

IMPACT



INSIDE:

The Center for Hope and Healing gives two local organizations a new home and room to grow.
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FREMONT AREA
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

SPRING 2022

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As usual, winter is no time for hibernation at the Community Foundation. We wrapped up 2021 by awarding more than 50 grants and a total of \$3.2 million in our second community grant round of the year. This brought the total awarded in both Newaygo County 2021 community grant rounds to nearly \$5.2 million. Staff and committees are now hard at work reviewing the first round of applications for 2022. Our Bridging Generations Fund, affiliate foundations, and Youth Advisory Committee are also reviewing grant applications.

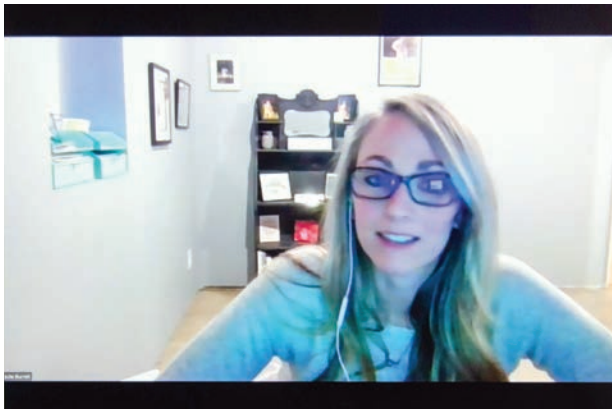
In February, we hosted the latest event of our ongoing Stronger Together Series: Women, Work, and Economic Equity. Read more about this event on the next page. This series has been a great opportunity to hear the stories of our neighbors and take a closer look at belonging, identity, and how our differences enhance our community.

The end of March marks six months with our new president and CEO Shelly Kasprzycki. We have loved getting to know Shelly and appreciate her enthusiasm and positivity every day. You can read more from Shelly on page 11.

As we look ahead, we are excited to spend time updating our strategic plan in 2022 and finding new ways to partner with you. Thank you for serving Newaygo County with us!



STRONGER TOGETHER SERIES CONTINUES



Our Stronger Together Series continued on February 24 with a virtual event exploring the unique challenges women face in the workplace, the impact of the pandemic, and the pursuit of greater economic equity. Dr. Jennifer Drake from Grand Valley State University moderated a panel discussion that featured the stories and insights of local women. They spoke about barriers women face, how their identities as women have shaped their lives, and the people who have helped them grow. If you missed the event—or just want to rewatch—you can find the recording on the Stronger Together Series page at fcommunityfoundation.org/stronger-together.

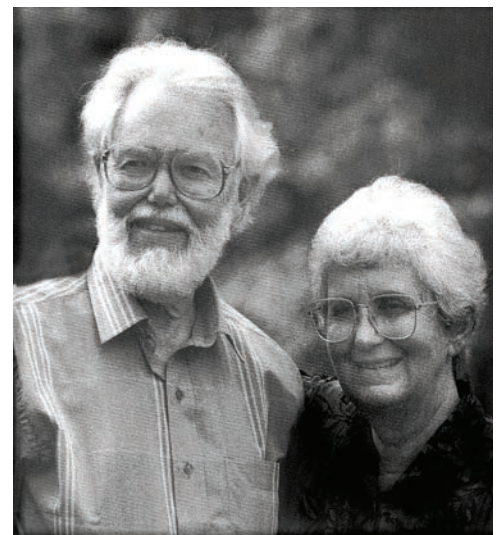
RAY AND PHYLLIS JANSMA

Ray and Phyllis Jansma met as students at the University of Michigan and married in 1950. Not long after, the Jansmas moved to Newaygo County and made the Fremont area their home. Phyllis taught at Pine Street Elementary, and Ray was an architect and designer.

Both Phyllis and Ray were prolific artists. Ray spent his life drawing, painting, sculpting, and building. He even designed and built a boat that he and Phyllis enjoyed sailing on Lake Michigan. Phyllis was a gifted musician who played cello with the West Michigan Symphony Orchestra and was active at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp.

