



100 WOMEN WHO CARE NEWSLETTER

Volume 12 February 2026

DECEMBER RECIPIENT

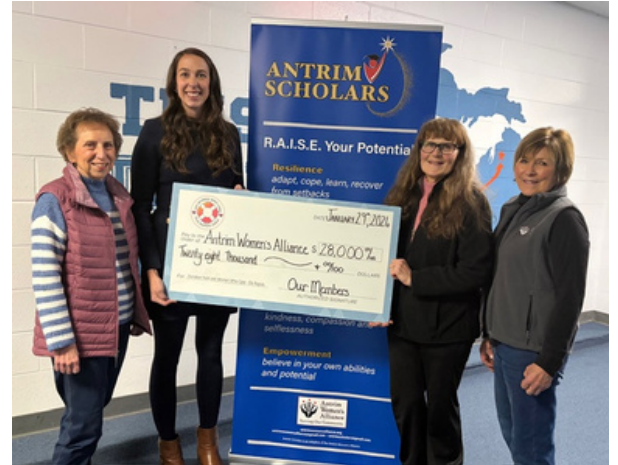


The Antrim Scholars program received a major boost thanks to the generosity of 100 Women Who Care - Elk Rapids Area members' collective gift to Antrim Women's Alliance (AWA) at our December 2025 giving meeting. Our gift of \$28,000 to AWA's Antrim Scholars program plus a \$5,000 matching grant from the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation brought the total gift to \$33,000.

Antrim Scholars supports first-generation and economically disadvantaged students in Antrim County as they prepare for, enter, and succeed in college. The program offers college prep support including long-term mentorship, access to resources like tutoring and SAT prep, help finding scholarships and financial aid, and a \$1,000 scholarship upon completion.



Kathleen Hintz, Nancy Tallio, Linda Kennedy and Cindy Collins enjoy the "Bunco Night" Social Event held at the Sundance Brick Oven on February 5.



Laura Schmidt (AWA), Mary Spyhalski (Central Lake School Counselor), Sylvia Schonauer-Kalchik (AWA) & Pat Budzynski (AWA) accept our check.

"This gift will allow us to grow beyond our pilot program at Central Lake High School and serve more students in neighboring schools," said pilot lead, and nominating member, Pam Singer.

"We are so grateful for this incredible gift" said Sylvia Schonauer-Kalchik, AWA's Treasurer and Antrim Scholars chair, "From our first interaction two years ago with member Nancy Baker—who inspired us to aim higher and create a full-blown college access program in Antrim County—to today, with several members joining the Antrim Scholars program in various capacities, we are so thankful for your unwavering support."



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

May 21 - Giving Meeting - 5:30 pm at ERHS' Peterman Auditorium

August 8 - Walk in Harbor Days Parade - Noon

August 20 - Giving Meeting - 5:30 pm at A-Gaming Golf Resort

December 10 - Giving Meeting - 5:00 pm at HERTH

EXCITING UPDATES FROM PAST RECIPIENTS



Thanks to a collective community effort, something truly special is taking shape in Elk Rapids. In December of 2024, we gifted \$30,700 to the Friends of the Elk Rapids District Library Capital Campaign. The library is now thrilled to share that Phase I of the new library is now fully funded and on track to begin construction in early spring 2026, with an expected move-in date in 2027.

Our gift qualified for naming rights, so **the new library will proudly feature the 100 Women Who Care - Elk Rapids Area Makerspace.**

This Makerspace, located in the heart of the youth wing, will feature built-in storage with supplies and kits to help instill a love for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. A rotating featured activity will bring kids back to explore hands-on STEM learning during every library visit.

This Makerspace will be a lasting reminder of what can happen when women come together to create meaningful change for the next generation.



In December 2022, our collective gift of \$23,400 was awarded to Elk Rapids High School's Sunrise Academy with the goal of helping students establish a school store and coffee cart. That support quickly paid off. Soon after launching, the program earned statewide recognition, receiving the Michigan CEC Award for Best Entrepreneurial Classroom.

Over the past year, changes have taken place within the Sunrise Academy program. Current students will continue completing their graduation requirements online; no new students will be admitted as alternative education services are being consolidated at Kalkaska High School.

While the structure of the program has evolved, we are pleased to share that **The Elk Den school store remains open and thriving.** The store is now operated by members of the Elk Rapids High School special education program, where students gain valuable hands-on experience. Through managing daily operations, customer service, and responsibility-based tasks, these students develop the real-world, on-the-job skills essential for success after graduation.

Although the ownership of the program has changed, the impact of our gift has not. What began as support for innovation has grown into a lasting legacy—one that continues to empower students, foster independence, and create meaningful learning opportunities.



Enrollment in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library - Grand Traverse Region is growing by leaps and bounds! Thanks to our August 2023 collective gift of \$23,600, the program expanded into Antrim County for the first time in 2024.

Today, 507 children—more than 55% of all eligible children in the county—are receiving a high-quality, age-appropriate book in the mail every month at no cost to their families. The program is available to every child from birth until their fifth birthday.

Parents regularly share how excited their children are when a new “Dolly book” arrives, and research shows these children are being read to more often and developing the early literacy skills they need to succeed when they start school.

Over 4,460 children across the 5-county region are receiving Imagination Library books each month, which is nearly double the number just two years ago. Just \$32 covers the cost to mail twelve Imagination Library books to a child for a year. For more information, visit dpil-gtregion.org