



Make More Possible

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ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026



A NOTE FROM OUR
Board Chair



Dear Friends of the Community Foundation,

First and foremost, thank you for supporting the Community Foundation with your time, treasure and talent. As we reflect on our 25th year, it is a joy to share some of the ways the Foundation has impacted our communities.

In the past year alone, 5 new endowment funds were created and \$1.6 million in grants and distributions occurred. We instituted the Healthy Chippewa County Grant Cycle; a new annual grant cycle specifically geared towards organizations that provide for our communities’ healthcare needs. Our board and committees worked hard to update our strategic plan, and it continues to be an important guide as we look to the future. Jill and her staff also completed the re-accreditation with National Standards for Community Foundations, an extremely important piece for the organization.

When we look back on the last 25 years, it’s remarkable to note that \$27.9 million in grants and distributions have been made. We now steward 331 funds between endowed and pass-through, and our managed assets now total just over \$43 million. It was a pleasure to host a special 25th Anniversary Society Social this past June to celebrate the milestone, and we were even able to do a matching gift program that raised over \$70,000 for endowments.

The impact this Foundation has on its communities is tangible and real. It also goes beyond numbers and transcends generations. This level of success only happens when community members like yourselves are deeply committed to the mission of the organization. Reflecting back on where we started and how far we’ve come, the idea of “making more possible” truly becomes a reality.

I’ve sincerely appreciated the opportunity to serve as your Board Chair over this last fiscal year. The Foundation will continue to support our communities, honor donor legacies, and work to inspire giving for future generations. On behalf of the Foundation staff and our Board of Directors, thank you again.

Tony Willkom
2025-2026 Board Chair

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Charitable Impact of Giving

FY 2025-2026 HIGHLIGHTS

\$2,260,122

CHARITABLE GIFTS RECEIVED FROM DONORS

629

UNIQUE
DONORS

5

NEW
ENDOWMENT
FUNDS
CREATED

234

ENDOWED
FUNDS
MANAGED

331

FUNDS
CURRENTLY
MANAGED

Our Mission

To enable donors to achieve their philanthropic goals, to meet changing community needs, thereby benefiting the communities, people, and other nonprofit organizations of Chippewa County.

Serving Chippewa County

Bloomer, Boyd, Cadott, Chippewa Falls, Cornell, Holcombe, Jim Falls, Lafayette, Lake Hallie, New Auburn, Stanley, Tilden.

Our Vision

The Community Foundation of Chippewa County will be recognized as a trusted leader by encouraging philanthropy, delivering the highest quality donor services, and being a collaborative partner and leader in addressing important issues that will strengthen Chippewa County now and well into the future.

We will accomplish this by listening and staying connected to donors,

maintaining trust and credibility, and remaining flexible in our approach.

WELCOMING New Fundholders

Thank you for building a legacy of giving in Chippewa County to make more possible.



John David Thurman and Karen Thurman Petersen Family Fund

DESIGNATED FUND



Lisa Herrmann Seedling Fund

SEEDLING FUND



Scott and Brenda Yohnk Endowment Fund

DESIGNATED FUND



Blachowiak Family Fund

DESIGNATED FUND



Timothy & Connie Russell Endowment

DONOR ADVISED FUND

SEEDLING FUNDS

That Became Endowed This Year



Tom and Marge Geissler Family Endowment

DESIGNATED FUND



Thad and Linda Hebert Fund

UNRESTRICTED FUND

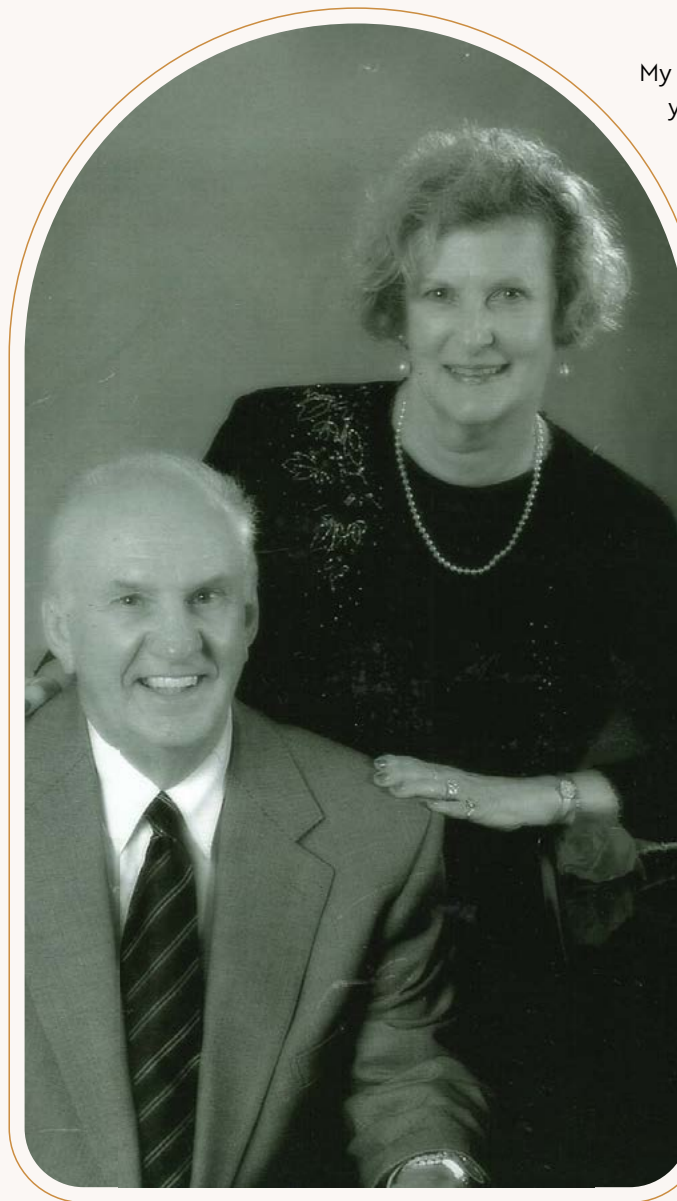


Matthew (Mogey) and Jennifer McDonough Family Fund

DESIGNATED FUND

A LEGACY OF GIVING

Timothy & Connie Russell Endowment



My late husband Tim and I have been aware of the needs of children and young adults due to my career in education and Tim's connections with young families through his real estate business.