In addition to their own artistic pursuits, the Jansmas were known as mentors and encouragers of other artists. A group gathered regularly for “Tuesdays at Ray’s,” where artists came to Ray’s home studio to create and discuss art. Phyllis taught piano and cello lessons for years, introducing many young students to music.

The Jansmas generously shared their time, home, and talents to help and inspire others. Today, that legacy continues through the Newaygo County Council for the Arts Jansma scholarship, awarded each year to a student planning to study art after high school.



recent grants

Our Board of Trustees approved \$3.2 million in our fall community grant round. Here are a few highlights!

Newaygo County Tourism Council

\$35,000

PURPOSE:

To provide operating and marketing support for the Tourism Council's efforts to increase local tourism.

WHY IT MATTERS:

According to the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, visitors spent more than \$144 million in Newaygo County in 2019. Increasing visitors to the area boosts local employment, business growth, and economic development. In addition, the Tourism Council's work helps make more residents aware of the amenities and activities available in their own community.



West Michigan Symphony

\$7,000



PURPOSE:

To support the Link Up program, which provides a comprehensive beginning music education program for elementary students in our county and five others across the region.

WHY IT MATTERS:

Learning music can impact everything from coordination and language development to math skills and test scores. One study even found that schools with high-quality music programs have higher graduation rates. Through Link Up, local elementary students learn to play music, meet professional musicians, and even get to perform during an interactive concert in the spring.

Camp Henry

\$10,000

PURPOSE:

To provide scholarships to help Newaygo County youth attend summer camp.

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. Scholarships made possible by Community Foundation grants cover up to 75 percent of a camp experience for qualified local youth with financial need. Several other local camps also received grants to provide scholarships, including Camp Newaygo and Camp Pendalouan.



TrueNorth Community Services

\$335,000



PURPOSE:

To support TrueNorth's housing and family services, aimed at keeping more local residents in safe, affordable housing while they work toward self-sufficiency.

WHY IT MATTERS:

Without stable housing, it can be difficult to maintain steady employment, access regular healthcare, and, for students, keep up in school. TrueNorth offers a variety of interventions for people experiencing a housing crisis. Specialized programs serve young adults, people with disabilities, families facing eviction, and more.

Newaygo County Regional Educational Service Agency (NC RESA)

\$133,000

PURPOSE:

To provide support for WE CAN! Newaygo County and the Newaygo County Area Promise Zone.

WHY IT MATTERS:

Since it formed in 2010, WE CAN! Newaygo County has worked to create a culture of career and college awareness and attainment in our area. Their efforts have since been integrated with those of the Promise Zone to provide even more resources for local students and to better address barriers to post-secondary education and career training.



a safe space for healing

center for hope and healing

Fresh paint and 3,500 square feet of new drywall are the obvious signs that something big is happening at the former Leighton Hall in White Cloud. But there's also a sense of excitement and possibility growing in the refurbished space.

The new Center for Hope and Healing is the joint vision of Newaygo County Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (PCA) and Open Arms Child Advocacy Center. It allows PCA to relocate from its pole barn-turned-office and Open Arms from its space in an apartment complex in Big Rapids. Both organizations needed more room for their work with children and families.

"We knew collaboration would be the future of both organizations," said Tara Nelson, PCA's executive director and an Open Arms board

member. "We have the same goals and want the same outcome."

Together, the organizations provide an array of services to build stronger families and prevent abuse while also supporting children who have experienced abuse. PCA offers services like infant safe sleep education, teaching children about body safety, and the popular Summer Magic program. Through Open Arms, children who have experienced abuse meet with a specially-trained forensic interviewer to tell their story just once while law enforcement, investigators, and others observe from another room. Follow-up services are offered to help begin the healing process.

"It was difficult for families to know what to do and where to go for help before," said Tara. "Here we can say,

'We know exactly what to do and we'll walk you through the next steps.' We can see them through the whole process."

In addition to private, child-friendly spaces for forensic interviews, the center will include areas for art therapy, supervised visitation, events, and more when it opens this spring. It's a big project that came together rapidly thanks to significant community support, including a matching grant from the Community Foundation. PCA was able to purchase and renovate the building debt-free, giving two organizations a new home and new opportunities.

"We're looking forward to the growth both organizations can have here," said Tara. "The new center opens the doors for greater impact."





remembering a legacy

diane and charles hazen

A Hesperia-area cottage has been collecting memories for Diane Hazen's family since it was built by her father and grandfather in 1935. Diane's parents saved up gas rations during World War II to travel from their home in Wayne County to close up the cottage for the season. Diane took her first steps on the porch.

"I've been coming here all my life," Diane said. "This place has been my refuge."

She shared that refuge with her husband Charles, who enjoyed visiting as much as Diane did. They often made the trip from Romulus, where Charles worked as an industrial planner and consultant and Diane was a library director.

The Hazens planned to retire to the cottage and were looking forward to

becoming more involved in the community. Local friends suggested organizations they could join, and Charles was particularly interested in helping young people in the area.

Sadly, Charles passed away before the couple could begin the retirement they were planning. Diane worked for several more years before relocating here full-time. Through it all, she remembered Charles's desire to help local students.

"He wanted to do something for young people," said Diane. "And when he died, that's what came back to me."

Diane created the Charles W. Hazen Memorial Scholarship to support Hesperia graduates, particularly those pursuing a business or art degree. These areas reflect Charles's own

interests. "His degree was in business and his love was art," said Diane, who keeps several pieces Charles created on display around the cottage. "His career and work were fascinating for him too." She remembers Charles often bringing home colleagues for dinner and conversation. "We made lots of good friends that way," Diane said. "It was an interesting life we led."

Over the last two decades, 17 Hesperia graduates have received the scholarship created in Charles's memory. Just as Charles always wanted, he and Diane are playing a part in helping local young people plan for their futures and achieve their goals.

"Charles wanted to help young people here," said Diane. "Through the scholarship he is."



OUR NEXT 75

Lindsay and Vonda Hager

Lindsay and Vonda Hager moved to Newaygo County in the late 90s for work, “but we stayed because we loved the community,” said Vonda. Little moments like taking their daughters to the local hardware store on Saturdays for popcorn and stickers made the area feel like home.

Through Lindsay’s work in the nonprofit sector—he is now the Community Foundation’s vice president and chief philanthropy officer—the Hagers saw first-hand all the ways community members give back, from volunteerism to donating funds. They passed along that example to their daughters and live it out themselves.

The Hagers recently became two of the newest members of Our Next 75. “We want to see the good work of the Community Foundation continue,” said Lindsay. “We want to make sure it continues to benefit the community for another 75 years and beyond.”

Why is giving important to you?

Lindsay: I used to think philanthropy was just for the wealthiest, but it’s for all of us. It’s something everyone can do.

Why give through the Community Foundation?

Vonda: I like the localness of it. The Community Foundation originated in Newaygo County by residents of Newaygo County giving back to Newaygo County—you can’t make a bigger impact than that in the community you love. So many things in the community are made possible because of the Community Foundation. It sets such a powerful example that these things can’t continue unless those who come after keep building it.

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 LANDHEER
Insurance advisor

LEVERAGING LIFE INSURANCE FOR CHARITABLE GOOD

It can be a good thing when a valuable life insurance policy outlives its original purpose. A policy originally intended to provide for minor children, for example, can provide additional benefits after the children are grown.

Instead of surrendering the policy or allowing it to lapse, life insurance can play a useful role in allowing a donor to make a significant gift to a favorite charity. By naming the charitable organization as beneficiary of an existing policy, the donor can often provide a more substantial gift than would have been possible using other assets.

A gift of life insurance is private and avoids probate, unlike a gift in a will. A charitable gift of life insurance also permits the donor to retain other assets for heirs, such as real estate, tangible personal property, or a family business. Alternatively, the donor can use life insurance to replace specific assets left to charity by naming family members as beneficiaries of a life insurance policy.

Making charitable gifts using life insurance can be simple and cost-effective. An outright gift of an insurance policy can be as simple as using insurance company forms to name the charity as beneficiary.

Some donors might not want to assign ownership of the policy outright to charity. By naming the charitable organization as beneficiary only, ownership of the policy remains with the donor while allowing the charity to eventually benefit from the policy proceeds.

