



Tinny in her garden in Germantown  
Photo by Marina Dominguez

## Many Ways to Give: Tinny Weintraub

Vera “Tinny” Weintraub’s dedication to early childhood education has helped transform the resources in our community. A former teacher, banker, and director of Literacy, Inc. (LINC), a NYC nonprofit, she first engaged with the Fund for Columbia County in 2008 through a grant to bring services to Hudson.

Tinny became a determined ambassador for Berkshire Taconic, inspiring others to support its mission. She served three terms on the Board of Directors and several advisory committees, including FCC, and is a founding member of the donor Learning and Giving Circle, advancing racial equity through philanthropy.

Tinny recalls the early FCC committee days when \$500 allocations were debated at length; now FCC grants over \$350,000 annually. Her expertise in education programs shaped literacy initiatives in our region, bridging a critical gap and enriching the lives of the children in our county.

A longtime donor to FCC, Tinny recently joined the Berkshire Taconic Legacy Circle, donating a portion of her Individual Retirement Account (IRA) as a lasting gift for communities beyond her lifetime.

### PLANNED GIVING MADE SIMPLE

Berkshire Taconic can help customize your planned giving to support what you care about most. There is no minimum gift size, and plans are adjustable and revocable. A variety of assets are accepted, including IRA proceeds. Learn more at [berkshiretaconic.com/plan](http://berkshiretaconic.com/plan).

## INVEST IN OUR COMMUNITY

Berkshire Taconic established the Fund for Columbia County (FCC) in 1999. It serves as a permanent community resource to help organizations run programs that make life here safer, healthier, and more equitable. Residents with local expertise serve on our volunteer advisory committee.

FCC supports projects that further youth development, economic equity, civic and community engagement, the arts, education, the environment, and health and social services. FCC strengthens the county’s nonprofit infrastructure by providing grants to new and established organizations, helping them grow their capacity to address unmet needs.

### MAKE A GIFT TO FCC

Contributions to the Fund for Columbia County support the diverse nonprofits addressing critical needs and strengthening our community. Whether you are new to the area and looking to grow your understanding of local issues or a long-term resident wishing to simplify your giving and maximize your impact—your generous investment will make a real difference right here.



Visit [berkshiretaconic.org/fcc](http://berkshiretaconic.org/fcc) or scan the QR code to donate.

Contact Kelly Sweet, Senior Philanthropy Officer, to learn about your giving options.  
[ksweet@berkshiretaconic.org](mailto:ksweet@berkshiretaconic.org) / 413.717.7036

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Hudson Hall Live Arts & Media Training  
Photo by program participant



## Fund for Columbia County

2024 **MIDYEAR REPORT**

### Message from the Chair

Dear Friends,

I’m pleased to share good news from our nonprofit partners and grantees in Columbia County!

Hudson Hall’s Live Arts and Media Training program received a School-to-Work grant from the Fund for Columbia County this year that supported high school students who spent their winter break learning live event production skills. They studied lighting, sound, and videography and were introduced to the region’s growing film industry and its career opportunities. The week culminated in a performance of an original work by the group. This was the second of these workshops that I’ve observed. The students’ enthusiasm and creativity were infectious. I was equally inspired by the teachers who created a dynamic program that engages and opens up possibilities for local teens.

Supporting youth transitioning from school to college or career is vital for building thriving communities, which is why this work is a strategic priority for Berkshire Taconic. And for the past three years, FCC has been a core supporter of this priority through our School-to-Work grant program. We funded a new Licensed Practical Nursing program, a certificate program teaching business software skills to high schoolers, a GED program attuned to the needs of non-traditional students, and paid apprenticeships for those entering adulthood.

I hope you’ll enjoy all the good news inside, where you’ll find more partner spotlights and a full list of our grantees.