Several years ago he and I sold a home to a young woman with two children on a land contract. She was unable to get a bank loan because of an earlier bankruptcy. Just a few years into the contract, she called and said she could not make the payments and would have to leave the house. She received a paycheck every two weeks and could not seem to save half of the monthly payment from the second check of the month. My husband asked her if it would help if she paid twice a month—half from each check. She thought that might help, and it did. He said she just needed a hand up. Today that woman owns her home—free and clear.

I have thought a lot about those three words, "a hand up." Most of us give a hand up on a weekly basis. We make calls, send cards, make a hot dish or cookies for a sick neighbor or friend, visit friends in nursing homes, and attend funerals to show respect. We check on our neighbors if their window shades don't go up and down.

Some of us have an opportunity to try and make a difference in other ways. Working in education my entire career, I think especially about children and teens whose lives are dark and/or threatened. Children and teens need a safe place to hang out and learn after school and during the summer months. They need to be protected from unsafe homes, they need a place to get a wholesome meal, and they need to be introduced to the arts. Special needs teens need tutoring. Both children and teens need a vibrant library with special programs.

Working with the Community Foundation of Chippewa County gives my late husband and me an opportunity to work toward these goals in a small way—by giving "a hand up."

“Working with the Community Foundation of Chippewa County gives my late husband and me an opportunity to work toward these goals in a small way—by giving “a hand up.”

Celebrating 25 Years of Making More Possible

For 25 years, generous individuals, families, businesses, and organizations have helped shape the future of Chippewa County through their lasting commitment to philanthropy. Our Societies recognize those whose gifts and endowed funds ensure the Community Foundation will continue strengthening our communities for generations to come. As our impact has grown, so too has our opportunity to celebrate extraordinary generosity through the Founders Society, Guardian Society, and Heritage Society.

Founders Society

Individuals, families, businesses, and organizations dedicated to the long-term viability of our area have made a substantial commitment to the Community Foundation and the causes they care about. Their generosity exemplifies a philanthropic spirit of giving that will help ensure a solid future for our local communities and the Foundation. Below are those who generously donated to secure the Foundation's original Operating Funds.

Platinum Founders

Dennis and Jeanne Boisvert	B. A. Mason Trust
Dennis Heyde	Carmen and Gene Mower
Gerald H. and Mary L. Jacobson	Northwestern Bank
Kell Container Corporation	Gordon and Donna Schafer
Carey B. Kell	Carol Shepard
Tom and Pam Kell	

Gold Founders

Dennis and Bonnie Ferstenou
John and Jane Lubs Family
Susan K. and Roger J. Tietz
Wells Fargo Banks - Chippewa Valley
Wipfli Ullrich Bertelson LLP

Silver Founders

Jackie and Jim Bernier
Mary A. Blake
Chippewa Falls Lions Club
Chippewa Falls Noon Kiwanis Club
B. James and Kay Colbert
Hugh and Marcia Crane
James and Janice Docksey
David and Dianne Fish
George and Peggy Fleming
David and Evalyn Wiley Frasch

Chuck and Jo Frenette
Dr. Gary and Carol Gienapp
Dr. Les and Marilyn Harrison
Dick and Karen Hebert
Bob and Donna Hogseth Family
Linda and Dan Hunt Family
Joseph W. Joas
Rich and Sue Johnson
Mike and Pat Kell
C. W. and Mary Ann King

Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Co.
Mark and Marcie Myrman
Northern Wisconsin State Fair Association, Inc.
Rooney Printing Co., Inc.
Rotary Club of Chippewa Falls
Bert Swanson
Steve M. Thaler
Sheila and Bill Volker

Guardian Society

Those who have generously donated \$5,000 or more to the Community Foundation Operating Fund.

Diamond

B. A. Mason Trust
Bert Swanson
Dennis and Jeanne Boisvert
Norm and Sue Plourde
Tom and Pam Kell

Platinum

Gordy and Donna Schafer
John and Mary Hofkes
Rex and Vicki Rathbun
Steve and Karen Rooney
William J. & Gertrude R. Casper Foundation

Gold

Jerry and Mary Jacobson
Jake and Peg Leinenkugel
Tim and Betty Callahan

Silver

Bob and Donna Hogseth
Chippewa Falls Kiwanis Club
Dan and Linda Hunt
Darrin and Kim Senn
David and Rita Raihle
Dennis Heyde
Carol Shepard
Dr. Gary and Carol Gienapp
Estate of Jane M. Lardahl
General Beer Northwest
Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Company
Jackie and Jim Bernier

Jeff and Kristen Brown
Jim and Jan Docksey
John Lubs
Joseph W. Joas
Ken and Debi Custer
Mark and Marcie Myrman
Mason Companies Inc
Northwestern Bank
Patti and Jeff Darley
Rex Systems Inc

Rooney Printing
Sandy and Roger Robarge
Sheila and Bill Volker
Steve and Lauree Pregent
Tim and MC Fries
William and Nancy Pickerign
Wipfli LLP

Heritage Society



Those who have generously created a permanent, named fund during their lifetime or have notified us that they have made provisions to do so in their estate plan.

