

milestones

2022 ANNUAL REPORT





Letter from the President

CELEBRATING EACH MILESTONE

When you are walking a path, you may encounter a pile of rocks stacked on top of each other that is known as a “cairn.”

The Gaelic word describes a marker, often along a trail and sometimes as a monument or memorial. We chose that image as we considered “milestones” and our work together at the Community Foundation of Elkhart County.

We often encounter people at a milestone in their lives, including but not limited to receiving a scholarship as they graduate from high school, starting a fund with us after a successful business transaction or choosing us to help their legacy live on after their death.

The stories in this Annual Report tell of major milestones. The Tolson Center for Community Excellence is under construction following the groundbreaking in May. Imo’s Den, part of Lifeline Ministries, is a testament to Keith Rupel’s love for his wife, Imogene, and his wish to honor her by helping others. C.A.R.E. University helps Elkhart County students with incidentals as they go to college and a fund at the Community Foundation helps support that effort.



Those are holy moments and we are so humbled to be part of those markers as we seek to inspire good in Elkhart County.

As we pause and look back at the path of the fiscal year 2022, the trail is lined with cairns indicating a historic year. Your Community Foundation received \$41 million in contributions from generous donors, the second highest total ever behind the year we received the gift from David Gundlach. More than 2,000 individual donors shared their philanthropy with us, the first time we have reached that total.

The tenth anniversary of the passing of Guy David Gundlach was last October and over the last year we have spent more time reflecting on his generosity, legacy, and how it is changing Elkhart County. As we reflect on what we have learned in the last decade, we remember how 1,000 people told us during a listening tour what they hope we become. We are now undertaking a relistening tour to learn anew.

We are grateful to the nonprofits in Elkhart County – with all their staff members, board members and volunteers – for their work to make our community stronger. We could not fulfill our mission without them. We are also grateful for our own committee members, board members and generous donors who join us in helping best determine how to be trusted stewards of this community asset that is your Community Foundation.

We look forward to joyfully marking many more milestones ahead with all of you.

Warmly,



PETE MCCOWN
President

By the Numbers

FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022

Total Assets
\$393m

Total Gifts
\$41m

Grants
\$33m

2021-2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Findlay
Chairman

Cien Asoera
Vice Chairman

David Weaver
Treasurer

Deborah Beaverson
Secretary

Dick Armington
Becky Bontreger
Todd Cleveland
Rob Cripe
Raquel Espinosa
Jan Farron
Stephen Fidler
Theresa Gunden
Ken Julian

John Liechty
Sharon Liegl
Galen Miller
Thomas Pletcher
Kerri Ritchie
BJ Thompson
Isaac Torres
Ola Yoder

FOUNDING MEMBERS *Names in italics are deceased.*

Charles Ainlay
Jon Armstrong
Lehman Beardsley
Wilbert H. Budd
Arthur J. Decio

Dr. John Foreman
Samuel Hoover
William P. Johnson
Lee Martin
James McNamee

William Myers
Richard Pletcher
Laura Rydson
Oscar Schricker
Thomas Warrick

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOUNDING DONORS

Founding Donors are those individuals or organizations that contributed \$50,000 or more from the inception of the foundation in 1989 through June 30, 1995. The names of the donors will always be prominently displayed in the foundation's Annual Report as the original endowment builders and supporters of the Community Foundation of Elkhart County.

Bashor Home Endowment Fund
Boys & Girls Club of Greater
Goshen Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Wilbert H. Budd
Charitable Fund of the First
Congregational Church
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Corson
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Deahl
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Decio
The Decio Family:
Terrence Decio
Jamee Decio
Lindy Decio Reilly
Jay Decio Christman
Leigh Decio Laird
Sherrill and Helen Deputy Family
Elkhart County Council on Aging
Elkhart County 4-H Endowment

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Fidler
Dr. and Mrs. John Foreman
Mr. and Mrs. Clinton Hartman
Mr. F. L. Hascall
Goshen College
Goshen Rotary Club
Scholarship Fund
Greencroft Foundation
Gunden Family Fund
Paul and Joyce Hultin Family Fund
KeyBank
Lacasa, Inc.
(formerly LaCasa of Goshen)
Lilly Endowment, Inc.
Mervin D. Lung Family
Martin Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Martin
Mr. William F. Martin

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Naquin
Northridge High School Dollars
for Scholars
Oaklawn Foundation
Mrs. Lee A. Rieth
Ms. Martha Rieth
Mr. and Mrs. Marly Rydson
Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Sailor
Salvation Army Elkhart Corps Endowment
Mr. and Mrs. Dan Sherman
Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Schricker
Ina L. Strasser Endowment
Trinity United Methodist Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Basil S. Turner
United Way of Elkhart County
Mr. and Mrs. Richard VanDerKarr
Maynard W. Wells Family
YMCA/YWCA Joint Community Project

Table of CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

From the President	1
Board and Founders.....	3
Mission and Values.....	5
Founding Donors.....	6

FINANCIALS

At a Glance.....	8
Assets by Year.....	9
Assets by Fund Type.....	10
Grants by Year.....	11
Grants by Fund Type.....	12
Statements of Financial Position.....	13
Statements of Activities.....	14

FEATURES

10-Year Retrospective.....	15
Milestones.....	18
In Honor of Imogene.....	19
Faithful Dads.....	27
Tolson Center.....	31
enFocus.....	35
Connect in Elkhart County.....	49

IMPACT

BizTown.....	39
C.A.R.E. University.....	41
INSPIRE Scholarship.....	43
Grove Scholarship.....	45
Acts of Service.....	47
Early Childhood Initiative.....	51

GRANTING

Career Pathways Grants.....	55
Kids and Families Grants.....	58
Opportunity Fund Grants.....	61
Placemaking Grants.....	62
Matching Grants.....	65

KEY PEOPLE

Legacy Society.....	23
Staff.....	53



MISSION AND VALUES

Mission

To improve the quality of life in Elkhart County by inspiring generosity.

Values

The Community Foundation is committed to the following as essential to our effectiveness. We aspire to reflect the following values as we serve the community:

- **Integrity:** An abiding pledge to honesty, professionalism, humility, and respect.
- **Inclusion:** We seek and elevate diverse voices. We are most impactful when our organization and deliberations include people from varied backgrounds, opinions, and perspectives.
- **Excellence:** In our every endeavor.
- **Collaboration:** We believe in teamwork, both internally and externally. We desire to be trusted partners with community members, civic leaders, and not-for-profit organizations to provide high-impact programs and services benefiting the broadest possible constituency.

Fund for Excellence

FOUNDING DONORS

Founding Donors are those individuals or organizations that contributed to the Fund for Excellence through the Lilly Gift VI Initiative from 2014 through 2016. The names of the donors will be prominently displayed in the Community Foundation's Annual Report as the original endowment builders and supporters.

Names in italics are deceased.

Gary and Connie Adamson	Joseph and Holly Hosinski	Myrl and Phyllis Nofziger
Dick and Deb Armington	Dean and Ruth Hupp	Mike and Judy Pianowski
Paris and Becky Ball-Miller	Irions Foundation	Donald Pletcher
Megan and Troy Baughman	Jayco	Marly and <i>Laura</i> Rydson
Deborah and David Beaverson	Rick and Sandy Jenkins	Mike and Vicki Schoeffler
Roy Beck	William P. and Toni Johnson	Oscar and <i>Marilyn</i> Schricker
Bill Deputy Foundation	Thomas and Donna Kauffman	Bob and Marie Schrock
Brian and Margot Borger	Donna Kercher Schrock	Brian and Lauri Smith
George and Marty Buckingham	Levi and Joanna King	<i>Carl</i> and Emilie Tiedemann
Corson Family Foundation	Delmar and Sherri King	Thomas and <i>Patricia</i> Warrick
Rob and Vicki Cripe	Richard and Susan Klepinger	David Weed
Cripe Family Foundation	Chuck and Betty Lamb	Jeff and Phid Wells
<i>Arthur J. Decio</i>	John and Jane Leavitt	<i>Madelon Wells</i>
<i>Lois Dusthimer</i>	<i>Allan</i> and Karon Ludwig	Welter Foundation
Estate of <i>Guy David Gundlach</i>	Pete and Wendy McCown	John and Carolyn Wolf
John and Lois Fidler	Bob and Sue Miller	
David and Susan Findlay	Gordon and Marie Moore	
John and Gwen Gildea	MutualBank Charitable Foundation, Inc	
Gordon McCormick Corporation	Dzung and Francoise Nguyen	



what we stand for

**WE ARE PART OF THE UNFOLDING STORY
OF GENEROSITY IN ELKHART COUNTY**

We believe the Community Foundation resembles the unique traits of the distinctive ginkgo tree. The ginkgo has a strong root system and resembles strength and hope to those who recognize it – inspiring good. Its leaves have been used for remedies, just as the Community Foundation strives to support nonprofits and various endeavors that improve the health of our community, our businesses, and our people – impacting success.

2021-2022

FINANCIAL DOCUMENTATION

Though the year presented a range of financial challenges, we are pleased to report that the Community Foundation of Elkhart County had a good year. The Community Foundation received a total of \$41 million in gifts in the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 and because of past giving and investment, we were able to give \$33 million in grants. We are committed to stewarding the community's assets even during challenging times. Thank you for your generous gifts of time and resources to help us tend the community's assets.

Your Community Foundation
AT A GLANCE

606

TOTAL FUNDS

\$33m

TOTAL GRANTS

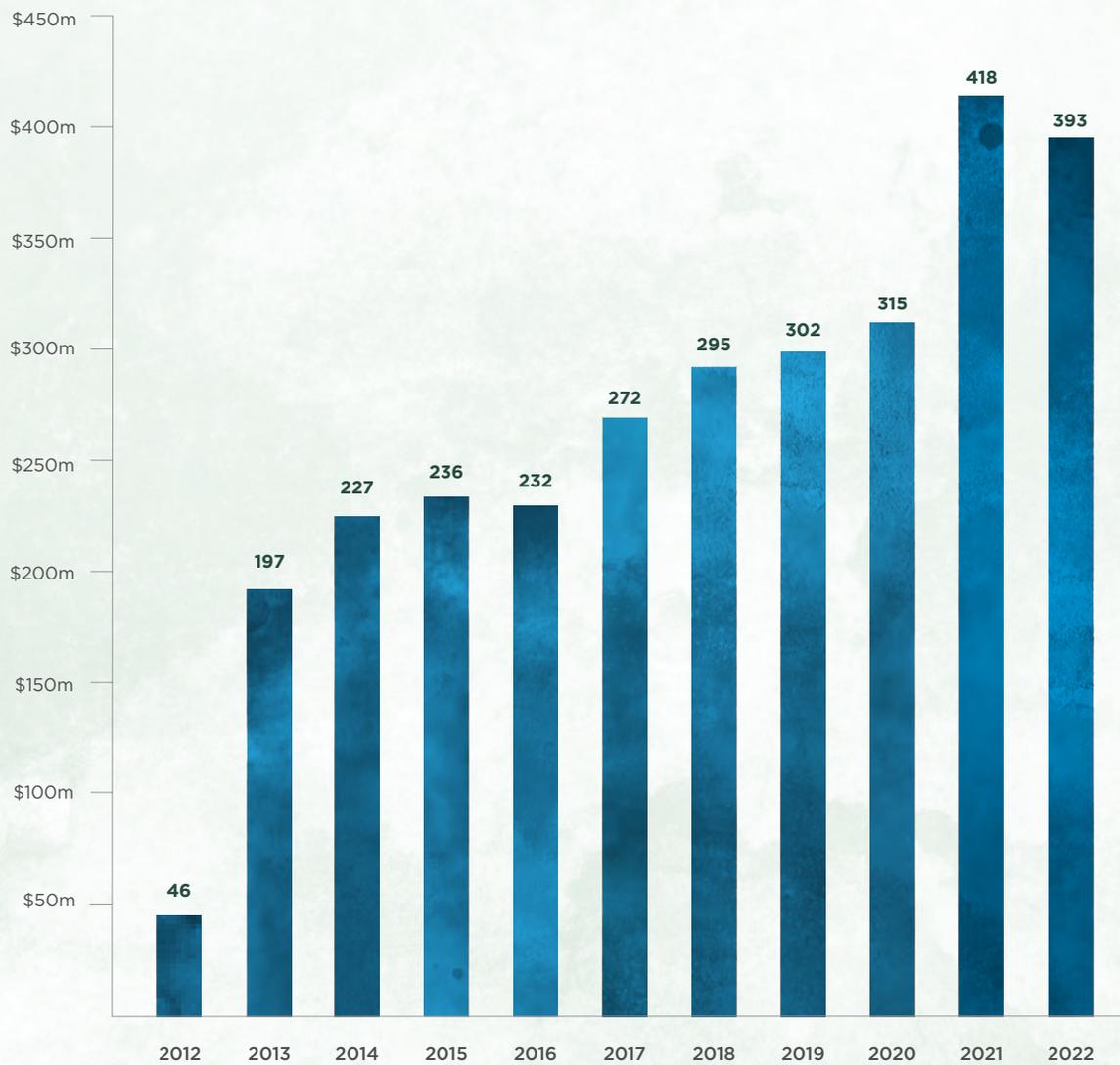
\$393m

TOTAL ASSETS

Historical

ASSETS BY YEAR

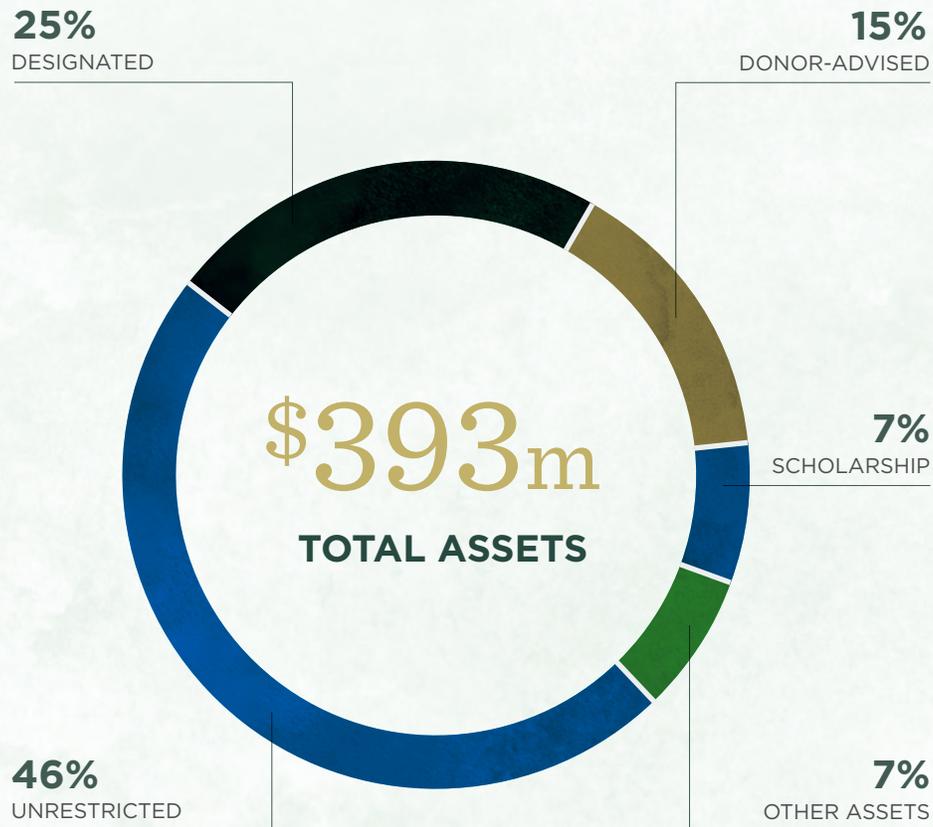
In 2013, the community received a wildly generous gift from Elkhart native Guy David Gundlach. The Gundlach gift was the start of a new era for the Community Foundation as other donors have become partners or deepened their relationships to make our community stronger.



