Scholarship Fund, allows me to be part of one wonderful team of people who help make it all possible for these incredible, well deserving women."

Elissa Perry

Elissa has been a dedicated volunteer application reader with us for a few years and recently created an endowed scholarship in the name of her mother, Elyane L. Perry.

"Education allows us to develop economic independence and provide for ourselves and others. It can lead to better job opportunities that provide resources that allow us to stay healthier and obtain homes where we can be safe. Education can also provide us with language and insight that helps us connect with more people and in new and different ways. Finally, education can help us find and develop our self-respect and become the people we want to be. Volunteering and donating to the Jeannette Rankin Women's Scholarship Fund allows me to help women access education which I believe is critical for personal growth and change and that ultimately has ripple effects outward to the people and communities in which these scholars are embedded."
Volunteer Application Readers

Liz Pavey        Romaine Rankin
Lori Dubuc       Rosa M. Ortiz
Lori Tingley     Rosamond White
Lorraine R. Burt  Rose Walker
Lynda Sessoms    Rozelia Park
Lynda Sessoms    Ruth Elizabeth Nakano
Campbell         Ryan Song
MacKenzie Smith  Sam Preston
Madhuri Javiya   Sara Hayden
Madison Won      Shantell Delva
Margaret S. Ryder Shav’A Langston
Marian Fontanez  Sheila P. Johnson
Marinda Wells    Simona Alexander
Marianne Gooze   Simone Moonsammy
Martha Kapelewski Sibhan Phillips
Mary G. Wolf     Sonia Camargo
Mary Rose Garcia  Stacy Sollenberger
Matthew Darby    Stephanie Hamm
Melissa Briner    Stephanie Mohar
Melissa Jones    Stephanie Richardson
Michelle Arthur  Sue Gilmurray
Michelle Bailey  Sue Lawrence
Molly Dunn       Susan Barger
Molly Jones      Susan Candy Quinlan
Monica Nixon     Suzanne N. Adams
Myrna Adams West  Suzanne Taipala
Nancy King       Tasha Mathew
Nancy McDuff     Tera Shook
Neelam Kane      Terra Davis
Pamela K Daniel  Theresa Duggar
Paris Hudnall    Treashia Velasco
Patricia Clark   Tiffany Simpson
Paula Halbert    Tina Kaye
Paula M. Huntley Tonya Helen Lough
Prianka Sharma   Tracy Ann Vaden
Rachel Mangan    Tracy Cosgrove
Rachel Mangan    Tracy White
Rachel Tinsley   Valerie A. Hepburn
Ragnhild DeFranks Veronika N. Reichert
Rasha Cheek      Vicki A. Connell
Rebecca Figueroa Vickie Richards
Rebecca Crosley  Viktoria Sazonova
Regina Schofield Vivian Hulsey
Renata Stone     Vivienne Sturgill
Renée L Hawes    Yadira Rivera Cintron
Rhonda Suka      Yakima Johnson
Rob Harrington   Yana Gilemaud
Robert Merkle    Yolanda Patterson
Roland Adams     Zaheerah Biggers

Mimi Sodhi

Mimi is a former JRF Board Member who has given so much to this foundation. She has read applications for us and volunteers as a Racial Justice Facilitator for our annual event, It’s Time to Talk: Forums on Race. Mimi also created an endowed scholarship in the name of her mother, Dr. Hardeep Sodhi.

"Education is key to moving toward financial security and breaking the cycle of poverty. Women are the rock of our society with unlimited capacity. It is a privilege to be a part of an organization that helps women achieve their goals and improve their and their families’ futures through education."

Sheila Johnson

Sheila is a new volunteer application reader with us and is already making an incredible impact at JRF.

"Not every woman has the same advantages and privileges; but every woman has gifts, talents and abilities that may go unrecognized if they’re not given the opportunity to develop them. That’s why it was a privilege and a joy to play a part in JRF’s mission to transform the lives of women through educational opportunity."

Monica Nixon

Monica was our STAR Party Co-Chair last year and has been an active member of the STAR Party Committee since 2018. She’s been a dedicated volunteer application reviewer with us since then, as well.

"I love volunteering for JRF because, more than anything, I love that the JRF supports women. JRF scholarships give women a chance to follow their educational dreams and shape their futures. What’s not to love?!"

"It gives me the utmost comfort to have such a wonderful team on my side. Thank you Thank you Thank you."

- Scholar Debra S.
Valerie Bell

Val is a new JRF Board Member who has been actively volunteering with us for years. She has attended and helped with our annual event, It’s Time to Talk: Forums on Race, for four years.

“I am captivated by the JRF Mission: Jeannette Rankin Women’s Scholarship Fund (JRF) provides scholarships and support for low-income women thirty-five and older across the U.S. and twenty-five and older in Georgia to build better lives through college completion. The equity, diversity & inclusion program series ‘It’s Time to Talk’ is an initiative about which I am passionate. JRF is an organization that addresses today’s issues, focused on real-life solutions.”

Bill Longhner

Bill was our first ever Volunteer of the Year because of his dedication to this foundation. He has led the way as one of our longest volunteer application readers. Bill and his wife, Helen, have been long time supporters of JRF.

“I volunteer for the Jeannette Rankin Foundation because it does amazing work for women who really need the help, women who have changed their lives because of our help. How could this not be a good thing? Amen.”

Gratitude from our Scholars

Thank You!