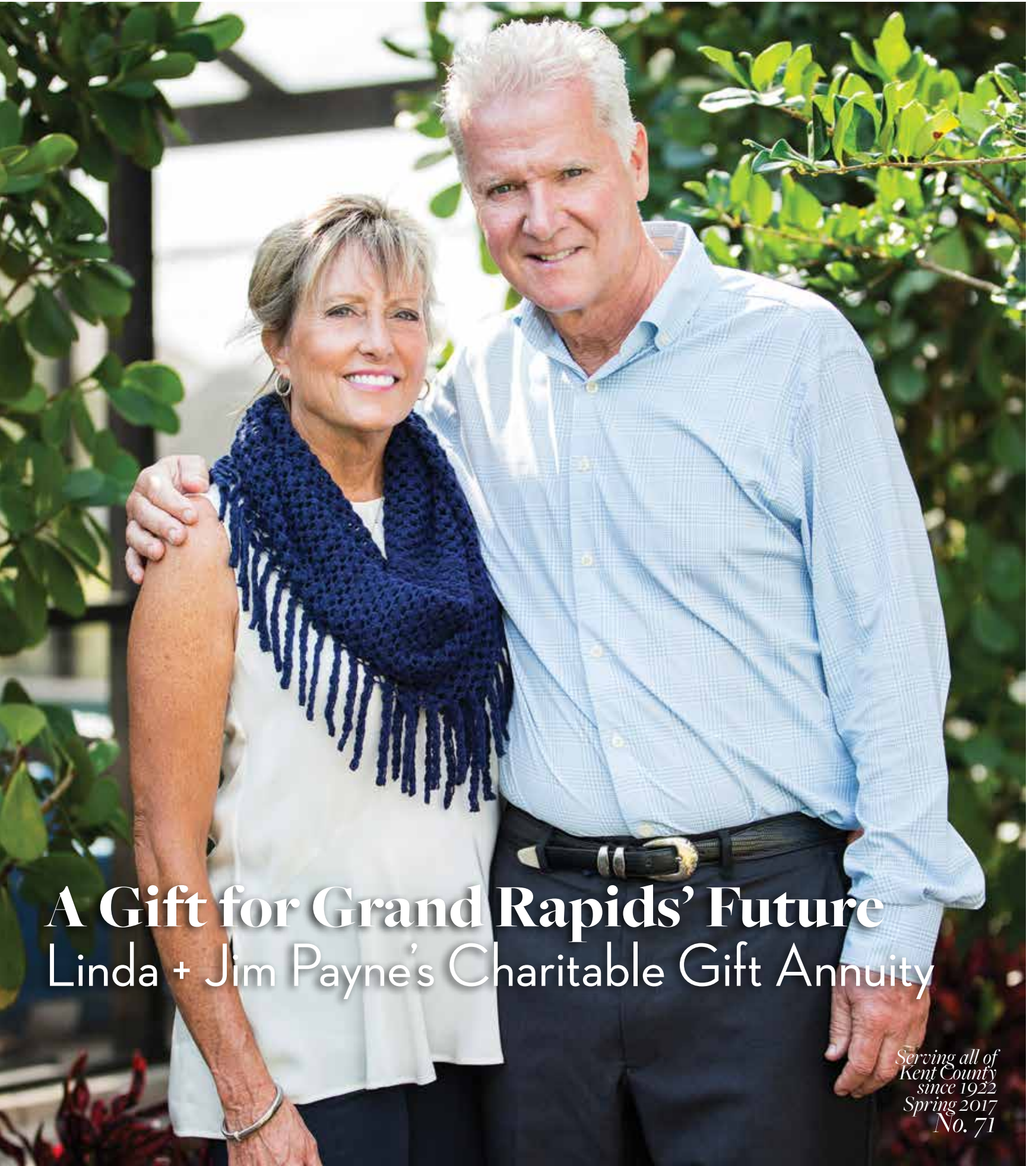


CURRENT



A Gift for Grand Rapids' Future Linda + Jim Payne's Charitable Gift Annuity

*Serving all of
Kent County
since 1922
Spring 2017
No. 71*

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About the Cover
Metz Legacy Society members,
Linda and Jim Payne.



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CHALLENGE
SCHOLARS

Small Investment, Big Results

If given the opportunity, would you go back to your freshman year of high school?

A bigger school, new faces, social challenges, increased class rigor and expectations, navigating who you are and where you fit in ... It all adds up to an especially precarious time in a young person's life.