2021-2022

ASSETS BY FUND TYPE

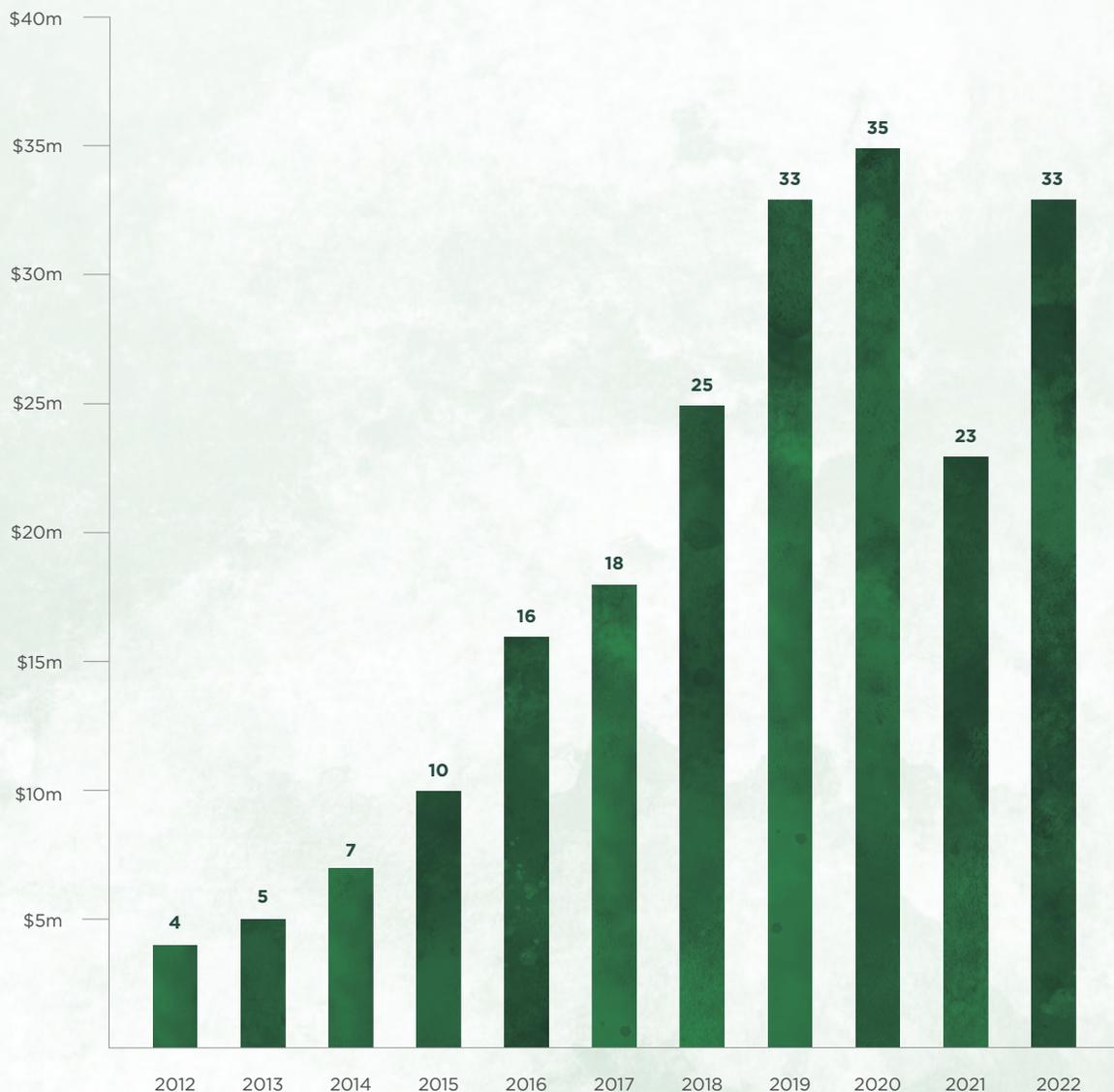
Since 1989 we have been working with passionate individuals, families, organizations, and businesses who are building a stronger community by supporting causes that strengthen and improve Elkhart County. Once we understand a donor's goals and establish their intent, we work with them to decide which funding option best brings their vision to life.



Historical

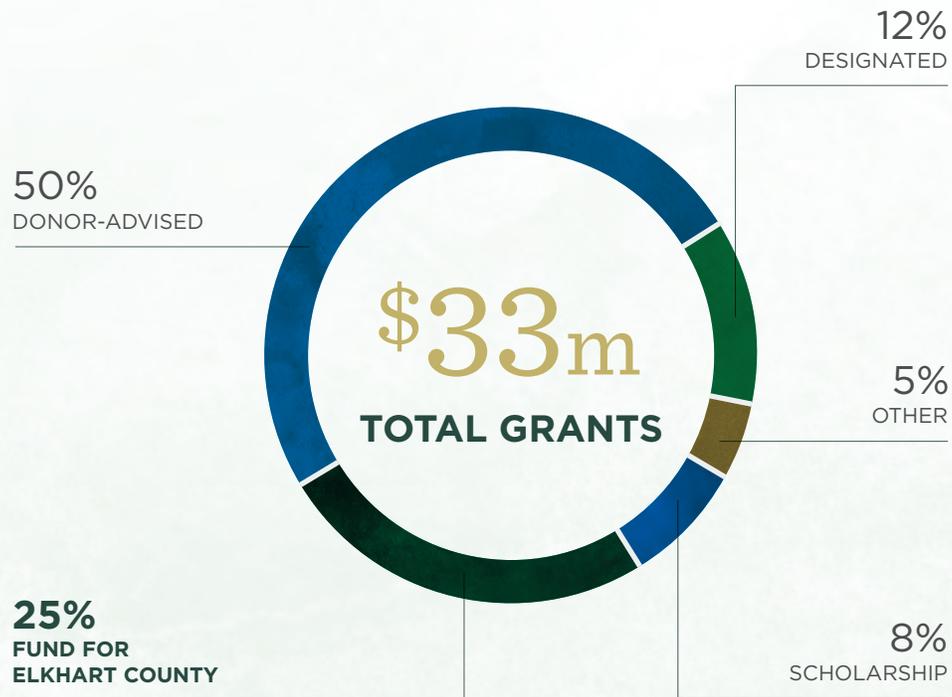
GRANTS BY YEAR

Most of the grants that the Community Foundation is trusted to manage are for specific areas designated by donors. Some of the grants are unrestricted, empowering the Community Foundation to respond to needs and make strategic grants to better our quality of life. A description of how these unrestricted grants were used to improve our community is found on pages 55–65 of this report.



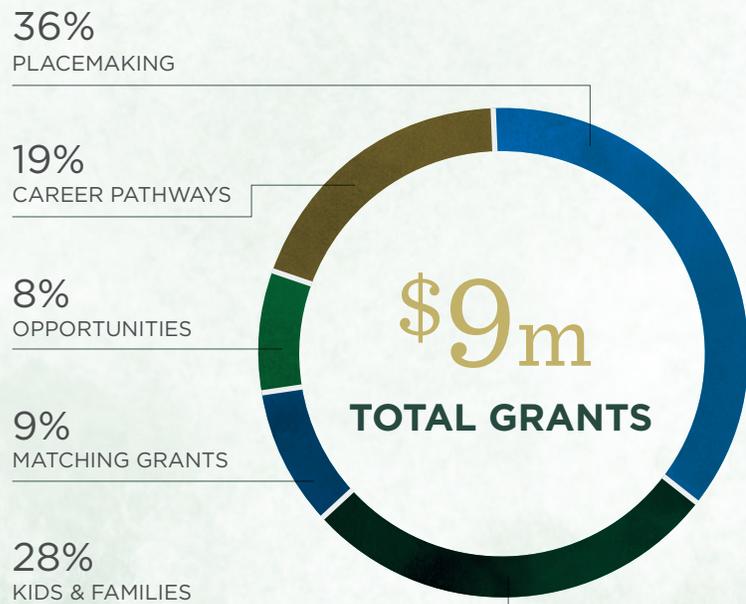
2021-2022

GRANTS BY FUND TYPE



FUND FOR ELKHART COUNTY

The Fund for Elkhart County, our unrestricted fund, supports our community's greatest opportunities and emerging needs with responsive contributions. This year, \$8.6 million in grants were awarded in areas of emphasis for the Community Foundation.



Statements of FINANCIAL POSITION

Unaudited Financial Statements for Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2022 and 2021.

	JUNE 30, 2022	JUNE 30, 2021
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$1,240,000	\$3,164,000
Investments	\$388,275,000	\$414,040,000
Property and equipment	\$964,000	\$151,000
Right of use asset	\$1,612,000	-
Beneficial interest in trusts	\$345,000	\$407,000
Other assets	\$423,000	\$388,000
TOTAL ASSETS	\$392,859,000	\$418,150,000
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Accounts payable	\$167,000	\$111,000
Grants payable	\$5,275,000	\$5,020,000
Gift annuities payable	\$435,000	\$435,000
Operating lease liability	\$1,612,000	-
Custodial funds	\$45,377,000	\$39,763,000
Other liabilities	\$262,000	\$589,000
Net assets - without donor restrictions	\$4,725,000	\$4,575,000
Net assets - with donor restrictions	\$335,006,000	\$367,657,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$392,859,000	\$418,150,000

Statements of ACTIVITIES

Unaudited Financial Statements for Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2022 and 2021.

	JUNE 30, 2022	JUNE 30, 2021
SUPPORT, REVENUES, GAINS AND LOSSES		
Contributions and grants*	\$27,893,000	\$17,347,000
Investment return, net	(\$31,905,000)	\$90,626,000
Fund administrative fees	\$2,878,000	\$2,477,000
Other	(\$106,000)	(\$31,000)
TOTAL SUPPORT, REVENUES, GAINS, AND LOSSES	(\$1,240,000)	\$110,419,000
EXPENSES		
Program services**	\$29,074,000	\$17,181,000
General & administrative	\$1,503,000	\$1,255,000
Fundraising	\$684,000	\$483,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$31,261,000	\$18,919,000
Change in net assets	(\$32,501,000)	\$91,500,000
Net assets, beginning of year	\$372,232,000	\$280,732,000
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$339,731,000	\$372,232,000

* Accounting standards require certain incoming monies to be presented as a change in the Custodial Funds liability. For the Annual Report, these monies are reported as gifts. As such, gift activity reflected throughout the report varies from Contributions and Grants reflected in the Statements of Activities.

** The Annual Report is designed to showcase the grant recommendations received from fundholders and the commitments made by the Board of Directors. Accounting standards, which stipulate what qualifies as a grant for financial reporting purposes, do not fully capture the recommendations received and commitments made. As such, grant activity reflected throughout the report varies from the grant expense amount reported as a component of Program Services on the Statements of Activities.

A remarkable decade

LOOKING BACK AT THE LAST 10 YEARS

In the months before Pete McCown officially started as president of the Community Foundation



Guy David Gundlach

of Elkhart County, he was invited to a meeting at attorney Mike Pianowski's office with a man named Guy David Gundlach. Little did any of them realize that the lunch they shared that summer afternoon in 2011 would change the trajectory of the Community

Foundation of Elkhart County and the county itself. In this interview, edited for clarity, Pete reflects on the last decade.

What do you remember from that meeting?

David was 56 when I met him. Part of the conversation was very specific in that he had a couple of properties here in Elkhart that he wanted to title over to us, but mostly it was just a conversation where we were getting to know each other. At the end of the meeting, he did write a check for \$100,000 to create a donor-advised fund at the foundation. And he made that gift essentially so that we could practice, together, his giving, his philanthropy, in Elkhart County. David gave me some instruction that he wanted to give those monies to youth-serving organizations. That summer, I invited and collected grant proposals from several youth-serving organizations. David and I then talked about them, and he instructed me to distribute the \$100,000 in a variety of different ways.

When did you come to learn more about his estate?

I knew he had decided to include the foundation in his estate plan, he had disclosed that, but I did not know the details. We only had a chance to interact with each other for three months before he passed away on October 16, 2011. Soon after David's death, we learned he had named the foundation as the majority beneficiary of his estate and later learned the estate included a Swiss bank account with a balance of \$113 million. As we began to marshal the assets of the estate we came to realize there was \$30 to \$40 million worth of real estate as well. I would be remiss if I did not recognize the important role Liz and Tom Borger played in settling David's estate and securing his gift for our community.

