

Rachel's Network



impassioned leaders & agents of change

About the Network

Rachel's Network (RN), a 501(c)(3) organization, has flourished since its inception in 1999, when 18 women philanthropists joined forces around a shared commitment to conservation. True to our pioneers' vision of empowering themselves and like-minded peers to be **more effective funders**, RN continues to build productive alliances among women who care deeply about the environment. Named in honor of Rachel Carson, RN *promotes women as impassioned leaders and agents of change dedicated to the stewardship of the earth*. To fulfill this mission, we offer services that increase women's **leadership** within the philanthropic sector and broaden members' **understanding** of ecological issues. Our outreach programs engage emerging advocates and fortify their capacities for leadership. RN has developed these programs to instill strategic acuity in our members and ensure that women's voices are brought to the fore in our nation's ongoing dialogue on conservation.

Our Growing Community

Today, our Network includes women from across the U.S. with diverse interests, backgrounds, and philanthropic strategies.

- Total membership: around **90** women, ranging in age from **28 to 98**
- New members this year: **6**, with a retention rate of over **90** percent
- Family connections: **9** mother-daughter or -daughter-in-law pairs, **1** pair of sisters, **3** pairs of sisters-in-law, **1** grand mother-granddaughter pair, **2** aunts & their niece, **1** set of cousins, and countless friends

Signature Services

RN's educational services include weekly listservs, a monthly e-newsletter, monthly teleconferences, Speaker Series events, and semi-annual meetings on an environmental and/or philanthropic theme. Our leadership development services include board placement, resume consulting, and Speakers' Bureau placement.

- Members placed to date on boards of national and international nonprofits: **34**
- Benefits of board placement: amplifying women's voices at the decision-making level of powerful organizations; developing members' leadership skills and expanding their personal networks; helping members serve society by advancing issues important to them, and paving the way for future generations of women to lead with confidence

About Our Founder



Winsome McIntosh founded Rachel's Network as the culmination of over 30 years of experience in philanthropy and conservation advocacy. She has served on the board of the family-run McIntosh Foundation since 1972, in addition to serving on the boards of many nonprofit organizations, including Defenders of Wildlife (past chair), League of Conservation Voters, The Boat Company, Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties (founder), and the Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School. In the for-profit community, she has served on the boards of American Legal Systems, Island National Bank and Trust Company, and Mo-DV, Inc. Among her awards for civic leadership are the Garden Club of America's Margaret Douglas Medal of Achievement, Palm Beach Chamber of Commerce Community Service Award, and Florida State University Achievement Medal. Winsome was founder and the first executive director of the Association of Small Foundations. For the past nine years, she has dedicated herself to ensuring the success of RN's strategic mission.

"Our network has a richness about it that has absolutely nothing to do with wealth."

- Winsome McIntosh

Extending our Influence with Outreach Programs

RN's three outreach programs apply our "grass-tops" strategy to effect change, developing emerging leaders who will empower women and advocate for the health of our families and our planet.

CONGRESSIONAL WOMEN'S NETWORKING INITIATIVE

- RN introduced this program to help the women in Congress reap the benefits of networking, offering regular events to keep them connected. By helping them collaborate as allies, rather than competing as adversaries, we are encouraging these legislators to **transcend partisanship** and unite around issues important to women.
- For the last two years, we have partnered with Harvard and Rutgers Universities to co-host the Congressional Women's Roundtable, a half-day event focused on a timely subject, such as **women's mental health** or **women's financial literacy**. This event, with an agenda set by a bipartisan Steering Committee, has drawn speakers from academia, clinical research, policy, and the armed services.
- We hosted the first reception to honor newly sworn-in women Members of the 111th Congress in January 2009. RN's reputation on Capitol Hill for effective programming and nonpartisan support for women's empowerment remains strong, and we look forward to helping these policymakers network in the coming year.

RN/ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP (EWG) BODY BURDEN COLLABORATION

- RN has teamed up with EWG to raise awareness of the pervasive dangers of unregulated chemicals, funding bio-monitoring tests that measure one's "**body burden**," or the presence of toxics in tissues. In 2005, RN members volunteered to undergo testing and were galvanized by the sobering results.
- To broaden the socioeconomic range of individuals tested, we knew we would have to take action. In 2007, RN funded tests for a cohort of **5 women leaders** and **10 samples** of infant umbilical cord blood, all drawn from minority communities across the country, with specimens now under analysis at specialized labs.
- EWG and RN are now helping these women act as community spokespeople for improved chemical regulation, while we collaborate on a **PR campaign** to underscore the inescapable nature of chemical contamination.

STRATEGIC CONNECTORS PROGRAM

- Since 2005, we have partnered with the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), working with former Vice President Rev. Richard Cizik to help him build alliances with fellow leaders and communicate the moral duty of "**creation care**."
- In 2007, we introduced Rev. Cizik to Dr. Eric Chivian, director of Harvard's Center for Health and the Global Environment. To bridge the gap between their communities, they led an expedition for scientists and evangelicals to Alaska to witness environmental degradation, documented by a PBS film crew. In 2008, Rev. Cizik and Dr. Chivian earned a berth on *TIME* magazine's list of the "**100 Most Influential People** in the World." Other high-lights include co-hosting a 2007 Global Leaders Forum for evangelicals, at which U.N. Secretary general Ban Ki-moon delivered a keynote address, as well as a 2008 **Christian-Muslim Dialogue** on Creation Care at the World Bank, which included the Moroccan Ambassador to the U.S. and eminent scientific, political, and religious leaders.
- In late 2008, Rev. Cizik resigned from NAE to pursue independent work. We continue to advise him informally and to partner with NAE to reach out to new evangelical voices. Without RN's support, Rev. Cizik and NAE would have lacked the access and funding to deepen evangelical interest in these vital issues. With our help, they will continue to **energize a new constituency** for conservation.

contact us

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