

IMPACT



INSIDE:

One local woman's kindness
created an enduring bond
between two families.
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FREMONT AREA
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

SPRING 2023

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The first quarter is always one of our busiest times of year at the Community Foundation, and 2023 has been no exception. We wrapped up 2022 by awarding \$3.1 million in our fall community grant round. Our spring community grant round closed on March 1, and staff and committees are now hard at work reviewing applications. Applications for scholarships and Youth Advisory Committee grants also came in on March 1 and are being reviewed.

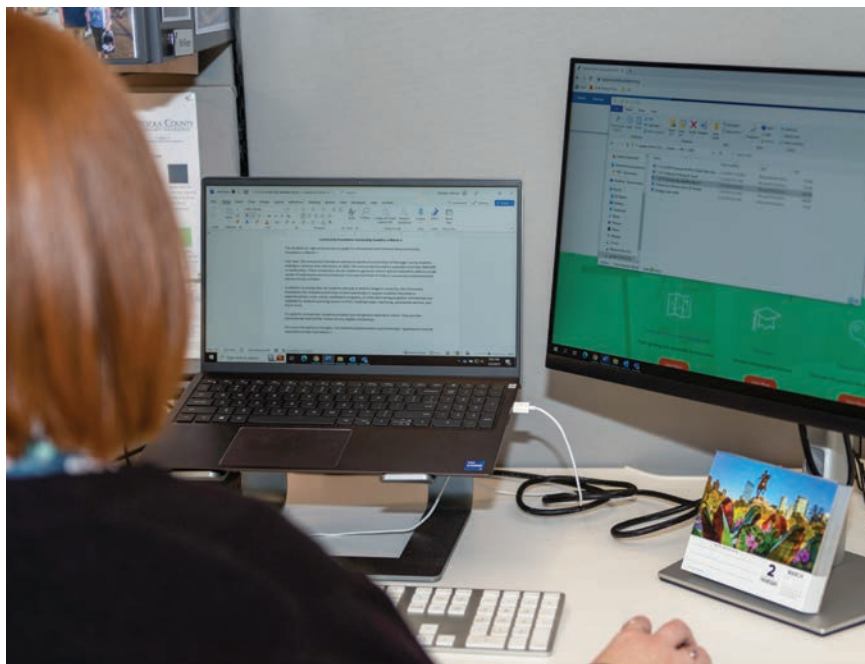
In January, we were proud to award a \$5 million mission-related investment to support the expansion of broadband internet access. We also continue to offer resources to local businesses through our small business loan program in partnership with MSU Federal Credit Union and Northern Initiatives. For more information, visit fcommunityfoundation.org/loans.

As the new year gets started, we’re excited to introduce our new strategic plan. Our strategic planning process was driven by input from grantees, donors, emeritus trustees, and other community members. Their valuable feedback helped us refine our mission and vision and ensure that our grantmaking focus areas are still serving our community well. Read more about our strategic plan on page six.

Looking ahead, we are excited about upcoming opportunities to gather, learn, and share more about our work. We couldn’t do any of it without your support. Thank you for serving Newaygo County with us!

INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY

We recently awarded a \$5 million mission-related investment to Great Lakes Energy to expand access to broadband internet service in Lake, Mecosta, Newaygo, and Osceola counties. The investment will support Great Lakes Energy's expansion of their Trustream fiber network and empower more rural residents with access to the internet connections they need for work, school, and telehealth. Affordable access to reliable internet can also create new possibilities for business growth and increased home sales. We are excited to support the local growth of broadband service and create positive impacts in our community beyond regular grantmaking programs.



FLOYD AND BETTY LOU HEAD



Floyd and Betty Lou Head grew up in California and attended San Mateo Junior College. Floyd joined the Army Air Corps in 1942, the same year he and Betty Lou were married.

Betty Lou began her career with NBC Radio, eventually moving into film where she acted in several motion pictures. She was a member of the Screen Actors Guild and a strong supporter of the theatrical arts.