How did you determine how he wanted his estate to help others?

When we met in person the one time, I asked David what causes were the most important to him. He certainly had a heart for kids, specifically underprivileged kids. I think if he had lived longer we would have developed a greater definition of his philanthropy. But at the time, he somewhat comically said, "Pete, as Mike has explained this to me, the Community Foundation exists to do good in Elkhart County." In response I said, "Well, and I'm not on the payroll yet, but that's what I understand, too." And David says, "Well, you know, kiddo, it seems to me that you and your board are better qualified to make decisions about what happens with my gift than I am because I don't live in Elkhart County, and you're close to this and you should be able to interpret the greatest needs in the community."

“David’s gift is certainly a significant part of our story in our history. But there are more than 10,000 people who have also contributed to the Community Foundation in one measure or the other over our 33-year history.”

— *Pete McCown*, President of the Community Foundation

What did the Community Foundation look like then compared to now?

We were founded in 1989. Before David’s gift, we had \$10 million in the Fund for Elkhart County. So other donors had made that decision to support the foundation, along with matching grants. In 2012, we had five employees. We had \$43 million in assets and approximately 200 endowments. We administered probably 20 or 30 scholarship funds at the time and had another 20 donor-advised funds and 100 or so agency endowment funds. Today we’re sitting in this new office space that represents probably a 10-fold office environment from what we occupied in 2011. We have nearly \$400 million dollars on our balance sheet. We have 126 scholarship funds, 292 designated funds and 200 or so donor-advised funds. The Fund for Elkhart County has grown from \$10 million to \$200 million. In 2011, we gave away \$500,000 a year from that discretionary fund involving one grant committee. Today we work with three grant committees, made up of community volunteers, to award more than \$10 million each year in grants and scholarships.

What have we learned over the last decade?

One of the things I’m cognizant of is that there’s no “best” way to steward our investment in community projects and organizations. There are multiple ways in which the foundation can fulfill our grantmaking and leadership responsibilities. I am pretty certain we will always be iterating, in some regard. We are the stewards of an important community asset. David’s

gift is certainly a significant part of our story in our history. But there are more than 10,000 people who have also contributed to the Community Foundation in one measure or another over our 33-year history. On a discretionary side of our grantmaking, we’ve been entrusted to be good stewards, but we get to draw the boundaries for how that looks. Sometimes I think the boundaries need to get wider and sometimes they need to get narrower, depending on the circumstance. There is no playbook here. We’ve also learned that David’s generosity didn’t suppress giving from others. In fact, it did the opposite. We have received over \$200 million in gifts in the last 10 years that do not get attached to David Gundlach.



RIGHT: Pete McCown

LOOKING BACK AT THE LAST 10 YEARS

What's happening at the Community Foundation now?

We are in the process of conducting a “Listening Tour” and want to facilitate conversations about the future of Elkhart County with approximately 100 focus groups this year. I think it’s valuable for us to create this feedback loop; we need the community to continue to inform the way we conduct ourselves and the way we think. We have become involved in a range of regional efforts that have benefited Elkhart County, so I think that will continue. There are 400 or 500 people who have disclosed to us that we are part of their estate plan. We count them as members of our Legacy Society. I hope these folks live long and rich lives. However, the estate plans of our Legacy Society members represent close to a billion dollars worth of additional giving to the foundation over a generation or so. So there’s no question the foundation will continue to grow in terms of scale, and as a result, its ability to impact the community.

What does the future hold for the Community Foundation?

The question I ask myself is “on what date do we arrive at the high-water mark of a billion dollars and then \$2 billion and \$3 billion?” When I came to the

foundation we had a discussion at one of my first board meetings about what the foundation might look like at \$400 million. So last June I took the board through an exercise in which I challenged them to consider what CFEC would look like if it grew by 10X again and had a balance sheet with \$4 billion in assets. Certainly you’d have to have a larger staff and office. Likely our investment strategies would change to some extent. However, this planning exercise was more valuable as a futuristic view of our community impact and vision. Today we give away \$30 million a year. We were forced to consider the question of “What does our stewardship look like 20 years from now if we are responsible for investing \$300 million annually into our community?” Despite the fact that the stock market has gone in the wrong direction the last six months, I am very optimistic about the future for the Community Foundation. The foundation will continue to expand its impact in our community through the generosity of those who entrust us to steward their philanthropy. We will also continue to learn and improve our practice of community leadership and collaboration. For me personally, this is a labor of love; I am grateful I get to be a part of this work. 🍀



MILESTONES OF THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF ELKHART COUNTY

- Mid-1980's** While vacationing in Naples, Florida, Oscar Schricker observed people being approached for financial contributions by the local community foundation. He and Jim McNamee began talking about the possibility of forming a community foundation in Elkhart County.
- 1989** The Community Foundation of Elkhart County was founded with a generous donation from Dr. John Foreman.
- 1989** Bill Myers named founding president of the Community Foundation of Elkhart County.
- 2000** W. Earl Taylor named second president of the Community Foundation after the retirement of Bill Myers.
- 2006** In August, founding member Wilbert (Bill) Budd died at the age of 93 and endowed the Community Foundation with \$7 million the following year.
- 2011** Pete McCown becomes president of the Community Foundation after the retirement of W. Earl Taylor.
- 2011** Legacy Society member David Gundlach died unexpectedly in October at the age of 56.
- 2012** Following his death, the Community Foundation received news of an end-of-life gift from Gundlach of \$150 million.
- 2015** Following a multi-year listening tour, the Community Foundation rebrands as Community Foundation of Elkhart County.
- 2019** Acts of Service joins Community Foundation family.
- 2022** Assets approached more than \$400 million. The Community Foundation received gifts from more than 2,000 donors in the calendar year ending December 31.

Creating new spaces with generosity

A GIFT IN HONOR OF IMOGENE

Keith Rupel gave out of love

Every time Darrell Peterson climbs the stairs at Imo's Den, the hair on his arm stands up and he sees goosebumps.

It's not fear, but awe at how the four-unit apartment building came to be thanks to the generosity of one man wanting to honor his wife.

Darrell thinks of the hours it took to reclaim those worn wooden steps and other parts of the large structure to turn it into living spaces for young people as they learn skills and take on adulthood.

In every apartment is a plaque honoring Keith and Imogene Rupel. Darrel, executive director of Lifeline Ministries, wants the young people who live at Imo's Den to remember this Elkhart couple. He wants those at Lifeline, a ministry that provides a safe, family-like atmosphere for youth from third to 12th grades, to know about the Rupels.

Keith Rupel grew up poor in South Bend and fought in General George S. Patton's division at the Battle of the Bulge. After the war ended, one of his brothers introduced him to Imogene Page, who worked at Wygant's Florist. Their first date was on Valentine's Day in 1946.

As they dated, Keith went off to study at Purdue University and would hitchhike home to see her. They married in June 1947 and he graduated almost a year later.

In the next decade, Keith and Imogene started a family and built two houses, first south of South Bend and then on Highland Avenue in Elkhart, where they worked together on weekends. She cut the limestone and he laid it. In 1963, Keith started REPCO, his own engineering firm, and his daughter Sandra Gentry remembers the smell of ammonia coming up from the basement as he created blueprints. His first clients were Don and Joe Schrock of DJ Construction. And as an example of the integrity and trust between the new business partners, that deal was sealed not even with a handshake, but with trusting nods.

BELOW: Imo's Den provides housing for interns and staff at Lifeline Ministries.





ABOVE: Darrell Peterson, executive director of Lifeline Ministries, and Sandra Gentry honor the memory of her parents Keith and Imogene Rupel.

In 1970 tragedy struck, as their 15-year-old son Gary drowned in a pond at Old Orchard Golf Course. Keith and Imogene were devastated, but instead of falling into despair, as some other fathers who lost children did, Keith said he was grateful to God for the 15 years he had with his best friend.

When the insurance settlement came, Keith and Imogene gave it away to Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne. Keith took Gary's bike to Irv Polk at Youth For Christ/Lifeline so that some other young person could benefit from its use. That encounter resulted in Keith and Irv becoming great friends.



ABOVE: Every apartment in Imo's Den honors the Rupels.

... how the four-unit apartment building came to be thanks to the generosity of one man wanting to honor his wife.

A GIFT IN HONOR OF IMOGENE



LEFT: A historic house along State Street in Elkhart is now Imo's Den.

Over the years, as Keith and Imogene's stewardship grew alongside his business, they gave generously to places that encouraged faith or provided education, including Trinity Lutheran Church and his beloved Purdue University, where they set up several scholarships. As the Rupels planned their estates, they chose organizations they wanted to support after their deaths.

Keith knew early on that Imogene was the one from the moment he spilled a milkshake on her new straw hat and she didn't get upset. Over the years, their love for one another continued to grow. The Rupels loved spending time with each other. They traveled to the Smokies on vacation and went to Purdue football and basketball games together. In later years, he built a laundry room onto their Highland Avenue home, despite his own macular degeneration, so that she wouldn't have to go up and down stairs. After that, he designed a ramp and had it built for Imogene's walker.

"True love," says Sandra.

After several years of failing health, Imogene passed away in June 2016. At her funeral, Keith told Darrell that he wanted to honor Imogene. Darrell thought he should give the grieving husband some time, but Keith showed up at Lifeline the next week. Darrell was already planning on renovating a four-

unit building to house interns or those coming out of Lifeline. Keith asked, "If I pay for one of the apartments, can we dedicate it to Imogene?" Darrell responded, "Absolutely."

Darrell appreciated Keith's gift and commitment to this project. Soon after, Darrell was out of town on vacation but came back to meet with Keith when he called. In the foyer of Lifeline, Keith said, "I don't want to dedicate an apartment to my wife. I want to do the whole thing in her honor."

With his donation, work on Imo's Den started in earnest. Keith swung the first sledgehammer to start demolition and showed up on Fridays with donuts or cider. The kids would head towards his vehicle not just because he had snacks. "He was always so kind and gracious," says Darrell.

He provided funds to support Lifeline events and helped with more than Imo's Den. A perfect example of his kindness was after seeing a photo of girls from Lifeline at prom, Keith paid for corsages for all the girls every year after that. "Every girl needs a corsage," he said.

The Imo's Den project was delayed for more than three years due to historical designations and renovation. Darrell and Sandra, who had been coming down from her home in Michigan to see her father and the progress on the project, were frustrated. Keith remained gracious.

"What Keith and Imogene decided to do is investing that will see returns and dividends in heaven."

— Darrell Peterson, Executive Director of Lifeline Ministries

Darrell had plans for how to get Keith up on the porch when it was part of Parade of Homes. Just days before that, Keith died at the age of 95.

Sandra gave the speech he'd written for her to give at the party unveiling the building. He had been ready to rejoin his wife on the other side and likely knew his time was short. "I think he knew," she says.

The Rupels had always been generous with their time and money. They had spent little on themselves and made it clear how they wanted their estate to be handled. The Community Foundation established donor-designated funds supporting Lifeline and Faith Mission. The generosity after their deaths left a legacy that will help generations to come.

Keith paid nearly all of the costs for Imo's Den. Lifeline is starting construction on a new main building. Its internship program is bringing in college students from across the country to learn how to work with young people in a faith-based organization. Programs in elementary schools are growing, as is vocational training. The family is also growing. Sandy is often with Darrell and his wife, Leslie, and Emily and David Gaona, who are the Petersons' daughter and son-in-law, as well as leaders at Lifeline. And they all want to hold baby Isabella Gaona, David and Emily's newborn.

Darrell has now been leading Lifeline for 14 years, carrying on the legacy of the late Irv Polk who urged him not to let it die. Lifeline has grown, "What God's done at Lifeline is nothing short of a miracle," Darrell says. "What Keith and Imogene decided to do is investing that will see returns and dividends in heaven." 🍀



ABOVE: Keith Rupel built two homes for his family and later funded the creation of Imo's Den.

RIGHT: Sandra Gentry (left) carries on the legacy of her father Keith Rupel's generosity.



LEGACY SOCIETY LIST 2021-2022

The Legacy Society is a group of generous individuals who believe in impacting their community. Their stories and hearts are inspiring! The following list includes the names of those who have left us estate gifts or have informed us of bequests, policies, trusts, and other end-of-life planned gifts, for the purpose of encouraging others. This list also includes people

who have a donor-advised fund with us, where they are living out their legacy during their lifetime. Some members of the Legacy Society, however, have chosen to inform us but otherwise keep their decision confidential.