From research we know that, nationally, failure and dropout rates are higher in ninth grade than in any other grade. The consequences of that failure are staggering: between 70 to 80 percent of students who fail during their freshman year will not graduate from high school.

Working with Grand Rapids Public Schools staff and Union High School leadership, we took this data very seriously as our first class of Challenge Scholars entered the ninth grade this past fall. Grand Rapids Community Foundation awarded \$13,000 to Union High School to implement a plan that would ease the transition for students to high school and improve outcomes.

FROM THIS MODEST INVESTMENT WE ARE SEEING TERRIFIC RESULTS!

Union High School Principal Karl Nelson assigned Assistant Principal Aaron Roussey to work with the ninth grade team to develop a plan. They completely redesigned ninth grade and adopted an "academy" model.

Each student is now assigned to an academic strategies class, based on his or her academic data, to receive personalized academic support. Once they achieve mastery, they may join an elective class and are then monitored for continued success. Students who are particularly at risk are referred to success coaches from Grand Rapids Community College or student advocates, who work one-on-one with students to keep them focused and on track.

To keep students engaged and support attendance, the ninth grade academy is also divided into teams. Each team accrues points through good attendance, participating in school events or passing classes. The winning team each month is celebrated with a fun event or special lunch.



"The biggest shift has been with the climate and culture within the ninth grade. We have created a healthy atmosphere of competition that has allowed students to support one another and have fun in meeting expectations," Roussey said. He attributes the transformation to a dedicated ninth grade teaching staff that has fully embraced the program and invested countless hours in making it a success.

Finally, excellent performance, growth and attendance are celebrated at family recognition nights held each marking period. Students are awarded medals and honored for their achievements.

So far the results of this intentional focus on student data, support and recognition have been noteworthy:

- After the first marking period, 83 percent of ninth graders passed all core classes. In the prior year, the rate was 62 percent.
- At the end of the first semester, 78 ninth graders were named to the honor roll, 50 more than had been at the same point in the prior year.

"The \$13,000 Community Foundation grant has fostered a team atmosphere and motivated students to excel on a daily basis. We believe we have started to change the academic climate within the building. The grant has provided us funds to create programs to enhance student participation, parent involvement and academic achievement," Roussey said.

**Keep up the great work, Union High School!
Go, Challenge Scholars Class of 2020!**

CO.A.S.



DONORS MAKE IT HAPPEN

If you'd like to explore ways that you can support the Challenge Scholars program, please contact Marilyn Zack, vice president of development, at 616.454.1751 x127. You may also make an online donation at any time to support the program at www.givegr.org/challengescholars.

LEFT: Ninth graders from Union High on a recent visit to Grand Rapids Community College.

CHALLENGE SCHOLARS



Metz Legacy Society Profile:
Linda and Jim Payne

“Given the Community Foundation’s integrity and financial position, we know our fund will always stay in the community.”

of the original gift—for as long as they live. This giving tool helped them with a tax deduction too. “It all fit into our estate plan,” Jim said.

After they are gone, the residuum of the gift annuity will create the James B. and Linda Payne Fund, a Field of Interest Fund to help children and adults living in poverty. The fund is intentionally broad. “We really don’t know what those needs will be in the future, so we’re trusting that the Community Foundation will do the best job in making those decisions. Given the Community Foundation’s integrity and financial position, we know our fund will always stay in the community,” Jim said.

At present, Jim and Linda support a wide variety of organizations in the community including Habitat for Humanity, Kids’ Food Basket, the Mental Health Foundation of West Michigan, their church, St. Paul the Apostle and Jim’s alma-mater, Catholic Central High School. “We also provide full-tuition scholarships for two students at Catholic Central. We feel very strongly if one child can have an education, food and shelter, they will thrive.” Linda said.

“Grand Rapids is a special place to us, and we’re pleased to be able to give back,” Jim said.



Marilyn Zack



Jenine Prus

To learn more about the Metz Legacy Society and creating a life income gift, contact one of the Community Foundation’s development team members: Marilyn or Jenine at 616.454.1751.

Jim and Linda Payne are native Grand Rapidians who have been married for 34 years with a life that has taken them around the world and back again to this place they call home. They’re proud that their daughter Kelly and son Ryan have remained in Grand Rapids and a third-generation Payne—granddaughter Sophia Monroe—was born to Ryan and his wife, Tiler almost a year ago. Now empty-nesters (except for Bella, English Cream Golden Retriever) Jim and Linda winter in Sarasota and spend the rest of the year in Grand Rapids. They enjoy playing golf in both places, have fun cooking together and are huge fans of Michigan State and the Chicago Cubs.

