

The New Opportunity School for Women

serves under-resourced Appalachian women who are ready to build stable and fulfilling lives for themselves, their families and their communities. All of our programs are free.



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SUPPORTERS

Dixie Schiederer

Dixie Scheiderer has enjoyed a life filled with love and hard work.

This summer, Dixie chose to share her blessings with NOSW, offering a \$20,000 matching gift if NOSW could raise \$20,000. More than 30 people and organizations pitched in during the month of July to help NOSW meet this challenge.

Born and raised in Ohio, Dixie was part of a family that had its roots in Catlettsburg, Kentucky, but had moved to Ohio during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

“I had absolutely wonderful parents,” she says. Her family were farmers, and Dixie and a sister would train and show horses. By the time she was 13, Dixie’s family had split up and she went to work babysitting for a local family, working in a butcher shop and tending horses, all while finishing school at night. Though she worked hard,

Dixie also felt supported. “I had good people around me.”

When she was 19, she met Jake Scheiderer at a local fair. She was showing horses, and he was showing cattle. She went home that evening knowing she would marry him.

“We had two dates and then got married,” Dixie says. “We had a lovely, lovely relationship as far as how we thought about each other.”

Jake’s family had farmed one of the oldest cattle herds in Ohio, and he and Dixie farmed together before turning the farm over to their son in 1977. Dixie ran a small cheese business on the farm that produced European cheeses for high-end stores. “We had a good time at it,” she says.

For many years, Dixie was plagued with a colon condition that caused multiple hospitalizations. She found a doctor in Lexington who could provide specialized care, and she and Jake moved to Kentucky in 2007. Then, in 2014, Jake passed

See DIXIE, page 3.



LIFTING LEADERS AT LEADERSHIP RETREAT

NOSW encourages our graduates to continue their journey of growth and leadership throughout their lives. Each year, we invite a small group of women to a Graduate Leadership Retreat to gain new skills, meet graduates from other classes, and spend time in nature.

This year’s retreat took our group to beautiful Cumberland Falls State Park the weekend of September 20-23. The graduates explored life satisfaction; recalled leaders in their own lives who have influenced them; pondered the differences between leadership and management; and embraced the leader they all have within them.

They also examined the role that urgency (or perceived urgency) plays in their lives and learned more about their own leadership styles through the Clifton StrengthsFinder. In between they enjoyed visiting the falls, hiking the trails and riding horses.

Participating graduates included Tamiko Turner (class of June 2006), Chrissy Johns (February 2011), Elizabeth Butler (February 2015), Jennifer West (November 2019), Shelly Carpenter (June 2022) and Tammy Simpson (November 2022). They were selected based on the leadership and forward movement they are demonstrating in their lives.

FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Hello! As the weather transitions from the beautiful leaves of autumn to the more frigid months of winter, I am reminded of how change is often necessary, needed, and, in some ways, quite the challenge. Change is inevitable, but it can also strengthen us and our work.

Speaking of change, it is coming up for our organization, as well. There have already been several changes to staffing this year at NOSW. Along with those changes have come exciting new ideas, fresh vision, new thoughts, In the coming months our staff and board will be revisiting NOSW's strategic plan document. Originally, this document was approved by the Board in 2019 and would guide our organization until 2025. The newest version will go into effect next year and guide us through 2027.

It is my hope that changes such as revising our strategic plan, revisiting policies and procedures, and discussing how we pursue and plan organizational goals around these materials will only serve to make us a better, more capable organization in the long term. At NOSW, we often have a saying, "It's all about our ladies!" And that is really true. Everything we do is all about the folks we are so blessed to uplift and work alongside! And although we might be changing other things behind the scenes, that will never change: We exist to serve Appalachian women from all walks of life, to help strengthen themselves, their families, and their communities.

I hope that you will join me in welcoming the improvements that change can bring. And that you will continue your unwavering support of all we do here at NOSW. Only change can bring growth, just as we teach our participants. And we are dedicated to doing our best for the region and our ladies.

I am humbled to be of service,



Gina M. Riddell
Executive Director



STAFFING CHANGES

Our Assistant Director Jennifer Walden, pictured above with Crystal Burton & graduate Shelly Carpenter, will be leaving us after serving our organization since 2019. During her time at the school, Jen made numerous changes to our programs and offerings to make them more useful and beneficial for our participants. We wish Jen and her husband all the best as they embark on creating their own business. Although we will certainly miss her around the office, we are glad that Jen will still be participating regularly in gatherings targeted at our graduates. Thank you for everything, Jennifer! We know that the next chapter in your life will be just as inspiring and successful as all the others that have come before.

Recently, Sam Cole was also hired by NOSW to serve as the Communications & Development Coordinator. Sam is excited to work with such an important organization in the region, and to be doing direct service to Appalachian women just like her.

WHAT'S COMING UP

October

Oct 7-9: Three-Day Non-Residential Session
October 17: Graduate Support Group (online)

November

November 9-23: Residential Session (Berea)

December

December 9-11: Three-Day Non-Residential Session
December 19: Graduate Support Group (online)

DIXIE SCHIEDERER

Continued from page 4

away at age 81. He was 15 years older than Dixie.

Now 77, Dixie lives in Rockcastle County near Mount Vernon. She gives credit for her current quality of life to Hospice, which provides in-home care that enables her to continue living on her own. She has three children, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

When asked why Dixie chose NOSW as the recipient of her generosity, she said, "The Lord told me to. That's exactly how I do my life."



MORE PHOTOS FROM LEADERSHIP RETREAT



UPCOMING RESIDENTIAL SESSION

NOSW is preparing for their upcoming two-week residential session to be held in Berea, KY in early November 2024. Just like at every session, this session will include trips to the salon, a shopping day, and various courses that the participants will be engaged in. A few of the courses that we offer at session include Appalachian Literature, Creative Writing, and Artistic Expression courses. We are especially excited about our trip for the upcoming session, a day at Newport Aquarium.

Around 10 participants during this session will be lodging at Happiness Hills Farm just outside Berea. The two weeks is always lots of fun, but it is also always a lot of work for all the women involved. Although we give a lot to all of our participants, they will also be engaged in deep, challenging work. Our programming team consisting of Crystal Burton & Amy Hogg have been working tirelessly to plan an engaging, life-changing experience for all our participants.

It is only because of your continued support that NOSW can keep offering such robust and effective programming! Thank you for your continued, generous support.

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