

Jeannette King

Jeannette King, president of SpecialtySoft, first heard about the nascent women's philanthropy initiative in Wilmington through a fellow female entrepreneur, Dana Jaunzemis. "Dana reached out to me and invited me to a meeting. She and I knew each other from different involvements in the community, and were in entrepreneurship organizations together," she said. That meeting involved a small group of women interested in pooling their money to make grants to address real needs in New Hanover County. The women also saw the opportunity to become better informed about those needs and how best to make their investments count.

Jeannette, excited to "get in on the beginning of something," became a founding member of that new organization, which members named the Women's Impact Network. And she has watched that group of about 25 grow four-fold in its first five years, a rate she describes as "astounding." WIN's first five years have also seen some changes, which Jeannette says she welcomes. "I think we have been open to examine our strategies and approaches to the accomplishment of our core purpose," she said. "As our group has grown and matured as an organization, we have attempted to embrace the input and influence of all members. Our mission and purpose – what we are trying to accomplish – is truly making a difference."

In addition to investing money to make an impact on the community, Jeannette has enjoyed the networking aspect

of WIN, and she's impressed as she has gotten to know other members and learned of their accomplishments. That's not surprising. She's committed to recognizing talent in others and helping today's young people become entrepreneurs. As the co-founder and president of SpecialtySoft, which develops, sells and supports retail point-of-sale solutions for specialty verticals such as custom picture framing, she knows the rewards and challenges of starting and building successful businesses. And she's sharing that knowledge with UNCW's Cameron School of Business, through her various involvements in the school's entrepreneurship program. Jeannette is also proud of another resource she offers entrepreneurs: her Double Eagle Flex Space venture. This collaborative workspace offering in downtown Wilmington is the home of multiple startups and small businesses. And, as an active member of WIN, she's now also sharing her talents and her treasure in a way that benefits the nonprofit community.