



Together, we flourish.

**Community
Foundation**™
for the Fox Valley Region

2020 REPORT
TO THE
COMMUNITY

Year defined by challenges as community, staff step up

The fiscal year that concluded in June 2020 was one of the most disruptive in memory for the Community Foundation. It was also a year for which we are most proud of our donors, nonprofit partners, board and staff.

Emergence of the global pandemic in early 2020 changed the world. It has proved a tremendous, ongoing challenge, but it also ushered in a time where people and organizations showed their best selves. Your Community Foundation helped our region support organizations serving those most affected and in need of help through the COVID-19 Community Response Fund. Our United Way Fox Cities friends collaborated with us, and our community provided the resources – in spades! Thank you!

Delivery of our mission has continued thanks to a skilled staff and wise board of directors and a progressive community of caring, generous investors in solutions. There are many silver linings, improvements of necessity that will continue even when life returns to “normal”.

Our year will also be defined by investments made to drive our mission:

- Hiring an Outsourced Chief Investment Officer charged with the dual mandate to manage assets to support today’s philanthropic purposes and to ensure we will have resources tomorrow to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead of us.
- Comprehensive rebranding to help the community better understand our unique role in this region and invite the many opportunities to partner with the Community Foundation for current and long-term impact.
- An office expansion and renovation to provide much-needed meeting and staff spaces that support our role in convening, educating and collaborating to bolster quality of life in our region.
- We’re discerning how we will address diversity, equity

and inclusion – both internally and in how it interacts with, supports, and leads in our community. Listening and learning come first. And we will reflect and set a course to do the right thing, consistent with our stated values.

Like you, we care about today and tomorrow. As your partner, we will work hard to address priorities such as continued vigilance in light of public health and economic uncertainty, defining and fulfilling our role in addressing equity and social justice, incorporating survey input into our service supporting philanthropy, and refreshing the focus of the Foundation’s strategic plan. We will pursue these and other initiatives in the spirit of continuous improvement to drive us forward as we foster a flourishing future for all in our region.

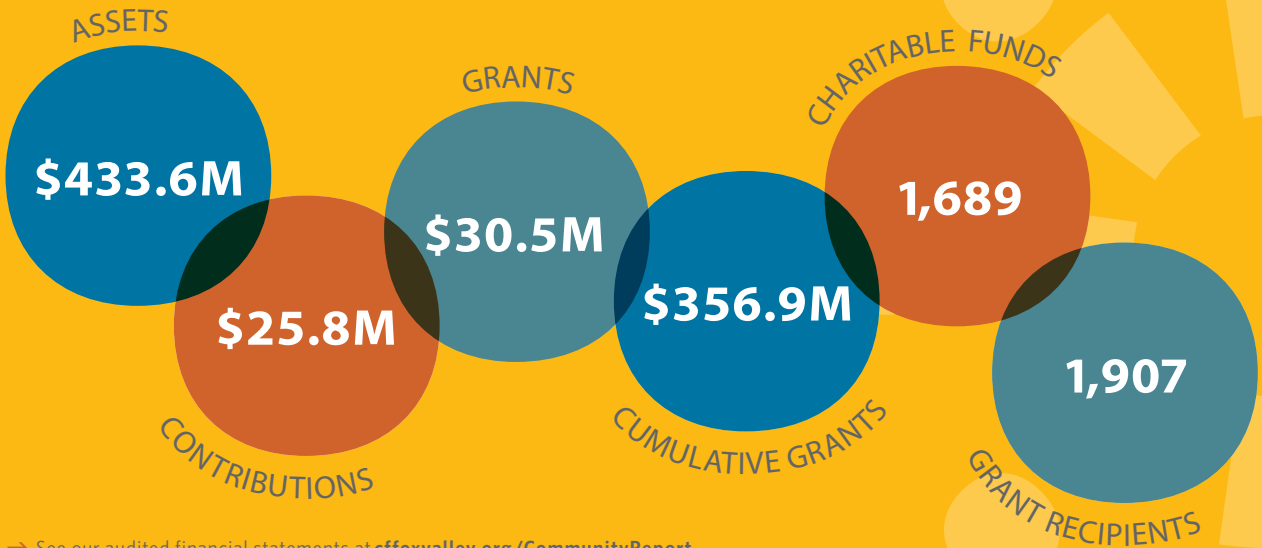
We’re grateful for all the ways you support the Community Foundation, entrusting us with your generous gifts and with your confidence in us as a valued partner.