Judi and Wayne Akey
Anson and Donna Albarado
Fern Anderson and Verdell Arneson Trust
Anonymous
Estate of Edith B. Arnhold
William and Helen Barnes
The Family of Dolores Barnier
Charles and Vonnie Bathke
Charles and Magdalen Bejin
The Family of Max Bergen
Jackie and Jim Bernier
Blachowiak Family
Patti J. Boeve
Dennis and Jeanne Boisvert
Del and Donna Bourget
Jeff, Julie, and Emma Bowe
Michael P. Boyle
Dr. Bertha M. Bresina
Cathy and Marc Brown
Cadott Community Theatre
Tim and Betty Callahan
David and Linda Carlson
Claudio Cayo
Rolf N. Chance
Beverly Chartier
Chippewa County Dental Foundation
Eugene and Jacolyn Cody
Ken and Debi Custer
Dan and Jacque Daniel
Jason and Tessa Darley
Patti and Jeff Darley
The Darley Family
Dwight and Linda Davis
Sue Decker

Kris Dimock
Bob and Lea Dirks
Lloyd and Arnetta Eckes
Brad and Mary Ewalt
Dennis and Bonnie Ferstenou
Dianne and Dave Fish
George and Peggy Fleming
Jane and Jim Ford
David and Evalyn Wiley Frasch
George and Jacquie Gannon
Rosilyn and Richard Gates
Tom and Marge Geissler Family
Paula Gerrish
Brian and Lisa Gienapp
Dr. Gary and Carol Gienapp
Theresa Gienapp
Judy Gilles and Mark Gilles
Dave and Ann Gordon
Sheldon and Ruth Gough
Gary and Pat Gray
Great Northern Corporation
Alice Hagen
Barbara and Raymond Harling
Barbara F. Harper
Les and Marilyn Harrison
Don Hauser and Kathy Cernohous
Karen Hayhoe
Dick and Karen Hebert
Jean and Tom Hebert
Nancy Hebert
Thad and Linda Hebert
Ray Helgersen
Kim and Brad Helgeson
Lisa Herrmann

The Earl and Hazel "Hess" Morrison Family
Dennis Heyde
Rev. Robert and Heidi Hoekstra
John and Mary Hofkes
Robert and Donna Hogseth
Jim and Melinda (Haun) Hohncke
Peter and Sue Holm
Fred and Carol Holtz
The Honaker Family
Estate of Gaylord Howard
Bryan Huls
Dan and Linda Hunt
Heather Hunt
Rick Hunt
Jeff and Lori Irvine
William Irvine
Gerald and Mary Jacobson
David and Patricia Jankoski
Sherry and Patrick Jasper
Carin and Scott Jelleberg
Gerald E. and Susan J. Joas
Joseph W. Joas
Tom and Julie Joas
Tom (TJ), Beth and Chance Johnson
James and Sheryl Jones
Russ and Gloria Kazda
Carey B. Kell
Tom and Pam Kell
Emmett A. and Anne E. Keller Family
Norman and Mary Ellen Keller
Robin Kelley
Cheryl Kern-Simirenko
David and Ellen Kiefer
Peter and Joan Kirk

William "Loopy" Kleich
Kevin and Lynda Koehn
Dr. James W. Lane and Jacqueline A. Lane
Jane Lardahl
Erik and Jenn Larson
Dr. Robert and Cath Lea
Tom and Louise Lea
Estate of John William "Bill" Leinenkugel
Jake and Peg Leinenkugel
William and Mary Lou Leinenkugel
The Family of Tim Leis
Gary and Joanne Leonard
Ann and Clark Loeffel
Arlene and Gene Lopas
John A. Lubs
Tim and Meg MacLaughlin-Barck
Elaine Mann
Dianne and Larry Marquardt
Bob and Chris Maslonkowski
Dan Masterpole and Kathy Lembezeder
Dr. Terry McCanna
Kari McCanna
Matthew (Mogey) and Jennifer McDonough
William and Deborah McDougall
Betty McIntyre Family
Kathleen McLaughlin and Daryl Skobba
Dave and Theresa Meinen
Dennis and Carole Mickesh
Estate of George A. Miller and Alice Miller
Gene and Carmen Mower
The Family of Jodie Mueller
Mark and Marcie Myrman
Howard and Joanne Olson
William P. "Bill" Olson
Ellen O'Neil and John O'Neil
Partners of St. Joseph's Hospital
Karen Thurman Petersen
Nancy and William Pickerign Family
Patricia J. (Ehlers) Popple
Steve and Lauree Pregent

Joyce Pugh (Pugh Family)
John Quigley
Tom and Jaci Quigley
Dave and Rita Raihle
David and Sharon Raihle
The Family of Trey Raihle
Tom and Mary Randall
David Robarge Family
Sandy and Roger Robarge
Robert and Madeline Ruscin Educational Trust
Timothy & Connie Russell
Gerald Sazama
David and Amanda Schafer
Gordy and Donna Schafer
Paul Walter Schaus MD
David and Jane Schill
Frank and Janelle Schlick
The Family of Frank "Frankie" Schlick
Dietmar Braune and Rita Schrantz
Georgiann Scritsmier
Darrin and Kim Senn
Greg Senn
Cindy Sesolak
Carol Shepard
Gordon H. and Dr. Rita R. Simon
Kris and Richard Simonson
Charles and Sally Smith Family
Marilyn "Jinx" Smith
Luarta and Mike Soden
Mary Beth and David A. Spooner
Rev. Scott and Theresa Stai
Bert Swanson
Dr. Mahmoud Taman
Rita Tanzer
Skip and Jill Thaler
Shawn and Rebecca Thompson
The Thorpe Family
Mike and Barb Tzanakis
Mai Vang
Bill and Sheila Volker

Craig Webb
Steve and Marcie Wermund
Susan and Bill Westbrook
Dean and Betty White
Brian and Kim Wogernese
Susan Lindoo and Michael Wolesky
Jim and Arlene Wright
Scott & Brenda Yohnk
Lisa Zunker

Our Family of Funds



Funds providing financial support for non-profits, charitable programs and projects as well as scholarships.