Names in italics are deceased Legacy Society members

Anonymous 1	Brian and Jeannelle Brady	Betty Cox
Anonymous 2	Patty and Coley Brady	<i>Michael</i> and Teri Crabill
Anonymous 3	Susan Branson	Robert E. and Betty Cripe
Anonymous 4	Tim Braun and Alysha Liljeqvist	Rob and Vicki Cripe
<i>Charles and Dorothy Ainlay</i>	Terrence and Kathy Brennan	Kelly L. Cummins
Dick and Linda Armstrong	Conrad and Debra Brenneman	Richard W. Davis, Jr. and Mary E. Davis
Janet Arnold	Michael P. Bristol	Richard and Shane Davisson
Matt Arnold	<i>James</i> and Patty Brotherson	<i>June Deal</i>
Tom and Dot Arnold	George and Martha Buckingham	<i>Arthur and Patricia Decio</i>
<i>Harold "Doc" and Jane Atkins</i>	George and Patricia Bucklen	<i>Elizabeth DeFries</i>
Steve and Julie Bachman	<i>Justine Sparks Budd</i>	Donald and Melanie DeGroff
Paris and Becky Ball-Miller	<i>Wilbert and Alice Budd</i>	Bob and <i>Mary Pat</i> Deputy
<i>Glenn and Joan Banks</i>	Alan and Nancy Burbano	Lawrence and Sherrod Deputy
John and Nancy Banks	Robert Burger	Michael and <i>Mandi</i> Deputy
Stephen and Holli Banks	<i>B. Jane Burns</i>	Dean and Jane DeVoe
Leon Bauman and Char Yutzy	Bill Caldwell	Mike Dibley
David and Deborah Beaverson	<i>John Calvert</i>	Terry and Julie Diener
William and Linda Beier	<i>Mary Ann Carroll</i>	Todd W. A. Driver
Al and Rebecca Benham	Bill and Anita Cast	<i>Thomas and Lois Dusthimer</i>
Drake and Carrie Berghoff	James and Anke Chandler	<i>Arthur Eby</i>
George and Mona Biddlecome	<i>Brantly and Katie Chappell</i>	Tom and Sara Elkin
Jim and Joan Bock	<i>Betty Chatten</i>	Kay Ann Eller
Bertha Bontrager-Rhodes	Jack and Karen Cittadine	<i>Sharlene Eller-Preston</i>
Derald and Cindy Bontrager	Brian and Diana Clark	<i>Susan P. Ellington</i>
Tyson and Sarah Bontrager	Todd and Missy Cleveland	Jane Eslick
Wilbur and Sarah Bontrager	Richard and Kathy Collins	<i>Ned and Agda Farber</i>
<i>Dorothy Borger</i>	Alex and Natalie Cook	Janice Farron
<i>Thomas Borger</i> and	Brian and Traci Cook	<i>Frederick and Dorothy Feick</i>
Elizabeth Naquin Borger	<i>Tom and Dot Corson</i>	Bill and Kristin Fenech
Mary Jean Borneman	<i>Donald and Margaret Covert</i>	John and Lois Fidler
Carl Bossung	Barbara Cowles	

Lewis and Elizabeth Fidler
 Stephen and Shelly Fidler
 David and Susan Findlay
 Richard and Marlene Finnigan
Ivan Fisher
 Robert and Dawn Fisher
John and Margaret Foreman
 Martha Foreman
 James Foster Shea, Jr.
 Andrew and Kathy Frech
 George and Katherine Freese
 Daniel Fulmer
L. Craig and Connie Fulmer
 John and Therese Gardner
 Bill and Sue Garvey
 Sandra Gentry
 Dan and Suzanne George
 Bob and Stevie Giel
 John and Gwen Gildea
 Gary and Debra Gilot
 John and Judith Goebel
 Joe and *Rita* Gold
William and Violet Goodsene
Christiana Graham
 Doug and *Barbara* Grant
Robert B. Grant
Ralph and Opal E. Gunden
 Don and Theresa Gunden
Guy David Gundlach
 Lisa Haines
 Steven Haines
John Harman
 Cindy and Dave Hawkins
 Vernon and Diane Heacock
Dan and Mary Henkin
 Steven and Ann Herendeen
 Stan and Sharon Hess
 Leon and Pam Hluchota
 Larry and Lucretia Hochstetler
 Terry and Lu Hoogenboom
 Floyd and *Esther* Hoover
Mary E. Hoover
 Shirley Hoover
Joyce Hultin
 Eugene W. and *Barbara* Hungate
 Jane Hunter
 Tom and Jennifer Irions
 Randall Jacobs and
 Rachel Miller Jacobs
 Melvin and Deborah Jacobson
 Moe Jacobson
 Brian and Amanda Jamison
 Rick and Sandy Jenkins
 Levon and Dorrene Johnson
 William P. and Toni Johnson
 Stephen Kash
Carolyn Keefe
Thomas and Suzanne Keene
 Donna Kercher Schrock
 Robert and Kristy King
 Chris and Gretchen Kingsley
 Richard and Susan Klepinger
Ted and Diane Kolodziej
Don L. and Jurate Krabill
 Richard and Joleen Krause
 Mark and Diane Kritzman
 Jeffery and Heidi Krusenklau
 Michael L. and Rebecca Kubacki
 Mark and Karen Kurtz
 Chuck and Betty Lamb
 John and Jane Leavitt
 Merritt and Dierra Lehman
 Robert and Carolyn LeMaster
Walter and Jane Lerner
 John and Dianne Letherman
 John and Joy Lambright Liechty
 The Liegl Family Foundation
 Tom and Marianne Lilly
Ralph and Rita Lockerbie
 Mary Jo Ludwick
Allan and Karon Ludwig
Mervin and Dorothy Lung
 Philip and Jeannette Lux
 Stephen and Maralee Macumber
 Tony and Tammy Magaldi
Joseph Manfredi
 Ashley Martin and Bernerd Haskins
 Frank and Marsha Martin
 Rex and *Alice* Martin
 Robert W. and Gail T. Martin
William and Margaret Martin
Irma Mast
 Pete and Wendy McCown
 Kathleen McCoy-Royer
Betty Jean McKeever
James and Ann McNamee
 James and Janet Mellott
 Bob and Sue Miller
 Devon and Diane Miller
 Marcus and Debra Miller
Ruth Miller
S. Ray and Linda Miller
 Ronald and Connie Minzey
Helen Mishler
 Michael Moloney and *Penny Free*
 Gordon and Marie Moore
 Michelle Moore
 G. Lynn and Linda Morris
 Dan and Jan Morrison
 James and Karla Morton
Don and Jane Mossey
 Thomas and Barbara Murphy
Neal and Dianne Myers
 Tim and Sarah Myers
William and Patricia Myers
 Thad and Rachelle Naquin
Thomas and Mary Naquin
 James and Joyce Nelson
 Sam and Kristina Newlands
 Dzung and Francoise Nguyen
 Vaughn and Cynthia Nickell
 Mike Nicolini
 Myrl and Phyllis Nofziger

LEGACY SOCIETY LIST 2021-2022

Quinton and Shannon Oakes <i>Virginia J. Pardee</i>	Rebecca Schowe	Michael and Sheila Terlep
Barbara Parker	William and Lorette Schmuhl, Jr.	Dr. Michael and Carole Thomas
Cole Patuzzi	Doug Schnell	George and Karen Thompson
Edward and Patricia Patzer	Michael and Vickie Schoeffler	David and Peggy Tompos
Jeffrey and Diana Peat	Kenneth and Doris Ann Schrad <i>Barbara Schricker</i>	Richard M. and <i>Anne K. Treckelo</i>
Darrell and Leslie Peterson	Oscar W. and <i>Marilyn</i> Schricker	<i>Gerald A. and Barbara J. Trolz</i>
Richard and Suzanne Peterson <i>William O. and Loretha Phillips</i>	Nancy Schricker	John and <i>Carole</i> Ulmer
Mike and Judy Pianowski	Susan A. Schricker	<i>Adrian and Treva Vaksvik</i>
Frank and Barbara Piaskowy	Bob and Marie Schrock	<i>Richard and Bellodene Van Der Karr</i>
James and Sharon Piechorowski	<i>Harold Schrock</i> and Donna Kercher Schrock	Martha Ann Rieth VanDyke
Mac Pierce	Janet Rae Scribner	Steven G. and Lynda Van Scoik
Donald Pletcher	Amy and Amish Shah	<i>Michael</i> and Meredith Vickrey
Kenneth and <i>Jean</i> Pletcher	Paul Shannon	Anne Von Der Vellen
Phillip and Nancy Pletcher	James Foster Shea, Jr.	<i>Mary Elizabeth Walker</i>
Richard and Susan Pletcher	<i>Daniel and Josephine Sherman</i>	Thomas and <i>Patricia</i> Warrick
Thomas and Dana Pletcher	Joseph and Angela Shoemaker	David Weaver
John and Kathy Postle	<i>John Shoup</i>	<i>Laveta Weaver</i>
Doug and <i>Mary</i> Putnam	Dan Shoup	<i>David</i> and Dottie Webster
<i>Clayton and Carol Quimbach</i>	Matt Shoup	David Weed
Paul and Sheela Reasoner	Stuart W. and Shirley H. Showalter	Donald Weed
Sharman Reimer	James and <i>LaRayne</i> Siegmann	<i>Robert</i> and Peggy Weed
<i>Larry</i> and Elizabeth Renbarger	<i>William</i> and Bernice Simms	William and Sarah Weed
<i>Florence Richardson</i>	Brian and Lauri Smith	Chris and Jenny Welch
Matthew and Susan Richardson	David and Nancy Smith, Jr.	M. Scott and Kimberlee Welch
<i>Robert E. and Sandy Richardson</i>	<i>Harold</i> and Patricia Smith	Ross and Linda Weldy
<i>Mary Jane Rieth</i>	Mark and Vicki Smucker	Timothy and Ruth Weldy
J. Douglas and Sharon Risser	F. Richard and Josephine Snyder	Jeff and Phid Wells
<i>Lucille Risser</i>	Christopher and Jodi Spataro	Karen R. Wesdorp
Andrew and Billie Roeder	Bruce and Barbara Stahly	Aaron and Stephanie Wieand
Kelly and Karen Rose	Joe and Emily Stiglitz	Matthew and Jill Windy
Charlene Rule	<i>William D. Stimpson</i>	John and Carolyn Wolf
<i>Keith and Imogene Rupel</i>	Ellen Stenberg	<i>Chris Wolfe</i>
Marly and <i>Laura</i> Rydson	Donald and Claudia Stohler	Wen and Susan Wu
Matthew and Tricia Rydson	Tim and Christy Stonger	Jim Yager
Janet Elaine Ryman	<i>Dick</i> and Kay Stout	<i>Al</i> and Marie Yoder
Carl and Andrea Sartorius	<i>Larry</i> and Susan Struble	Candy and Darrel Yoder
Mary Jo Sartorius	Doyle and Ann Stump	Ola and Vera Yoder
<i>Vernon and Doris Sailor</i>	<i>Marjorie M. Swift</i>	Randi and Anita Yoder
George and Terri Schmidt, II	W. Earl and Linda Taylor	<i>Dorothy Zimmerman</i>

JOIN US ON THE JOURNEY

THE LEARNING CENTER

The Learning Center of the Community Foundation has a mission to provide learning opportunities for area nonprofits so they can continue to successfully serve Elkhart County. The events are meant to inform as well as inspire and reinvigorate nonprofit workers by providing opportunities for leadership, development, continuing education, and occasions to network and collaborate. In addition to workshops and CEO roundtables, TLC also offers an annual two-day retreat for nonprofit CEOs to network and reflect on their contributions to Elkhart County.

To learn more, visit inspiringgood.org/the-learning-center or reach out to **Vonnie Trumble**, Program Officer, at vonnie@inspiringgood.org



ESTATE PLANNING COUNCIL OF ELKHART COUNTY

Staying on top of the latest information in estate planning is not always easy. The Elkhart County Estate Planning Council is open to professionals who advise their clients on all facets of planning their estates. The Estate Planning Council, which meets quarterly, provides multidisciplinary education and a place for accountants, attorneys, bank officers, wealth, trust advisors, and other professionals who work within estate planning to network with each other. Participants are able to earn Continuing Education Units for continued professional education. Annual membership is \$100.

To learn more, visit inspiringgood.org/estate-planning-council-membership or contact **Kim Miller**, Director of Donor Services, at kim@inspiringgood.org



100 WOMEN WHO CARE ELKHART COUNTY

Small time commitment. Big community impact. That's the basis of 100 Women Who Care Elkhart County. If you are looking for a way to give generously in a fun social setting, consider 100 Women Who Care Elkhart County. Four times a year, the organization gathers at the Matterhorn Conference Center. Women give \$100 individually or can split the cost with a friend; \$100 equals one vote. Members nominate local nonprofits and pick one each meeting to receive that quarter's \$10,000 contribution. This incredible group of women has given away over \$300,000 to local nonprofits.

For more information visit inspiringgood.org/organization/100-women-elkhart-county



Guiding the way for fathers

BOB SCHROCK HELPS OTHERS BE FAITHFUL DADS

He found a passion for fatherhood

Bob Schrock remembers sitting in the conference room at DJ Construction listening to others talk about the Community Foundation's role in the community.

The Community Foundation was getting a large gift from David Gundlach's estate. Bob was on the board in 2013 as the organization did its listening tour to determine how to best be stewards of that gift. He invited friends to participate in a session, where President Pete McCown asked, "If you were in Bob's shoes and could give away \$10 million a year to make the community better, what would you do?"

Someone in the room said the foundation should help families. The conversation turned to how to help fathers own their role in their children's lives.

That moment, along with a series of others, helped cement Bob's mission.

Bob had helped build a successful company as president and CEO of DJ Construction, but had been wrestling with questions about his purpose since he'd turned 50 a few years earlier. He'd read "Halftime: Moving from Success to Significance" by Bob Buford about approaching the second half of one's life. Justin Maust of EntreLegacy Group offered life coaching and Bob said yes, though he'd declined such offers in the past.

As they met regularly over coffee, Justin mentored and helped Bob wrestle with how to spend his days. He was considering leaving the construction business. "The purpose of us meeting wasn't the transition of DJ. It was the transition of me," Bob says.

Justin asked Bob, "If you could put a dent in one thing, what would it be?"



LEFT: The Schrock family is (from left) children Mandi Juarez and Matt Schrock and parents Bob and Marie Schrock.



ABOVE: Bob Schrock sits in his former office at DJ Construction. Since his retirement, his son Matt now works in that same office.

Friend and coworker Enos Yoder remembers Bob wrestling with how to give. As DJ had done well, Bob's financial generosity had increased and he was asking how to get more involved in the community. "I know Bob was searching for his next phase," Enos says.

Bob and Enos were friends and their children were nearly the same age. They did life together, at church and on the softball field. When Enos's work life was out of balance because of travel, he went to work for Bob at DJ. Together, they discussed and prayed over how to make a difference. At Sugar Grove Church where they attend, they had heard about the needs of mothers and children after a father abandoned the family.

As a board member for The Crossing and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Elkhart County, Bob had heard stories about students who had achieved success with the help of mentors when dads were absent. He thought about the day he volunteered with Lifeline at an apartment complex, cooking for the families from which the fathers were absent.

He also thought about his own father, Don, who had mentored him and others. "I know I am who I am today because not only did I have a dad in my life, but I knew he loved me and believed in me," Bob says.