Jim has had a career with Amway Corporation for 37 years and currently serves as Vice-Chairman. In his early years with the company, Jim was involved in the expansion of their international markets and the Payne family had the unique opportunity to travel all over the world and lived in Bangkok, Thailand for 3 1/2 years. They also lived in Munich, Germany, Sydney, Australia and Tokyo, Japan.

Their planned gifts to Grand Rapids Community Foundation are deferred gift annuities, a suggestion from their professional advisor, Dirk Hoffius. The donation they made is invested, and, after a specified amount of time will pay the couple an annual income—a percentage

New Grants!

Land Conservancy of West Michigan How much: \$400,000

Purpose: This grant was used to purchase the Highlands Golf Course, in partnership with Blandford Nature Center, to create 121 acres of permanent community green space and natural discovery area for public use.

Why it matters: The Land Conservancy presented us with an extremely rare opportunity to expand green space in our growing city and we simply could not pass it up. The land will be returned to a natural state with a focused habitat restoration effort. This is good for the land, Blandford Nature Center and all people in our community who want to explore nature close to home.



Top: A few of the 100 acres of the Highlands Golf Club.

National Kidney Foundation of Michigan How much: \$117,500

Purpose: This grant will be used to run a yearlong program for people at risk for type 2 diabetes. A lifestyle coach will help them reduce their risk by exploring healthy eating habits, becoming more physically active and making other behavior changes. Participants will be referred through partnerships with local healthcare providers.



Why it matters: Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure in the U.S. Type 2 diabetes disproportionately impacts Hispanic and African American adults in greater Grand Rapids. Many people can avoid it by taking preventive measures.



Left: The Highlands (outlined in green) and Blandford (outlined in red).

Hispanic Center of Western Michigan How much: \$50,000

Purpose: This grant will be used to create a business plan for adding business management, skilled trades and STEM programs to the Hispanic Center's current training programs. They'll do this in partnership with public schools, community colleges and trade schools.

Why it matters: The Hispanic Center of Western Michigan is uniquely positioned to play a significant and leading role in increasing access to career training opportunities in the Latino community.

SMALL, BUT MIGHTY GRANTS

■ **Grand Rapids African American Museum and Archives**
How much: \$10,000

■ **Local First Educational Foundation**
How much: \$10,000

■ **The Midwest Tech Project**
How much: \$10,000

■ **Actors' Theatre Company**
How much: \$7,500

■ **Special Olympics Michigan**
How much: \$5,000



DONORS MAKE IT HAPPEN!

We appreciate the generosity of the following funds for making these grants possible:

- George M. and Lucinda Ann Edison Memorial Trust Fund
- Charles Evenson Fund for the Environment
- Fund for Community Good
- Fund for Health
- Leonard and Eileen Newman Fund for the Arts
- Elizabeth J. Steed Johnson Fund for Health
- Herbert and Doris Vander Mey Fund for Community Good



Matt and Stephanie Muscat

Enthusiasm and laughter bubbles from Stephanie and Matt Muscat—whether they’re talking about work,¹ fun² or food.³ They’re crazy positive about Grand Rapids, as most transplants are. She’s from Manchester⁴ via Livonia and Grand Valley State University. He’s also from the east side of the state and moved here to be with her!⁵ They’re happy to be settled in the Knapp and Ball Street neighborhood, and they’re expecting baby Muscat in April. As new philanthropists, they’re focusing on two causes: education and health. “Education and health touch all people in the community. If we support those organizations, it has an impact on everyone,” Matt said.

WHY GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION?

“When our friends Ben and Emily VerWys⁶ told us about Grand Rapids Community Foundation, we were impressed. We can make our donation in one place and know that it helps all the things we care about most,” Matt said. “We know what we care about, but we don’t have time to learn all the details about which specific organizations to support. The Community Foundation really encompasses things we care about,” Stephanie said. The Community Foundation will help them focus their giving and provides information about nonprofits and issues that matter to them.

“Our giving, it’s kind of been all over the place the last few years. Every year we support Gilda’s Club a little bit through their events. It’s easy to support the events they do. We have family members who have had cancer, so that matters to us,” Matt said. They’ve also supported the Power of Education⁷ Foundation. “And I’ve never been able say no to a Cub Scout or Girl Scout selling me anything,” Matt said, laughing.

