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September 23, 2022  
Bethlehem, NH

### *WREN Receives Four Grants from State Organizations*

The Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN) announced it is the honored recipient of four different grants from three state organizations for the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

The New Hampshire Women's Foundation awarded WREN with a grant of \$2,500 for the Women's Work Initiative, a new program of WREN which is tasked with developing and piloting solutions to eliminate systemic influences that perpetuate the gender wage-gap and lower the earning power of North Country women. WREN's Women's Work Initiative will build new pathways to higher earning and long-term financial success for North Country families.

The New Hampshire State Council on the Arts (NHSCA) awarded WREN with two grants: the second of three installments of \$11,000 from its Public Value Partnership Grant funds, and \$3,223 from American Rescue Plan Funds. Public Value Partnership grants are for general operating support for nonprofit cultural organizations investing in the cultural infrastructure and creative economy of New Hampshire. The NHSCA American Rescue Plan funding category recognizes the importance of the nonprofit arts industry to New Hampshire's economy, and its funds help these entities endure economic hardships related to the pandemic.

The New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) awarded WREN with \$78,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Microenterprise grants. CDBG funds are for the development of viable communities through improving economic opportunities, particularly for persons of low and moderate incomes. The CDBG Microenterprise program fosters economic development by supporting organizations that provide entrepreneurial training and technical assistance training to low- to moderate-income micro-business owners with less than five employees. WREN will use these funds to provide 20 low- to moderate-income small business owners with business development courses, one-on-one training sessions with expert instructors, and business mentorship opportunities, as well as to provide direct grants for costs related to the purchase of business equipment or machinery.

Each of these grants will help WREN to continue its mission of supporting better lives and livelihoods through education, economic development and community engagement in the North Country.

### ***About WREN***

The Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN) is a nationally recognized nonprofit organization in Bethlehem, NH founded 28 years ago by local women. Through the years, WREN's work has impacted thousands of people across New Hampshire's North Country by providing technical assistance training and market access for local entrepreneurs and artists and providing educational, cultural and social events for the entire community. The Store and Gallery at WREN support the livelihoods of local artists while also increasing the vitality of the North Country. WREN provides classes, workshops, community workspace, networking and events to support better lives and livelihoods, access to markets, and rural economic development in the North Country.