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CO-CHAIRS WENDY KEITH AND CONNIE MAGNUSON AT MICHIGAN SHORES CLUB



# A PHILANTHROPIC TRADITION

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JON CANCELINO

*The Winnetka Board of The Northwestern University Settlement Association raised record-breaking numbers last year for the Settlement House downtown. The event co-chairs describe how the organization is gearing up for their 81st fashion event this fall. by Elaine Slayton.*

The ancient Chinese proverb states, “Give a man a fish and you feed him for one day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.” When applied to philanthropic organizations striving to help those less fortunate, it’s an ongoing challenge to move beyond providing immediate short-term assistance to *teaching* them to fish for a lifetime.

The Northwestern University Settlement Association (NUSA) has been succeeding at this goal for more than a century. Its programs help people see they have choices in life, no matter what obstacles they face. By providing resources and support, Settlement House empowers its Chicago West Town neighbors to take personal responsibility for overcoming poverty and becoming self-sufficient.

Since 1926, the Winnetka Board of NUSA has actively supported the Settlement House with its annual fashion show. Not surprisingly, the board is made up of many talented, successful, and tenacious women determined to continue providing the resources people need to improve their lives

and the broader community. The show raised a record amount of more than \$110,000 last year to facilitate and sustain important programs.

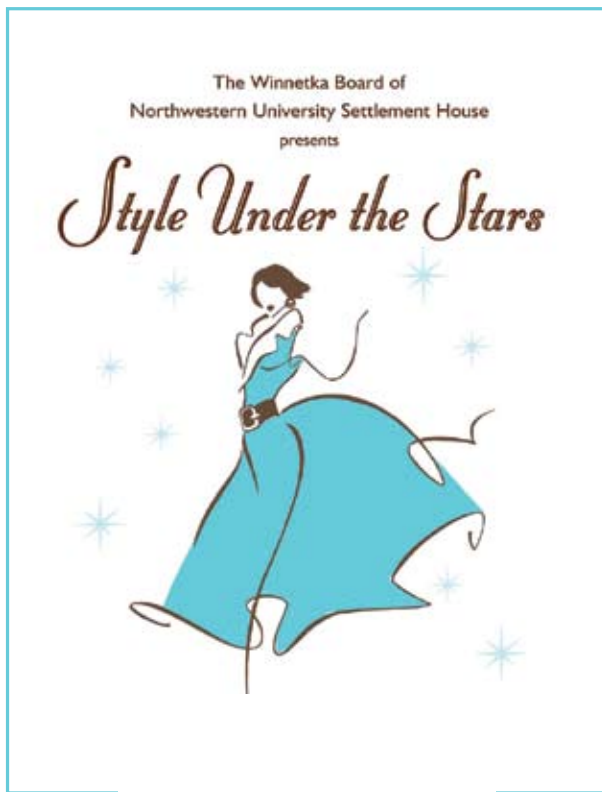
Fashion benefit co-chairs Connie Magnuson and Wendy Keith put their talents to the test last year when they changed the longstanding format for the 81st annual fashion show. What started as a modest luncheon in a North Shore home grew to an elaborate event that had to be moved to the outside lawn to accommodate guests. Connie and Wendy also wanted to make the show accessible to more people—career women, young mothers, and others for whom a daytime luncheon was difficult to attend. The co-chairs’ instincts paid off. “Style Under the Stars: Cocktails, Canapés, and Couture” was a smashing success raising more than \$110,000 for the Settlement House.

As part of their effort to add a contemporary image to the show, the board invested in a new design. The whimsical powder blue “style girl” logo was adopted and is now used in all benefit communications. Modeled after a New York runway show, the

show had a buzz and energy. It featured 19 couture shops from Lake Forest to Wilmette that donated their time and lent their clothing to support the cause. In all, more than 500 people were involved in the event, including exhibitors, models, corporate sponsors, press, board members, and guests.

“The Settlement House has roots and longevity, and it’s very solid,” explains Wendy. “We wanted to contemporize our functions to give [them] a more current appeal. This organization can be really flexible and responsive to community around us.” Wendy joined the Winnetka board five years ago. With 15 years’ experience as a management consultant in strategy and marketing, she’s now juggling a freelance consulting career, raising three young children, and her role as benefit co-chair. When asked why she chose to support the Settlement House, Wendy answers, “I wanted to be part of an organization that’s always growing. That’s flexible. Vibrant.”

Co-chair Connie is at a different point in her life. Retired from The Northern Trust after 28 years



THE "STYLE GIRL" OF THE WINNETKA BOARD

and with three grown children, she selected the Settlement House to support six years ago. "They're very hands-on," explains Connie, "and one of the oldest Settlement Houses in Chicago. They serve so many people who need help, particularly people new to the program such as children. Their Head Start is one of the strongest in Illinois."

The Settlement movement was born in London, England in 1873 to help the large urban population who experienced poor working conditions, unemployment, bad housing, and serious health problems. Its abiding principals were to promote individual and family *self-help*. More than a century later, Chicago's Settlement House, established in 1891, offers over 70 programs and services for 8,000 low-income Chicagoans every year. Services fall into one of three areas: assistance for short-term crisis; knowledge, opportunities, and support to break out of the poverty over the long term; and access to a network of additional programs and services.

The Northwestern Settlement House offers English as a Second Language, after-school programs, and resident youth camping—all geared toward fostering self-confidence and teamwork. Performing arts programs are used to teach a core curriculum to neighborhood public schools whose budgets can't support the arts in their schools. More than 15,000 young people have been exposed to the performing arts through the Adventure Stage Chicago/Vittum Theater. The Golden Agers Club provides senior citizens with the opportunity to meet each week to remain socially active and form friendships with other community members. And, while its goal is to give people the tools they need to succeed, NUSA also offers short-term emergency services to help people through particularly difficult situations.

In addition, Settlement House connects people to its network of partner organizations that can provide additional programs and services. AmeriCorps and the House in the Woods Camp are two such programs. And, writes NUSA President Tom Manderschied in a letter to friends of the Settlement, "The most recent efforts of the Settlement have been directed toward expanding Noble Street Charter High School from one to seven campuses. Noble Street targets low-income students from Chicago with a program that stresses self-discipline and high academic standards. Over 85% of graduated seniors have gone on to higher education opportunities."

This year's 82nd annual Style Under the Stars benefit will be held on September 18 at Michigan Shores Club.

For more information about the Settlement House and the Winnetka Board, visit [www.nush.org](http://www.nush.org) or contact Valery DeLong in the development office at 773-278-7471. For tickets to the upcoming show, please email [styleunderthestars@gmail.com](mailto:styleunderthestars@gmail.com). [comments@jwcmedia.com](mailto:comments@jwcmedia.com)



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