83

DESIGNATED FUNDS

Fundholders open a fund and name a specific nonprofit or charitable purpose they will support with an endowment.

28

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

These endowed funds respond to the highest needs in Chippewa County through the annual competitive grant cycle. This high-impact fund type also includes:

FUND FOR CHIPPEWA COUNTY • COMMUNITY FOUNDATION RESPONSE-RECOVERY-REBUILD FUND • COMMUNITY FOUNDATION COMMUNITY NEEDS GRANT FUND

28

AGENCY FUNDS

Opened by a nonprofit or charitable organization solely to support its long-term, mission-driven goals.

44

DONOR-ADVISED FUNDS

Fundholders choose each year, the specific nonprofit or charitable purpose to support with their fund's earnings.

81

PASS THROUGH FUNDS

Non-endowed funds are usually established for short-term nonprofit campaigns, projects, or charitable giving. This fund type includes:

SPECIAL PROJECT FUNDS • SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOLARSHIPS • GIVE CHIPPEWA COUNTY CIRCLE

51

FIELD OF INTEREST FUNDS

These endowed funds respond to the highest needs in Chippewa County through the annual competitive grant cycle. Fundholders declare one of five charitable focus areas that their fund will support when granting out.

12

SEEDLING FUNDS

Builds the fundholder's continual contributions toward full endowment over a 5-year period.

04

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OPERATING FUND

Donations sustain the Foundation's basic needs for operating. Those who give \$5,000 or more to this fund are welcomed into the Guardian Society.

331 Total Funds Managed

Each year the Community Foundation awards grants to nonprofit organizations serving Chippewa County.



Ways to Give

We invite you to make a lasting investment in our community.

The Community Foundation of Chippewa County provides a simple, effective, and highly personal approach to giving. We offer a variety of tools to help you achieve your charitable goals. You can make a gift of cash, stocks, bonds, real estate, or other assets to the Foundation. Most charitable gifts qualify for maximum tax advantage under federal law.

We will work with you to customize a charitable plan that is right for you. To discuss your options, please contact our Foundation office to schedule an appointment.

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS FUNDHOLDERS WHO CHOOSE TO **MAKE MORE POSSIBLE.**
Your generosity creates a lasting impact that transforms our community forever.

OVER **300** FUNDHOLDERS.
One incredible community.



make more possible

Together, we build a stronger Chippewa County for today and for generations to come.



Blachowiak Family Fund



The Blachowiak Family Fund was established to honor and remember Jerome and Karen Blachowiak. Their children, Anna, Becky, Christopher, and David, were born and raised in Chippewa Falls and have many fond memories of their hometown, where Jerome set up his long-time orthodontic practice.

"It was a wonderful place to grow up," said Becky Maher. "None of us lives in the area anymore, but it's where we lived as a family. We were thinking about what would be important to our parents when we set up the fund."

Grants from this designated fund will provide ongoing funding for the Lake Wissota Improvement & Protection Association, the Bernard F. Willi Outdoor Pool, the Chippewa Falls Public Library, and the Foundation's Community Needs annual grant cycle.

The Blachowiak family lived on Lake Wissota, where they enjoyed a variety of all-season outdoor sports, including fishing. The library was a big part of the Blachowiak children's childhood, and they participated in the reading club every summer. Karen would take the kids to swimming lessons at the Chippewa Falls pool, followed by picnics in Irvine Park. All four of Blachowiak children went on to become lifeguards at the pool, so when they learned there was a chance the pool might close, they wanted to help.

Becky recalls the generosity of her parents supporting many local organizations throughout the years, looking after their neighbors, and going out of their way to be helpful whenever they could.

"We grew up knowing how important it is to give back to the community," said Becky. "I remember picking up trash on the side of the road as part of a cleanup project and delivering items to a family in need. An interesting thing about my parents is that they donated a lot to the area, but they did it anonymously. We thought it was time to put a name on a fund and recognize their good works!"



Scott and Brenda Yohnk Endowment Fund

Scott and Brenda have been longtime residents of Chippewa County. They both like the Chippewa Valley area and wanted to give to organizations that support their principles and beliefs. They started out their working careers at Cray Research in Chippewa Falls, with neither of them knowing much about supercomputers. While being employed at Cray Research they understood the value of learning the changing technology at that time. They used that knowledge throughout their working careers as technology continued to change. That is why the **Scott and Brenda Yohnk Endowment Fund** is focused on supporting the technological needs of our younger generation. The endowment fund also supports the historical side of past technology. Scott and Brenda feel it is important to learn from our history instead of forgetting about it or tearing it down.

"Bloomer is close to our hearts as Scott's dad was raised in Bloomer and was a local businessman in Bloomer for many years."

