Women United is proud to grant $148,000 this year, through its Little Kids, Big Futures Philanthropy Fund, to support six critical early literacy programs that will ensure a foundation for strong and successful academic futures for children in Lake County.

Since 2014, Women United has granted more than half a million dollars to early literacy programs in Lake County.

- $65,000 to Success By 6 Kindergarten Countdown Camp. Beach Park, North Chicago, Round Lake, Waukegan. This program ensures that children with little to no preschool experience get the basic skills they need to start kindergarten ready to learn. This program will change the lives of 120 children who will also receive transportation and food service.

- $30,000 to Success By 6 Home Visiting. North Chicago, Waukegan, Zion. This collaborative program provides in-home early intervention for families with infants and preschool-age children who struggle with poverty and have limited access to health and community services. 20 of the highest-risk families will receive personalized wrap-around services.

- $25,000 to B.E.S.T. Pre-K Program. Round Lake. Children, who otherwise would not have access to preschool, will receive scholarships to attend this NAEYC accredited preschool program within the Round Lake Park District Child Development Center. An empty classroom will now be filled with 20 eager children ready to learn.

- $15,000 to Better Together. Green Bay Early Childhood Center, North Chicago. This early learning program focuses on family engagement and skill building for children 0 - 3 years old by providing individualized attention. As families learn and grow together, parents learn to foster their child’s development for a healthy start and a bright future.

- $8,000 to Early Learning Clubs. Waukegan Public Library. Early Learning Clubs provide opportunities for children to learn basic skills while their parents are empowered to be their child’s first teacher. Funding will allow the library to host 1 - 2 clubs a month (even through the critical summer months).

- $5,000 to HUGS/North Partnership. Waukegan. Women United’s HUGS (Heroines United for Giving and Support) initiative began a new partnership with Waukegan’s North Preschool. 140 children will have enhanced programming including reading days, learning bags, special family events and parenting workshops.

Women United is a critical community within United Way of Lake County that fights for the education of our youngest learners in Lake County’s most vulnerable communities.