

Microsoft, local community foundations, and the Green Bay Packers recommit to fostering informed, engaged communities

Green Bay, WI – What started as a three-year pilot effort to preserve local journalism and amplify the stories of Northeast Wisconsin will continue with renewed investment by Microsoft, the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation, the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region, and the Green Bay Packers.

The combined \$135,000 commitment extends support for the Northeast Wisconsin Journalism Initiative to fund the Northeast Wisconsin (NEW) News Lab, which launched in 2021 as Microsoft's fifth regional news pilot. The NEW News Lab is the largest and has the most varied network of partners of the five pilots. Northeast Wisconsin was selected in part for its strong history of collaboration among the community foundations and Microsoft's partnership with the Green Bay Packers in Tiletown Tech.

"The NEW News Lab ensures that this region will thrive as a robust ecosystem for local news by collaborating across storytelling, fundraising, and business operations," said Mary Snapp, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives for Corporate, External, and Legal Affairs at Microsoft. *"The Lab's results are even greater than the sum of its amazing parts, and it's a model we hope can be studied and replicated across the country."*

The NEW News Lab partners include six regional news outlets: Fox Valley 365, Green Bay Press-Gazette, The Post-Crescent, The Press Times, Wisconsin Public Radio, and Wisconsin Watch. The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay's Communications Department is an educational partner. Content produced by the NEW News Lab is shared at no cost for the purpose of increasing access and broadening awareness of community needs.

Since launched, the formerly competing newsrooms of the NEW News Lab have collaborated to produce numerous in-depth series reporting on topics such as the need for more affordable housing, the difficulties finding affordable childcare, the challenges of youth in accessing mental health care, the struggles associated with growing diverse populations, and other emerging trends. These stories have been picked up by more than 125 news outlets nationwide and have reached an estimated audience of more than 23 million people.

"These stories connect us to the well-being of our neighbors and focus on both critical and emerging needs we are all committed to solving," said Dennis Buehler, President & CEO of the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation. *"The collaborative approach by these newsrooms presents opportunities to inspire people to partner and act on innovative solutions that will strengthen our community."*

The Greater Green Bay Community Foundation welcomed Microsoft's Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, Mary Snapp, to share in announcing the recommitment at its annual celebration event on Thursday, October 12, at the Legends Club at Lambeau Field. Since the Northeast Wisconsin Journalism Initiative was established, Microsoft has committed a total \$900,000.