

IMPACT



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Our Youth Advisory Committee recently awarded \$76,000 in grants.
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FREMONT AREA
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

SPRING 2019

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Spring is making its shaky entrance, but rest assured that your Community Foundation found plenty of ways to keep busy during a wild Michigan winter.

Our first group of Kickstart to Career kindergartners received savings accounts and \$50 deposits from the Community Foundation. Behind the scenes, we have been meeting with and learning from other organizations around the country who also operate children's savings accounts.

Last fall we awarded nearly \$3.4 million to a wide variety of local organizations in our second community grant round. Currently, our staff is hard at work reviewing the next round of community grant applications to be awarded in June.

We've been thinking about the heart of the work we do at the Community Foundation. Carla Roberts, our president and CEO, was published in *The Foundation Review*, a peer-reviewed journal for the field of philanthropy. Her article details the relationships we've built and strengthened over the years on our journey toward more strategic grantmaking and increased impact. Check out the full article at <http://bit.ly/RobertsFACF>.

Our staff has grown over the last few months! We added new members to our community investment team (Liz Mansfield, Dan Wheat, and Jackie Hite) and administrative services team (Casey Houston and Tricia Somers). Check out our Facebook page for introductions. These individuals represent all corners of our community and we're excited for their contributions to our work.

In the upcoming months, we look forward to donor events, the release of our annual report, and continued partnerships. Thank you for all you do to make Newaygo County a great place to be.

On the cover: YAC members like Megan Norris and Elli McAree make a difference in their community through service learning and grantmaking.

FIRST KICKSTART TO CAREER DEPOSITS MADE

More than 550 Newaygo County kindergartners received their first Kickstart to Career deposits from the Community Foundation this winter. The children's savings account program kicked off in the fall when kindergartners received their very own savings accounts at ChoiceOne Bank. In addition to the initial \$50 deposit, students can earn more deposits from the Community Foundation each year and friends and family can contribute to the accounts. Once students graduate from high school, they can use their savings accounts to help pay for career or educational expenses like tuition, books, job training, and required supplies.



FRANK SMITH

Frank Smith was born in Hesperia just after Christmas in 1915. He graduated from Hesperia High School and served in the Army during World War II. He married Irene Raskey in 1942 and they had a daughter named Mary Ann who became a teacher.

After the war, Frank continued his career as a barber in the Muskegon area. He was a good storyteller with a keen sense of humor and his work gave him the perfect opportunity to share both every day. In his free time, Frank liked to hunt, fish, and garden.

Always looking for opportunities to grow, Frank learned to paint with watercolors and acrylics at age 80. At 86 he learned to use a computer and put his new skill to work recording detailed memories of his youth in Hesperia. He later donated his memoirs to the local history room at Hesperia Community Library.

After Frank passed away in 2008, his brother Carl and sister-in-law Viola created the Smith Family Fund in honor of Frank and his daughter. More than a decade later, the fund continues to support Hesperia's library.



recent grants

Our Board of Trustees approved \$3.4 million in grant requests in our fall grant round. Here are a few highlights!

Grant Public Schools

\$10,000

PURPOSE:

To support the teacher-developed pilot program: Readers Into Leaders

The program pairs elementary students with middle schoolers who offer reading support.

WHY IT MATTERS:

The reading intervention program provides extra literacy support to young students who need it and builds positive cross-grade-level relationships.



St. Mark's Episcopal Church

\$14,500



PURPOSE:

To support Vera's House, a community wellness center

Grant funds support the Women In Transition program for women who have experienced grief or loss and the Project Illuminate counseling program.

WHY IT MATTERS:

Vera's House programs help participants build supportive relationships and connects them to a wide range of resources including life skills classes and access to mental health treatment.

Newaygo County Regional Educational Service Agency

\$120,000

PURPOSE:

To support the Family Information Service Hub (F.I.S.H.) program over two years

Families can visit a F.I.S.H. Hub to get help with things like applying for assistance and navigating the county's support systems.

WHY IT MATTERS:

F.I.S.H. Hubs will be strategically located in more remote local areas to help reduce transportation and internet connectivity barriers families may face when searching for resources and support.



County of Newaygo

\$500,000



PURPOSE:

To support Michigan's Dragon at Hardy Dam, a 47.5-mile circular biking and hiking trail around Hardy Pond

It will be one of the largest loop trails of its kind anywhere in the world.

WHY IT MATTERS:

While the trail will add new recreation opportunities for locals, it is also expected to become a premiere regional and national attraction and create new jobs in the area.

Camp Henry

Up to \$20,000

PURPOSE:

To support camp scholarships for Newaygo County youth

Scholarships cover up to 75 percent of a camp experience for local youth with financial need.

