

The Gratitude Report

Issue No. 2 | July 2022



Thanks a LATTE... to our founding Coffee Club members!



We would like to extend a very special thank you to everyone who joined The Coffee Club this spring - our monthly giving circle supporting clients in our 3 Cups of Coffee program. Your generous support makes life-changing mentorships possible for women in our community.

Many of you have witnessed the impact our 3 Cups of Coffee program has on job-seekers up close. You know that the right advice or the right connection can lead to an important career opportunity. More than anything, you know how important it is to have someone in your corner to help navigate the challenges of starting or restarting your career.

Your generous monthly gift - whether it is \$5 or \$50 - has given a job-seeking woman a mentor who will become her advocate, her confidant, and her coach as she continues her journey to find meaningful and family-sustaining employment. Take a look to the right to see what you've made possible this year alone, and know that because of you many more women will find a job that provides them with a more stable and prosperous life.

More information and a list of our Founding Members can be found at pawomenwork.org/the-coffee-club.

Your generosity helps women succeed with... *3 Cups of Coffee.*

161 MENTEES.

In the last year, 161 mentees received support from qualified professional mentors.



100% MOTIVATED.

Of those who completed the program, 100% said they felt ready and motivated to find and maintain employment that was right for them.

200+ COMPANIES.

Our mentors represent more than 200 companies, including Duquesne Light, UPMC, BNY Mellon, the University of Pittsburgh and more.



90% BUILT A NETWORK.

After completing 3 Cups of Coffee, 90% of participants felt they were able to access a professional network that could connect them to job opportunities.

"I CAN DO THIS."

"I am finally able to hold my head high and not be ashamed of my employment history. I learned how to take the skills from each of those jobs and expand and build on them."
- A recent 3 Cups of Coffee client



Rising up to support her family - *Sara's story*



After working in manufacturing for three years without a salary increase, Sara Ndayisaba, a foreign-born citizen and mom of four children, needed a change. "I didn't know where to start. I needed something that would support us financially, help us buy a home, and fit in with our schedule," Sarah explained.

Sara's friend told her about PA Women Work's RISE program - a service that helps refugees and immigrants navigate the American workforce and achieve financial stability. She was connected to Kristen Tsapis, RISE program manager.

"I wanted to apply for UPMC's Environmental Services training program, but I couldn't finish it on my own," Sarah explained. "Kristen sat down with me for three hours and walked me through it. It was so helpful."

A few weeks later, Sara was accepted into the program. While the program was paid, Sara decided to continue working her full-time manufacturing job throughout the training. "I was working so hard. I went from the training, straight to work. At the end of the program, I felt so happy," Sara said. "The training ended on a Friday, and I began my new job at UPMC Mercy on Monday."

Sara started her new job in February 2020, and after a year, she and her husband had enough money to buy a house for their family. "I continued to be in touch with Kristen, and when we were moving and didn't yet have Internet set up, Kristen helped me get my kids registered for school," Sara said.

With plans to build her own career as her children get older, Sara continues to spread the word about the RISE program to her friends, family and neighbors. "I send everyone to PA Women Work who needs help. Kristen is a good person - she is such a helper," Sarah insisted. "I owe PA Women Work so much for helping me get to where I am today."

To learn more about the RISE program, visit www.pawomenwork.org.

Save the date!



CIRCLE OF HOPE
PENNSYLVANIA WOMEN WORK

WHAT: 21st Annual Circle of Hope Awards Dinner
WHEN: Wed., Oct. 26
WHERE: The Westin Pittsburgh

Join us for our biggest celebration of the year as we honor our inspirational clients, employer partners, volunteers, and more.

Stay in touch

Pennsylvania Women Work
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Pittsburgh, PA 15222
412-742-4362
pawomenwork.org



Donor spotlight: *Lori Heiles*



Photo: Pamela Walker, Lori Heiles

When Lori Heiles reminisces about her godmother her conversation is peppered with deep admiration and anecdotes that bring both laughter and tears. Her godmother, Pamela Walker, affectionately known to Lori as "Aunt Pam," passed away this February leaving behind the legacy of a trailblazing career woman who devoted herself to family, friends and colleagues.

Aunt Pam grew up in New Kensington, heading straight into the workforce at age 18 to support herself and her family. She started as a retail bank teller and retired as the vice president of risk management for BNY Mellon - a testament to her career drive.

"I think as a woman building a career in the 80s, she knew she had to work twice as hard to get ahead, but she always made time for the people in her life," recalled Lori. "Back then, it was challenging for women to advance in the workforce, and when they did, it was common to shut the door behind them. But, as Pam's career advanced, she brought so many women up the ladder with her. She retired with some of the same colleagues she started out with."

Lori always looked up to Aunt Pam and admired her career and work ethic. When Lori's own career started taking off, Aunt Pam proved to be her strongest cheerleader, providing advice and mentorship as she made important work and life decisions.

When Pam passed away, Lori wanted to do something meaningful in her honor by directing gifts in her memory to an organization that aligned with what she remembered best about her godmother. "PA Women Work, and especially the 3 Cups of Coffee mentorship program, was a perfect fit. Aunt Pam was a mentor to so many women."

When it came to her own donation, Lori also wanted to make a gift that spoke to the moment. "There's such a need right now to reach out a hand and help someone up when you can." Lori is now following in her Aunt Pam's footsteps in more ways than one. As the Regional Director for Casamigos Spirits Company, and an industry trailblazer in her own right, she's also a mentor to a client in the 3 Cups of Coffee program. Lori, thank you for continuing your Aunt Pam's legacy!