He thought about how he and Enos had mentored Jaraan Cornell, a former Purdue University basketball player who hadn't gotten his college degree because of his own child's health issues. "My biological dad walked out on me so there was no way I could walk out on my child," Jaraan says.

Bob became a mentor and father figure for Jaraan. "Fathering is taking a young man, a young girl, and trying to help change a life," Jaraan says. "It's being in a kid's life. Doing it out of your heart because you care. That's what fathers do."

Bob, and Enos, did that for Jaraan and helped him get back to school. The two men were in the crowd at his college graduation. "This was a complete stranger at one point," Jaraan says of "Boiler Bob," his nickname for Schrock, "but it didn't take long until it felt like someone I had known for 20 years."

BOB SCHROCK HELPS OTHERS BE FAITHFUL DADS



ABOVE: Bob Schrock smiles onstage at a Fathers Matter Forum with Anthony Meadows, whom he has mentored for a number of years.

While vacationing in Grand Cayman, Bob was drawing charts and graphs, wrestling with the questions from Justin and Pete. He suddenly realized he wanted to make a dent in the fatherless epidemic. He wanted to urge fathers to step up and be leaders in their families. He also wanted others to help young people whose fathers were absent.

He told Justin, Enos and others and was soon meeting with the Community Foundation to establish the Faithful Dads Fund, a donor-advised fund that would support Bob's passion. Starting in 2015, Bob volunteered as a big brother for Big Brothers Big Sisters and is now mentoring his second young man in the program.

The mentoring and focus on fatherhood energized Bob for his last years as CEO of DJ. As he was preparing to leave DJ, the management team asked him for a Big Hairy Audacious Goal that could guide the company. Instead of one that related to construction or business, Bob suggested the company work at addressing the fatherless epidemic in this community.

Bob and DJ sponsored three Fathers Matter Forums in Elkhart County, bringing in nationally known

speakers to promote faithful fatherhood and highlight local organizations working on the issue. Bob and DJ helped bring the All Pro Dad program to Elkhart County, where fathers join their kids at elementary school. It's now in schools in Elkhart, Goshen and Nappanee. He's watched as fathers praise their children in front of others at the school. "Those are powerful moments," Bob says.

DJ employees volunteer at All Pro Dad events and now the company is leading the Transition To Trades (T3) Program to help young people try construction. Some of the participants are getting jobs at DJ or other construction-related companies from their time working on the tiny homes project at Faith Mission or with Lacasa and Lifeline.

Bob has been the kind of father every kid wants and needs. "I cannot think of any time growing up where I doubted my dad's love for me and investment in my life," says son Matt.

Bob went to dog shows and rock concerts with his daughter Mandi. "He supported my interests rather than push his own," she says, noting that as she and her husband parent their son they try to do the same.

Mandi is director of brand management at DJ

“I know I am who I am today because not only did I have a dad in my life, but I knew he loved me and believed in me.”

— *Bob Schrock, retired President/CEO, DJ Construction*

and Matt is vice president. They’ve both seen how their father’s fervor for fatherhood has shaped the company’s response and the family’s philanthropy. They sit with him on the committee, along with Enos, to make decisions about granting from the Faithful Dads fund. As they meet each year in November, on a date near Bob’s late father’s birthday, the family has a clearer sense of how to focus on what they truly want to support financially.

Bob admits that making a dent in the fatherless epidemic isn’t easy to do or measure, but that doesn’t diminish his effort. He’ll keep urging others to be there for children, whether it’s their biological ones or others.

As Jaraan put it, “If we just had 100 more Bob Schrocks, the community, the world, would be a better place for young men.” 🍀

BELOW: Enos Yoder (right) talks about how his friend Bob Schrock found his passion for helping others become better fathers.



Building anew

NEW TOLSON CENTER ARISES FROM HISTORIC ROOTS

Community coming together to rebuild

A child carrying a ball runs across the grass on a glorious summer evening.

He was looking toward the crowd that had gathered on the lawn at Tolson Center for Community Excellence.

He was eager to join what was emerging — as are so many others in our community. He was eager to see what is happening at Tolson Center.

For decades, people, particularly young people, have gathered at 1300 Benham Avenue, Elkhart. As a child, Norman Anderson flew kites on the property that had nothing other than the Abshire Car Wash.

After a youth center opened in 1991, he saw the community come to play basketball and learn life lessons. Tolson’s adult leaders would lead bus trips to sporting events and college campuses. Tolson Center was a key part of the village raising its children.

Over the last decade, Tolson was in decline. “That was really hard to watch because it meant so much to so many people,” said Cyneatha Millsaps, whose family had been involved as participants, volunteers and employees.

When the Elkhart City Council voted in mid-2018 to stop funding Tolson Center, the decision saddened Cyneatha and others. Norman was disappointed that the city didn’t have another vision to meet the needs of those on the south side of Elkhart. The decision rippled through Elkhart and beyond. “Whether you are still living in south central Elkhart or grew up through south central, your hearts are still in south central,” said Cyneatha. And those with their hearts in that place felt the pain of this milestone.

People quickly urged some sort of action in response, and Pete McCown of the Community Foundation of Elkhart County and Levon Johnson of the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce left their offices and met at Central Park to discuss the matter.

That led to the creation of a task force and then community forums to discuss future plans. The 500 or so people who offered suggestions said Tolson needed to be not just a youth center, but a place that could serve the community as a whole and in doing so, make it more whole.

Tolson needed to be not just a youth center, but a place that could serve the community as a whole and in doing so, make it more whole.

RIGHT: A groundbreaking ceremony this summer preceded the construction of a new Tolson Center for Community Excellence.





ABOVE: Two children gather dirt as part of the groundbreaking ceremony this past summer.



ABOVE: An architectural rendering shows the beauty of the new Tolson Center for Community Excellence.

The Community Foundation, Elkhart Chamber and Elkhart City collaborated to create a new 15-member board in July 2020 that would in turn create a new organization and center. Cyneatha had offered her help to Rod Roberson, who was running for mayor of Elkhart. After he won, he appointed her to the board and then those people selected her as the president. “I tell people all the time this is the most diverse board I have ever been on, let alone chaired,” she said.

A public-private partnership was forged with the goal of creating a freestanding nonprofit that could guide Tolson into the future. It achieved nonprofit status in October 2021. Consultants and architects GreenPlay LLC, RRC Associates and Jones Petrie Rafinski helped envision

what the center would look like. Architects and consultants helped add details to the vision.

All of this takes funding and the Community Foundation was at the center of helping arrange the funding. So far, \$11 million has been pledged. The City of Elkhart appropriated \$5 million and has agreed to give \$700,000 a year to support the ongoing work. Lilly Endowment Inc. and the Community Foundation both committed \$2 million. Another \$2 million has been given or pledged privately. About \$1.5 million more is needed because of rising construction costs.



NEW TOLSON CENTER ARISES FROM HISTORIC ROOTS

The new building will have 30,000 square feet, including two gymnasiums. Outdoors, tennis/pickleball courts will be alongside basketball courts and a soccer field.

The board and others discussed whether to rehabilitate the existing building, but costs and logistics led to the decision to demolish completely and rebuild. After items were removed and auctioned, demolition began in July and construction by DJ Construction is expected to be completed in fall 2023.

Breanna Allen, who worked at Ivy Tech Community College and then Horizon Education Alliance, became the new executive director in April. She remembered how excited her Latino students at Ivy Tech had been as they partnered with Tolson Center to raise money for scholarships. She remembered hearing the news that Tolson would close. Now she gets to help guide its construction and reopening with Cyneatha and others. Breanna said it's been fun so far and that will continue.

When several hundred people came to the

groundbreaking on May 24, people danced. They applauded as the new dirt was turned with golden shovels. The excitement was so evident as people celebrated what was and what is to come.

Breanna wants to reignite that excitement at Tolson that has been a part of its deep history and was evident in her students. The passion of the adults who remember will mix with the exuberance of youth as the new Tolson serves the community with sports leagues, youth activities and space for family and community events.

“The hope is that Tolson Center for Community Excellence will be that safe, educational, recreational hub not only for south central Elkhart, but for Elkhart,” said Cyneatha. “People will come once again and participate in activities going on there.”

Tolson will shape future generations of children and their families. “I think it’s going to be very important to Elkhart. It can be the hub of most of the activities going on in Elkhart,” Norm Anderson said.

It will bring Elkhart together again. 🌱

BELOW: Community members look at plans for the new Tolson Center.



BELOW: Plans for the new Tolson Center include spaces for athletics, education and community events.



Tolson Center for Community Excellence is poised for success due to strong community support. Breanna Allen (shown at right) is its first executive director.



BELOW: Community members celebrate at the groundbreaking in summer 2022.



Attracting and retaining talent

ENFOCUS KEEPS YOUNG PEOPLE IN REGION

A decade of innovative work

Every community in the United States wants its young people to stay, work and contribute.

And, almost every community in the country has to work hard to do what is called “talent attraction and retention.” In the South Bend-Elkhart Region, one of the bright lights attracting young people is a nonprofit called enFocus, which celebrated its tenth anniversary in May.

In 2012, Andrew Wiand and six others visited an incubator focused on entrepreneurship in Durham, N.C. as they studied in the ESTEEM Master’s program at the University of Notre Dame. They were so inspired after their visit that they worked with community and business leaders to start their own version in South Bend. Those first seven fellows worked on projects for eight local partners.

enFocus charges fees to area partners to do research and help support initiatives. Often, it’s focused on solving a problem — which seems to be what engages the interns and fellows the most. Initially, interns and fellows focused on helping only nonprofit groups, schools or municipalities. In Elkhart County, projects have included:

- Elkhart County Convention and Visitors Bureau (ECCVB) downtown vibrancy assessment and Vibrant Communities BIG Event development.
- Elkhart County Health Department systematic approach to increase early childhood immunization rates.
- Goshen Public Library strategic planning initiative.

BY THE NUMBERS, ENFOCUS HAS:

450

Worked on more than **450** business, technology, civic and entrepreneurial projects

70%

Retained **70 percent** of the fellows in the region at the conclusion of the fellowship

1,200

Attracted more than **1,200 students** to work in the region through 160 fellowships and more than 1,194 internships

RIGHT: enFocus fellows engage in work to help the community and in doing so often find meaningful work here.



“We get the talent here because there’s cool stuff going on, but the cool stuff has value in itself.”

— *Andrew Wiand, Executive Director, enFocus*

Following a \$42 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to form the Labs for Industry Futures and Transformation (LIFT) Network, enFocus has worked in partnership with iNDustry Labs at Notre Dame to assist in driving innovation at local industries. At Smoker Craft in New Paris, enFocus has helped improve production line efficiency with lean manufacturing techniques. At Robert Weed Corp. in Bristol, enFocus helped with data analysis, supplier management and sourcing optimization.

The entrepreneurial spirit that created and grew enFocus led to expanding into its own projects. During the pandemic, its fellows helped with the creation of a comprehensive website for Elkhart County residents to help respond to COVID-19. It has also helped with the design of DW Victims Advocacy Center, a nonprofit supporting victims of crime and trauma in Elkhart.

Technically, enFocus is a crew of young consultants who help make the South Bend-Elkhart Region stronger. Some of the 40,000 college or university students who study in the region have opportunities to work on problems or challenges that help build strong resumés. “We get the talent here because there’s cool stuff going on, but the cool stuff has value in itself,” said Andrew Wiand, enFocus executive director who was one of those original seven fellows.

Yet the primary objective of attracting talent means that you hope to keep as much of it as possible. A remarkable number of young people choose to stay in the South Bend-Elkhart Region after their time with enFocus ends. Often, they land a job at a place they were helping as part of enFocus.





ABOVE: enFocus interns learn about the community at Goshen Theater during a recent tour.

**Zac Quiett, Business Manager
& Transportation Director,
Baugo Community Schools**



Zac grew up in South Bend and did poorly his first year in college. He left school and worked in the restaurant industry for a long time. He went back to Indiana University South Bend and the National Guard in the early 2010s and graduated in 2016. He then spent two years with enFocus.

Zac wasn't interested in a job in a cubicle. He had experience as the president of the student veterans group and wanted to give back.

"It wasn't about a title or position. It was impact and access to making a difference," he said.

As a fellow, he worked with local school systems, including South Bend and Baugo, which is located in western Elkhart County. At Baugo, he helped the school system join Promise Indiana which starts funds for students in kindergarten to grow money for college.

As his time at enFocus was winding down, he had an offer from local industry. Former Baugo Superintendent Jim DuBois asked him to fill an administrative opening as business and transportation manager. He said yes to the school

system and continues in that role. He is now also in the Executive Master of Business Administration program at the University of Notre Dame.

He loves how enFocus is reversing the brain drain. "It retains smart people and they do a very good job infusing those people into the cities, the communities that they work in, and they give freedom to operate in that space," he said.

Eydis Lima, Co-founder, Curiva



Eydis had an idea and plans to move to one of the country's tech hubs.

As a student at Yale University, she was researching ovarian cancer and saw a potential solution to help women.

After graduation, she came to study in the ESTEEM master's program at Notre Dame, and was able to build on a concept of creating a diagnostic patch for the detection of high-risk stage cervical cancer called diaPatch. At Notre Dame, she continued to make progress through coaching and mentoring available there and eventually teamed up with cofounder Tracie McGinnity.

After graduating with a master's in engineering science in May 2018, she was headed to Austin, Texas

"We're seeing a level of engagement with the community that is unprecedented."

— *Kristen Smole, Assistant Director of Economic Development, City of Elkhart*

to work on the startup, but enFocus gave her some income and time to work on her side project as she was still a fellow in the program. She had time to navigate Austin and Silicon Valley as she worked on a business plan.

What Eydis learned through that experience, including working at Goshen Health, is that she wants to be in the Midwest, particularly this region, as she pursues launching her startup.

“enFocus really gave me the resources to learn the consulting mode of business,” she said. “It helps in that capacity in giving some freedom and things, such as IDEA Week, connecting people in the region, particularly in manufacturing space.”

Kristen Smole, Assistant Director of Economic Development, City of Elkhart



Kristen was not planning to stay in northern Indiana.