Curt Detjen
President/CEO

Jon Stellmacher
2019-20 Board Chair

FISCAL YEAR 2020 AT A GLANCE



Flourishing in Crisis

In many ways, the coronavirus pandemic revealed a hidden strength and resiliency we didn't know we had. In March, our community was put to the test as schools, businesses and organizations were suddenly forced to shut down and basic needs serving nonprofits went into crisis mode.

One resounding question arose from our Fox Valley communities: **"How can we help?"**

Working from home, the Community Foundation staff worked tirelessly to find answers to that question.

Within days we established the COVID-19 Community Response Fund in partnership with United Way Fox Cities, and the community came together in force to help nonprofits sustain critical basic needs services like safe shelter, food, financial assistance, health care and childcare and help for vulnerable and marginalized populations disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

Within four months, 359 generous individuals, businesses and organizations donated more than \$1.2 million to the fund to help nonprofit organizations meet the enormous needs in the Fox Valley.

Many people encouraged others to give, including an Appleton couple who used their annual fundraiser to memorialize their baby daughter to boost donations to the fund.

Nonprofit organizations have been working on the front lines during the pandemic, and many have been hit hard, forcing some to close their doors to the public, reduce staff hours, reinvent

programs and make do with less at a time when people need their services most.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our communities, grants totaling more than \$1 million were awarded from the fund to 82 nonprofit organizations in four months.

As we ended our fiscal year June 30, we proactively awarded grants from our *Bright Idea Fund* to nonprofits that have had fewer opportunities for critical funding due to COVID-19, but which play a critical role in our regional quality of life. Grants totaling \$114,000 were given to 44 local arts, culture, environment, and racial and ethnic support organizations, the latter following local and national racial injustice events.

The work behind the scenes won't stop with the end of the pandemic. The needs of local nonprofit organizations are and will continue to be significant during the public health crisis and beyond, and we are here to help support our partners in the year ahead.

We're looking forward to more avenues of opportunity with our local donors and regional funding partners, our statewide network of community leaders and nonprofit partners plus our national community foundation colleagues to ensure we continue to mobilize resources, where and when they are most needed, particularly for the Fox Valley's most vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Overall, grantmaking increased by 26% in the 4th quarter of fiscal year 2020 from fiscal year 2019.

▼ **ThedaCare Family of Foundations received much-needed ventilators in spring, thanks to an anonymous donor who gave a grant from a fund within the Community Foundation.**



► **"Every year since Oliver and Rebecca Zornow's daughter Lydia passed away at five days old, the couple has brought together friends and family for a community memorial project. "This year, we chose to support the COVID-19 Community Response Fund, which offers our community vital relief during this pandemic."**



◀ **A COVID-19 Community Response Fund grant of \$35,000 supported early childhood programming that's operating at three childcare centers in Appleton and Neenah, serving children of health care and other essential workers during the pandemic crisis.**



Art Works

At-risk youth in the Art Works program at the Trout Museum of Art gained an opportunity and friendships that had been missing from their lives. The youth, many who face mental health and trauma challenges, are referred to Art Works by the Outagamie County Juvenile Court system to reconnect them with their community in a positive way. The museum received grants for the program from the *Bright Idea Fund* and the

▲ Local artist Irineo Medina and a few at-risk youth from the Art Works program at the Trout Museum of Art worked on a mural across the street. He stands with Education Coordinator, Marci Hoffman from the museum.