WHAT DO YOU GET FROM GIVING?

“I’ve been here for just over eight years. Seeing where Grand Rapids was and the change that philanthropic donations have made is tremendous. You can really see where people’s donations have made a difference in making the community better,” Stephanie said. They find that the culture of giving in West Michigan is infectious. “The culture here makes it fun to be part of giving back. You don’t have to give a lot to be part of the philanthropy community⁸ here,” Matt said.

¹ He is the marketing director at Treadstone Funding. She’s the human resources recruiting manager at Metron Integrated Health Systems and a licensed personal trainer. He also is adjunct faculty at Davenport University and owns a digital marketing firm, Maltese Marketing, a nod to his ethnic heritage.

² They love to “be out and about” or traveling and are often on the lookout for bargain airfares. And working out. “Every day,” Stephanie said.

³ Stephanie and Matt love Grand Rapids’ food scene and like to be the first to try out any new restaurant that’s opening around town. “West Michigan has the best food in the country,” Matt said.

⁴ England.

⁵ Way to go, man.

⁶ Thanks for the endorsement, Ben and Emily VerWys. They were featured as One Hundred New Philanthropists in Current, December 2015.

⁷ It helps build schools and support education in Haiti.

⁸ Time, talent or treasure—that’s what makes a philanthropist.

We’re having a social gathering of our 50+ (so far) One Hundred New Philanthropists in April. If you are thinking of joining this group, there’s no better time than now. We’ll be noshing and talking about what the Community Foundation’s 100th anniversary should look like and the role the One Hundred New should play. Give Jenine a call if you want an invitation.



Jeff and Laura Hill

After college at Western Michigan University,¹ where they met, Jeff and Laura Hill saw a lot of their friends heading out of state. But these two devoted Michiganders² wanted to find a place to call home where they could be close to both of their families. They chose Grand Rapids, moving here even before they had jobs,³ and have been here for more than 20 years now. They love their neighborhood in the Forest Hills Eastern area, where their three teenage daughters attend school. “It’s full of people who came to Grand Rapids from other places and really appreciate what the community has to offer,” Jeff said. He works for Third Coast Real Estate, and Laura is with Priority Health. Jeff’s work makes them interested in responsible urban growth and development. “I’m aware of the housing and homelessness issues in the city. I wouldn’t call it a huge passion—but we’ve supported Habitat for Humanity and Well House⁴ because of the need,” Jeff said. When they’re not working or involved with school activities, Jeff is an avid cyclist and enjoys fat tire winter biking as well as road and mountain biking. Laura likes to read whenever she gets the chance and usually spends down time trying to keep up with their girls.

WHAT DO YOU GET FROM GIVING?

“We give because we know we are very fortunate to live in a great area with great schools. We make a comfortable living, but we understand that we’re not the norm. There are a lot of people in the community who struggle—to make ends meet and put food on the table—even though they work harder than I⁵ do every day. A lot of our giving is relationship based,” Jeff said. He went through Leadership Grand Rapids and Leadership Advantage.⁶ “We tend to give to organizations where we’ve met people,

whether that be the executive director or someone in development at a nonprofit. That relationship gives us the inside view,” he said. They also support the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, as one of their daughters has had diabetes since age five.

WHY GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION?

“I’ve been involved with the Community Foundation for the last five years or so. I like how it selects community programs that best meet the needs of an area or community—rather than us trying to find the best place for it go. The Community Foundation has a lot of heart⁷ and always seems to be at the forefront of addressing needs in the community,” Jeff said. “My parents always gave to their local community foundation. It’s a great way to make our individual contributions go farther, and I like that I can feel good about where our money is going,” Laura said.

¹ Go, Broncos!

² He’s from Lansing, she’s from Saginaw.

³ That shows some faith in yourself and your prospective community!

⁴ Both Habitat and Well House are Community Foundation grantees.

⁵ Jeff also said that Laura works harder than he does, but that’s an aside.

⁶ Programs for emerging leaders in Grand Rapids, both sponsored through the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce.

⁷ We think so too!



ONE HUNDRED NEW PHILANTHROPISTS

As Grand Rapids Community Foundation moves toward its 100th anniversary in 2022, we want to recognize people’s philanthropy. That’s why we created our One Hundred New Philanthropists campaign. This outreach effort asks people to do just four simple things:

- Make an annual gift to the Community Foundation.
- Volunteer in the community.
- Make a provision in your estate plan for the Community Foundation.
- Share your philanthropic story with others.