The Scott and Brenda Yohnk Endowment Fund will support the following organizations:

- The Bloomer Historical Society - Bloomer, WI (Preserving our past technology)
- St. Paul's Catholic School - Bloomer, WI (Technology needs)
- Venture Academy - Chippewa Falls, WI (Technology needs)

The Yohnk's endowment fund will allow them to support the organizations they have chosen and be assured that their gifts will serve these charitable purposes for as long as the Community Foundation of Chippewa County continues to exist.

It is their hope that the Scott and Brenda Yohnk Endowment Fund will provide a steady stream of income while preserving the principal amount for long-term use. This should be a long lasting, sustainable support system for future generations.

They look at their Endowment Fund like this:

"Imagine you plant a tree whose fruits you can harvest every year. Now, the tree grows over time, providing a sustainable supply of fruit without being cut down. This tree will continue grow and supply fruit long after you are gone." This is our hope and intention of establishing the Scott and Brenda Yohnk Endowment Fund.



Our Foundation's History Highlights

Over 25 years ago, a philanthropic idea took root after a group of citizens in Chippewa County with a vision and generosity heard about a way to generate capital that stays in a community forever

for charitable purposes. What unfolded after that created what we now know as the Community Foundation of Chippewa County. This year we are celebrating 25 years of neighbors helping neighbors,

generous donors, dedicated community members, and nonprofits working together for the greater good of our area. Thank you to everyone who has been a part of this journey. Below are highlights from our history:

2001-2005

February 2001 – A favorable consensus emerged among local leaders that a Community Foundation had great potential and a Founders Society was created to organize the initial dollars needed to do so.

March 2001 – Articles of Incorporation filed for the Chippewa Area Community Foundation

June 2001 – Bylaws were adopted

January 2002 – The first endowment fund was established

October 2002 – First Executive Director and paid staff, Carol Gienapp was hired and served until 2009. The Foundation Office found a home in the Rutledge Charities Building

2003 – The first strategic plan was adopted

2004 – A name change was made to better reflect the focus of the county wide work: *Community Foundation of Chippewa County*

2004 – The first Northwestern Bank School Mini-grant was awarded and are still being granted today

December 2004 – First grant from an endowed fund was awarded

April 2005 – Achieved accreditation in meeting the National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations

2005 - 20 endowed funds and \$567,839 in assets managed

2006-2010

2006 – The First Wine and Dine in Irvine was held to raise money for operations and to introduce community members to the Foundation's work

2008 – 2009 – During the Economic downturn a sustaining campaign was held resulting in the Guardian Society to assist with present and future operational expenses

Bonnie Lynn Robinson served as Executive Director 2010 - 2011

2010 – 88 endowed funds and \$4,077,465 in assets managed

2011-2015

2011 – An increase in endowment funds throughout the county were seen.

2014 and 2015 – The Foundation further clarified its' strategic direction, an updated Strategic Plan was put in place, along with a revised Mission and Vision Statement.

Our Mission
To enable donors to achieve their philanthropic goals, to meet changing community needs, thereby benefiting the communities, people, and other nonprofit organizations of Chippewa County.

Our Vision
The Community Foundation of Chippewa County will be recognized as a trusted leader by encouraging philanthropy, delivering the highest quality donor services, and being a collaborative partner and leader in addressing important issues that will strengthen Chippewa County now and well into the future.

We will accomplish this by listening and staying connected to donors, maintaining trust and credibility, and remaining flexible in our approach.

Melinda Haun served as Executive Director 2011 - 2018

2015 – 142 endowed funds and \$12,898,311 in assets managed

2016-2020

2018 & 2020 – The Community Foundation once again received its' reaccreditation with National Standards. Jill Herriges started serving as Executive Director in 2018.

2019 – The Annual Celebration was rebranded to become the Seedlings to Shade Trees Social held in October each year to celebrate accomplishments of the fiscal year and introduce the community to the Foundation's work.

A Response Recovery Rebuild Fund was created in 2020 to respond to Covid and future crisis situations in Chippewa County

2020 – 181 endowed funds and \$20,645,957 in assets managed

2021- June 2026

2021 – Give Chippewa County Giving Circle Created

2022 – First Give Chippewa County Grants were awarded

2023 and 2026 – The Community Foundation once again received its' reaccreditation with National Standards

September 2024 – Became stewards of endowment funds created by donors with the Foundation of St. Joseph's Hospital

May of 2026 – Opened another competitive grant cycle – The Healthy Chippewa County Grant

June 2026 – A Society Social was held, celebrating the 25th year of the Foundation with the Founders, Guardian and Heritage Society Members

June 2026 – Board adopted a refreshed Strategic Plan outlining 5 key priorities for the next 5 years.

June 2026 – 234 endowed funds \$42,426,294 in assets managed \$24.9 million granted since inception

John David Thurman and Karen Thurman Petersen Family Fund

John David Thurman and Karen Thurman moved to Chippewa Falls in 1962 shortly after their marriage. Through John's work as Director of Social Services for Chippewa County and Karen's position as Director of Nursing for the former Hannah Rutledge Home for the Aged, they realized the importance of giving back to the community.

As long time board members of the Cook-Rutledge Mansion, John was instrumental in raising large funds of money for this nonprofit landmark. Karen used her culinary expertise to make the annual Elegant Dinner and

Christmas Open House memorable. They also served as chairpersons and in numerous other capacities.

Judge Dayton Cook purchased the Mansion following the death of Edward Rutledge and their family lived there until 1973. At that time it was sold to the Chippewa County Historical Society. It is now self-sustaining and supported through fundraisers, donations and bequests.

The Mansion, opened to the public in 1973, was originally built by Lt. Governor Bingham, in 1873 and was enlarged and beautified in 1887 by Edward and

Hannah Rutledge. In his position of President of Lumberman's National Bank as well as chief officer for Frederick Weyerhaeuser's sawmill, Rutledge was required to entertain often and lavishly. The brick house is a unique example of High Italianate Victorian design, deemed by a member of Washington D.C.'s National Register of Historic Places "a perfect jewel."

