TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES: ONE GRANT AT A TIME

I am often asked, “What does the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation do?” The short answer is that we work with people who want to donate resources to make our community an even better place to call home - today and for future generations. We understand our communities’ needs. We guide charitable dollars to be most effective. We strengthen our community.

This year, your Community Foundation is celebrating its 95th anniversary. Our first 30 years were spent building endowments. A foundation to build on. The following 30 years were spent awarding scholarships and helping the disadvantaged. During these last 30 years, we’ve continued doing these things in addition to addressing emerging community needs and advancing the communities we serve.

This past year has been extra special. Over $11.6 million has been distributed through grants and other program-related investments. A new record. We are proud of our history and look forward to continuing our growth.

This report gives readers a taste of what we have been doing. It gives an overview of a few things we are involved in. There is so much more. We are here to help you transform your community one grant at a time. Please contact us if you want to be part of strengthening our communities.

With gratitude,

Bill Wyman
President & CEO

ABOUT THE OSHKOSH AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Oshkosh Area Community Foundation is a nonprofit organization created by and for the people of Winnebago County, Waushara County, Green Lake County, and Ripon. We offer a range of flexible giving tools to help our donors make a positive impact on the community and causes that align with their interests and passions.

Through our grantmaking, we invest in the long term and bring people and organizations together to address local issues and opportunities. Our mission is simple: to strengthen our communities. Our business is in building community and helping the places we call home continue to flourish and grow.

ON THE COVER | The Oshkosh Public Museum hosted its first annual Day of the Dead Celebration. This popular Mexican holiday celebrates life and death. Traditions include people coming together dressed up with calavera painted faces (skeletons) to have parades in the streets.

MISSION
To Strengthen Our Communities
We want our communities to be the model of what happy and thriving communities look like.

OVER $145 MILLION
$145,306,325 Unaudited assets as of December 31, 2022

FEATURED GRANTS
FOOD: Rescuing Food to Tackle Hunger ................................................................. page 3
EDUCATION: Maci’s Scholarship Journey ............................................................... page 4
HEALTH: Aging in Place ......................................................................................... page 6
RECREATION: Building Lauree’s Trail ................................................................. page 7
MENTAL HEALTH: Supporting Student and Staff Well-Being .......................... page 8
HISTORY: If the Walls Could Talk ................................................................. page 10
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: Giving Parents the Answers They Need ................... page 11

CLOSE TO $9 MILLION
$8,972,950 Granted

QUICK FACTS
See our audited financial statements for the period ending June 30, 2022, at oshkoshareacf.org/financials
See our investment results at oshkoshareacf.org/investments

TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES:
943
Total charitable funds
35
New charitable funds
NEARLY $10 MILLION
$9,881,868 Contributions to OACF funds

MISSION
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Earlier this year, many of our neighbors in need got a notice signaling the end of temporary increases in federal food stamps benefits that started during the pandemic: Your food budget is about to be cut, potentially by hundreds of dollars a month. Here are some tips on how you can manage. You can’t appeal.

The cuts come at a time when groceries are costing up to 10 percent more than they did last year. “Money is tight,” said Samantha, a mother of five and regular guest at the Oshkosh Area Community Pantry. “Food, gas, rent…well just about everything is more expensive right now. The pantry is helping us make ends meet.”

Samantha is not alone. “Our usage peaked in November 2022 at 2,035 families served,” shared Ryan Rasmussen, executive director of the Oshkosh Area Community Pantry. “And while numbers have come down a bit since then, our number of first-time visitors is higher than ever. In 2022, we were seeing 50-80 new families a month. In 2023, we’ve already registered 209 new families just in January and February.”

To help rescue more food and get it into the homes of families facing hunger, nine area pantries including the Oshkosh Area Community Pantry are partnering with local retailers through Feeding America of Eastern Wisconsin’s Direct Connect Program. Direct Connect allows pantries to get food directly from partnering stores like Walmart, Pick ‘n Save, Aldi, Kwik Trip, and Target.

