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Mary's Pence to receive Minnesota Council of Nonprofits' 2017 Nonprofit Mission and Excellence Award for Responsive Philanthropy

The award ceremony is Friday, October 13 at the Saint Paul RiverCentre

St. Paul, MN (October 6, 2017) – Mary's Pence will receive the 2017 Nonprofit Mission and Excellence for Responsive Philanthropy during the Minnesota Council of Nonprofit's 2017 Annual Conference on Friday, October 13.

"It is an honor to be recognized as a responsive funder during a moment when women and other marginalized people are facing tremendous struggles. Mary's Pence is committed to supporting women who have experienced injustice. By trusting in their experience and knowledge, together we can create effective solutions and long-term change," said Mary's Pence Executive Director, Katherine Wojtan.

A Saint Paul-based non-profit organization, Mary's Pence was founded by women to support women on the margins at a time when women-led social justice projects were overlooked and under-funded. This year Mary's Pence is celebrating 30 years of funding women and changing lives.

Nominated by a local grantee

Reviving the Islamic Sisterhood for Empowerment (RISE), a two-time Mary's Pence grantee based in Minneapolis nominated Mary's Pence for the award. Mary's Pence envisions a world where empowered women and their communities flourish in solidarity and justice. They provide resources and support to women in the Americas who are working for social change through two programs – Mary's Pence Grants and ESPERA.

Mary's Pence Grants act as seed money for organizations with very small budgets

The Mary's Pence Grants program funds women's organizations in the US and Canada that are working with their local communities to create long-term systemic change. Nausheena Hussain, the Executive Director of RISE, says the organization's willingness to embrace and invest in vision is critical. "We needed funding to get rolling, and Mary's Pence really stepped up and invested in what really was our vision at that time. We didn't have a successful track record, but instead we had this vision for change, and they understood it," she said.

To qualify for a Mary's Pence grant, an organization must collaborate with diverse populations, advocate to change unjust policies, and educate to build skills and increase capacity – all while having an operating budget of no more than \$200,000.

While grantee organizations range in age from newly created to decades-old, approximately one third have been in operation for less than three years.

To learn more about Mary's Pence Grants or ESPERA visit maryspence.org/what-we-do.

To read the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits press release "Recipients of the 2017 Nonprofit Mission and Excellence awards Announced!" visit <http://www.minnesotanonprofits.org/news/articles/2017/10/03/recipients-of-the-2017-nonprofit-mission-excellence-awards-announced>