Ornate woodwork, stained glass, ceiling murals and Lincrusta wallpaper are among the visual points of interest, but the life style modeled by the Mansion and its furnishings is of bygone elegance, and an important link with Chippewa's logging industry.

Tours, weddings and special events are ongoing by request. Echoing the mission statement of the Mansion, the John David Thurman and Karen Thurman Petersen Family Fund will make possible continued historic restoration, preservation and education in the community.



Cook-Rutledge Mansion
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

© Sharon Woods

Doris Vennard Nursing Endowment Fund

A PLANNED GIFT MAKING LASTING CHANGE

The Doris Vennard Endowment Fund was established in 2008 to provide scholarships to high school students, post-secondary students and adult learners pursuing undergraduate degrees in the field of nursing.

Doris Vennard, a generous benefactor, grew up in Jim Falls, and when she left the area, it was to pursue a career in Civil Service through which she traveled the world. Her endowment fund at the Community Foundation was established from a bequest in her last will and testament.

According to Brittany Fortuna, director of the Chippewa County Department of Public Health, it means a great deal to have the field of nursing, and especially public health nursing, recognized through the endowment. Fortuna's office is committed to carrying on Doris' legacy. She and her staff manage the annual scholarship selection process, something they look forward to every year.

"Bringing attention to this work helps underscore the important role these professionals play in supporting and improving community health, and it reinforces the value of investing in the next generation of nurses," said Fortuna. The loss of HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital and other medical clinics in Chippewa County reflects the problems with access to healthcare in rural communities nationwide. Keeping people interested in health careers and providing financial support can help small communities stay healthy and strong.

Sia Drivas, a Chippewa Falls Senior High School graduate, is the 2026 recipient of the Doris Vennard Nursing Scholarship. She is pursuing an associate degree in nursing at Chippewa Valley Technical College.

The flexibility of nursing was appealing to Sia because of the many options for hours and work settings, including hospitals, clinics, schools, wellness centers and in-home care, as well as travel nursing opportunities, making it a career that can grow with her over time.

Past scholarship recipients include a rural student that had done mission work, which aligns well with public health nursing. Another was affected by the shutdown of Hospital Sisters Health System.

Pam Guthman is an advanced practice nurse specializing in public/population health nursing, and a nurse educator, and serves on the scholarship selection committee. In the classroom, she has witnessed how financial barriers can

come between aspiring nurses and degree completion. "Nursing school is rigorous and we have a responsibility to our patients and the community. It's a lot for some students to be financially stable and meet their basic living needs, let alone come to class and concentrate on their education," said Pam. "It's also a challenge for educators because they can see the students who are struggling and may not be successful in the long run. Scholarships like this can make all the difference in a student's success."

Carol Lendle, a retired Chippewa County public health nurse, marvels at the significant impact Doris Vennard has already had on many young people and the nursing profession for nearly two decades.

"I like the twist that she wasn't a nurse—and there were no nurses in her family that we know of—but she thought enough of the profession to leave part of her estate to benefit future generations of nurses," said Carol.



Grants Overview

BY CHARITABLE FOCUS AREA



Through the generosity of our donors and partners, the Community Foundation of Chippewa County is able to invest in people, places and possibilities across our community. These grants and distributions support the organizations and initiatives that make Chippewa County a vibrant place to live, work and grow.

401

GRANTS AWARDED
THROUGH ALL FUND TYPES

\$1,659,475

TOTAL DOLLARS OF GRANTS
& DISTRIBUTIONS

135

NONPROFITS & CHARITABLE
ORGANIZATIONS SERVED

Grants By Fund Type

	RECIPIENTS	TOTAL GRANTED
Community Needs	39	\$128,522
Healthy Chippewa County	5	\$141,389
Donor Advised	56	\$146,507
Designated	48	\$351,279
Agency	15	\$277,783

Distributions By Fund Type

	RECIPIENTS	TOTAL GRANTED
Give Chippewa County	3	\$7,300
Scholarship Pass-Through	68	\$132,898
Special Project Pass-Through	5	\$167,397
Northwestern Bank School Mini-Grants 20 PROJECTS	9	\$6,000

Grants Overview by Charitable Focus

	GRANTS AWARDED	TOTAL GRANTED
Community Development	35	\$236,590
Environment & Animal Welfare	61	\$286,289
Education	155	\$450,213
Arts & Culture	37	\$141,216
Health & Human Services	113	\$545,166



"This was the best day of my life, because I got to play in the mud kitchen, explore the insects in the water and how habitats change". -CFAUSD Student



Northwestern Bank School Mini-Grants

Awarded annually by the Foundation to bolster education endeavors in 3rd-8th-grade classrooms throughout Chippewa County.