“Historically, the movement of food was retail to food bank to pantry and now we are focusing on retail to pantry. This has increased the amount of perishable items available through the food pantry system,” said Patti Habeck, CEO and president of Feeding America of Eastern Wisconsin, which operates food banks in Appleton and Milwaukee.

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A $54,000 grant from your Community Foundation helped Feeding America hire a retail sourcing assistant to support and grow the number of Direct Connect partnerships between retailers and member pantries. “Direct Connect allows us to go to nearby retailers to collect whatever they have available. Right now, that’s a variety of produce, bakery, meat, and shelf-stable foods,” said Rasmussen.
Maci Wallace was a senior at Oshkosh North High School when she learned about scholarship opportunities through the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation. Hundreds of scholarships. Thousands of dollars up for grabs. With a goal to not only attend a four-year college but also to earn a master’s degree in counseling, there was no doubt she was going to apply for all that she could.

As a high school senior, it’s not always easy to fully understand the financial burdens of college and the costs associated with furthering your education. “We can hear the numbers and total costs but can’t really put it into perspective with so little life experience,” shared Maci.

“I remember when I was applying for scholarships in high school and many students didn’t want to apply for any that were $500 or less. They only wanted ones that were in the thousands. But even those ‘smaller’ scholarships add up and any dollar amount helps in the long run. My family did not have the finances to pay for my college out of pocket, and I knew that doing my best to earn scholarships would be one way to help ease that financial burden.”

Maci attended UW Oshkosh and earned her bachelor’s degree in psychology in 2012. She then received support from the Laurie Holtmeier Raupp Scholarship Fund for UW Oshkosh students entering the master’s in counseling program. Maci completed her master’s in professional counseling, with an emphasis in school counseling, in 2015.

The Laurie Holtmeier Raupp Scholarship Fund is one of many at your Community Foundation that was started to memorialize a loved one. This fund was created in 2010 by Laurie’s mother, Carole, in honor of her late daughter. At the age of 53, Laurie passed from ovarian cancer. She was a Registered Nurse with her master’s in counseling and helped many professionals as an Employees Assistance Program counselor at Affinity in Oshkosh, now Ascension.

Today, Maci is a counselor at Oshkosh West High School. “My life has really come full circle. Now I’m the one using my experience to share information with students. The Community Foundation makes it easy for students to apply for scholarships, helping alleviate the confusion and frustration that can come along with applying.”
In 2008, Lauree Renaud dreamed of developing a network of safe walking and biking trails in Green Lake County that would connect area communities and the people in them. She founded a nonprofit organization called Green Lake Greenways to help make this happen.

Lauree passed away unexpectedly in 2018. She had invested countless hours completing loads of paperwork for a trail to connect the cities of Green Lake, Ripon, Rush Lake, and Berlin with the help of the Mascoutin Trail. Years of organization, preparation, fundraising, and grant writing lay in limbo. The trail, so close to being built, was stalled.

“We wanted to honor Lauree by making her dream a reality and finishing the project,” shared Howard Hansen, president of Green Lake Greenways. “It took a while, but good things come to those who wait.”

The board of Green Lake Greenways regrouped and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources extended the end date for their Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant, which funds recreational development and conservation land purchases statewide.

“The Oshkosh Area Community Foundation helped us establish the Green Lake Greenways Ripon to Green Lake Trail Special Project Fund that was both visible and easy to contribute to. The Foundation helped connect potential donors with our project and gave them the assurance that their gifts were secure and would be used appropriately,” said Barry Rodgers, treasurer of Green Lake Greenways.

Construction of “Lauree’s Trail” began in April 2020; named after the woman with the vision and determination to make it a reality. Phases 1 and 2 of the project were completed in July 2022. After the final phase is completed, the 18-mile off-road recreational trail will run along the north side of Highway 23 from the Green Lake Conference Center to Ripon. The total cost of the trail is estimated at $1.8 million.