Warmly,

Peter Frank

**Berkshire Taconic**  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Harmony Project Hudson  
Photo by Josh Aronson



## Engaging Our Students

Harmony Project Hudson (HPH) uses intensive and joyous music education to cultivate positive social and academic development. HPH strives to help students realize their innate potential as individuals and citizens of their community through long-term mentorship from elementary school on. They currently serve 300 students for three to four hours each week in their free after-school programs. Backed by two FCC grants—Community Impact and School-to-Work—HPH aims to grow to five hours a week, fulfill all enrollment requests, and hire more student teachers.

## SCHOOL-TO-WORK GRANTEES

- Beautiful Racket
- City of Hudson Department of Youth
- Columbia County Youth Theater
- Columbia-Green Community College Foundation
- Common Ground Dispute Resolution
- Greater Hudson Promise Neighborhood
- Harmony Project Hudson
- Hudson Area Library Association
- Hudson Hall
- Kite's Nest
- Taconic Hills School District



Cooks for Health at The Learning Garden  
Photo courtesy of The Sylvia Center

## Teaching Healthy Habits Early

The Sylvia Center partners with local schools to educate young people and their families about healthy cooking and eating through their Cooks For Health program and their organic Learning Garden at Katchkie Farm. Last year, they doubled their participants in Columbia County, serving 1,174 students. Their grant from FCC helped ensure they could successfully expand to reach more children in our highest-need communities.

Columbia Children's Center  
Photo by John Dolan



## Supporting Working Families

Serving working and migrant families, Columbia Children's Center (CCC) provides affordable childcare in our county's "daycare desert." Their expansion of Universal Pre-K brought new opportunities but also challenges: CCC could now serve the waitlist of infant and toddler families, but they were operating at a loss awaiting approval and renovation. FCC's grant helped them stay open during this transition.



Coffee Hour  
Photo courtesy of Hillsdale Safe at Home

## Building Community Among Seniors

Hillsdale Safe at Home Committee helps seniors age in place. Much of their work happens through monthly Coffee Hours, where community is built and sustained. Information on local resources and services is provided, and relevant, engaging talks and activities are led by doctors, therapists, artists, and other professionals. A grant from FCC this year provided funding to cover the costs of hosting a full year of these valuable events.



Literacy Connections class  
Photo by Peter Frank

## Strengthening Immigrant Opportunities

Literacy Connections Adult and Family Literacy program relies on volunteer tutors to teach English language skills and on local libraries to provide comfortable spaces for these popular classes. However, a volunteer shortage has meant waitlists for students. An FCC grant will enable Literacy Connections to onboard additional volunteers to meet the demand for this program, which, through improved literacy, helps participants attain greater employment, education, or even citizenship.

# COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANTEES

- Ancram Center for the Arts
- Ayni Herb Farm
- Beautiful Racket
- Bindlestiff Variety Arts
- Center For Regenerative Ecological Education & Enterprise Development
- Chatham Public Library
- Copake Hillsdale Farmers Market
- Claverack Free Library
- Coarc
- Columbia Children's Center
- Columbia County Habitat for Humanity
- Columbia County Recovery Kitchen
- Columbia County Sanctuary Movement
- Columbia-Greene Addiction Coalition
- Columbia Pathways to Recovery
- Common Ground Dispute Resolution
- Family Resource Centers of Columbia County
- FASNY Museum of Firefighting
- Flying Deer Nature Center
- Greater Hudson Promise Neighborhood
- Harmony Project Hudson
- High & Mighty Therapeutic Riding and Driving Center
- Hillsdale Safe at Home Committee
- Hudson Area Association Library
- Hudson City School District
- Hudson Hall
- Kinderhook Memorial Library
- Kite's Nest
- Literacy Connections
- New York Folklore
- North Chatham Free Library
- Perfect Ten After School
- Philmont Public Library
- PS21/Center for Contemporary Performance
- Reentry Task Force of Columbia County
- Roeliff Jansen Community Library
- Super Stories
- The Canary Project
- The Sylvia Center
- Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood