IT STARTS WITH A STORY

FREMONT AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
2018 ANNUAL REPORT
The Community Foundation's story begins with a tenacious teacher named Bessie Slutterback. facommunityfoundation.org/slutterback
A story is more than words on a page.

Stories are visceral and visual and human. They tell us where we came from and where we’re going.

At Fremont Area Community Foundation, we carry generations of stories. Stories of passionate donors, dedicated grantees, innovative leaders, and bold ideas.

Our history is based on real people. It’s not a concept or theory.
Because every seismic shift in human history starts with one.

One person.

One idea.

One big step forward.

One story can transform lives and change communities.
Gary Woods loved maps. He began each year in his Hesperia classroom by drawing colorful world maps across the blackboard. Former students who went abroad often wrote to say that, thanks to him, they always knew exactly where they were in the world.

“Many wrote to him from the military,” said Gary’s wife Marcia. “Around the time of the Iranian embassy attack, a former student was sitting off the coast of Iran. He wrote, ‘I know where I am. Most of these guys have no idea.’”

After Gary passed away, Marcia and family created a scholarship in his honor. It will be awarded to Hesperia students studying secondary education and a portion of the fund will support social studies education.

“He meant so much to kids, touched so many lives,” said Marcia. “I don’t think even he realized the impact he had.”
Tracy Sanchez, director of Quest Educational Programs in Fremont, and her staff help their alternative and adult education students complete high school and plan for what comes next. “We’re working hard to get kids world-ready,” said Tracy.

“We have a lot of unaccompanied students,” she continued. “They don’t have a parent or caregiver to help them. And for some, school’s not really their thing so they don’t see themselves going on to college. We want to let them know there are options.”

With a $9,000 grant from the Community Foundation, Fremont Public Schools hired a career coach based at Quest. Stacy Shriver works with students on financial aid, job searches, and applications for college and trade schools.

“They don’t feel defeated anymore,” said Stacy. “A student can come in with no idea, no plan, and when they’re done they’re excited about going off to school or getting jobs.”
Tom and Carol Bieberle bought property in Newaygo County when they were expecting their first child. They eventually built a home there. “We have a really nice community,” said Carol.

Getting involved in the community was always a priority. “In high school it dawned on me that one way to express myself was to do things, to give back to the community,” said Tom. “I like to be involved.”

He and Carol have volunteered at mobile food pantries, been active in their church, and even participated in an informal giving circle with friends at Christmas. They created the Bieberle Pathways to Self-Sufficiency Fund at the Community Foundation as another way to give back and empower local individuals and families.

“In my research I saw that the Community Foundation was doing what I want to do—helping people,” said Tom. “We’re not rich by any stretch, but we can help.”
For many families, a major unplanned home repair can throw them into a precarious position and potentially make their home unsafe. That’s why the Center for Nonprofit Housing (CNH) at TrueNorth Community Services helps local people obtain and maintain housing, including foreclosure prevention and housing counseling.

There is also a large need for home repair assistance according to Brad Hinken, who oversees CNH. “When something goes wrong, like the well goes out, it all spirals downhill quickly. We’ve replaced a couple of wells recently for people who didn’t have water for months. People would take water bottles to work to fill up so they would have water.”

With help from multiple funding sources, including the Community Foundation, CNH has put in new wells, furnaces, and septic systems for local families.

“When people haven’t had water for months, they get pretty excited,” said Brad. “People hit a barrier and they don’t know where to go. We help them find options.”

In 2017, the Community Foundation awarded a grant up to $160,000 to CNH to support emergency home repairs, foreclosure prevention, and other housing assistance programs.
Mike and Carolyn Hummel are both retired educators. “I was blessed with the best job ever,” said Carolyn. Their careers gave them a front-row seat to the impact that grants and scholarships from the Community Foundation can have. When Carolyn joined the Board of Trustees, the idea to create a fund of their own began to grow.

“We want to give back to the area that’s been so good to us,” said Carolyn.

“If we can do things for others, it’s fulfilling. It brings us happiness,” said Mike. “And the Community Foundation was a good avenue for us.”

“We have different passions,” added Carolyn. “This allows us flexibility to give to different things. Where there’s a need, we can help fill in the gaps. It’s our responsibility to the next generation coming up.”
Dawn Ausema was a stay-at-home mom to three very busy daughters for 13 years. “The whole 13 years I was looking for work from home,” said Dawn. “And I couldn’t find a thing.”

She eventually took a job in Sparta, but the hours and commute made it hard to keep up with the girls. “I wasn’t around,” she said. “My husband works 14-hour days but he had to do all the running with the kids because I wasn’t there.”

Then Dawn saw an ad for Digital Works, a training program based at The Stream in Newaygo that prepares people for customer service jobs they can do remotely. She was hired by a company shortly after finishing and was promoted to team lead a few months later. She now works from home, sets her own schedule, and can be more involved with her family.

“Without this program, I don’t know if I would have ever been able to work from home,” said Dawn. “And that’s all I wanted for years.”

In addition to training people like Dawn for customer service jobs they can do from home, Digital Works also provides help creating resumes, preparing for interviews, and searching for jobs. The Community Foundation awarded a grant up to $300,400 over two years to support the program.
OUR NEXT 75

In 2026, Fremont Area Community Foundation will celebrate 75 years of generosity and impact in Newaygo County. As part of this milestone anniversary, we are looking for 75 new people who want to support the community they love both today and into the future.

These people are emerging philanthropists—passionate, driven, and committed to making lasting change in our community. As we draw closer to our 75th anniversary, this group will play a vital role in building the future of Newaygo County.

To join Our Next 75, we only ask three simple things:

1. **Give today**
   Establish a named fund or make an annual gift of $250 or more to an endowed fund at the Community Foundation.

2. **Give tomorrow**
   Include the Community Foundation in your estate plan.

3. **Share your story**
   Share with us why you chose to give back to the community.

Dawn Williams: First Member of Our Next 75

At age 15, Dawn Williams was the Hair Station’s first receptionist. Today she’s the Fremont salon’s owner. Eager to give back, Dawn looked for ways to support the cosmetology program at Newaygo County Career-Tech Center. She and her daughter Morgan were excited to learn about the Community Foundation’s Build-A-Fund program. “I was surprised that you don’t have to have hundreds of thousands of dollars to start a fund,” said Dawn. “The Community Foundation made it easy for us.”

The Hair Station Fund is now steadily growing with help from staff and clients. Awards from the fund will help cosmetology students pay for tests and equipment and help young stylists get started.
Fremont Area Community Foundation was created by and for the people of this community.

Our history is steeped in stories. Stories of passionate, humble, and community-minded people who worked hard to build a better future. Stories of tenacity and a refusal to quit in the face of overwhelming odds. Stories of steadfast commitment to this community.

As we begin to plan for the Community Foundation’s 75th anniversary in 2026, it’s impossible not to get a little nostalgic, to remember the people and events that shaped our organization. Because everything we do today is built on decades of history and generosity.

We believe that these stories form our identity. They teach us vital lessons. They cause us to challenge the status quo. Above all, these stories connect us, unify us, and give meaning to our current work. The stories from 2017 are ones of generosity and community impact.

- We received gifts of $2.8 million from generous donors and organizations
- We welcomed 24 new funds
- We awarded $9.5 million in grants to local organizations doing amazing work
- We gave $626,670 in scholarships to 461 students

This work would not be possible without our growing community of supporters like you. We can’t wait to see what the future holds, up to year 75 and beyond.

Carla A. Roberts   Lindsay Hager
President and CEO   Board Chair
Since 1951, Fremont Area Community Foundation has sought to be a transformative force for good in Newaygo County. Our story began with people like William Branstrom and Bessie Slautterback. It grew through generations of community members who gave of their time and resources to make Newaygo County a better place.

Today, we continue in the footsteps of those who came before us. This work is carried out with intention, optimism, and a deep commitment to the people of this community.

In order to make the greatest impact for the future, the Community Foundation focuses our grantmaking and leadership efforts on three main areas.

Each area has its own audacious decade goal: a target to guide our work and keep us focused on the future.

**COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Fuel a growing and sustainable local economy

**EDUCATION**

Increase educational attainment to 60% by 2025

**POVERTY TO PROSPERITY**

Decrease the poverty rate and empower families

We know that change won’t be easy. These three areas have great need and it will take generations to make lasting change. That’s why we’re committed for the long haul.
Over 20 students from local high schools and the homeschooling community in Newaygo County make up our Youth Advisory Committee (YAC). YAC members meet throughout the school year to discuss issues relating to youth in our community and make grant recommendations to our board.

Since our YAC began in 1994, 190 youth have served on the committee. Almost $1 million has been granted over the past 23 years to programs that address the needs of young people in our community.
Fremont Area Community Foundation supports local, volunteer-led organizations in three neighboring counties: Lake, Mecosta, and Osceola. Each year, these affiliate foundations respond to the unique needs of their communities through local grant funding and outreach efforts.

Each affiliate foundation has its own board of passionate community members. They provide community leadership, work with donors, award scholarships, and recommend funding. We provide financial and operational support. We’re proud to partner with such committed organizations in our region.

Lake County Community Foundation
- $186,848 total grants awarded in 2017
- $5,006,845 total assets

Osceola County Community Foundation
- $251,250 total grants awarded in 2017
- $9,282,379 total assets

Mecosta County Community Foundation
- $1,208,243 total grants awarded in 2017
- $5,564,254 total assets
The Community Foundation is home to two supporting organizations, both with missions to make life better and more vibrant for specific groups in our county. Our supporting organizations qualify as public charities through their association with Fremont Area Community Foundation, have their own boards, and recommend or award grants.

The Amazing X Charitable Trust

Established as a fund in 1978, The Amazing X Charitable Trust began with a gift from Daniel Gerber Jr. The Amazing X board recommends grants to the Community Foundation board to benefit differently-abled people in Newaygo County.

$212,914 total grants awarded in 2017

$6,046,534 total assets

The Fremont Area Elderly Needs Fund

The Fremont Area Elderly Needs Fund was created in 1992. The board awards grants to support health and enrich life for seniors in Newaygo County.

$325,850 total grants awarded in 2017

$11,365,571 total assets

Our Professional Advisory Board is a steering committee comprised of local advisors that provide strategic planning and guidance and serve as a liaison to advisors across the Community Foundation’s four-county service area. The advisors on this board are our active partners, skilled in personal estate matters and recognized as trusted leaders in the community.

Board members represent the following advisory areas:

- Estate planning attorneys
- Accountants
- Trust officers
- Investment advisors or managers
- Financial planners
- Stockbrokers
- Certified life underwriters

Professional Advisory Board Members

Dorothy Paris, Chair  David Landheer
Woody Bowman  Jon LeBaron
David M. Byrne  Richard LeBaron
Jason DeKuiper  Jennifer Proctor
Julie Dykman  Denise Stone
Don Farmer  Scott Swinehart
Brad Fath  Scott Wagasky
Cathy Kissinger  Seth Wenger
**FINANCIALS**

**GRANTS BY FOCUS AREA***

*community grant awards

- **$5.7 M**
  - Total community grants 2017
  - 30% Education
  - 28% Poverty to prosperity
  - 10% Community and economic development (includes natural resources)
  - 12% Other
  - 20% Nonprofit sustainability

**TOTAL GIFTS**

- $2,815,760
  - Fremont Area Community Foundation: $1,605,102
  - Affiliates: $1,210,658

**TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS**

- $626,670
  - Fremont Area Community Foundation: $539,130
  - Affiliates: $87,540
  - Students awarded scholarships: 461

**TOTAL ASSETS**

- **$254.1M**
  - Total assets 2017

**INVESTMENTS**

- **$216.8M**
  - Fremont Area Community Foundation
  - **$5.0M**
  - Lake County Community Foundation
  - **$5.6M**
  - Mecosta County Community Foundation
  - **$6.0M**
  - The Amazing X Charitable Trust

**INVESTMENT RETURNS**

- 2008: 31.3%
- 2009: 28.5%
- 2010: 15.1%
- 2011: 14.7%
- 2012: 12.2%
- 2013: 2.9%
- 2014: -2.9%
- 2015: 9.2%
- 2016: 17.1%
- 2017: 17.1%

