

LOCAL HEROES

Building Change From the Ground Up

BY JACKIE SCHATELL

In a time when division often dominates the national conversation, Emily Won of Short Hills and Nikki Silver of NYC have chosen a different path, one rooted in connection, purpose, and action. On March 12, 2024, the longtime friends launched 2x4 foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to supporting women across the United States by strengthening the grassroots organizations already serving them.

The idea grew out of reflection and resolve. After decades of building careers and raising families, Won, a former law firm partner, and Silver found themselves asking a simple question: What can we do that truly makes a difference? Their answer became 2x4, a foundation grounded in the belief that when women's essential needs are met, entire communities are stronger.

Rather than focusing on policy or large scale institutions, 2x4 takes a more personal, hands-on approach. The organization researches and identifies smaller, community-based nonprofits addressing critical issues in health, safety,



2x4 foundation members volunteering at i-tri's 2025 Hamptons Youth Triathlon. (l-r): Co-founder Nikki Silver, Jennifer Gardner Trulson, LeeAnn Carlson, Co-founder Emily Won, and Amy Won.

and education, then provides funding and amplifies their work. There is no formal application process; instead, the team does the legwork, ensuring that often overlooked organizations receive both recognition and support.

2x4 partners with nonprofits across the country tackling issues such as domestic violence, period poverty,

access to healthcare, incarceration, and STEM education for girls, with new partners continually being added as the foundation grows. Beyond funding, the foundation is building a community of supporters and volunteers who help elevate these missions and expand their reach, while also bringing people together through events and hands-on engagement.

Guided by core beliefs like "All women deserve support," "Change begins at the grassroots level," and "Generosity has a ripple effect," 2x4 is intentionally nonpartisan, focusing on what unites rather than divides.

For Won, the work is deeply personal and consistently inspiring. Through each partnership, she sees firsthand the impact of women helping women, and the powerful ripple effect that follows.

More than a nonprofit, 2x4 foundation is a movement built on the idea that meaningful change does not have to be complicated. Sometimes, it starts by simply showing up, shining a light, and supporting those already doing the work.



2x4 Foundation Co-founders Nikki Silver and Emily Won attend a 2x4 foundation sponsored free mammogram day by the American-Italian Cancer Foundation mobile unit in the East Village.

For more information, or to donate, visit: 2x4foundation.org.