Appleton Rotary Community Art Fund within the Community Foundation to bring in local artists to help the youth express themselves through art in a healthy and safe environment.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

Rock the Block Waupaca

Even though the 2020 Rock the Block Waupaca event was cancelled in spring due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the crew at Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity worked hard on home repair projects that normally would take the hands of hundreds of volunteers. With safety top of mind, a handful of staff helped families with 35 residential projects in the Waupaca area. The community celebrated in September. Charitable funds within the Foundation and our Waupaca Area Community Foundation affiliate that supported this effort include the *Bright Idea Fund*, *Robert and Christine Faulks Charitable Fund*, *Tim and Joy Neuville Family Fund*, *Rotary Club of Waupaca Charitable Fund*, *ThedaCare Medical Center-Waupaca Medical Staff Charitable Fund*, and the *Waupaca Area Community Foundation Fund*.





ENVIRONMENTAL

Trail planners plot their course

No one could have predicted that fear and boredom from COVID-19 would make trails so popular, but recreation professionals in the Fox Cities were ready after attending the Fox Cities Trail Summit in February 2020, presented by Fox Cities Greenways and East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission with grant support from the Community Foundation's *Bright Idea Fund*.

Staff from 16 municipalities and people representing seven nonprofits compared notes on plans for new trails focused on popular destinations, gaps and barriers.

A Community Foundation survey found \$20 million in trail projects are planned in the Fox Cities through 2022 – including a new river span connecting Little Chute and Kaukauna, three trestle projects in Appleton and a CE Trail extension making a Kaukauna-Green Bay link possible. Oshkosh and High Cliff State Park were also identified as important destinations.

A Trails Summit Report is available at cffoxvalley.org/Fox-Cities-Trail-Summit.

First Five Fox Valley

First Five Fox Valley is an early childhood coalition of childcare, schools, healthcare, birth-to-three programs and Head Start to help children from ages birth-to-five be safe, healthy and ready to learn. First Five's Welcome Baby Program is improving the way organizations reach, assess, and connect new families with community resources through pre- and post-natal home visits, community events at the Building for Kids in downtown Appleton and a multi-agency database and referral network. The effort is supported with multi-year grants from the Community Foundation's *Bright Idea Fund* and the Basic Needs Giving Partnership within the Community Foundation, supported by the *U.S. Venture Fund for Basic Needs*, the J. J. Keller Foundation and other community partners.



EDUCATION



St. Vincent de Paul

Dora Fabian is a “gap-bridger,” helping Spanish-speaking residents who struggle with finding the resources they need in Fox Valley communities. St. Vincent DePaul in Appleton hired her as a Spanish-speaking resource advocate, thanks to a grant from the Basic Needs Giving Partnership. It’s one of the ways the nonprofit is helping people hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, in spite of having to close its Thrift Store in spring. St. Vincent de Paul served 7,882 people in 2019, and the need has increased. In addition, the nonprofit used a *COVID-19 Community Response Fund* grant to respond to urgent requests for assistance with food, transportation, housing and other basic needs, while helping vulnerable people living in Outagamie and Waupaca counties remain safe in their homes and avoid homelessness.

HUMAN
SERVICES



HEALTH

Us 2 Behavioral Health

Kou Yang and Sheng Lee Yang believe every person deserves access to quality mental health services without prejudice to one’s culture, socioeconomic status or financial position. In 2019, the couple launched Us 2 Behavioral Health Care clinic in Appleton, a nonprofit providing outpatient counseling and psychiatric services using a unique culturally led, trauma-informed approach to help clients build resiliency and empowerment in

their own lives. A grant from the Basic Needs Giving Partnership enabled Us 2 Behavioral Health to implement Equity, Diversity & Inclusion programs, and *Bright Idea Fund* grants helped hire a therapist to provide culturally responsive counseling to Hmong, First Nations, Hispanic and other minority groups and provide U.S. Census outreach. A grant from the *John J. and Ethel D. Keller Fund* supported operations.