Thanks to Jeff + Laura and Matt + Stephanie for sharing their stories here. If you are interested in becoming part of One Hundred New Philanthropists, please contact Jenine Prus at 616.454.1751 or email her at jprus@grfoundation.org

LOCAL FUNDERS COLLABORATE TO HELP GROW HEALTHY NONPROFITS

This year marks 15 years that the Nonprofit Technical Assistance (NPTA) Fund has collaborated with up to 14 Grand Rapids-area funders.

The NPTA Fund has done incredible things to boost the capacity and infrastructure of Kent County nonprofits. It awards grants so nonprofits can increase their capacity in strategic planning, IT, fund development, governance, communications and human resources.

Grand Rapids Community Foundation holds, administers and donates each year to the NPTA Fund. The Community Foundation has awarded a total of \$610,000 to the NPTA Fund—including \$40,000 in its most recent grant round.

NPTA Fund Success Stories

OUR HOPE ASSOCIATION

Our Hope provides substance abuse treatment for women. It received \$9,900 to transition client records from a paper and physical filing system to an electronic medical record database. They recognized that doing so would promote administrative, financial and clinical productivity and efficiency.

LITERACY CENTER OF WEST MICHIGAN

The Literacy Center received \$5,000 to develop a marketing plan. The result was a set of clear organizational messages for staff and board members, website content, a new logo and digital strategy. This work helped the Literacy Center increase the number of volunteer tutors paired with learners by 26 percent in one year's time, thus increasing organizational impact.

JOHN KNOX COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

John Knox received \$9,700 to work with a fund development consultant. The deliverables included an annual appeal strategy, a newsletter template, a community ambassador program and audience personas for most effectively engaging people interested in its mission.

UNITED CHURCH OUTREACH MINISTRY

UCOM first received a \$6,225 grant to restructure and improve board and staff leadership. These foundational improvements helped UCOM use other NPTA awards to successfully address fund development practices and planning, marketing and outreach, technology upgrades and program evaluation.

GRAND RAPIDS CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

In late 2015, Grand Rapids Children's Museum received \$6,852 to engage Partners for a Racism Free Community (PRFC) for a diversity and inclusion project. PRFC is helping the museum assess its current practices, explore best practices and come up with an action plan to take its inclusive practices to the next level.

NPTA FUND FACTS



Top 10 Grant Recipients by Amount Received

NONPROFIT RECIPIENT	TOTAL GRANTS
Heartside Ministry	\$52,719
Literacy Center of West Michigan	\$49,200
North Kent Community Services	\$46,645
United Church Outreach Ministry	\$43,725
Girls Choral Academy	\$38,360
Grand Rapids Opportunities for Women (GROW)	\$37,575
Women's Resource Center	\$36,921
Our Hope Association	\$36,749
Safe Haven Ministries	\$34,774
West Michigan Environmental Action Council	\$33,277

To learn more, please visit www.nptafund.org

Making It Happen

Hear what Nicole Notario-Risk, NPTA Fund program manager, enjoys most about this work: "What I love most about working with the NPTA Fund is being able to offer resources that can be difficult to access from traditional funding sources. The day-to-day work of nonprofit organizations is by nature very challenging. NPTA Fund grants are not always the most flashy in purpose, but if they can help our organizations save time and resources, plan and operate at a high level of quality, and work together more productively, then these are important investments."



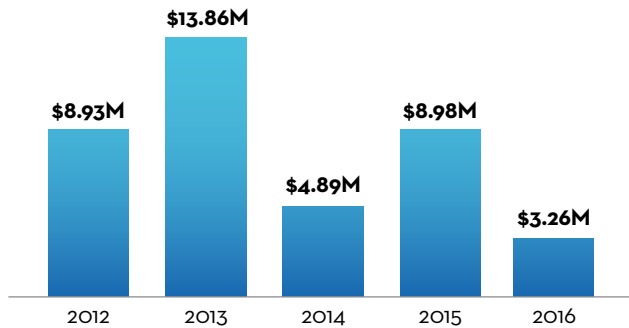
Simplify Your Giving With a Donor Advised Fund

Donor Advised Funds (DAF) account for a quarter of the Community Foundation's total assets and about a third of our annual grantmaking to nonprofits. This is an integral part of our work and as such we have a team dedicated to providing excellent philanthropic services to donors.