WHY IT MATTERS:

In addition to being fun, summer camp can help youth gain confidence, build a sense of community, learn new skills, increase resiliency, and more. More than 200 youth will benefit from scholarships funded by the Community Foundation at several area camps.



angie bradley

back to school for a better future

Angie Bradley got a well-paying job at a factory right out of high school. She took college classes on and off over the years, but didn't really see the need for a degree. Later, as her children grew, she felt guilty taking the time.

But when Angie was passed over for her dream job because it required a bachelor's degree, she knew she needed to make a change.

"I decided never again would I not be able to have what I want in my career because of this," Angie said. "Options and opportunities—that's what I tell my kids that education

provides. It's easy to go to the quick money, but you have no idea what you're going to come across down the road."

Angie received an adult student scholarship from the Community Foundation after a coworker urged her to check into it. "Not having that financial burden up front is super nice. I could not have done my classes the last two years without the scholarship," she said. "And the support the Community Foundation offers is key. If you have questions, reach out. They are a great support system."

Now working toward a degree in psychology, Angie enjoys applying what she learns in class to her work in training and organizational development with a local company. She gets lots of support from her husband and children too. "They're really proud of me," she said. "I want to be able to tell my kids I did it."

"You worry there will be a stigma to going back to school as an adult, but there's not. People think it's cool," Angie said. "My advice to others? Start. Take one class. You don't need to take six classes right now or have a career path planned out. Just start."





bill and jeanne leaver

making a lasting change

Bill and Jeanne Leaver were both born in Fremont, just days apart. They dated in high school, went their separate ways, then reconnected years later at a reunion. Their careers—Bill’s in hospital administration and Jeanne’s in teaching—took them around the country, but they always planned to come home.

“We knew we would come back here,” said Bill. “Our kids and families were here.”

Their roots in the community grew right along with a belief in the importance of giving back.

“We both grew up in an environment where our parents were very focused

on teaching you that you were blessed with many gifts and you have a responsibility to help,” said Bill.

Those early examples have inspired the Leavers to find their own ways to get involved, including volunteering and creating a fund at the Community Foundation.

“You can’t live in this community without seeing the fingerprints of the Community Foundation,” said Jeanne.

“The Community Foundation provided a place to put the funds where they would continue to grow and be well managed,” added Bill.

“We can think about what kind of impact we want to have.”

With their donor advised fund, the Leavers can address a variety of needs—including supporting women in transition and homelessness—that can help strengthen their community.

“We need to be more concerned with what kind of society we have and the world our grandchildren will live in,” said Bill. “It’s not just the responsibility of the government or schools or churches. It’s all of us. What contribution are we making?”

“We all can think about the little things people did for us—little acts of kindness that you remember all your life,” said Jeanne. “Wanting to do for someone else, helping, being kind—that leads you to a place where you want to help with bigger changes.”



OUR NEXT 75

randy and shari paulsen

Randy and Shari Paulsen both went to Fremont High School (FHS). The family legacy continued when their sons Steven and Chad went to FHS, playing multiple sports. “Our boys had so much fun and excelled in sports,” said Shari. “It was an incentive to keep their grades up and it’s such a big factor in socialization and relationships in school.”

Concerned that some students may not be able to afford to play sports, the Paulsens created a fund at the Community Foundation that is intended to support the school and its athletics programs. They have also included the Community Foundation in their estate plan.

Why is giving important to you?

Randy: We’ve seen people like Jack and Mary Butterick and Bob and Bonnie Erber who have served in the community and given back. We’ve been given much, so now we can give.

Shari: We want to make sure our grandkids have the same opportunities or better than we have had. We want to make this the best community possible for them.

Why give through the Community Foundation?

Shari: You see what this can do. You see what the funds can do in the community.

Randy: To do something like this, that continues on, that’s a good thing. If we can do anything to encourage or to help others, that’s what we want. We want to support the community.

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

To find out more about Our Next 75, contact a member of our philanthropic services team at 231.924.5350.



pro - advice

DAVID M. BYRNE
Attorney at Law

TOP FIVE ESTATE PLANNING MISTAKES

The following are the top five estate planning mistakes that I see in my practice:

1. No prepared estate plan. It is very important to have a will or a will and a trust. Your estate plan should name a guardian for minor children, name who will manage your assets and money for your child(ren), state the age that your child(ren) will receive their share of the assets, designate who receives your property, and instruct how and when your assets are to be distributed. If you do not have a last will and testament or a living trust, your estate will be distributed pursuant to the Michigan Compiled Laws.