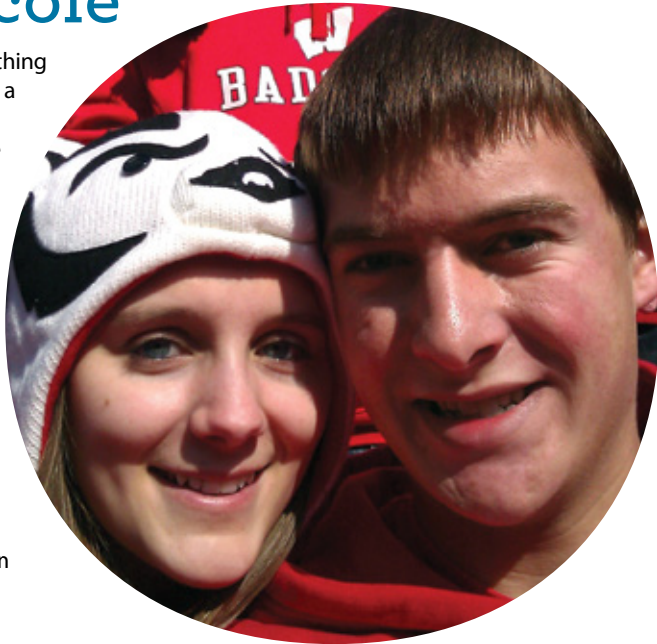
Remembering Nicole

Brady Kees (Nicole's longtime boyfriend) is doing something special in memory of his late girlfriend Nicole Bangart, a 2010 Chilton High School graduate and straight-A co-salutatorian. She and Brady met in band and shared a love for music and theater. Five years after her tragic death, Brady and Nicole's mother Cindy created a scholarship fund and a donor advised fund in her name.

"I was the recipient of high school scholarships through the Community Foundation and I've seen their stories of grants to the performing arts, so it made sense for Cindy and I to team up with this experienced local partner to honor Nicole," says Brady.

Nicole performed in plays and musicals, was an avid reader and piano player, and loved to help out on her family's farm.

Graduating seniors from Chilton who are pursuing a four-year degree in agriculture or visual/performing arts can apply for a \$500 Chilton Area Community Foundation *Nicole Bangart Memorial Scholarship*.



In 2020, \$1.24 million was awarded to 434 students.
See all available scholarships at www.cffoxvalley.org/scholarships.

Passing on the joy of giving



Mike and Amy McGowan find incredible joy in using their gifts to make a difference in people's lives in the Fox Valley. By including their children in family discussions about where to make grants from their family fund, they're building a strong foundation for philanthropy in the next generation. The Community Foundation makes it easy for people to give to multiple causes, so the McGowans make grants from the *Michael & Amy McGowan Family Fund* to support their church, basic needs, clean water, education, Habitat for Humanity and Down's Syndrome organizations (in honor of their godchild).

"We believe that we make a living by what we get, and make a life by what we give," Amy says.

Why give through YOUR Community Foundation?

LOCAL EXPERTISE

- Knowledge of nonprofits and community needs
- Board members engaged in the community
- Helpful professional staff

PERSONAL SERVICE

- Effective giving
- Prudent investment management
- Grant-making made simple
- Awareness of needs of nonprofits
- Collaboration with professional advisors

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- Community investment
- Collaborative giving
- Nonprofits made stronger



Together, we flourish.

Community Foundation™

for the Fox Valley Region

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Catherine Tierney: *(Vice Chair)*

Welcome 2020-21 new board members:

• Jeff Lang • Mike Mader • Shipra Seefeldt



We are committed to the quality of life in Calumet, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca and northern Winnebago counties, and partner with:

- Brillion Area Family of Funds
- Chilton Area Community Foundation
- Clintonville Area Foundation
- Shawano Area Community Foundation
- Waupaca Area Community Foundation



Helping clients create a legacy

We've enjoyed longtime partnerships with legal and financial advisors across the Fox Valley. This year we launched new online resources to help professional advisors tailor a gift or a charitable fund to their clients' unique interest and goals.

Paul Bonikowske has encouraged his clients to explore charitable giving options and create funds within the Foundation. "Knowing what people's goals are is key, and the Community Foundation is a great

resource," says the Northwestern Mutual CFP®/Wealth Management Advisor.

Just before Christmas 2019, Bonikowske and his wife created the *Paul and Jenny Bonikowske Charitable Fund*, a donor advised fund that will enable the family to give to multiple organizations in the Fox Valley.

"The staff at the Community Foundation made it an incredibly easy process," Bonikowske says.