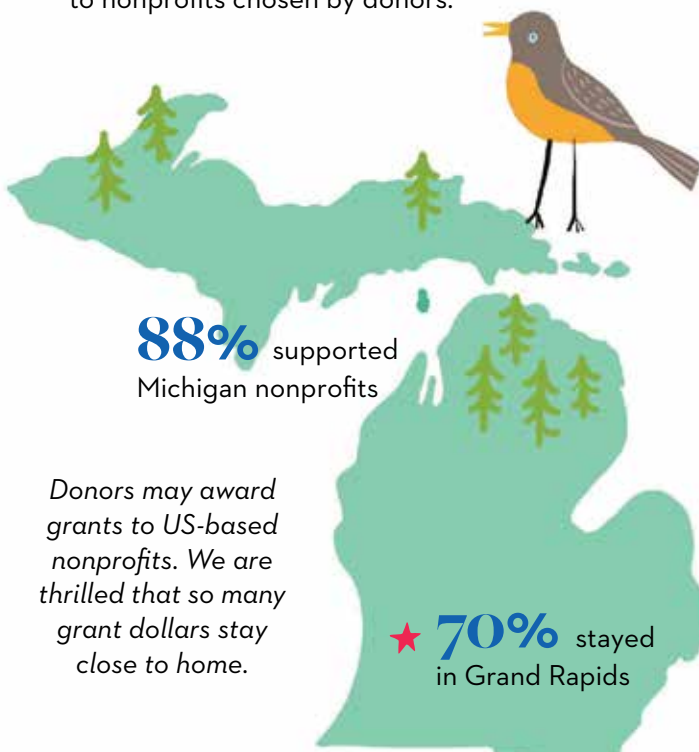
The Community Foundation has offered DAFs for nearly 30 years and we only see them growing in popularity. Here are some facts about our DAF program:

ANNUAL GIFTS TO DAFS

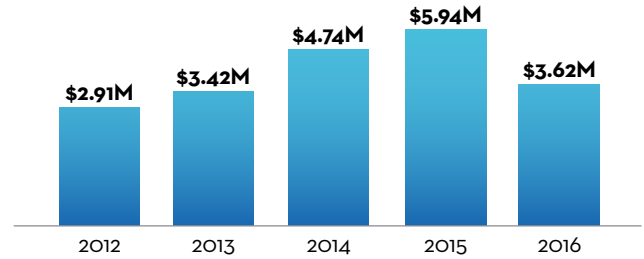
\$40M in gifts have been made to DAFs



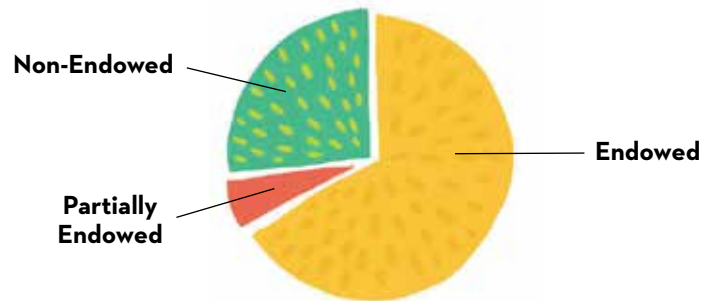
Over the past 5 years, DAFs have awarded **3,200 grants** to nonprofits chosen by donors.



ANNUAL GRANTS FROM DAFS



NUMBER OF DAFS ADMINISTERED BY THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



THE GRANT AREAS MOST SUPPORTED BY OUR DAFS INCLUDE:



If you'd like to learn more about the flexibility and benefits of a Donor Advised Fund, contact us! Shaun works with donors establishing new funds. Jonse and Liz offer personalized service to donors once the funds are established. The team can be reached at 616.454.1751.



Shaun Shira



Jonse Young



Liz Warners

WGUV's Perspectives in Philanthropy

For more than a decade, Grand Rapids Community Foundation has had a regular spot on WGUV's Morning Show with Shelley Irwin. Heard on the second Monday of the month at 10 a.m., President Diana Sieger (or sometimes a stand-in guest) talks with Shelley about a variety of philanthropy, giving and community topics. You can hear the show on 88.5 FM. "It's a challenge to present a topic every month, but it gives me the opportunity to think about local and national philanthropy issues that people might want to hear about," Diana said.

Accreditation = Community Foundation Excellence

In December 2016, Grand Rapids Community Foundation earned National Standards re-accreditation from the Council on Foundations (COF) in Arlington, Virginia. The arduous process requires U.S. community foundations to document their policies for donor services, investments, grantmaking and administration. The documentation gets reviewed by a community foundations expert from a panel appointed by the Community Foundations National Standards Board, a COF supporting organization.