An outright gift of a life insurance policy offers tax advantages that are not available by making a charitable bequest with the same policy. For example, an outright gift of an existing policy during life can qualify for an income tax charitable deduction. Contributions made to charity to pay subsequent premiums can also qualify for a deduction. Advisors can help donors navigate the IRS rules to ensure that gifts substantially benefit charity and fit efficiently into the donor's estate and tax-planning strategies.

A life insurance policy doesn't necessarily lose its usefulness when it outlives its original purpose. The policy can become a valuable planning tool for the philanthropically-minded individual.

David Landheer is an insurance advisor with Landheer Insurance Agency and a member of the Professional Advisors Board at the Community Foundation.

noteworthy



STAFF PROMOTIONS

It's a new year with new titles for three of our staff. Tara Takken (*left*) was promoted to director of administrative services. She oversees our administrative services team, coordinates maintenance of our building and grounds, provides executive support, and manages business services. Ashley Folkema (*center*) and Patti Wheeler (*right*) also were promoted to communications officers. Ashley takes a lead role in visual storytelling along with managing project timelines and developing marketing materials for our affiliates and supporting organizations. Patti provides our written content and oversees the planning of special events while working with philanthropic services on building relationships through events and publications. Congratulations!

BOUGHER AND CRAWFORD JOIN STAFF

We were excited to welcome two new staff members to our administrative services team! Lisa Bougher (*left*) joined us as a part-time receptionist and is one of the friendly faces you see when you walk into the Community Foundation. Lauren Crawford (*right*) serves as an administrative assistant who specializes in supporting our affiliates, supporting organizations, and philanthropic services team.



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

Our high school scholarship application closed on March 1, but did you know we offer additional educational opportunities? Scholarships are available year-round to adult students residing in Newaygo County who are going back to school or obtaining a degree, certificate, or credential. Students who received a scholarship from the Community Foundation are also eligible for two awards to help recent graduates overcome barriers to employment: the Graduation Award and the Ready2Work Award. Learn more at facommunityfoundation.org/scholarships.

recently

SHELLY KASPRZYCKI
President and CEO



Although it is early in my tenure here at the Community Foundation, I am deeply moved by the stories and perspectives people of Newaygo County and surrounding areas are sharing with me. In the expanse of my career, I have learned the hallmark skill of listening. This means engaging in the Community Foundation's core values of trust, inclusion, compassion, perseverance, and excellence.

The Community Foundation's work is intended to make life better for everyone. In a time when contempt seems to be a staple and many think that differing opinions mean we cannot collaborate, the Community Foundation strives to find the compassion and threads that bind us together. As I have met with community leaders, library patrons, colleagues, educators, people at the grocery store, servers, parents, and young people from all sorts of backgrounds and interests, there is a common golden thread. We all want our communities to thrive; for people to be well and to have opportunity; to appreciate the nature and beauty that surrounds us.

Together, we have accomplished a great deal, but we have even bigger plans for engaging each other, listening, and finding the innovation and supports to make good things happen. I trust the good in people and see examples of our community's assets every day, like those described throughout this newsletter.

I believe in taking decisive action but am mindful of the quote by social scientist John Dewey: "A problem well stated is a problem half solved." Listening and building upon our golden thread develops trust, and with perseverance and the right strategies, we can solve community problems. Thank you to all the wonderful people who have shared their thoughts, concerns, and hopes for our county.

Looking ahead in 2022, the Community Foundation is preparing for trustee election and our annual meeting in June. We are so grateful to our current trustees and look forward to integrating those servant leaders ready to grasp the golden thread and help us weave it into a strong and vibrant tapestry for Newaygo County.



FREMONT AREA
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

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A GIFT THAT KEEPS GIVING

Artist James Magee grew up in Newaygo County learning about the power of philanthropy from his grandparents, William and Margaret Branstrom. While William—a founder of the Community Foundation—was the more public figure, James wanted to recognize his grandmother’s quieter but just as faithful generosity. He established the Margaret C. Branstrom Memorial Arboretum Fund in her honor and created a charitable gift annuity to build the fund.

A charitable gift annuity provides donors like James with a fixed rate of income throughout their lifetimes and the opportunity to support their community for generations to come. Interested in learning more about charitable gift annuities? Contact our philanthropic services team at 231.924.5350.