After rising to the rank of staff sergeant in WWII, Floyd returned to California and began working for Gerber Products Company. In 1959, the family moved to the Fremont area when Floyd was transferred here. He later retired as executive vice president of the company.

The Heads raised four children, enjoyed playing bridge and golf, and after Floyd's retirement, spent winters in Arizona.

Both were deeply involved in the community. Betty Lou volunteered often and was one of the founders of the original Fremont Civic Theater. Floyd and Betty Lou were both recognized for their faithful service to St. John's Episcopal Church.

In addition to their volunteerism, the Heads created several funds at the Community Foundation, including a scholarship in memory of their daughter and a fund to support the Dogwood Center. Their kindness and generosity will leave a legacy for generations to come.

recent grants

Our Board of Trustees approved \$3.1 million in our fall community grant round. Here are a few highlights!

County of Newaygo

\$50,000



PURPOSE:

To support local economic development efforts through a partnership with The Right Place.

WHY IT MATTERS:

With support from The Right Place, the Newaygo County Economic Development Partnership is dedicated to driving sustainable economic growth. They target areas like business expansion, supporting local entrepreneurs, and community development projects.

Heritage Museum of Newaygo County

\$100,000

PURPOSE:

To provide general operating support. The award includes a matching grant of \$50,000.

WHY IT MATTERS:

Museums not only preserve and share a community's history, but they also add to the cultural and social amenities of an area. The Heritage Museum's recent renovation and expansion has provided a fresh, flexible space for exhibits and events in the heart of downtown Newaygo.



Classis Muskegon/Fremont Service Committee

\$85,000

PURPOSE:

To support the Used Car Ministry, which provides cars and repairs to help people get to work. The award includes a matching grant of \$10,000.

WHY IT MATTERS:

Access to reliable transportation remains one of the top barriers to employment in our area. Increased prices for used cars create even more challenges. This program helps local people who need a car or repairs to get to work or secure a new job.



Newaygo County Regional Educational Service Agency (NC RESA)

Up to \$43,450



PURPOSE:

To support the 2023 Summer Internship Program, which provides an opportunity for young adults to gain valuable work experience.

WHY IT MATTERS:

Through paid summer internships, local young adults ages 16-21 can gain work experience and career-related skills in a variety of settings. Internships help meet needs for local businesses and organizations while providing young adults with resume-building experiences.

Our Brothers Keeper Shelter

\$20,000

PURPOSE:

To provide shelter for people experiencing homelessness in our area.

WHY IT MATTERS:

With a lack of affordable housing and no shelter facility in Newaygo County, Our Brothers Keeper—located in Big Rapids—meets an important need for those in our area without a place to stay. They provide emergency shelter as well as case management services, classes, and other supports and resources.

a refreshed plan

strategic plan updated

Throughout 2022, the Community Foundation developed an updated strategic plan to guide our work. The process included analyzing extensive research and community feedback.

“The best part of our process was seeking out the opinions of community members, leaders, former trustees, grantees, staff, donors, and affiliates and supporting organizations,” said Shelly Kasprzycki, president and CEO. “Their input and inspiring work in the community are what propelled our planning.”

These diverse perspectives helped us identify what worked well and where we could improve. For example, we will continue our grantmaking focus on poverty, community and economic development, and education. However, we are also

adding a stronger emphasis on natural resources and placemaking.

“We want to build a community that is comfortable and accessible, that has economic prosperity, and offers healthy social and cultural opportunities,” said Shelly. “All of these things make a community a great place to be.”

Other goal areas include streamlining grantmaking processes and finding innovative solutions to local challenges. Woven throughout is a focus on continuing to build trust and collaborations.

“Our framework centers on partnership, whether it be donor relationships, leveraging resources, or solving problems together,” said Shelly. “The Community Foundation belongs to the community, and that’s

why we see our role as one of an essential partner. We are listening to our grantees and strengthening relationships with our community partners and donors so that we can better collaborate and serve the needs of our neighbors.”

