



Ripley Memorial Foundation

Legacy of Compassion, Hope for the Future

A fund of the Women's Foundation of Minnesota

OVERVIEW

Founded in 1957, the Ripley Memorial Foundation Fund has a mission of honoring Dr. Martha Ripley by funding programs that foster and enhance the health and well-being of women. In 1886, Dr. Ripley established a maternity hospital for unmarried women and needy married women. Upon selling the hospital seventy years later, the assets were retained thereby creating the endowment.

Both personally and professionally, Dr. Ripley was a pioneer and her tireless dedication to improving the lives of women, particularly those who were often not given a voice in society, continues to make an impact even decades later. In 1993, the Foundation narrowed the focus of its grant-making to support programs demonstrating the intent to prevent first time, and subsequent pregnancies among adolescents.

More specifically, Ripley Memorial Foundation's priority is to fund organizations that directly interface with youth to promote pregnancy awareness and prevention, and encourage overall sexual health, with the ultimate goal of reducing teenage pregnancies in Hennepin and Ramsey counties. Additional funding consideration is given to programs that incorporate innovative, multi-faceted approaches aimed at reaching populations at increased risk for teen pregnancy.



Dr. Martha Ripley - 1905

“Ripley Memorial Hospital is more than a hospital. It has been a home and a shelter for deserted wives and widows; for homeless infants and wronged and betrayed girls who needed its shelter and skillful care. Many girls have said that it was the only real home they have ever known.”

— From the 1911 Annual Report

THE SCOPE OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY

The biggest predictor of teen pregnancy in the United States is poverty. Roughly 60% of girls who have a child before age 18 will not graduate high school or complete their GED. Only slightly over 1% of those that do graduate will attain a college degree before age 30, making long-term financial stability even more challenging and further perpetuating the cycle of poverty. As a result, teen pregnancy frequently has a multi-generational impact. Daughters of teen moms are three times more likely to become teenage mothers themselves, whereas sons of teen moms are two times more likely to end up in prison.



Babies in baskets - 1925

The encouraging news is that since 1990, adolescent pregnancy and birth rates have decreased significantly both in Minnesota and nationwide. However, teenage pregnancy is still very pervasive. Consider that each day, approximately 16 adolescent girls in Minnesota become pregnant and approximately 12 give birth. Further, 19% of births to adolescents are subsequent births. Not only do teenage births have a major impact on the lives of the young mothers, their children and their families, but nationally, teen childbearing costs taxpayers an estimated 10.9 billion dollars each year.

OUR IMPACT AND WHO WE REACH

Since 1992, Ripley Memorial Foundation has provided over 1.13 million dollars in charitable support to eighty-eight organizations working to reduce teen pregnancy throughout our local communities. However, much more important than the dollars given are the thousands of young women who continue to receive the life-long benefits of the unique programs funded via the Ripley Memorial Foundation.

Ripley recognizes that to make further progress and improve adolescent sexual health, it is imperative that social factors such as education, cultural influences, income and housing are addressed. Therefore, we support programs that understand and incorporate the social environment that is relevant to the youth they serve. To ensure supported programs are comprehensive in their approach, prior to receiving funding each program undergoes an assessment to evaluate three key areas: sexual education, reproductive health, and youth development. Our objective is to proactively support and educate young women and help empower them to make informed decisions regarding their lives.

FILLING A UNIQUE NICHE

The challenging economic climate and subsequent decreases in charitable giving have had an impact on nearly all non-profits. The Ripley Memorial Foundation remains an important source of funding for many of our grantee organizations. During a time when foundations are frequently shifting their giving priorities to focus on basic needs, such as hunger and housing initiatives, Ripley Memorial Foundation continues to fill a unique niche, and remains dedicated to funding progressive programs that specifically concentrate on the ever-important issue of teen pregnancy prevention.

As a donor, it can be hard to discern which organization merits your support. Similar to the role of a donor advised fund, Ripley is positioned to evaluate a variety of programs and collectively determine those that produce successful outcomes and are best aligned with our overall mission. Ripley's volunteer advisory board takes pride in maintaining the legacy of Dr. Ripley, and is committed to being excellent stewards of the charitable dollars we award to our partnering organizations. Each year, prior to awarding grants, Ripley advisors review proposals, conduct personal site-visits, and evaluate programs to assure they employ best practices and use evidence-based strategies in their outreach efforts.

Through developing relationships with the organizations we support, Ripley is able to stay abreast of trends in teen pregnancy, gain insight into successful programmatic approaches, and remain better connected to the individuals we serve. As a donor, you can feel confident knowing that the benefit of your gift will be best optimized when you give to Ripley Memorial Foundation. Over 98% of your donation will directly support programming!

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Through the Ripley Memorial Hospital, Dr. Ripley created a safe place for women and their children, while simultaneously making a life-changing, and at times life-saving, impact upon the lives of those she served. In our efforts to continue her important legacy, we, too, are committed to supporting programs that provide safe and supportive environments for young women.

We ask that you please join our efforts by making a charitable donation. Gifts to Ripley Memorial Foundation make a very important impact upon the young women that receive the benefits of your generosity. Whether you designate your gift to help sustain proven programs, or choose to support those that are trying new approaches or serving small but under-served teen populations, you can feel proud knowing that you have made a meaningful and long-term investment in the future of a young person.

"I give to the Ripley Memorial Foundation because I strongly believe in the mission and the wonderful work they do to support and educate young women about preventing and dealing with adolescent pregnancies, and to empower them to make good decisions which will affect the rest of their lives."

—Mary Lee Dayton