

How Grants are Awarded



Funding is awarded year-round from the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation to charitable community organizations, educational institutions and government agencies.



We award grants from charitable funds that donors establish so they can give back to the community today and for generations to come. Donors can select from a range of options, choosing the level of involvement they prefer in making grant decisions.

While competitive grant opportunities are often the most visible awards made by the Foundation, they comprise only 12.5 percent of \$4.57 million in grants awarded by the Foundation in FY2016. Funds accepting applications and corresponding application deadlines can be found on the Foundation website (OshkoshAreaCF.org/grants.cfm).

Donor Advised Funds

Grant recipients from Donor Advised Funds are selected by the people, businesses and organizations that established the charitable funds with us. Grant recommendations to support organizations and

charitable projects locally and beyond can be made throughout the year. Our staff performs due diligence to ensure that the recommended grant recipient is recognized by the IRS as a tax-exempt public charity. Once this process is complete, grant checks are issued from that particular fund.

Most donors know the causes they want to support. For others, our staff will arrange conversations or site visits with charitable organizations, identify grant opportunities that match their charitable interests or provide other guidance.

Agency Funds

Grants from funds established by nonprofit organizations to benefit their operations and/or programs are distributed upon request or according to a predetermined schedule after our staff confirms that the grant falls within the giving policies for the fund.

Making an Impact

Sue Dove's (pictured) last birthday was a special one. She arrived home to a cake and card with heartfelt notes from her family — her Ohana House family. The gesture meant a lot, says Dove. "In a way, I'm happier now than I've been in five years, and it's good to be happy," she says.

Dove's story is as unique as each of the residents of Ohana House — but what they each share is the need for support during their recovery from drug or alcohol addiction.

Ohana House fills a gap in the Fox Cities where previously recovering addicts were faced with travel to facilities as far away as Arizona, and at a great expense.

As the first sober living house of its kind in the Fox Cities, Ohana House provides a safe and supportive home for women to experience recovery as long as they need it.

The residence was funded in part by a grant from the Basic Needs Giving Partnership, comprising the U.S. Venture Fund for Basic Needs, the J. J. Keller Foundation and the Community Foundation.

The grant is an example of how several funders can work together to co-invest in a project that will have a lasting impact and create change.

Designated Funds

Grants are distributed annually from Designated Funds created by donors to support one or more specific organizations in perpetuity. These grants are not open for applications, and are typically distributed upon request or according to a predetermined schedule.

Scholarship Funds

Scholarships are awarded annually from more than 190 individual Scholarship Funds to assist students pursuing all levels of education. Foundation staff are skilled in administering a variety of scholarship programs at different service levels, depending on the donor's desired level of involvement. We work with numerous public and private schools, businesses, community groups and individuals to administer each of their unique scholarship programs.

Most students need only complete one online application and are automatically matched with every scholarship for which they are eligible. A full listing of scholarships and a link to the online application is available at FoxRiverScholarshipCenter.org.

Field of Interest Funds

Grants from Field of Interest Funds are often awarded following a competitive process; however, the Foundation Board of Directors or an appointed grants committee may decide to make proactive grants in the field of interest, or to solicit proposals from specific agencies whose work in the field is interesting to them.

Field of Interest Funds with application processes are highly competitive. During FY 2016, the Foundation received 219 grant applications to these types of funds. Grants were awarded to 158 of these projects and programs. On average 41 cents was awarded for every dollar requested.

Field of Interest Funds are great for many types of donors, including those who want their fund to be flexible enough to meet changing needs in a specific area and do not feel the need to be actively involved in grantmaking. Additionally, individuals and families choose field of interest funds to leave a legacy supporting charitable causes they care about and to memorialize those who had a passion for a particular cause.

Unrestricted Funds

Some donors — who want to ensure their gifts address the area's needs as they change through time — make unrestricted gifts and leave grant decisions to community volunteers serving on our Community Impact Grants Committee and Board of Directors. These grants are awarded to charitable organizations serving people in Winnebago, Green Lake and Waushara counties, and Ripon.

These funds are professionally managed for long-term growth, with a portion of the investment earnings distributed each year as grants. Unlike Donor Advised Funds, the donor does not play an ongoing advisory role with these kinds of grants.

