

For Immediate Release

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**Impact 100 Garden State Announces Seven Finalists;
Welcomes Wendy Steele as Keynoter**

When Impact 100 Garden State arrived in New Jersey in 2012, it offered women an innovative way to transform the act of charitable giving. The effort was local, but the founders' inspiration came from Wendy Steele who created the Impact 100 concept in Cincinnati 2001. Her idea was straightforward: first recruit 100 women who would donate \$1,000 each, then pool the money to fund a local non-profit organization.

Four years later, Impact 100 Garden State is announcing seven finalists for three 2016 grants, totaling \$244,000, and will welcome Wendy Steele, now a nationally known motivational speaker, as keynoter at its Annual Awards Meeting on November 2. At that meeting, Impact members will listen to the finalists' presentations and vote to select the three recipients.

The finalists for the two \$100,000 grants are: the College of Saint Elizabeth, Morris Township; Interfaith Food Pantry, Morris Plains; Lake Hopatcong Foundation, Lake Hopatcong; New Jersey Agricultural Society, Bordentown; and Roots & Wings, Denville.

The finalists for the \$44,000 grant are the Girls Scouts of Northern New Jersey, Riverdale and The Wharton Institute for the Performing Arts, Paterson.

Suzanne Herrmann, co-chair of the grants committee, coordinated the evaluation of 59 applicants this year. "Along with my Co-Chair Christine DiCesare we are pleased to present to the Impact100 Garden State membership the seven finalists. From these seven, two will be selected for \$100,000 grants and one for a \$44,000 grant. Over 70 members were involved in the process of vetting the grants, attending site visits and choosing the finalists. They have worked arduously for over four months. It has been my honor to work with the volunteers to assist them in this most professional process. They deserve a big round of applause for their steadfast dedication."

Wendy Steele, who has described her commitment to philanthropy in a 2014 TEDx talk, believes that women are an untapped philanthropic resource, and that Impact 100 can be an instrument of empowerment. She is so right. In their four years of giving, members of Impact 100 Garden State will have awarded \$767,000 in transformative grants to nonprofit organizations in Morris, Passaic, Somerset and Sussex counties. And by the end of 2016, members of 39-plus Impact 100s around the globe will have donated more than 42 million dollars to organizations in their local communities.

For more information about Impact 100 Garden State and about the seven finalists for this year's grants, go to www.impact100gardenstate.org

Impact 100 Garden State is a Special Project Fund of the Community Foundation of New Jersey, www.cfnj.org, which supports charitable giving focused on making NJ communities stronger.

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