



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Community Foundation Celebrates Landmark Year in Giving**

APPLETON, Wis. – The Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region awarded a record \$28.6 million in grants to 1,251 nonprofit organizations, taking the total grants awarded in its 32-year history to \$295 million.

For the fiscal year 2018, which ended June 30, the grants total includes \$1.01 million in scholarships awarded to a record number of recipients - 408 students from 60 high schools.

“It’s incredibly exciting to see how the spirit of philanthropy is changing lives and opening doors of opportunity for people in our communities,” said Curt Detjen, president and CEO. “That \$28.6 million helped to improve communities in all aspects of life.”

The Community Foundation helps people, businesses and organizations make a difference by supporting nonprofits working on the causes they care about most, during and after their lifetimes. Donors create charitable funds with the Foundation that award grants to nonprofit organizations across the Fox Valley region and beyond.

The grants cover the full range of charitable causes in the community, including \$9.4 million in grants for human services projects, \$5.4 million in grants for community improvement projects, \$6.5 million in grants for education projects and scholarships, \$2 million in grants for health care, \$1.2 million in grants for environmental projects and \$4.1 million in grants for arts and culture projects.

“By serving as a knowledge resource, catalyst, partner, convenor, mentor and investor, the Community Foundation helps donors, professional advisors and nonprofit organizations improve the quality of life for all, forever,” said Cathie Tierney, 2017-2018 Board Chair.

The Foundation’s 1,605 charitable funds under management total \$470 million in assets and received \$132.9 million in contributions, including a breathtaking estate gift of more than \$100 million by the late David and Rita Nelson of De Pere. The gift was among the largest in Wisconsin’s history and by far the largest gift ever to the Community Foundation.

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The gift established the *David L. and Rita E. Nelson Family Fund*, a permanent, donor-advised endowment that will award grants to charitable organizations primarily in the Fox Cities and Green Bay areas reflecting the charitable interests of David and Rita Nelson and their family.

“We are honored that the Nelsons chose us to steward their generosity,” Detjen said. “We commit to being that trustworthy partner for the Nelsons and every donor who chooses to give to and through the Foundation to make a difference in their communities. That has been our focus, honor and privilege from the beginning and we feel it in a special way in this milestone year.”

Nearly five percent of all grants awarded from within the Community Foundation come from the *Bright Idea Fund*, which combines gifts from generous donors who chose to have their funds work together to address community problems and opportunities within the fund’s focus areas and priorities.

“With the *Bright Idea Fund*, we are being intentional about inviting the best ideas from the community and investing in those ideas with grants,” Detjen said. “We encourage our donors and other funders to learn with us, and help emerging, innovative projects in our community.”  
(See all grants awarded at [cfoffvalley.org/BrightIdeaResults](http://cfoffvalley.org/BrightIdeaResults).)

### Examples of \$28.6 million in Grants

- A \$35,000 *Bright Idea Fund* grant for a new Innovation Lab at the Building for Kids Children’s Museum in Appleton, where children are learning through hands-on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) challenges.
- A \$250,000 grant from the *Bright Idea Fund* and \$300,000 from the Basic Needs Giving Partnership helped the Boys and Girls Club of the Fox Valley and its eight partners launched STAR (Scholarships On Target to Achieve), an intensive mentoring program to bridge the equity gaps in graduation rates in Appleton and Menasha public schools.
- Twenty-two charitable funds within the Community Foundation awarded grants to LEAVEN’s Community Resource Center expansion project totaling \$614,108, including a \$50,000 grant from the *Bright Idea Fund* and a \$218,608 grant from the *Basic Needs Giving Partnership* within the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region, which is supported by the *U.S. Venture Fund for Basic Needs*, the J. J. Keller Foundation and other community partners.

The Community Foundation was created in 1986 with \$5,000 Walter L. Rugland received as part of the first Community Service Award given by Aid Association for Lutherans (now Thrivent Financial), where he had been president, CEO and chairman. The Foundation is the second-largest certified community foundation in Wisconsin, and among the top 10 percent nationwide.

More details on the financial performance, as well as lists of grant recipients, charitable funds and investment performance, are available at [www.cfoffvalley.org/CommunityReport](http://www.cfoffvalley.org/CommunityReport).

*The Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region, a Fox Cities-based nonprofit founded in 1986, helps people provide long-term support for favorite charities through endowments and other charitable funds. The second-largest certified community foundation in Wisconsin, its donors have allowed it to award more than \$295 million to nonprofit organizations from more than 1,605 charitable funds. Affiliated community foundations operate in Brillion, Chilton, Clintonville, Shawano and Waupaca. To learn more, go to [www.cfoffvalley.org](http://www.cfoffvalley.org), subscribe to The Loop at [www.cfoffvalley.org/loop](http://www.cfoffvalley.org/loop) or connect with us on Facebook and Twitter.*

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