Excellence. Accountability. Impact.™

"The National Standards accreditation says this house is in order. It is excellent validation of the work we do on behalf of our donors and our community," said Diana Sieger, Community Foundation president.

Special thanks to Rená Guttrich for leading this effort.

MEET OUR NEW TRUSTEES



Ana Ramirez-Saenz



Ric Roane



Amy Ruis

Grand Rapids Community Foundation recently elected three people as Trustees: **Ana Ramirez-Saenz**, founder and CEO of La Fuente Consulting; **Ric Roane**, partner at Warner Norcross & Judd; and **Amy Ruis**, owner of Art of the Table and co-owner of Aperitivo. Each will serve two four-year terms.

Ana: "I am so honored to be joining the Community Foundation Board. I have great respect for the organization and all the great work they have done. I am looking forward to being part of efforts that will continue to bring great smiles and opportunities to children all over our community."

Ric: "Serving as a Trustee moves me beyond serving as a longtime donor and Donor Advised Fund grantmaker—to using my passion and leadership skills toward future growth and direction for the Community Foundation. My new role with the Community Foundation supercharges my giving ethic and commitment to our community and the people we support."

Amy: "I have known the Community Foundation for a long time from the 'outside.' I'm looking forward to an inside look at all that is happening in our great community as far as giving—where it comes from and how, where it goes to and why. I'm looking forward to having a different perspective on our city and all that is happening in the giving community. I have been volunteering in neighborhood and business capacities for 14 years. While I don't intend to quit that entirely, I feel like it's a good time to focus a bit more outwardly in the community to see what makes Grand Rapids tick. I enjoy being a creative thinker on boards, working together to make good happen, and this is a place that does just that."

OTHER BOARD AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

Chair of the Board for 2017 is **Carlos Sanchez**, director of the Latino Business and Economic Development Center at Ferris State University; Vice Chair is **Christina Keller**, president of Cascade Business Team at Cascade Engineering. Immediate Past Chair is retired banker **Laurie Finney Beard**.

Retiring Trustees include **Don Lubbers**, president emeritus at Grand Valley State University; **Bob Roth**, president and CEO of RoMan Manufacturing; and **Wayman P. Britt**, Kent County assistant administrator.

Kathy Vogelsang, chief investment officer at Van Andel Institute, is serving as Investment Review Committee Chair. New to the Investment Review Committee are **Allan Hoekstra**, EDP Management president; **Edward Mikolay**, Municipal Employees Retirement System director of private markets; and **Wayne Wilson**, Priority Health senior vice president, government markets.

Matthew Osterhaven, assurance senior manager at Crowe Horwath, is Chair of the Audit Committee. New to that committee are **David Centers**, GVSU accounting instructor; **Thomas Kyros**, Varnum partner; **Janice Oshinski**, Viking Group CFO; and **Carlos Sanchez**, director of the Latino Business and Economic Development Center at Ferris State University.

Upward for Jonse Young!

Grand Rapids Community Foundation is proud to announce that Johngerlyn "Jonse" Young, director of philanthropic services, has been selected to participate in the Council on Foundations' 2017 Career Pathways program. This intensive, yearlong leadership development program is designed to foster diversity and excellence among the philanthropic sector's senior executives. Participants will graduate from the program with the knowledge, experience and professional networks to be more effective in their current roles. This helps them contribute more broadly to the field of philanthropy and positions them to compete successfully for senior-level foundation positions.



"The Council on Foundations said that getting into this year's Career Pathways program was 'extraordinarily competitive.' We're honored and excited that Jonse was selected. Her leadership skills have always been evident here at the Community Foundation, and we're pleased that she'll have the opportunity to be involved nationally," said Diana Sieger, Community Foundation president.



MY COMMUNITY MATTERS

Across the Aisle... Crossing the Chasm!

To say we are living in a highly charged atmosphere would be an understatement. Some people are keeping their thoughts to themselves out of fear of reprisal, and others are quite upfront about their opinions. If you are quiet, then you are judged as being complacent in the midst of swirling rhetoric. It is loud out there. Relationships are hanging in the balance, and, frankly, these are troubling times.

Remember when there was honor in reaching across the political aisle to find common ground? Those days have faded away. Now it would take an Olympic long jump champion to cross the chasm of polarization, name calling and accusations.