“My son and I ride on Lauree’s Trail about once a week. To not have to bike along the highway, like I did as a kid, has been great. This trail makes it so much safer for pedestrians and bicyclists. It’s such a wonderful asset to our communities,” shared Hansen.

Sister Mary and Sister Mary Jo have been living on Patriot Lane in Oshkosh for 20 years. After more than six decades spent helping others, they realized that they could use a little help themselves. They needed to make a few updates to their home like the installation of a grab bar in the bathroom to help prevent falls.

Thanks to coordinated efforts between Rebuilding Together Fox Valley, the Oshkosh Fire Department, the Aging Disability Resource Center (ADRC), and other community partners, the Sisters received the home modifications they needed at no charge. “Everyone prefers to stay at home rather than go to assisted living,” said Sister Mary. “This truly is a step in that direction.”

On average, the Oshkosh Fire Department responds to someone who has suffered a fall more than five times a day. Many of these falls are preventable. “When responding to a fall-related call, we help to connect the individual who fell with home safety modifications and personal health and well-being services to prevent future falls,” said Oshkosh Fire Department Chief Mike Stanley.

Grants totaling almost $160,000 from the Ladies Benevolent Society: Advocates for Older Adults Fund and U.S. Venture Fund for Basic Needs within your Community Foundation supported the development of this collaborative approach to addressing the growing number of fall-related injuries.

Rebuilding Together Fox Valley installs grab bars, toilet seat risers, bathtub transfer benches, night lights, and bathtub anti-slip strips at no cost to qualifying homeowners.

The Winnebago County ADRC ensures that individuals have access to nutritious food, exercise classes, and transportation to appointments. In addition, they see that individuals are using the benefits that might be available to them through their health insurance provider.

And for those that want to be proactive, the Winnebago County Health Department provides free home fall risk assessments.
Students in grades 7 and 9-12 can participate in the Wellness Screen offered by Samaritan. Simply put by one student, “It is a survey that is here to make sure we are okay.” Students voluntarily answer questions about their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Answers are confidential and only seen by Wellness Screen staff. If concerns are identified, results are discussed with the student and their parent/legal guardian and, if appropriate, support for follow-up resources and services is offered.

“Just as free lunch programs are based on the idea that a hungry child can’t learn, we recognize that a distracted or troubled mind cannot focus on schoolwork,” said Dr. Jay Jones, School District of Omro superintendent.

The district is also partnering with Collaborative Wellness to hold small group sessions for teachers, called Luminary Circles. The sessions provide teachers an avenue for self-care to avoid burnout, confidence to support others, as well as insights on how to recognize trauma in students and improve overall classroom effectiveness, safety, and engagement.

“As therapists, we don’t just want to bring in interventions that only we as experts can deliver,” said Collaborative Wellness Therapist Lindsay Loewe. “We need to provide those on the front lines with tools to not only manage classroom behavior and equip kids with the basic coping skills they need to thrive, but also foster mental health and wellness in school staff.”

“The Luminary Circles have given me new ways to look at circumstances that I am faced with daily as a teacher. I play many of our conversations over and over in my head until I see a situation from a better point of view. The tools and advice shared during the meetings have supported my mental health in a positive way and given me confidence to support others too,” shared one educator.
It started in 2018 as a pilot project in Winnebago County. A dream to improve kindergarten readiness by screening more infants and toddlers to determine if they are reaching important developmental milestones and identify any concerns early on. Your Community Foundation has invested more than $275,000 over five years in this dream, which continues to evolve with the 2022 launch of Help Me Grow-Fox Valley, a new support system for families.