She graduated from Concord High School in 2009 and went to Purdue University to become a veterinarian. After studying political science and public policy, she not only ended up with several degrees, but also on a path toward working with people rather than animals.

She was home visiting family in the fall of 2019

as she applied for jobs. People kept telling her about enFocus, which had already begun its fellowship year. She explored it and wasn't sure it would be a good fit, but put off moving to Chicago for a year. She joined enFocus for nearly a year as an intern and then signed on to become a project manager, overseeing four other fellows. She loved that work and the people with whom she worked. “I was planning on staying at enFocus until they were going to get rid of me,” she said.

A role opened in the City of Elkhart and the young woman who had always said “absolutely not” to living in Elkhart County was soon taking a role with the city and evangelizing for it.

“I think the city of Elkhart right now is at a point of transition that is exciting,” she said, noting that the city looks different and feels more vibrant. “The personality of Elkhart is the same, but now we're reflecting that vibrancy. We're seeing a level of engagement with the community that is unprecedented.”

Retaining talent is part of the reason the unemployment rate is low and the quality of life here is rivaling other larger cities. She knows that enFocus is part of the reason she is here and making an impact for others.

“enFocus is more important than the region even realizes,” she said. 🍀

BELOW: enFocus interns visit Janus Motorcycles in Goshen as they learn about local startups.



Teaching entrepreneurship

BIZTOWN INSPIRING YOUNG PEOPLE

It's pretty easy for Amish Shah to point to the milestones that line the road to JA BizTown®.

The Elkhart entrepreneur remembers when his father, Satish, would drop him off at Junior Achievement on Saturdays. As his father worked across the street at AccraPac, Amish caught the business bug at JA. He made a device that could crush the cans that piled up at his father's factory and soon

was riding his bicycle and knocking on doors to collect more orders.

After graduating from college, someone asked Amish to teach for Junior Achievement, an organization that educates students in grades K-12 about entrepreneurship, work readiness and financial literacy. For five years, Amish taught in a seventh-grade classroom at North Side Middle School where he had been a student. "How cool is it that I did JA as a kid and now I'm a young

adult and I'm teaching JA in this classroom with my previous teacher Mr. Toth," he says.

As Amish was talking with students who were feeling the impact of the Great Recession on their families, he realized that he wanted these students to experience the thriving Elkhart that he had experienced when he was a youngster. He surveyed

the programs available and saw a need for a vibrant environment where students could learn economics and how to contribute to the community in which they live.

"It was just stuck in my mind, asking what we can do. Somebody's got to do something," says Amish, founder and CEO of Kem Krest. "So I just envisioned what if we build a center for youth entrepreneurship."

He wasn't sure how to do that, but knew it needed a curriculum, programming and structure. In 2013, he learned about a program called Lemonade Day, which encourages young people to sell lemonade to instill business skills. Before long, he launched the program in Elkhart with Jodi Spataro and Stephanie Patka Mahoney.

Teachers and parents helped young people get involved in Lemonade Day and learn economics by selling the sweet and tangy products. Amish found the community support for those making and selling lemonade was remarkable. He wanted to do more and Elkhart philanthropist and leader Craig Fulmer urged him on. Soon, Junior Achievement, which had ceased operating in Elkhart for a time, was up and running again. JA, fueled by Lemonade Day and the strong operating organization Junior Achievement of Northern Indiana based in Fort Wayne, was ready to grow.

After several years of planning and coordination with a range of others, Amish was ready to build a JA BizTown in Elkhart, modeled after one in Fort Wayne. The miniature city, constructed inside a building, has storefronts representing actual businesses and organizations in the community. It took time for



ABOVE: Young people take on community and business roles to learn entrepreneurship and economics.

"Somebody's got to do something... So I just envisioned what if we build a center for youth entrepreneurship."

— *Amish Shah, Founder and CEO of Kem Krest*



ABOVE: Amish Shah, Candy Yoder, Pete McCown and Jessica Hilary mark the opening of BizTown.



ABOVE: Participants in the first Taste of Achievement raised money for Junior Achievement and BizTown.

staff, funding and planning to come together, but JA BizTown opened in 2022.

Soon students were taking on roles as CEOs, accountants and bankers. They were producing goods and services and paying for them. They were doing hands-on economics in a setting modeled after their own community. There's even a spot for young people to donate to nonprofits via the Community Foundation of Elkhart County.

Approximately 700 students came to JA BizTown as the school year was ending in spring 2022. The program targeting fifth-graders and sixth-graders is part of the local ecosystem to teach entrepreneurship, financial well-being and commitment to this community. The hope for the future is that people will point to their experiences participating in Junior Achievement and JA BizTown as milestones on their own professional journeys.

The Community Foundation has committed \$750,000 to JA BizTown and given \$500,000 so far. Junior Achievement continues to raise funds and the Community Foundation continues to support the fundraising efforts. 🍀

*If you would like to donate please email **Jessica Hilary** at jessica.hilary@ja.org, or call (574) 320-6222.*

RIGHT: Students visit the new BizTown in Elkhart.



Supporting our students

TAKING “C.A.R.E.” OF DAY-TO-DAY LIFE

Transitioning from high school to college is a major change for students and their families. Students are often on their own for the first time. And while parents and guardians do everything they can to lessen the uncertainties, some details get overlooked.

In 2016, Danielle Neal learned what her two daughters really needed as they attended college out of state. Since both were on scholarship, they had little time for a job outside their school and athletic commitments. As a result, they were continuously calling home to Danielle, asking for help with basic, day-to-day necessities.

Danielle saw an opportunity to help not just her kids, but those across the community. She began by asking for donations of personal care items to assemble care packages for current college and

university students from Elkhart County.

Danielle created C.A.R.E. University, whose full name is Community Assisting and Rewarding Education. The program collects and distributes donations of personal hygiene products, snacks, and school supplies to help college students and their parents with the cost and challenge of keeping necessities on hand.

In 2018, Danielle took steps to make C.A.R.E. University an official nonprofit. In 2019, the organization received a 100 Women Who Care Elkhart County grant of \$10,000 via the Community Foundation of Elkhart County that helped boost the number of students it could support. The funding gave Danielle the confidence to continue her mission. “The Community Foundation gave us our first grant, and

BELOW: Volunteers from C.A.R.E. University help support Elkhart County students in college settings with practical items.



when you get that as a nonprofit, it confirms that you are doing the right thing,” she says. “They showed they believed in us and wanted to see us grow.” C.A.R.E. University has since received \$15,000 in Community Investment Grants and a non-endowed fund that the Community Foundation continues to support.

C.A.R.E. University started with twelve students and has grown to support 70 students during the 2022-23 academic year. The nonprofit now provides funding for laptops for students that completed 10 hours of community service and maintain a 3.5 grade point average. C.A.R.E. University also maintains an emergency fund for students.

In addition to supplies, each student is paired with an adult advocate, whose role is regularly checking in with their student and acting as a sounding board. This helps take some of the burden off parents and provides the student with someone to speak with in addition to their parents. “It’s amazing to see the relationships that form over time and the bond that is made,” says Danielle.

Entry into C.A.R.E. University is easy. The student must graduate from an Elkhart County high school, have a GPA of 2.0, and attend college away from home. “Just because a family makes a certain amount of money on paper doesn’t mean they don’t have things going on, such as health issues or other financial burdens, that inhibit them from fully supporting their child. I don’t want to turn anyone away for financial reasons,” explains Danielle.

Danielle sees growth opportunities through additional partnerships with local businesses. Beacon Health System is a current financial contributor to

C.A.R.E. University, and in turn, C.A.R.E. University supports students of Beacon employees, even if they are outside of Elkhart County. American Electric Power has partnered to sponsor the technology program that provides students with laptops and other necessary technical equipment.

Danielle hopes to expand the nonprofit’s reach to help younger students access resources that encourage early academic success and to support students attending trade schools with tools and equipment for their classes. But, at its core, C.A.R.E. University’s biggest aspirations are to continuously grow the total number of college students it supports annually. Danielle has a frontline view of the positive impact C.A.R.E. University has on students, and many have given back to the community and the program after graduating. “There is a quote to the effect that it takes one adult to change a child’s life, and I firmly believe in that,” she says. “For some of these kids, it takes one person to say, ‘I care about you, I want you to be successful, we’re not going to provide excuses but create expectations, and you’re going to meet them with the help that we’re going to give you.’ That’s very important to me.”

C.A.R.E. University hosts an annual kick-off event every July for students, student advocates, program volunteers, and community members. The event celebrates the students and gives them a positive send-off for the upcoming school year. 🍀

For more information on C.A.R.E. University, visit theCAREuniversity.org

“For some of these kids, it takes one person to say, ‘I care about you, I want you to be successful, we’re not going to provide excuses but create expectations, and you’re going to meet them with the help that we’re going to give you.’”

— Danielle Neal, Founder of C.A.R.E. University

Giving and receiving

INSPIRE SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS GROW COMMUNITY CONNECTION

The INSPIRE Scholarship of the Community Foundation of Elkhart County doesn't just give students money to help with tuition. It connects them to their community.

The INSPIRE Scholarship, which began in 2017, gives hard-working, community-minded students the opportunity to receive \$3,000 per year. To be eligible, each of the recipients must complete

a minimum of 30 hours of volunteer time per year in Elkhart County.

As a young girl, Maria Mitchell was on the receiving end of community outreach. She was diagnosed with cancer at 14 and spent months in Chicago, IL, away from home, receiving treatment. Maria made a full recovery, and the help of organizations like Ronald McDonald House made a lasting impact.

"I'm the first to help, because help was given to my family and me when I needed it," said Maria.

In addition to volunteer work for Ronald McDonald House, Maria served on their teen board. She has also volunteered for smaller nonprofits and events around the Elkhart community.

Maria received the INSPIRE Scholarship in 2020 and recently graduated from Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana with an associate degree in general studies. She plans to work in the nonprofit space and aspires to one day start her own organization. "The INSPIRE Scholarship helped me build a network. It's opened my span of connections, which I know will come in handy as I pursue a career in the nonprofit space," says Maria.

Anna Smucker learned about the INSPIRE Scholarship during her senior year of high school, and was selected as a four-year recipient in 2018. "It's impacted me much more than I thought. It's made me think more intentionally about giving to others and giving to the community," says Anna.

Anna volunteered at the The Depot in Goshen, which is part of a network of nonprofit thrift shops that support local and global relief, development, and peace projects of the Mennonite Central Committee. She also made masks during the COVID-19 pandemic as part of a program with the Community Foundation of Elkhart County. "I've gotten to know many people, different ages and walks of life, that I wouldn't have otherwise," she says.

Anna graduated from Goshen College with a degree in graphic design and a double minor in Bible and religion, and music. She is moving to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, this fall for a year to volunteer with



ABOVE: Anna Smucker is inspired to volunteer because of the scholarship she received.

"The INSPIRE Scholarship is special. The relationships I've made have motivated me to continue volunteering."

— *Anna Smucker*, scholarship recipient

United Way. “The INSPIRE Scholarship is special. The relationships I’ve made have motivated me to continue volunteering,” said Anna.

Anna believes in the power of volunteering. “It’s a good way to get out of your comfort zone and meet new people in your community. It may be challenging at first if it’s not something you’re used to, but it’s a great opportunity to dig deeper,” she says.

Anna is confident that volunteerism and giving back to her community will play a significant role in her life, no matter where her career path leads. “It’s been such a blessing, and I’m so grateful. I’ve learned more about myself and that giving and helping others have become part of who I am. I don’t know that I would have had that if I hadn’t been actively volunteering to maintain the INSPIRE Scholarship.” 🍀

RIGHT: Maria Mitchell, shown with her dog, Willis, wants to make a lasting impact.



SCHOLARSHIP HONORS TOM GROVE'S IMPACT AS A TEACHER AND ARTIST

Tom Grove was a skilled fine artist and photographer with a quick wit, sharp intelligence, and mastery of Scrabble and crossword puzzles. But what is remembered most about Tom is how he made people feel good about themselves and helped them believe they could accomplish anything.

"He was the guy in the room that if you were around him, it was something special," says Tom's brother, Stephen Grove.

Tom grew up in a large, tight-knit family in southern Indiana. He was known as the funny guy in the family with a keen ability to make others laugh.



He attended Ball State University, initially pursuing a degree in architecture but later changed to fine art and education. He was also deeply involved in Greek life at the university, where he developed lifelong friendships.

While he was an extremely talented painter and illustrator, he gravitated toward photography. Perhaps it was the science of photography and the ability to look at the everyday as art. "When you saw Tom's photography, you got a glimpse into his eye, what he was seeing and why he would capture it and frame it as art," says Steve. "He once explained to me it's not that you are showing someone that a particular thing is art, but instead looking at it and saying, 'What if this was art?'"

Tom and his work earned many prestigious awards, including: a two-time Lilly Creative Teacher Fellow, a Toyota International Teacher Program participant, and the National Endowment for the Humanities Research participant. A selection of his art is on permanent exhibit at the Midwest Museum of Art in Elkhart, Indiana.

In his 40-year career as an educator at Elkhart Central High School, Tom didn't just teach thousands of students. He inspired them. Tom was a beloved photography teacher, retiring as the head of the Art Department just months before he died in 2017. He had been diagnosed with cancer and complications from treatment caused his untimely passing. "Good teachers know their stuff, and Tom knew his stuff," says Cynthia Holland Marks, who taught in the art department with Tom for many years. "He gave 100% every day. Kids loved him. He stood up for the fine arts."

LEFT: Tom Grove was beloved as an art teacher at Elkhart Central High School.



ABOVE: Tom Grove created art and photos, as well as had an impact on students.

When Tom passed, his fraternity brothers, spearheaded by friend Bill Dougherty, suggested the scholarship. Their goal is to honor Tom’s legacy by supporting his passion for the classroom and young artists. “We aspired to create a scholarship that Tom would have wanted. A way for Tom to still be out there, encouraging these young artists, even though he is no longer with us,” says Steve.

