

Giving matters

FOURTEEN YEARS AGO, the Women's Philanthropic Leadership Circle in CEHD grew out of conversations among a group of 12 women who were seeking a way to have a greater impact with their gifts. They knew from experience that, despite advances in gender equity, many women still defer to the men in their lives when it comes to financial decisions. And women may be reluctant to make philanthropic gifts because of uncertainty about their own financial security.

Since then, the circle has grown to more than 40 members who have raised a half-million dollars and given out more than \$200,000 in graduate fellowships and faculty awards. Together they strive to raise the overall visibility of women leaders in education and human development and to provide financial support to women in educational leadership positions.

Each year the circle supports one or more early-career women faculty members with a Rising Star Award. A 2016 recipient is LeAnne Johnson, '04, whose research in special education focuses on how to speed the application of tested practices across early childhood environments. Johnson will use the award to support travel and data collection through a series of interviews, surveys, and observations with early-childhood behavior support teams this fall.

"I entered the field what seems like a lifetime ago to work with children with behavioral problems including autism because I saw something in those kids," says Johnson. "This award means you see something in me."

The circle has also benefitted 80 women graduate students, many of whom have gone on to professional, academic, and leadership positions in their fields. I-Ling Yeh, for example, is a student leader and community volunteer. Her doctoral research in kinesiology investigates a novel wrist movement intervention for people with chronic stroke. The scholarship is allowing her to present that research at two national conferences.

"I hope my research can help improve recovery from stroke, benefiting patients and clinicians."

—I-LING YEH, DOCTORAL STUDENT,
KINESIOLOGY

"This award is a welcome investment in research that will benefit children with behavior problems and those who work with them."

—LEANNE JOHNSON, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

MANDY DWYER

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