Focus on Financial Literacy

In today’s complicated financial world, it is increasingly important for youth to learn the fundamentals of earning, saving and investing. It is equally important to understand the implications of debt and to avoid the pitfalls of unscrupulous lenders and other predatory practices. To address this issue, High Water Women joined forces with financial industry legend Muriel Siebert in 2009 to launch the **Muriel Siebert High Water Women Campaign for Financial Literacy**.

The program provides low-income teens and adults with the skills and knowledge needed to manage money responsibly and lays the groundwork for a more secure financial future. The curriculum draws on materials developed by the Siebert Foundation, the National Financial Educators Council, the NYC Office of Financial Empowerment and other resources, and is targeted for high school, GED, college students and adults. Our instructors are financial professionals who are recruited and trained by HWW to teach our weekly sessions and workshops in schools, after-school and community-based settings. In 2018, HWW provided workshops and financial mentoring to the Women’s Project, an initiative to provide early release for women in custody at Riker’s Island.

**CURRICULUM SUMMARY**

- **Decision making**, opportunity costs, wants and needs, income and jobs
- **Budgeting**, goal setting, expenses, income and saving
- **Banking and balancing a checking account**
- **Credit card costs and benefits, selecting a credit card**
- **Credit history and credit reports**
- **Savings methods and ways to cut costs**
- **Saving strategies, financial services for saving, time value of money**
- **Income taxes, completing a 1040, understanding W2 and W4 forms.**

**HWW Partners**

- **New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)**
  - Cornerstone, Neighborhood Development Area and after-school program providers
  - NYC Summer Youth Employment Program
- **Nonprofit organizations (with a focus on enriched educational opportunities for low-income youth and adults)**
  - Breaking Ground
  - BronxWorks
  - Children’s Village
  - Chinese American Planning Council
  - FEDCAP
  - Hunter College Liberty Partnership
  - Jacob Riis Youth Program
  - New Alternatives for Children
  - New Jewish Home GCD
  - Nurse Family Partnership
  - Sunnyside Community Services
  - The Door
  - W!se Institute

We have taught more than 10,000 youth and adults to manage their money.
Volunteer instructors teach in the program.

- HWW recruits and trains volunteers, mostly from financial services and legal companies.
- We work with volunteers on scheduling to avoid work/travel conflicts.
- Volunteers are not required to teach more that four sessions and teach in teams of two.
- HWW requires a two-hour training session and provides all curriculum materials and supplies.

Students receive $25 gift cards for completing the program.

- HWW works with personnel running youth and adult programming at the sites to schedule financial literacy classes (eight or four week programs or workshops).
- Teens/adults at the sites sign up to attend scheduled classes that are generally offered in late afternoon or early evening.
- Students participating in weekly classes receive incentives such as $25 gift cards for completing the program.
- Students, volunteers and site directors complete a survey at the conclusion of each program to help HWW assess and continue to improve the program.

“I really enjoy it and feel it makes a difference.”
- Kristin Short, Volunteer at Metropolitan High School, Brownsville Brooklyn

“I learned a lot of things that will help me make better money decisions in the future.”
- Teen Participant at Mott Haven Library, South Bronx

“This program was great!”
- Anthony Urena, Teen Participant at Columbus Library

“Working with the kids was very fulfilling...I feel I have found volunteer work I love.”
- Jojon Tamir, Volunteer at Columbus Library, Manhattan

Watch the High Water Women Financial Literacy Program Video

Financial Literacy Program sites 2014 - 2019


Financial literacy instruction makes a real difference in the lives of the students who complete the program. We are continually expanding our efforts to reach greater numbers of youth and young adults in sites across the city. For more information please contact: FinLit@highwaterwomen.org

High Water Women is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization www.highwaterwomen.org