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**Communicators for Women Religious receives \$1.5 million Conrad N. Hilton Foundation grant**

The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation has awarded a \$1.5 million grant that will enable Communicators for Women Religious (CWR), to grow in its influence in the promotion of women religious and be an even greater resource to organizations that serve women religious, as well as their own members and individual congregations of women religious.

“Communicators for Women Religious has the potential to have a deeper impact in raising public awareness about women religious, and this is a major step in accomplishing that goal,” said Eileen Dickerson, chair of the CWR Board of Directors. “We believe that CWR can become a strong hub for all communications related to Catholic women religious, providing resources, training, events, networking and information regarding Catholic sisters, their mission and image.”

CWR is an international, professional organization of personnel responsible for communications within religious congregations of women. The organization’s mission is to provide members with the communication tools necessary to promote understanding of women religious, enhance their image and advance their mission; serve as a leader, providing resources and support to organizations serving women religious; and serve as a resource for media and the wider public about the diversity and changing role of women religious in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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The Hilton Foundation grant, which will be distributed over three years, will enable CWR to establish a physical office presence, hire full time staff and launch programs and outreach initiatives that are outlined in its new three-year Strategic Plan.

“CWR is the only organization of its kind serving communicators for women religious, and members realize that they are in a unique position to assist the unfolding future of women religious,” Dickerson said. “This grant will supplement our annual income and empower us to begin implementing the tactics and projects outlined in our new Strategic Plan – initiatives that will enable us to realize our vision to become the go-to organization for communications about women religious,” Dickerson said.

CWR’s new Strategic Plan is the result of an in-depth evaluation of the organization over the past year with consultants from American City Bureau. That endeavor was made possible because of an earlier grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to help CWR identify where capacity building would be effective and develop that into a strategic direction to grow the organization.

The grants to CWR reflect the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation’s commitment to strengthening congregations of Catholic sisters in service to people in need around the world. The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation was created in 1944 by international business pioneer Conrad N. Hilton, who founded Hilton Hotels and left his fortune to help the world’s disadvantaged and vulnerable people. The Foundation currently conducts strategic initiatives in six priority areas: providing safe water, ending chronic homelessness, preventing substance abuse, helping children affected by HIV and AIDS, supporting transition-age youth in foster care, and extending Conrad Hilton’s support for the work of Catholic sisters. From its inception, the Foundation has awarded more than \$1 billion in grants, distributing \$100 million in the United States and around the world in 2014. For more information, please visit [www.hiltonfoundation.org](http://www.hiltonfoundation.org).

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