As we put our new strategic plan into practice, you can expect to hear about new initiatives, opportunities to get involved, and more.

“I’m excited about being proactive in some of our initiatives, such as addressing affordable housing, as well as the critical role civility will play in our future direction,” said Shelly. “We must work together to move forward for the common good.”

For a look at our full strategic plan, visit facommunityfoundation.org/plan.





(pictured l-r) Laska Creagh, Morris Davenport, Annie Davenport, and Rhonda Davenport Johnson

honoring aunt glad

gladys hindes

Over 55 years ago, Gladys Hindes heard a simple message from her pastor about a family in Hesperia who could use a friend. Her immediate, whole-hearted response created an enduring bond between two families.

Rhonda Davenport Johnson is one of eight children in the family that Gladys befriended. “We became a part of her family,” said Rhonda. “When she said, ‘Call me Aunt Glad,’ she meant it and it was for a lifetime.”

Gladys knitted mittens for everyone at Christmas, attended high school and college graduations and weddings, and became one of Rhonda’s mother’s best friends. “She was always a part of our big moments, but she also just did life with us,” said Rhonda.

Gladys also embodied a welcoming spirit of inclusion that provided an indelible example for those around her. “For my brother and I, her legacy was inclusiveness,” said Laska Creagh, Gladys’ daughter. “She believed everyone deserves love.”

“Growing up as one of very few African American families in the area, we were made to feel different by some, but that was never part of Aunt Glad,” said Rhonda. “She wanted the best for everyone.”

At Gladys’ 100th birthday party in 2019, not only were many Davenports in attendance, but they also donated in her honor to the Community Foundation. “We wanted to help families who needed encouragement and support,” said

Rhonda, who is now an executive vice president with Comerica Bank. “We wanted to acknowledge how significant such support had been in our lives and to bless someone else.”

When Gladys passed away in 2021, the Davenports gave again in honor of Aunt Glad’s legacy of love, joy, and generosity. Rhonda and her family continue to look for ways to carry on that example.

“I hope someday people will say that we did some of those things for others,” said Rhonda. “That we were kind, that we were loving, that we were accepting, the way Aunt Glad was with us. I, like the rest of my family, adored her!”



OUR NEXT 75

Christie Pollock

Family and community are deeply important to Christie Pollock. She is a hands-on grandma, a book club member, one of the founders of the local pickleball movement, a beloved former teacher, and even a member of our Bridging Generations Fund board. “There are a lot of opportunities in this community to give in different ways,” said Christie.

The fund Christie created at the Community Foundation combines her love of family and community with a lifelong desire to give back. The fund will help local people who want to adopt children. Christie was adopted at birth and always knew she wanted to adopt. “It was always on my roadmap,” she said. “I adopted my two children, and they’re everything to me. They’re my whole life.”

While there are many children who need loving homes, adoption can also be an expensive process. “With this fund, I want to help people who are adopting in any way I can,” said Christie. “I hope it can help give children a permanent home.”

Why is giving important to you?

Christie: I’ve been lucky, and I feel a lot of gratitude. That’s why you give back, to pass it on. It’s brought me a lot of joy.

Why give through the Community Foundation?

Christie: This is a very giving community, and the Community Foundation is at the center of that. I’m very proud that we have the Community Foundation here. It says a lot that so many people have wanted to support it, and I wanted to be one of them.

To join Our Next 75, we 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 BYRNE
Attorney at law

THE IMPORTANCE OF WILLS AND TRUSTS

It is important for all adults to have a last will and testament drafted by an estate planning attorney. Depending on a person's needs and desires, a living trust may also be needed.

For an individual with at least one minor child, a will can appoint the guardian who will care for the child. A will or trust will also 1) name the person or entity to manage the individual's assets and money (called a personal representative or successor trustee) after the individual's incapacity or death; 2) state to whom the personal representative or trustee can make distributions (to beneficiaries such as children, grandchildren, friends, etc.); and 3) determine the age that the beneficiary/child of the deceased individual will receive control over his or her share of the assets.