Every family wants to give their children a strong start in life – physically, mentally, socially, and educationally. Yet, the obstacles families face in raising children can be considerable. "As we started to screen more children, we quickly learned that the community’s support system was not well-organized. There needed to be a better way for families to access resources for their children and service providers to connect families to needed supports," recalled First 5 Fox Valley Executive Director Barb Tengesdal.

Help Me Grow-Fox Valley is a centralized access point for families and providers to connect. Families are connected to family resource navigators via phone, text, chat, or email who will link them with appropriate resources. Navigators are also present at community-based offerings like Play and Learn Groups and Parent Cafés.

"The very first time I walked into the Markesan Library for the Play and Learn Group, Madyson [a family resource navigator] was the first to greet me and my two kids. She showed compassion and was so knowledgeable about resources available for my children, including for my youngest who has Down syndrome," shared Sara Windle. "Madyson even helped with my personal struggle to find employment after a few years of being a stay-at-home mom and working on completing my degree."

To stop further damage and to meet future warranty standards of the conservation, the Morgan House will also become climate controlled. A heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system will help preserve the house’s historic documents and textiles for years to come.

The project, supported by $50,000 in grants from the Community Impact Fund within your Community Foundation and an anonymous donor, is expected to be completed in time for the Morgan House’s re-opening in early June 2023. Complimentary tours are available every Saturday from 10 am to 1 pm and last about 20-30 minutes. No reservations are required.
OUR PEOPLE
Make the Difference
Our staff are the driving force behind everything we do. We work together to make decisions and get things done.

LOCAL EXPERTISE
• We know nonprofits and community needs.
• Our board members and staff are engaged in the community.

PERSONAL SERVICE
• We help people invest in the causes they care about most.
• We create personal legacies.
• We facilitate even the most complex forms of giving.
• We manage investments prudently.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP
• We promote giving.
• We build funds that benefit the community forever.
• We strengthen nonprofits.

WHY GIVE THROUGH YOUR COMMUNITY FOUNDATION?

THE TAKING ROOT II CAMPAIGN is replacing lost trees due to the emerald ash borer in Oshkosh. To date, $300,000 has been raised towards a goal of $500,000. Visit oshkoshareaact.org/taking-root for more information.

MUSIC FOR ALL is helping participants at Lakeside Packaging find their groove by using instruments, dance, and more to express themselves thanks to a grant from the Boeing Family Fund.

MUSIC FOR ALL

Dawn Watson
Office and Technology Manager

Amy Putzer
Director of Programs

Jennifer Sheahan
Director of Finance and Administration

Kate Bahr Fuller
Development and Donor Services Manager

Cheryl Fowler
Director of Education

Karlene Grabner
Director of Donor Services

Bill Wyman
President and Chief Executive Officer

Kate Bahr Fuller
Development and Donor Services Manager

Cheryl Fowler
Director of Education

Dawn Clark
Executive Assistant

Siri Pollnow
Marketing and Communications Manager

Dawn Watson
Office and Technology Manager

For Good.
For Ever.

For Good.
For Ever.

We are in compliance with national standards for U.S. Community Foundations.
AFFILIATES

Our affiliates developed out of a desire to help rural communities and interest groups inspire philanthropy to address their own unique needs. Together, we are working to achieve lasting impact in the places we call home and for the causes that matter most to us. Each of our affiliates operate as a family of funds within the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation, giving them the benefit of our cost-effective, centralized professional services. Our team provides financial and investment management, administration, and technical expertise so local leadership can focus on asset building and community needs.

Founded: 1998
Funds: 58
Assets: $3,438,407
2022 donations: $192,259
2022 grants: $157,475

women.OshkoshAreaCF.org

Founded: 2000
Funds: 45
Assets: $3,792,988
2022 donations: $690,107
2022 grants: $381,058

OshkoshAreaCF.org/GreenLakeCountyRiponCF

Founded: 2013
Funds: 75
Assets: $2,711,415
2022 donations: $170,162
2022 grants: $54,544

WinneconneAreaCF.org

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