For Tom, encouraging students to pursue their interest in art and photography was important. The arts aren’t always as supported or held in the same esteem of other fields. The scholarship helps to validate a career in the arts and inspires people to follow their passion. It continues the impact he made on students in his honor. Mario Casto, who was awarded the scholarship in 2020, says, “I’m really thankful for the scholarship. I’m still inspired by it; it’s motivated me to keep driving forward.” Mario is pursuing a double major in Photography and Marketing at Columbia College in Chicago, Illinois, with the goal of owning a gallery and teaching photography at the college level.

Tom’s former wife, Mary Jo Sartorius, connected the scholarship creation efforts with the Community Foundation of Elkhart County. “I knew from previous

experience that in the hands of the Community Foundation, the scholarship would be well managed and offer a way to endow the scholarship, so his legacy lives on,” says Mary Jo. “Working with the Community Foundation takes the burden of the day-to-day management of the scholarship off of his family and friends.”

Tom’s life meant something to everyone that he touched. He lived by the golden rule to do unto others as you would have done to you, and he gave back to his community in a way that isn’t consistently recognized. Tom’s life illustrated how you can do good and make an impact on people through your actions, how you live your life, and by inspiring others.

On Tom’s memorial Facebook page, a former student wrote, “Grover, you set my path in life, and I could never thank you enough. I’ve had a camera in my hands or around my neck since the day I first took your class. I’ve built a successful business and it’s kept me going through some pretty rough times. Today I am turning in my application for my first big kid job (at the age of 38) as a high school photography teacher and the only person I want to call is you. I hope I can change at least one kid’s life like you changed mine.” 🍀

*“He gave 100% every day. Kids loved him.
He stood up for the fine arts.”*

— Cynthia Holland Marks, colleague of Tom Grove

A legacy of helping others

ACTS OF SERVICE HELPS ELKHART ORGANIZATIONS CREATE ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS THAT BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY, THEIR EMPLOYEES, AND THE ORGANIZATION ITSELF

Most employers want their team members to engage in the community. The struggle is making it happen.

Employee community engagement programs benefit organizations in several ways. They boost employee morale and productivity, help attract and retain employees, and create connections for employees outside working hours. Research from America's Charities found 88% of employers believe effective employee engagement programs help attract and retain employees. In addition, 71% of employees surveyed say it's imperative or essential to work where the culture supports giving and volunteering.

Yet many organizations struggle to design an effective and lasting employee engagement program. That's where Acts of Service, an initiative of the Community Foundation of Elkhart County, steps in. Acts of Service is a community service hub that helps match the needs of local nonprofit organizations with the willing hands of individual

volunteers and community partners.

Acts of Service works with businesses in and near Elkhart County to establish employee volunteer programs and inspire employee volunteerism. The resources available through Acts of Service help companies streamline and manage their volunteer programs.

"The beauty of Acts of Service is collaboration. It's about building long-term relationships between the nonprofits and those that serve the nonprofits," explains Ashley Jordan, director of Acts of Service, which became part of the Community Foundation in 2019.

Genesis Products is an excellent example of an organization that partners with Acts of Service to develop a community engagement strategy that works for employees, uses its resources, and gives back to the community. Genesis Products is a leading supplier of laminated panels, wood components, and custom molded solutions serving OEMs across several industries.

"Employees want to give back, but they don't always have the right connections or know how to get started," says Caitlin Lengerich, communications coordinator at Genesis.

Genesis has been working with Acts of Service since the program's early days and has built a community engagement program that excites its employees. Community engagement has become part of their culture, and they've realized its benefits to the business.

"We're constantly looking at what we can do for employee retention and how

LEFT: Volunteers from Genesis Products show love to a dog at the Elkhart County Humane Society.



to improve the employee experience so they want to stay,” says Caitlin. “Volunteering has become part of this because it allows connection with supervisors and managers.”

Genesis also provides paid volunteer time and encourages teams to take on volunteer projects together. “The volunteer groups are super successful. Because it comes from the managers and supervisors, and they are going out there too, they’re connecting with the teams, and together doing something different,” says Caitlin. “They are outside, having fun, goofing around, and get to know each other on a different level, and it takes away the hierarchy.”

Caitlin has found that the volunteer program has increased employee morale and gets people excited. It’s changed the way employees engage with each other and the business. It’s a unique experience outside the company outings and events Genesis provides. “The team building and bonding have had the biggest impact on the business,” says Caitlin.

A significant factor in Genesis’s success is being open to existing volunteer opportunities and looking to fulfill the current need. “I am not here to make more work for a nonprofit. Yes, we have this goal of hitting so many volunteer hours. But I will not go to a nonprofit and say, ‘We have 50 volunteers available on this date, from this time to this time; what can we do?’. My job is to serve the existing need,” says Caitlin.

While the service opportunities are out there, they aren’t always public. This is where Acts of Service plays a critical role. Acts of Service has a beat on what’s happening with local nonprofits, and is also the hub where nonprofits seek resources. “I feel this is how Acts of Service works for us. They allow us to fill the needs already out there and say, ‘How can we help you?’ rather than ‘How can you help us?’,” says Caitlin.

Acts of Service helps organizations create the right volunteer experiences for employees. Many volunteer opportunities in the Elkhart community allow people to use their talents and abilities, and connect with a cause that is important to them. Ashley says, “We work really hard to match what the business can offer with

the current needs of the nonprofits in our community. There’s an art to that and then magic happens when volunteers show up to do the work. There are people in the community with needs and businesses with the talents and resources. We help businesses think outside the box on how they can engage and give back.”

Genesis and other partners appreciate the variety of opportunities for their team members. Caitlin says, “We provide opportunity, but it’s never “voluntold” – if it’s not their jam, that’s OK. Let’s find something that speaks to you.”

The Genesis leadership team sees the value of community engagement and makes it a priority for the business.

Genesis CEO John Wenger says, “Our employees live in Elkhart, Goshen, and surrounding areas. We’re passionate about improving the communities that employees live, work, and play in, and we can actively do that through a strategic employee engagement program.”

Acts of Service is available to help any Elkhart County business design a community engagement program that works for them and serves the community’s needs. “There are so many ways businesses can give back,” says Ashley. “Acts of Service helps organizations navigate community engagement and create a lasting impact for their employees and the community.” 🌱



ABOVE: Genesis volunteers pause for a photo at Bashor Children’s Home.



ABOVE: Genesis volunteers with Acts of Service build a wheelchair ramp.



Building trails and pathways

CONNECT IN ELKHART COUNTY LEADING EFFORTS

Goal is creating a 130-mile network

Elkhart County is great at making things to move people. Thousands of recreational vehicles, boats and even motorcycles come together here so that people can travel with them.

Within the county, visionaries saw the possibilities in the abandoned, Pumpkin Vine Railroad corridor and a rutted path along a Goshen canal to create some of the first and best paths in Indiana.

New trails have emerged over the years, but now it's time to create a world-class trail system in a community known for how it helps people get moving.

The Community Foundation's Placemaking Committee is one of three groups of volunteers who award Community Investment Grants to make our community stronger. The Placemaking Committee's goal is to improve the quality of place in Elkhart County by working with community partners to invest in our backyard. Several years ago, each granting committee narrowed its focus down to two significant priorities to concentrate efforts on making a more considerable impact in Elkhart County. The Placemaking Committee chose vibrant downtowns and parks and trails as priority areas.

The committee members quickly realized how much we have to learn about parks and trails when we started gathering the various transportation and parks plans. There have been 20 of them involving 19 organizations since 2010. Hundreds of people in our community have been engaged in those conversations and efforts.

The Community Foundation partnered with YARD & Co., an urban growth firm, to help guide our exploration of these relevant plans. In the year working with the foundation and community stakeholders, YARD & Co. produced an implementation guide. With this guide the community can develop and execute a comprehensive mobility plan for Elkhart County.

Committed partners and agencies built trails that help Elkhart County residents and tourist move across our community. Additional trailmaking in this community of manufacturing industry trailblazers will require bringing more entities together and connecting the efforts.



We are on our way. Brittany Short agreed to join the effort as the project director. Brittany brings a wealth of experience to this role. Since 2011, she and her husband Spencer have owned and operated Pumpkinvine Cyclery in Middlebury.

And in 2020, Brittany stepped up as the president of the Friends of the Pumpkinvine board, the nonprofit entity that has overseen the development of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail and the move toward completion.

As a community, we can learn from the decades of work it took to craft the Pumpkinvine. Elkhart is building up its riverfront and the River District. Nappanee and Wakarusa are working on a trail connection. Middlebury is adding trails in addition to the Pumpkinvine.

So far, Elkhart County has 68 miles of bike lanes and trails. We aspire to be like other communities with more trails. Some involved in this effort have visited Greenville, South Carolina, where trails create a bike-friendly community.

We believe we can build a 130-mile network connecting many of the key communities with trails that provide safe and separate travel from roadways.

In Elkhart County, the Community Foundation hopes to leverage several million dollars of funds with other government and private sources to build this network.

Connect in Elkhart County is an outgrowth of Vibrant Communities, an effort the Community Foundation helped fund with the Elkhart County Convention & Visitors Bureau to identify the projects that would enhance residents' quality of life. "You can't successfully argue quality of life doesn't affect your community," said Goshen Mayor Jeremy Stutsman.

Stutsman and other local political leaders gathered in May to discuss involvement in Connect in Elkhart County. A meeting with planning staff members from the county, cities and towns followed in July. A public launch is being planned for this fall.

"Some of the pieces are in place," said Nappanee Mayor Phil Jenkins. "This effort will provide the overall vision. How do we all work together to make this happen?"

"If we are going to connect, now's the time," said Elkhart Mayor Rod Roberson. 🍀

BELOW: The Pumpkinvine Nature Trail is one of Elkhart County's trails to become part of a network.



Investing in change

EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE SEEKS TO PREPARE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FOR SUCCESS



The village has been working to raise a child, so to speak, for a long time, and the Elkhart County village is upgrading its approach.

A new initiative, led by the Community Foundation with Horizon Education Alliance, The SOURCE, and Crossroads United Way will address ways to help more children arrive at kindergarten ready to reach their full potential. The

initiative will focus on a systems-level approach, considering how the

various existing programs and services contribute to success and where opportunities for improvement exist.

Candy Yoder, chief program officer for the Community Foundation, has spent her entire career focused on the well-being of children. Others in the community have also done great work on that front. “It’s really clear there are many professionals with long history and experience who are committed to this work,” she says. “There is a great deal of interest. It’s time now to consider how the entire system can be improved.”

LEFT: Getting children ready to learn and succeed is the goal of an early childhood initiative in Elkhart County.

The Community Foundation has had an abiding interest in kids and families as an area of focus; community listening sessions consistently raise this as a top priority for the community. When areas of emphasis were approved by the board in 2020, early childhood development and education was selected for the Kids and Families Committee. Historically most grant funding has been awarded for singular programs and projects. This new initiative will identify a more collective and systemic approach for grant investments.

In September 2021, those leading the initiative started meeting with Tamarack Institute, which leads systems-level work in Canada to fight poverty. The tools and processes from that work can be applied to this area in Elkhart County.

Over the last number of months, more than 50 parents have come to listening sessions to help leaders better understand the challenges they face in raising children.

In May, at a quarterly meeting for the Elkhart County Child Dashboard, practitioners learned about the initiative and three action teams quickly formed at that meeting. Those groups have been meeting this summer to discuss:

- Maternal & Child Health
- Support for Young Families
- High-Quality Childcare & Learning Environments

In support of these initiatives, a larger community gathering is being planned for this autumn to equip community partners as they work together. The event will include reports from the three actions with prioritized opportunities identified. The featured speaker will be Dr. Dana Suskind, a professor of surgery and pediatrics and author who has researched the neuroscience of early child development.

The Community Foundation's Kids & Families Committee overseeing its Community Investment Grants in that space is in the process of reprioritizing its funding to support these system changes.

The "theory of change" that undergirds this work is that if a system results in children and mothers having positive health outcomes, having access to safe and stimulating environments, and families having access to the things they need to support children's positive development, then the community's children will enter kindergarten poised for success.

Yoder believes this is a great opportunity for the community to improve how its children succeed. "I'm very hopeful and excited," she says. "This is a long game, with a 10-year investment or longer. I think this is our best opportunity to transform our village." 🌱

"This is a long game, with a 10-year investment or longer. I think this is our best opportunity to transform our village."

— Candy Yoder, Chief Program Officer, Community Foundation

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Grants

CAREER PATHWAYS

The following Community Investment Grants were awarded from the Fund for Elkhart County to organizations or programs serving our Elkhart County residents.

BASHOR HOME Day Reporting Program	\$23,000
BAUGO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS Jintown Community Center	\$350,000
BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS SOUTHERN LAKE MICHIGAN REGION Elkhart County Mentor Recruitment	\$15,000
BUSHEL CRAFT FARM CORPORATION Farm-Based Internships	\$10,000
C.A.R.E. UNIVERSITY Operational Support	\$10,000
CONCORD COMMUNITY SCHOOLS Strategic Planning to Support Students Success	\$20,000
E3 ROBOTICS CENTER CNC Equipment	\$4,000
ELKHART EDUCATION FOUNDATION Summerscape Field Trips	\$15,000
ENFOCUS Talent Attraction and Civic Innovation	\$100,000
ENFOCUS Elkhart Center for Entrepreneurship	\$20,000
ENFOCUS Research: Social Service Labor Shortage	\$20,000

ETHOS Operational Support	\$200,000
ETHOS Operational Support	\$85,000
FISCHOFF NATIONAL CHAMBER MUSIC Arts-in-Education Residency	\$11,500
FIVE STAR LIFE Summer Program	\$15,000
GOSHEN THEATER Summer Drama Camp	\$5,000
GREATER ELKHART CHAMBER OF COMMERCE Business Diversity Initiative	\$24,000
HORIZON EDUCATION ALLIANCE Operational Support	\$150,000
HORIZON EDUCATION ALLIANCE Gallup Student Engagement Poll	\$22,606
HORIZON EDUCATION ALLIANCE Counseling Event	\$5,475
INDIANA BLACK EXPO - ELKHART CHAPTER Indiana University Education Conference	\$3,000
INDIANA BLACK EXPO - ELKHART CHAPTER Trail Blazer Awards	\$10,000
INDIANA BLACK EXPO - ELKHART CHAPTER Black Women Expo	\$5,000
LIFELINE Construction Program Tool Replacement	\$2,500

Career Pathways, continued

LIFELINE Summer Camp	\$17,500
SOUTH BEND ELKHART REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP Startup South Bend - Elkhart, <i>Year 3 of 3</i>	\$100,000
STABLE GROUNDS Capital Campaign	\$190,614
THE CROSSING Satellite Programs	\$25,000
TOLSON CENTER Project Fund, <i>Year 2 of 2</i>	\$82,518
ULEAD Simple Interactions Development Project	\$11,500
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME Center for Civic Innovation Internships, <i>Year 2 of 2</i>	\$39,040
WNIT Education Counts - Michiana	\$10,000
YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU OF ST JOSEPH COUNTY Capital Campaign	\$50,000
TOTAL	\$1,652,253

Grants

KIDS AND FAMILIES

The following Community Investment Grants were awarded from the Fund for Elkhart County to organizations or programs serving our Elkhart County residents.

ADEC Trauma Responsive Care Training	\$13,000
AGAPE MINISTRY Backpack Giveaway	\$5,500
AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS Home Fire Campaign <i>1:1 Challenge*</i>	\$5,000
BLESSED BEGINNINGS CARE CENTER Certification	\$62,000
CAMPUS CENTER FOR YOUNG CHILDREN Music Together	\$3,238
CENTER FOR COMMUNITY JUSTICE Operational Support	\$50,000
CENTER FOR COMMUNITY JUSTICE Community Conversations <i>1:1 Challenge*</i>	\$10,500
CENTER FOR HEALING AND HOPE Capital Campaign	\$75,000
CHILD AND PARENT SERVICES Healthy Families	\$140,000
CHILD AND PARENT SERVICES CEO Search	\$25,000
CHILD AND PARENT SERVICES Primary Prevention Expansion, <i>Year 2 of 3</i>	\$150,000
COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINIC Capital Campaign	\$150,000

Kids & Families, continued

CORNERSTONE CHRISTIAN MONTESSORI SCHOOL Building Repairs	\$18,000
ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS Parent Connection Expo	\$3,500
ELKHART COUNTY CLUBHOUSE Crisis Intervention Team Training	\$2,200
ELKHART COUNTY CLUBHOUSE Lexington House - A Clubhouse for Elkhart, <i>Year 2 of 3</i>	\$100,000
ENFOCUS Child Immunization Project ECHD	\$17,500
FAMILY CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT CENTER Exterior Building Upgrades	\$13,000
GIRLS ON THE RUN MICHIANA Operational Support	\$10,000
GIVEHEAR AKA HEARCARE CONNECTION Goshen Hearing Healthcare Clinic	\$5,000
GOSHEN COLLEGE ECoSistema Music Program, <i>Year 1 of 3</i>	\$35,000
GOSHEN PUBLIC LIBRARY Latinx and Hispanic Outreach	\$37,440
GREENCROFT COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION Capital Campaign	\$25,000
HOOSIERS FEEDING THE HUNGRY Operational Support	\$16,000
HORIZON EDUCATION ALLIANCE Operational Support	\$150,000
HORIZON EDUCATION ALLIANCE Early Childhood Initiative Support	\$24,500
HUBBARD HILL ESTATES Early Learning Capital Campaign	\$500,000

JOE'S KIDS INC. Elkhart County Fundraising 1:1 Challenge*	\$20,000
LACASA THRIVE Initiative	\$15,000
LACASA Roosevelt Center Gym Improvements	\$19,375
NORTHERN INDIANA HISPANIC HEALTH COALITION Thank You Brunch	\$2,000
OAKLAWN Data Action Mini Grant	\$10,000
PATHWAYS RETREAT Strategic Planning	\$3,325
RIBBON OF HOPE Capital Campaign	\$20,000
RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE OF MICHIANA Elkhart County Fundraising 1:1 Challenge*	\$10,000
RYAN'S PLACE Capital Campaign	\$250,000
RYAN'S PLACE Professional Development	\$7,500
TOLSON CENTER Project Fund, Year 3 of 3	\$287,052
WOMEN'S CARE CENTER Operational Support	\$100,000
TOTAL	\$2,390,630

*Challenge grants awarded, full funding is dependent on the organization's fulfillment of the challenge.

Grants

OPPORTUNITY FUND

The following Community Investment Grants were awarded from the Fund for Elkhart County to improve the quality of life in our communities. This applies to all the grants, and more specific detail is found in the descriptions.

MEMBERSHIPS AND SPONSORSHIPS	\$266,727
ACTS OF SERVICE Program Support	\$100,000
CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY Elkhart Community Engagement	\$45,006
ELKHART COMMUNITY SCHOOLS Priority Audit	\$55,000
ENFOCUS Institute for Entrepreneurial Communities	\$50,000
GREATER ELKHART CHAMBER OF COMMERCE Business Diversity Initiative	\$9,000
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY Pre-Capital Campaign Planning Support	\$12,500
LATINOS PRO EDUCATION Hispanic Heritage Celebration Sponsor	\$5,000
SOUTH BEND ELKHART REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP Operational Support	\$100,000
SUSANNA'S KITCHEN Relocation Expenses	\$2,835
TOTAL	\$646,068

Grants

PLACEMAKING

The following Community Investment Grants were awarded from the Fund for Elkhart County to organizations or programs serving our Elkhart County residents.

ANABAPTIST MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY Elkhart Black History Project	\$17,000
CITY OF ELKHART Riverwalk Grand Prix	\$5,000
CONNECT IN ELKHART COUNTY Project Director	\$25,000
DOWNTOWN GOSHEN First Fridays	\$10,000
ELKHART CIVIC THEATER Summer Serenade Series	\$3,000
ELKHART CIVIC THEATER Seasonal Support	\$10,000
ELKHART COUNTY 4-H FAIR Heritage Park Annex	\$25,000
ELKHART COUNTY 4-H FAIR 4-H Fair	\$10,000
ELKHART COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU Epic Art on the Heritage Trail	\$75,000
ELKHART COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY History Leadership Institute	\$4,200
ELKHART COUNTY SYMPHONY Operational Support	\$90,000
ELKHART ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER EnviroFest	\$2,000

Placemaking, continued

ELKHART FESTIVALS Jazz Festival	\$50,000
ENFOCUS City of Elkhart Parks Passport Pilot	\$11,000
FRIENDS OF THE LERNER Endowment Initiative	\$200,000
FRIENDS OF THE PUMPKINVINE NATURE TRAIL Completing the Pumpkinvine 1:1 Challenge*	\$75,000
GOSHEN ART HOUSE Seasonal Support	\$5,000
GOSHEN ARTS AND EVENTS Arts on the Millrace	\$3,500
GOSHEN COLLEGE Music Center Seasonal Support	\$10,000
GOSHEN FARMER'S MARKET Share the Bounty	\$5,000
GOSHEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY Strategic Planning	\$3,000
GOSHEN HOSPITAL Capital Campaign	\$500,000
GOSHEN THEATER Seasonal Support	\$10,000
GREATER ELKHART CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2nd Floor Furnace	\$12,054
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY Capital Campaign	\$250,000
HALL OF HEROES 2022 Comic Con	\$5,000

HALL OF HEROES 2021 Comic Con	\$10,000
INDIANA BLACK EXPO - ELKHART CHAPTER Soul Music & Jazz on the Green	\$5,000
MIDDLEBURY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE Summer & Fall Festivals	\$5,000
MIDDLEBURY THEN AND NOW Seasonal Support	\$5,000
MIDWEST MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART Seasonal Support	\$5,000
NAPPANEE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE Apple Festival	\$10,000
NAPPANEE ARTS COUNCIL Tunnel of Love	\$25,000
PREMIER ARTS Art Walk	\$7,000
PREMIER ARTS Seasonal Support	\$10,000
RESERVED Pathways and Trails Initiative	\$250,000
RUTHMERE FOUNDATION Seasonal Support	\$5,000
TOWN OF WAKARUSA Memorial Park Splash Pad	\$10,000

Placemaking, continued

TOWN OF BRISTOL Riverwalk Engineering Study	\$14,000
TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY River Mill Trail Project	\$116,000
VISIT NAPPANEE Visit Nappanee Events <i>1:1 Challenge*</i>	\$7,000
WAKARUSA MAPLE SYRUP HERITAGE Maple Syrup Festival	\$5,000
WELLFIELD BOTANIC GARDENS Welcome Center	\$1,176,911
WELLFIELD BOTANIC GARDENS Seasonal Support	\$15,000
TOTAL	\$3,096,665

**Challenge grants awarded, full funding is dependent on the organization's fulfillment of the challenge.*

Grants

MATCHING GRANT

The Community Foundation of Elkhart County increases the impact of giving by matching 25 percent of contributions to endowment funds. All cumulative gifts made by individuals totaling \$100,000 were matched in this fiscal year with an additional \$25,000 to the corresponding fund. Your generosity establishes more milestones as we progress together in our community.

25% MATCHING GRANT	\$796,398
TOTAL	\$796,398



THERE'S MORE OF THE STORY TO TELL

To see additional content from this year's stories, including video and photo galleries, go to inspiringgood.org/ar2022



CONTRIBUTORS

A heartfelt thank you to the many contributors who helped put together this report, including:

WRITERS

Marshall V. King
Sara Wesche
Lauren King

DESIGN

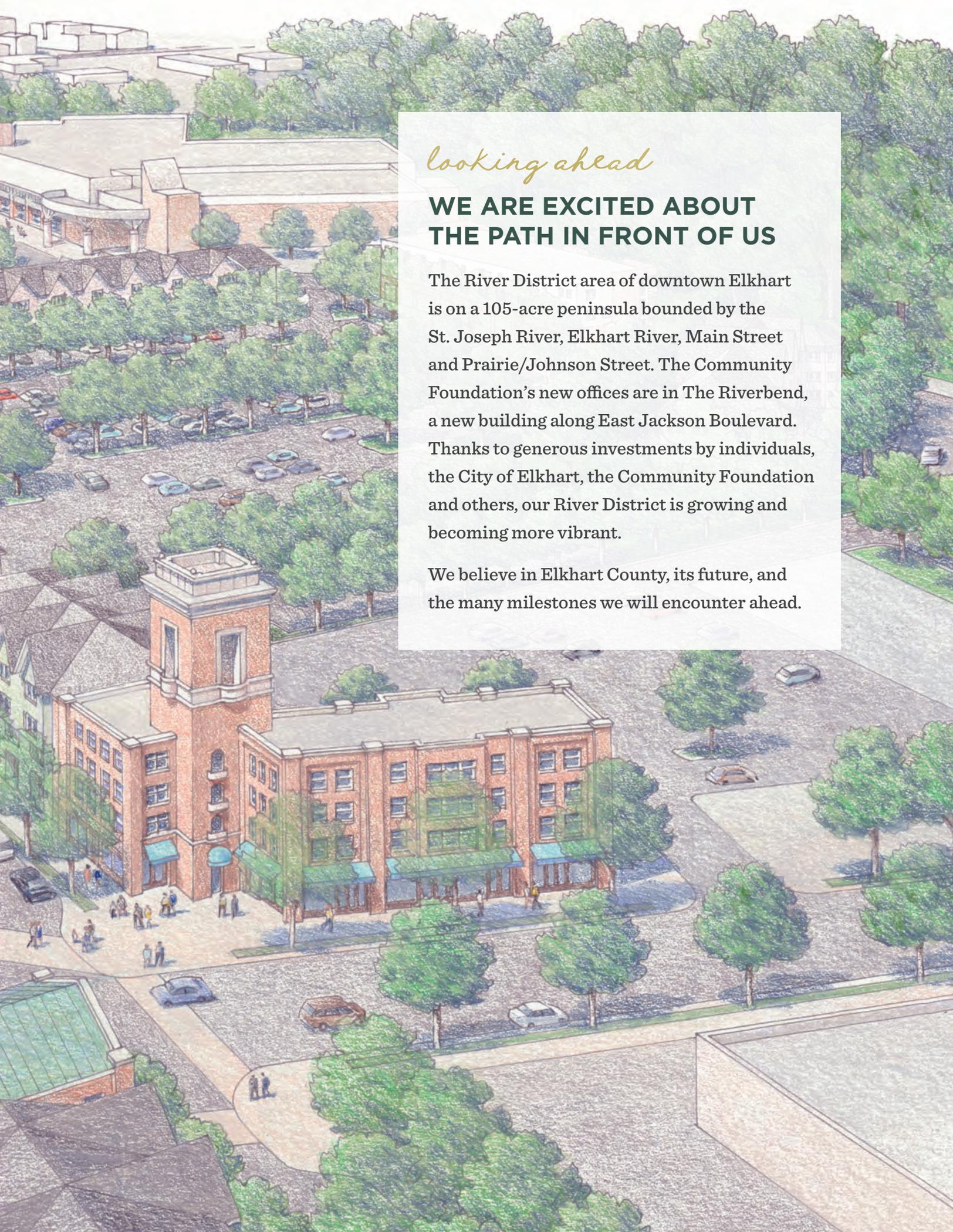
Kruse Design LLC

PHOTOGRAPHY

Grant Beachy
Bryan Chris
LightBox
Derald Gray
Marshall V. King
Micah Gilbert

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looking ahead

WE ARE EXCITED ABOUT THE PATH IN FRONT OF US

The River District area of downtown Elkhart is on a 105-acre peninsula bounded by the St. Joseph River, Elkhart River, Main Street and Prairie/Johnson Street. The Community Foundation's new offices are in The Riverbend, a new building along East Jackson Boulevard. Thanks to generous investments by individuals, the City of Elkhart, the Community Foundation and others, our River District is growing and becoming more vibrant.

We believe in Elkhart County, its future, and the many milestones we will encounter ahead.



240 E. JACKSON BLVD.
SUITE 104
ELKHART, IN 46516

(574) 295-8761
INSPIRINGGOOD.ORG
INFO@INSPIRINGGOOD.ORG