Amid this rancor, I am more committed than ever to find a path to restoring civility.

A first step on this path is inclusion—involving each and every one of us in dialogue and creating solutions. Inclusion is not a liberal or conservative value; rather, it is learning about one another and finding value in all of us.

How are we doing locally? We often talk about our community's collaborative nature as "how we do things in our community." Will this collaboration fracture now?

I certainly hope not, but I do think that it is time for us to examine who is really at the decision-making tables in our community. Those who are perceived to have power may not readily want to share power. Yet, if they did, it would likely result in a stronger, more positive outcome. I sense a willingness to do this, although it's still a stretch for some.



In our Challenge Scholars program, we recognize the importance of reaching out to the students, families and residents involved with this effort. From the beginning, we sought feedback and involved the community in providing needed insight so we could move forward together. Including all voices—parents, students, teachers and community stakeholders—has made the program stronger and better.

For example, because Harrison Park and Westwood Middle aren't the only schools feeding students into Union High School, people noticed an inequity. Only those who had become Challenge Scholars in sixth grade had extra support to become college bound. So we made a change. Now any Union High graduate who has been at the high school for four years and graduates with a 2.0 GPA or better will be eligible for two years of tuition-free college at Grand Rapids Community College.

More than 20 years ago, the City of Grand Rapids began the Voices and Visions planning project to detail the future of (primarily) our downtown. Grand Rapids Community Foundation was part of this process, and the report

helped fashion what downtown could become. Nevertheless, it was difficult to convince persons who were in perceived and real power at the time that including all voices could result in a stronger and positive outcome.

Fast forward to more recent efforts such as GR Forward and other planning processes for specific neighborhoods in Grand Rapids, and we see more intentional effort to include many people in the processes. This is not easy work; yet, it will result in a more sustainable and vibrant outcome for our future for everyone, not just a segment of our community.

Paul Doyle, founder and CEO of Inclusive Performance Strategies, says, "Inclusive growth is the concept that equitable opportunity for all members of a community to participate in growth will benefit every sector of society." And he further states that "embracing inclusion is a mandatory prerequisite for growth in the new global economy."

It is critical that we bring hope and opportunity to the forefront for everyone. Who wouldn't want that as we build a strong robust community? I see this as an opportunity for Grand Rapids to continue to differentiate itself.

In the coming months, I will share strategies the Community Foundation is developing that stem from a statement we call our "North Star." It reinforces our stance on inclusion and equity. This is definitely the time for bold leadership!

Dianna Siegel

Grand Rapids Community Foundation
185 Oakes Street S.W.
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Our LGBT Fund Reaches a Milestone *Year-end Giving Was Strong*

Grand Rapids Community Foundation's Our LGBT Fund reached a milestone in December with gifts from 60 donors. The matching gift of \$25,000 from fund founders Carol Sarosik and Shelley Padnos was met and exceeded. And since the fund was created, 357 donors have given a total of \$513,855.

"When the fund was established in 2014, we were blown away by the initial fundraising success. But after we came back down to earth, we realized that our work had just begun. The needs of LGBT youth are not lessening, and we have to help build Our LGBT Fund into the fabric of our communities and into the annual charitable giving consciousness of all our supporters," Shelley said.

Tom Merchant and Glen Johnson made a \$5,000 gift to the fund, taking advantage of the match. They have supported the fund since its inception. "A healthy and vibrant community is built on diversity and embraces full acceptance and inclusion of our LGBT members. Tom and I, as gay men, know personally the challenges faced by LGBT youth and adults. These can impact self-esteem, physical and mental health and lessen opportunities



Carol Sarosik and Shelley Padnos

"The needs of LGBT youth are not lessening, and we have to help build Our LGBT Fund into the fabric of our communities and into the annual charitable giving consciousness of all our supporters."

— Shelley Padnos

to become full contributing members to the community," Glen said.

"Grand Rapids Community Foundation is respected in our community and has been successful in helping increase the health and vitality of Grand Rapids across many areas. They are a natural partner to work with the LGBT community and friends. They help increase visibility, funding and education around the needs of the LGBT community, especially its youth," Tom added.

The fund made a joint grant of \$25,000 in November 2016 to Arbor Circle and Grand Rapids Pride Center for the Safe and Supported program. This is the second grant for this collaborative effort, which offers counseling and support to LGBT

young people who are homeless or in crisis.

To see who is supporting Our LGBT Fund and learn more, visit grfoundation.org/lgbt.

