

FOUNDATIONS AND ADVOCACY FOR WOMEN

St. Ann Foundation: From Women to Women

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Established in 1973 with the \$8.2 million dollars realized from the sale of St. Ann Hospital, the St. Ann Foundation has used the interest from the sale to support health and health care institutions and programs, primarily in the Northeastern Ohio area. St. Ann Maternity Home and Infant Asylum, as St. Ann Hospital was originally called, was founded in 1873, by a group of women — the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine — primarily to care for single mothers — mostly unwed mothers in the language of the day — and abandoned infants. It was Ohio's oldest maternity hospital and developed the first formal social services program for unwed mothers. Thus, in the 22 years of existence, St. Ann Foundation has focused strongly on funding programs of direct service, advocacy, and education that continue that early mission. Through a public foundation which has given to a wide variety of health and human service projects, from a first aid station at Blossom Music Center to the AIDS housing corporation, a review of the 22 years of gift giving — totaling 18,270,880 million — show the focus on five areas of particular interest to women: Pre-natal, natal, and post-natal programs; children, especially those with disabilities; family/women's issues; women's academic education; and elderly, most of whom are women.

The St. Ann Foundation rests on a clear history of women reaching out to real health and social service needs. For almost the 100 years of its existence, St. Ann Hospital was headed by women, who also started an early training school to staff it. Though the Foundation has been headed by a man, the Board of Trustees, by design, has always been at least one half women, both lay women and sisters, and the Sisters of Charity continue a strong presence in the direction of grants.