If a person with a minor child does not have a valid will and/or trust, a probate court judge will appoint a guardian for the care of the minor child and a conservator to manage the assets for the child. There will be uncertainty for the

child and the potential guardians until the court makes this appointment. Additionally, the court may not pick the person that the deceased individual would have chosen. The court-appointed guardian and conservator will each need to file annual reports with the court and the conservator will need to obtain approval from the court to spend money for the child. The balance of the child's share will be distributed upon the child's 18th birthday, regardless of whether the child is financially responsible or not.

Having an attorney who is experienced, trained, and specializes in estate planning prepare a person's estate plan is the best way to ensure that person's wishes are fulfilled.

David Byrne is a member of the Community Foundation's Professional Advisors Board. He is an attorney specializing in wills and trusts, small business, probate and trust administration, and Medicaid nursing home planning.

noteworthy



NEW STAFF WELCOMED

We were excited to welcome three new staff members late last year. Todd Jones serves as foundation manager and specializes in supporting our affiliates and supporting organizations. Kaitlyn Goguen and Becky VanHaften joined our administrative team as part-time receptionists and are the first two friendly faces you see when you walk into the Community Foundation. We're thankful to have them on our team!

KICKSTART TO CAREER

Incentive workshops are underway in local elementary schools. These interactive lessons cover topics on financial literacy and how saving today can help students prepare for the future. By participating, students can also earn \$50 for their Kickstart accounts. Along with incentive workshops, students are contributing to their savings accounts by participating in special deposit days, where they can bring in their saved money to deposit into their Kickstart accounts.



TRUSTEES AND STAFF GATHER

In December, our staff and board gathered with the boards of our affiliate foundations in Lake, Mecosta, and Osceola counties and our two supporting organizations, the Amazing X Charitable Trust and Bridging Generations Fund. We always enjoy this annual opportunity to build relationships and celebrate our shared work and commitment to our communities. We're grateful to work with such passionate, dedicated people!

recently

SHELLY KASPRZYCKI
President and CEO



I am feeling particularly optimistic as we head into a busy season of grant review, scholarships, and new partnerships. Henry David Thoreau said, “It’s not what you look at that matters, it is what you see.” We see possibilities and opportunities.

We’ve begun visiting with people about our new strategic framework, which will serve as a springboard for proactive partnerships and leveraging funds. We are so grateful for the collective wisdom of many community members who offered their thoughts about the Community Foundation and our work during our planning process. I hope you enjoy some details about the new framework in this issue.

I would note that an important element of our work is building civility and goodwill. The Greek playwright Aeschylus coined the word “philanthropy” as a love for humanity. Don’t we all play a critical role in that endeavor? Together, we can work to be models of civility

and kindness and leave a legacy for our next generations of a community we all want to live in and enjoy.

We recently welcomed Congressman John Moolenaar for a visit, as he is new to representing Newaygo County. He was so impressed with our community leaders and understands rural needs. I also participated in Foundations on the Hill in Washington, D.C. at the end of February with other foundation leaders from around the country. This annual event creates visibility for foundations and philanthropy on Capitol Hill and helps us emphasize the power of giving in our communities. We spoke with representatives to promote charitable tax credits and help our legislative leaders understand the needs of communities like ours.

Please enjoy this edition of our newsletter, and let our team know how you would like to partner with our Community Foundation.



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The biannual newsletter of Fremont Area Community Foundation



A GREAT TIME TO GIVE

Carla Roberts served as the Community Foundation's president and CEO for 10 years, but her commitment to Newaygo County has continued since her retirement. Carla has given in multiple ways through the Community Foundation, including creating a charitable gift annuity, ensuring her love for this area will be felt for years to come.

A charitable gift annuity provides donors with a fixed rate of income throughout their lifetimes and the opportunity to support their community for generations. Now, with an increase in gift annuity rates for gifts established on or after January 1, 2023, there has never been a better time to take advantage of this giving tool.

Interested in learning more about charitable gift annuities? Contact our philanthropic services team at 231.924.5350.