2. Estate plan was not drafted by an experienced estate planning attorney. The best way to insure your desires regarding your minor children and property are met is to work with an attorney who is experienced, trained, and specialized in estate planning. If the provisions in your will or trust are not clear, your desires may not be effectuated.

3. Improper use of joint tenants and/or owners. It is recommended not to name a child as a joint tenant on your accounts or real estate. If you want a child to be able to help you with your financial affairs, a properly drafted estate

plan can allow him or her to do so without opening up your assets to liability.

4. Beneficiary designations are not coordinated with estate plan. It is important to coordinate the beneficiary designations on your life insurance, retirement accounts, transfer on death (TOD), or payable on death (POD) accounts with your estate plan. If not properly coordinated, your assets may not be distributed as you desire and/or your personal representative/trustee may experience difficulties administering your estate or trust after your death.

5. Failure to review and update estate plan. Your circumstances and family continue to change and so should your estate plan. Read your estate plan documents to determine if everything is current. If changes are necessary, call your attorney and get your documents changed right away to make sure your current desires will be known and put into effect.

David Byrne is an attorney based in Fremont specializing in estate planning, small business, probate and trust administration, and Medicaid nursing home planning. He also serves on Fremont Area Community Foundation's Professional Advisory Board.

noteworthy



MARY HUISJEN RETIRES

Mary Huisjen retired in late January after 20 years at the Community Foundation. Mary served as our receptionist and special projects associate and had also mentored the Youth Advisory Committee and provided key leadership in our prairie restoration project. We miss her but hope she is enjoying having more time to spend with her family and garden.

YAC GRANTS

Our Youth Advisory Committee recently awarded over \$76,000 to 12 organizations and programs serving local youth. YAC students—who represent each public high school in Newaygo County and the homeschool community—carefully reviewed grant proposals and awarded funding to a variety of programs, including mentoring opportunities, arts classes, and mental health education.



NEW WEBSITE

Our website recently got a makeover! We freshened up the look and layout to better tell our story and make it even easier for you to find exactly what you're looking for, whether it's grant information, scholarships, stories, or how to give.

Check it out today at facommunityfoundation.org.



recently

CARLA A. ROBERTS
President and CEO



THE CRISIS OF TALENT

Newaygo County is currently on the brink of a “crisis of talent.” According to data from Talent 2025, in order to remain economically viable, Newaygo County needs an additional 1,825 employees over the next five years.

As evidenced by the growing number of help-wanted signs, the jobs are there. However, employers in retail, food service, and manufacturing compete for entry-level workers and have difficulty finding and retaining skilled workers.

How will we prepare for the present and future shortage of talent needed to keep our local economy strong? At the Community Foundation we have identified and deployed four key strategies focused on talent development:

- Preparing our youth for the workplace of tomorrow
- Assisting those who have been out of the workforce return and be successful
- Helping small businesses develop
- Ensuring that the nonprofit sector is viable

To prepare our youth for the workplace of tomorrow, we must focus on the skills needed for local industries and encourage young people to build their careers right here at home. Those opportunities will require at least a high school education supplemented by a post-secondary degree, certification, or credential. The Community Foundation funds programs that

support early childhood, kindergarten readiness, high school completion, and scholarships for higher education.

The most viable pathway out of poverty is a good job with benefits. In recognition of this, Circles Newaygo County—one of our grant recipients—takes a long-term approach toward ending poverty permanently in our community. Circles is an intensive, individualized approach to support adults on their goals toward self-reliance, including how to be successful in the workplace.

Small businesses are sometimes not able to secure the financing needed to grow and expand. The Community Foundation partners with Northern Initiatives to address this issue. Northern Initiatives is a nonprofit that provides services and loans to small businesses and entrepreneurs in rural areas.

In addition to providing grants to local nonprofits for programs and services, we support skill development for these organizations through local workshops offered by the Johnson Center for Philanthropy at Grand Valley State University. Individual consultations are also offered to address critical operational issues that can hamper success.

Through community leadership, grantmaking, or simply participating in community conversations, we are addressing the current and impending crisis of talent. We believe that people make our community great and we see no better investment for our future than our own talent.



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IMPACT

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SUPPORT YOUR PERSONAL PASSIONS

Donor advised funds are convenient, flexible tools you can use to support the organizations and causes you're most passionate about. With a donor advised fund, you can personally recommend grant awards to the organization or program of your choice.

Jason and Kristin Brookhouse grew up in the area and created a donor advised fund as a way to show gratitude to the community that supported them. Their fund also allows the flexibility to give to different causes that speak to each of their interests and is something they hope to pass on to their children.

Interested in learning more about donor advised funds? Contact our philanthropic services team at 231.924.5350.