Bloomer Elementary School	4th Grade Rockets
Chippewa Falls Area Unified School District	3rd- 5th Grade Outdoor Classroom: Lake Wissota
Cornell Elementary School	4th Grade Decodable Chapter Books for Struggling Readers
Holy Ghost Elementary School	5th Grade Holy Ghost Beginning Band
Holy Ghost Elementary School	3rd Grade Base Ten Block Sets/Math Manipulatives
Holy Ghost Elementary School	Guidance Class- Fleece for Service
Holy Ghost Elementary School	3rd- Grade Hands on Math
Holy Ghost Elementary School	3rd-5th Grade Intervention Room
Holy Ghost Elementary School	3rd- 5th Grade Printmaking Pathways: Building Virtue and Creativity Through Gelli Plate Art
Jim Falls Elementary School	3rd Grade Readers
Jim Falls Elementary School	3rd- 5th Grade Conscious Discipline Support
New Auburn Elementary/Middle School	5th – 8th Grade Middle School Flower/ plant production
New Auburn Elementary/Middle School	Elementary Mystery Reader
New Auburn School District	3rd – 8th Grade Trojan Recharge: Regulation Room for Learning Readiness
Notre Dame Middle School	7th- 8th Grade Visualizing Success: Regulation Room for Learning
Notre Dame Middle School	6th-8th Grade Novel Ideas: Igniting Minds through science stories
Notre Dame Middle School	6th & 8th Grade Classroom Flexible Seating
St. Peter Catholic School	5th-8th Grade Classroom Library
St. Peter Catholic School	6th Grade Poetry Books
St. Peter Catholic School	3rd – 8th Grade Boosting Language Arts Excellence

Healthy Chippewa County Grants

The Community Foundation of Chippewa County launched the Healthy Chippewa County (HCC) grant cycle, a new funding opportunity supporting programs which invest in initiatives that address health needs while working to reduce health disparities. Annual grants support projects focused on improving health outcomes & reducing disparities, AODA services, home health and/or hospice, financial assistance to health care assistance, and healthcare for women and infants.

- 

Aspirus Health Foundation
Panda warmer for ER at Aspirus Chippewa Falls Hospital
Health Care for Women and Infants
- 

Chippewa County Aging and Disability Resource Center
Chippewa County Meals on wheels expansion
Home Health and/or Hospice
- 

Chippewa Valley Health Cooperative
Equipment for Wound Care Center
Health Needs and Reducing Health Disparities
- 

Curtie Cares Inc
Medical Transportation program for rural and homebound residents
Financial Assistance to Healthcare
- 

Rogers Memorial Hospital Foundation
Furniture, Fixtures & equipment for new Rogers Behavioral Health Hospital in Chippewa Falls
AODA



"At Curtie Cares, we believe no one should have to choose between their health and transportation. This generous grant allows us to continue providing free medical rides to rural and homebound residents, helping our neighbors access the care they deserve. We are truly grateful for your partnership and support."



Give Chippewa County is a giving circle that is fueled by community members who provide a modest membership contribution each year. Pooled together, these membership dollars support grants in Chippewa County and also build an endowment fund at the Community Foundation. Now celebrating 5 years, Give Chippewa County continues to bring people together to make a meaningful difference in our community.

Total Giving from 2022-2025:

\$26,773

- 2025 Recipients:
- Curtie Cares Inc
 - Parkinsons Wellness Initiatives
 - Safe Families for Children Wisconsin



Community Needs Grants

Community Needs Grants are awarded annually by the Foundation to nonprofit organizations and charitable institutions through a competitive grant cycle.

Bloomer/New Auburn Area Food Pantry

2026 Holiday Meals

**Boys & Girls Clubs of the Greater Chippewa Valley Inc.-
Chippewa Center**

Quality Academic Learning Project

CareLink

CareLink

**Center for Independent Living for Western Wisconsin Inc.
DBA/CompassIL**

Transportation for Eligible Chippewa County Residents

Chippewa County Criminal Justice Services

Reentry Program Services

Chippewa County Dept of Public Health

Stay Warm Kits - Public Health Kiosk Expansion

Chippewa County Historical Society Inc

Lunch and Learning Program Expansion

Chippewa County Humane Association Inc

Fire Cellular Communicator and Security System Upgrade with Additional Cameras

Chippewa County Land Conservancy Inc

Field & Brush Mower

Chippewa County Sheriff's Office

Peer Support and Community Outreach

Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition

Lighten Your Laundry Mission

Chippewa Falls Senior High School

Cardinal Landing and Cardinal Market

Chippewa River Industries Inc

Quiet Room Development for Facility-Based Day Services

Chippewa Valley Cultural Association Inc

Access to the Arts for Seniors

Chippewa Valley Free Clinic

Comprehensive Health Care Services for Chippewa County Residents

Chippewa Valley Salvation Army

Laundry Card Purchases for low-income Chippewa County residents

Cook Rutledge Mansion Inc

South Porch Restoration of the Cook-Rutledge Mansion

Early Literacy Coalition of the Greater Chippewa Valley

Chippewa Valley Little Libraries-Chippewa County

Feed My People Food Bank

Chippewa County Rural Outreach

First Presbyterian Church Community Food Pantry

Purchase of Kwik Trip milk coupons for food pantry clients

Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes - Eau Claire Facility

Establishing Equity in the Chippewa County Girl Scout Leadership Experience

Girls on the Run of Chippewa Valley

Girls on the Run and Heart & Sole: Empowering Curriculum for Adolescent Girls in Elementary and Middle School

