

## The Power of Women: \$15 million and climbing

*American Red Cross*

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In 2007, the American Red Cross launched one of the most successful and exciting fundraising pilots in its history: the Tiffany Circle, Society of Women Leaders. The eight-chapter pilot, focusing on women's and leadership giving, was targeted to raise \$1 million by asking Tiffany Circle founding members to invest at least \$10,000 annually in their local community. They far surpassed this goal by raising more than \$3 million in support of their local programs and services.



Now three years later, the success continues. The original eight chapters have expanded to fifty-one chapters with more than five hundred women leaders.

With this increased support, fundraising has reached new heights. Tiffany Circle members have raised a total of \$15 million to date for the American Red Cross, including \$6.5 million alone in the most recent fiscal year.

The Tiffany Circle is looking ahead to an even brighter future. A new giving opportunity is available: the Bonnie McElveen-Hunter Tiffany Circle Lifetime Membership, a \$100,000 commitment over ten years. It is named after the current Chairman of the American Red Cross.

Melanie Sabelhaus, founding National Chair of the Tiffany Circle and American Red Cross national board member, introduced the Lifetime Membership at the concluding night of the 2009 Tiffany Circle Summit. When she asked attendees to stand if they would commit, many women stood and cheered. To date, 60 women have pledged Lifetime Membership.

“The powerful women of the American Red Cross are leaving a legacy for generations to come, as this movement spreads throughout the United States and we see the results of the good work we are doing in our local communities,” said Sabelhaus.

The Tiffany Circle's success can be credited to a couple key factors:

- 1) There is tremendous, steadfast support from volunteer leaders across the country. These individuals personally dedicate their time and talents to cultivate, solicit, and steward donors. By making their own financial contributions, they are also leading by example.
- 2) Another successful ingredient is the tremendous partnership between the Board of Governors, National Headquarters, and participating chapters. National training programs empower local chapters to make individual asks of influential men and women in their communities, many of whom are new supporters to the Red Cross.

In the first year of the Tiffany Circle initiative, more than 50 percent of the 235 members were new American Red Cross donors. The Miami chapter alone recruited more than 28 first-time donors. Additionally, many donors significantly increased their giving. (There were four gifts of \$100,000 or more from individuals across the country.)

Unanimously, chapters see benefits in the program. “I have worked for the American Red Cross for 30 years in chapters, National Headquarters, and regional offices. The Tiffany Circle is the most powerful and impactful fundraising initiative that I have ever been a part of in that time. It has meant a great deal to my own personal success as a Chapter Executive and to my chapter's ability to deliver critical Red Cross services to the communities that we serve,” said Vernon Reed, Northern New Jersey Chief Executive Officer.

For a list of Tiffany Circle chapters and further information, please visit <http://www.redcross.org/tiffanycircle>.