**INVESTMENT RETURNS VERSUS BENCHMARK**

- 1 YEAR: 17.1%
- 5 YEAR: 8.4%
- 10 YEAR: 5.4%
OUR BOARD

LINDSAY HAGER
Chair
President, Hager Consulting, LLC

CATHY KISSINGER
Vice Chair
Financial Advisor, Edward Jones

WILLIAM ALSOVER
Treasurer
Business consultant

CATHY KISSINGER
Vice Chair
Financial Advisor, Edward Jones

WILLIAM LEAVER
Retired healthcare executive

MARY RANGEL
WIC Program Clerk Technician,
District Health Department 10

JOSEPH ROBERSON
Head of Accounting Operations,
Nestlé Business Services
North America

MICHEAL ANDERSON
Facility Manager, North Lake
Correctional Facility

LOLA HARMON-RAMSEY
Secretary, Distribution Chair
Owner, Cart-Right LLC

PEGGY ROSSLER
Retired educator

DENISE SUTILES
Pastor, First Baptist Church
of Woodland Park

CAROLYN HUMMEL
Retired educator

KENT KARNEMAAT
Owner, Karnemaat Farms

DR. LORI
TUBBERGEN CLARK
Superintendent, Newaygo
County Regional Educational
Service Agency (NC RESA)

DALE TWING
Newaygo County
Drain Commissioner

THOMAS WILLIAMS
Owner, Tom Williams Builders LLC

MARY RANGEL
WIC Program Clerk Technician,
District Health Department 10

JOSEPH ROBERSON
Head of Accounting Operations,
Nestlé Business Services
North America

MICHEAL ANDERSON
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DALE TWING
Newaygo County
Drain Commissioner

THOMAS WILLIAMS
Owner, Tom Williams Builders LLC
OUR STAFF

Front row (L-R)
Ashley Folkema, Patti Wheater, Kathy Pope, Samantha Ruthven, Amy Moore, Tara Kartes,
Jessica Folkema, Sarah Dixon, Carla Roberts

Back row (L-R)
Wes Miller, Maria Gonzalez, Todd Jacobs, Robin Cawles, Vonda Carr, Lindsey Slater, Katie Boven,
Mark Petz, Mary Huisjen, Renee Hanshue

Not pictured: Jenna Smalligan
FUND FOR WOMEN IN CRISIS

Sisters Holly Moon and Linda Meisling created the Betty Taylor Memorial Fund in honor of their mother, a funny, hard-working woman who knew what it was like to have to start over. The Build-A-Fund will help support the wellbeing of local women, especially those in crisis.

$44,610

The grant amount awarded in 2017 by our Youth Advisory Committee to support programs benefiting local youth.

LITTLE FREE LIBRARY INCREASES ACCESS

With help from an education mini-grant, Newaygo's fourth graders built a Little Free Library on the new playground at Velma Matson Elementary to make more books available to the community. Students researched literacy, presented their idea to the school board, and even hosted a grand opening event.

POSSIBILITY SCHOLAR GRADUATES

In 2013, Alyssa Greene of Hesperia received the Possibility! Scholarship, a one-time full scholarship that launched the Community Foundation’s Goal 2025 initiative. She took her scholarship to Central Michigan University where she excelled academically and was involved on campus, focusing much of her time on mentoring youth. In May 2017, Alyssa graduated with a bachelor’s degree in sociology and a concentration in youth studies.

GETTING FAMILIES BACK ON THEIR FEET

In 2017, the Community Foundation made a $20,000 grant to support the Hope 101 transitional housing program. A three-apartment house called Anchor Home in Newaygo gives individuals and families a safe place to live while they set goals and work toward self-sufficiency. Hope 101 is now renovating a second, single-family home.

We launched the Give 5 initiative in 2017 to encourage Newaygo County residents to give 5 percent (or more) of their estate through the Community Foundation—which could add up to $33.2 million in charitable gifts for the community!
Our stories could not be told without the generosity of people like you. Thank you!
It continues with you.