Hillcrest Elementary School

Chippewa Falls Hillcrest Elementary School Playground Project

Hope Village

"Clean and Green" Project

Junior Achievement of Wisconsin Inc - Northwest Branch

JA Titan Business Challenge & Class for Chippewa Co. High School Students

Lake Wissota Association

Biochar Dock Sock Pilot Project on Lake Wissota

Lake Wissota Garden Club

Increasing June's Flowering Species in the Sanctuary

Legacy Community Center

ServSafe Volunteer Certification

McDonnell Area Catholic Schools

Classroom Safety and Enhanced Literacy Program

Mentor Chippewa

Mentor Recruitment and Retention

Notre Dame Middle School

Notre Dame Art Club

Notre Dame Middle School

Props for School Musical

Our Nawakwa Inc

Fishing with the Loons on Picnic Lake

Professional Dental Hygiene Express Inc

Bright Smiles

School District of Bloomer

Bloomer Robotics

Sleep in Heavenly Peace - Chippewa Chapter

No Kid Sleeps on the Floor in Our Town! WI-Chippewa Valley 2025

St John Lutheran Church

Hygiene for the Hornet Hive

St Paul's Catholic School

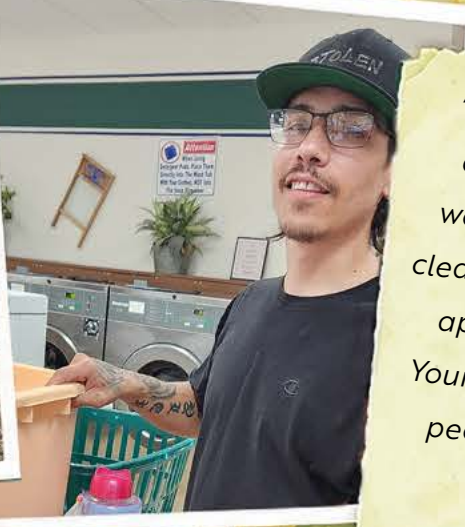
Tuition Assistance

St Paul's Catholic School

Outdoor activities to promote teamwork and physical fitness, also for indoor recreation times

The Open Door Clinic

Prescription Services



"Lighten Your Load definitely helps us worry less on having clean clothes. We really appreciate Lighten Your Load, the friendly people, and smiles. Thank you!"
- LYL Client



"Some of the kids get so involved and it's exciting when they can be successful. I just enjoy helping the kids out and maybe making an impact on their lives in a positive way."
- Volunteer from JA Titan

"The best part about having a mentor is I can talk about my interests without being judged. I was skeptical going into mentoring, but my experience has been very good and I would recommend mentoring to a friend."
-T.K.

Memorials

Many have found that a fitting way to remember a special someone is through giving a gift in memory of that person. During times of great sorrow and times of great joy we look to honor those who will be forever dear to us. The following people were remembered with a Memorial gift to the Foundation.



Albina Bowe	Don Hable	Jim Dimock	Richard Sparks
Allen Seilheimer	Donna Boos	Jim Schumacher	Roger King
Anne Keller	Donna Hogseth & Natalie	Joan Robarge	Roger Robarge
Ardyce Bernier	Doug Greenhalgh	Joanne Olson	Rolland Voelker
Arlene Newman	Doug, Therese, Morgan,	Joie Hertzfeldt	RoxAnn Nadeau
Arlene Wright	Branden and Paul	Judy Gamache	Ruby Hvizdak
Arnold, Aline & Roy Buchner	Dr & Mrs Francis T. McHugh	Judy Lee	Ruth Anne Gilbertson
Autumn Helgesen	Dustin Helgeson	Judy Sterling	Ryan Hebert
Barb Slowiak	Earl McIlquham	Karen Shellito	Sara, Haylee, Autumn, Jayna
Beaver	Eugene Markowski	Kathleen Filas	Sharon Van Valkenburg
Bryan Huls	Franklin A. "Frank" Weeks	Kathy Dircz	Sue Ann Balow Parker
Cal Myrman	Fred and Carol Holtz	Kenneth Kasper	Tammy Brunstad Pickerign
Carol Braune	Fred Bowe	Krista Ann Van Zutphen	Ted Hollar
Carol LeDuc	Garfie the best Kitty ever!	Larry and Trudy Folkerts	Thelma Spitzach
Catherine Grace Burke	Gene Markowski	Lori Kleich	Tim Crawford
Cindi Haag	Gene Mower	Lorraine Pontius	Tim Langteau
Cora Ann Haugli	Griff L. Griffith	Lucas Bathke	Tim Leis
Dale Buhrow	Helen Ristau	Mabel Clara Rodewald	Tom Nayes
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David "Dee" Sullivan	Jack Gehweiler	Melissa Miller Buckli	Vincent and Sullivan McDonough
David Lee (Davey) Harling	Jacqueline A. Lane	Michael Dineen	Vivian Dahl
David Schill	James Nyman	Neil Goodall	Wayne Bergevin
David Spooner	Jane and Dave Hvizdak	Neoma Dole	Wayne and Harland Danielson
Debe	Jim and Arlene Wright	Pat Mrotek	William Bruce Reed
Deceased members of Chi-Hi Class of 1976	James Bowe	Patricia Quigley	William Sprague
Dennis Klinger	Jay Krumenauer	Paul Lehmann	
Diane Myslinski	Jean Granert	Paul Robert Carpenter Jr.	
Dolores Barnier	Jean Mayer	Richard "Grandpa" Felix	
	Jeanne Wright	Richard Porn	

Honorariums

A retirement, anniversary, birthday, a special memory of an event or to thank a person who touched your life are times when honorary gifts can be made to the Foundation. The following were honored with a gift to the Foundation.

2025 Rodeo Volunteers	Judy Schneider
All the girls and moms who attended Camp Nawakwa over the years	Kathleen McLaughlin
Amelia Reisinger's Birthday	Ken Parejko
Annie B.	Knights of Pythias Lodge 49
Autumn Helgeson	Lisa Herrmann
Barb & Ray Harling	Lori Kleich
Beauty and Allison	Margaret Ann (Huls) Kot
Betty Nenzel	Marshall Schlick's Birthday
Carin Jelleberg's Birthday	Mel Felix
Cassie Gast Holloway	Music Educators
Chi-Hi Class of 1976	National Police Week
Dave and Ann Gordon	Patty Mewhorter
Doreen Mrotek	Paul & