

communityaction

Summer 2023

OSCEOLA COUNTY
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

An affiliate of
Fremont Area Community Foundation

Getting in the game

Chuck and Lori Holmquist



Being part of a community is more than just living there. For Chuck and Lori Holmquist, making connections and giving back is important. Chuck grew up in Reed City while Lori attended a rival school in a neighboring county. The couple met, and after spending a few years living downstate, had the opportunity to move back to Osceola County.

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"It just felt right," said Chuck. "This community—its landscape and people—is home. We like being part of a small town, where neighbors become friends. Plus, it's beautiful. We're surrounded by lakes and rivers."

"Osceola County is rural and that is one of the things that makes it special," shared Lori. "We feel safe and protected while also having access to things such as quality school systems and local health care. We are incredibly lucky."

Getting involved in the community is a priority for Chuck and Lori. Their two kids attended Reed City Area Public Schools and were active in sports. "Not only did we go to games, but I had the opportunity to coach while our kids were in school," said Chuck. "It was a really special time. Even though our kids have moved on to college and careers, you'll still find us cheering from the stands. We're lifelong Coyotes!"

The Holmquists have also been involved with the Community Foundation for many years. Chuck served as trustee and treasurer while Lori currently serves as trustee. Both were also instrumental in planning the annual auction. "We saw the good work the Community Foundation was doing and knew we wanted to be part of it," said Chuck.

"The Community Foundation is Osceola County's best kept secret," said Lori. As a trustee, she sees the impact grant funds have on local nonprofits. "The Community Foundation supports organizations who do incredible work, and it's our responsibility to help get the word out."

"We want to see the Community Foundation here forever," said Chuck. "It's our duty to help make sure that happens."

Their love of the area led them to create a fund at the Community Foundation to support Reed City Area Public



School athletics. Their hope is that their fund can provide K-12 student athletes with opportunities, experiences, and equipment they might not have access to, due to school budget constraints. "We understand the importance of athletics on a student's educational experience," said Chuck. "Sports teach important lessons such as commitment, hard work, and being a good teammate."

For Chuck and Lori, knowing their fund will be around for generations to come is the most rewarding part.

"Growing up, we saw how important it was to give back," said Lori. "Making the decision to follow the lead set by those before us was easy. It's our pleasure to continue their vision."

Engaging youth in the outdoors

Rose Lake Youth Camp provides scholarships to area youth

For 75 years, children from mid-Michigan have come to LeRoy to attend Rose Lake Youth Camp. The camp—originally started as a Girl Scout camp—runs for seven weeks in the summer and welcomes over 200 children each year.

The children who attend experience a camp that is not far removed from nature. A typical day might include playing nine-square, fishing, swimming, kayaking, crafts, and stories and songs by the fire. Campers stay in tents, getting up early to raise the flags and have breakfast. They are also taught responsibility through daily chores and friendly competitions such as who has the cleanest tent.

“This is the most time that a majority of these kids will get to spend outside all year long,” said Angie Cornell. Angie, who is a teacher and friend of the camp, takes it upon herself to

identify some kids who would benefit from the experience and may not otherwise get a chance for something like camp.

Half of the campers attend on full scholarships. Without a scholarship, the cost for camp would be unaffordable for many families, especially if they have multiple children. Rose Lake also provides scholarships for Discovery Camp as well, which is a three-day camp made available to special needs campers through a partnership with Hope Network. The Community Foundation provided a grant in the spring to help pay for Osceola County students to attend camp.

“Most of the kids who come here would never be able to attend without the scholarship,” said Board President Kim Young. “And those scholarships would not be possible without the Community Foundation and our other donors.”



Moving our work forward

Action planning update



Over the last 18 months, the Community Foundation has developed an updated action plan to guide its work moving forward. The process has included extensive research, conversations, and community feedback.

"This work is important to give us direction and purpose," said Maria E. Gonzalez, senior director. "We want donors to be able to understand how their money will be used, and we want grantees to know what our priorities will be."

The action plan began with Fremont Area Community Foundation's strategic planning process. Fremont Area Community Foundation serves Newaygo County and hosts three affiliate foundations, including our own and the community foundations in Lake and Mecosta counties. All four foundations were actively involved in the development of Fremont Area Community Foundation's

four primary goals: optimize operational enhancements, promote the common good, expand philanthropy, and strengthen capacity for people and communities.

While we have adopted these goals as an overall guide for our own work, each community foundation in our four-county region has also developed an action plan specific to the needs, resources, and character of their own county.

"While some of our efforts happen across the region, some are very specific to the particular county," said Maria. "There are specific things we are engaging in for each area."

In Osceola County, involving staff and trustees in site visits to nonprofit partners will be an important step toward strengthening impact. "We want to get out and see these programs in person, not just in grant applications," said Maria. "That will help us engage and make connections."

Sharing stories, holding events, and targeting significant needs like affordable housing are a few other projects the Community Foundation plans to incorporate into its upcoming work to raise awareness and expand impact. The action plan is also intended to grow along with the Community Foundation.

"The new strategic action plan is an important guide for our work but is also a flexible document that can change and be updated as community needs change and shift," she continued. "We are excited about having a plan that can be implemented and allow us to move forward in a strategic manner."

Our board

Mark Sochocki, Chair

Roger Elkins

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Dr. Amy Keller, Secretary

Lori Holmquist

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Trustee spotlight

Dr. Amy Keller

To say Dr. Amy Keller's family has history in Osceola County is putting it mildly. "My family arrived here in the 1860s when Michigan opened for homesteading," Amy said. "This is home to me. I love the people, the beauty of the trees, the seasons, and the rolling hills. I like knowing who my neighbors are and that we support one another."

In 1992, Amy had the opportunity to return to her hometown of Reed City and open an optometry practice. It was at her office one day that she first heard about the Community Foundation.

"Dr. Don Gogolin, who worked tirelessly to establish the Community Foundation, came and explained what it was all about," said Amy. "I wanted to belong to a group that was out there working to make life better for the people in our county. They were a group that accomplished things instead of just talking about it."

Amy has now been a Community Foundation trustee since 2017 and currently serves as the board's secretary. Through her board service, she has enjoyed getting to know more people working in the local nonprofit sector and seeing their dedication first-hand.

"I have learned that there is so much more need in our county than I had ever imagined," she said. "I have enjoyed getting to know the compassionate people within our nonprofit sector who work daily to provide assistance to those in need, even though they are understaffed and underfunded. I am excited when funding from the Community Foundation gives them the boost they need to get a program off the ground that has a significant, positive impact on community members."

Supporting Osceola County

Giving through your estate plan

The Community Foundation offers many opportunities to connect. We do this by connecting people's abilities to local needs. We have been very grateful for the generosity of our community throughout our history.

One of the most significant gifts to the Community Foundation was through an estate plan. About 10 years ago, we received one of the largest estate gifts in our history from Dave Bonsall. Dave was a generous partner of the Community Foundation during his lifetime and supported many organizations. Through this relationship, we were able to work with him to include the Community Foundation in his estate plan. His gift has provided hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of grants that serve Osceola County residents.

Dave was able to give during his lifetime and then into the future through his estate plan. A charitable bequest is one way to make a significant impact on Osceola County, even if giving today is not a possibility. Including the Community Foundation in your estate plan allows you to support the community in many ways. You can dedicate your gift to your favorite nonprofit or cause or help the Community Foundation assist with general local needs as they arise.

If you are interested in talking about how to give to the Community Foundation, we would be happy to assist you. Contact Katie Boven at kboven@facommunityfoundation.org to discuss how to include us in your estate or make a gift today to benefit the community.





2023 financials

Impact by the numbers

TOTAL GIFTS	\$158,732
TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS	\$53,425
TOTAL GRANTS	\$135,382
Community grants	\$114,382
Donor advised/agency endowment/designated grants	\$21,000

All data as of May 31, 2023

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The newsletter of Osceola County Community Foundation

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231.924.5350

Chair's note



It seems like just yesterday we were excitedly anticipating warm weather and bright summer days, and today we are preparing for changing leaves and Friday night football games. Although we are reaching the later days of summer, there is still much to look forward to for the remainder of the year. One thing we certainly can't wait for is our fall grant round. The deadline is September 1, and it is always exciting to review grant applications, work with our nonprofit partners, and award grants that will work to improve the community. In addition to the grant round, we have four new funds coming into the Community Foundation this fall that will provide community services in 2024.

Before we look too far ahead though, it is still summer and we at the Community Foundation certainly made the most of it. We visited many of our nonprofit partners all over the county, including Rose Lake Youth Camp and Community Mental Health for Central Michigan. We were moved and inspired after seeing the passion and

commitment that these organizations have for the work they do.

It has been a fantastic year so far and we only expect great things as we head into September. We are so grateful for your continued support of the Community Foundation. Thank you!

Respectfully,

Mark Sochocki
Board Chair