

**For Immediate Release**

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**Montville Women Join Impact 100  
To Help Those in Need**

*(Montville, NJ/February 11, 2016)* - Local women with an interest in philanthropy recently attended a meeting hosted by Debbie Catena of Montville to learn about the work of Impact 100 Garden State. Impact 100, a philanthropic women's organization, is dedicated to helping local nonprofits meet the needs of the disadvantaged and underserved in New Jersey communities. The organization combines women's dollars and women's actions into high-impact grants that are awarded to local nonprofit agencies offering programs in Morris, Passaic, Somerset, and Sussex counties. Since its inception three years ago, Impact 100 Garden State has awarded more than \$500,000 to help veterans, at-risk youth, minority pre-school children, the elderly, and those who are food insecure. Membership in the organization is open through March 31, 2016.

During the meeting, Impact 100 Membership Chair Merle Johnson and Board Member Helene Kennedy (Towaco) described the organization's collective-giving approach: Each woman pays an annual membership fee of \$1,000, and the total amount, which is tax deductible, is used to fund large, transformative grants, including at least one grant of \$100,000.

"Impact 100 offers women an opportunity to engage in local philanthropy on a broader and deeper level than they could as individuals," emphasizes Kennedy, the first member from Towaco.

“This is a unique organization of women who truly want to help their communities,” states Catena, an Impact 100 member since 2015, adding, “It is run by a volunteer board. With no paid staff, every dollar goes to charity. That appeals to me.”

Impact 100 Garden State does not restrict its funding to groups that support women’s issues. There are five categories for applicants—arts and culture; children and families; education; environment, preservation, and recreation; and health and wellness—and finalists are chosen in all five areas. Volunteer Impact 100 members vet the applications and select the finalists, who are also subject to a thorough financial review. The final grant recipients are then determined through a vote of the membership.

In 2015, the organization had 205 members and awarded two transformational grants of \$102,500 each to Free Pair Paterson, a program of the New Jersey Community Development Corporation that supports high-school dropouts, the elderly and the disabled, and the Early Learning and Literacy program, which is organized by the Head Start Community Program of Morris County to help young children from low-income Morris County families, the majority of which are Spanish speaking.

“Our members are all ages from all walks of life,” states Johnson. “They share a common belief that by combining their resources and contributing to Impact 100, they can make the most of their charitable giving. That belief is fueling our growth.”

Members may join through March 31. To do so, go to [www.impact100gardenstate.org](http://www.impact100gardenstate.org) or email [member.impact100gardenstate@gmail.com](mailto:member.impact100gardenstate@gmail.com).

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## Caption for Photo

### Montville Women Support Impact 100 Garden State; Help Nonprofits Serve Those in Need

Impact 100 Garden State invites women to join them in helping local nonprofits serve their communities and those in need. Member Debbie Catena hosted an event to educate women about this unique philanthropic organization. Among those attending the Montville gathering were (seated, l-r): Nancy Orsi, Mardi Rizzuto and Kim Hug, all of Montville, and Suzanne Gallat of Summit; (standing, l-r) Janine Cerreto (Caldwell), Jennifer Mastriani (Montville), Donna Bivona (Montville); host Debbie Catena (Montville), Merle Johnson (Impact 100 Membership Chair, Morristown); Helene Kennedy, Impact 100 Board Member, Montville), and Lisa Adami (Montville). Not pictured, Dr. Stacey Siegel, who practices in Denville. Membership in Impact 100 is open through March 31, 2016. More than 200 women joined the organization in 2015. Go to [www.impact100gardenstate.org](http://www.impact100gardenstate.org) for more information.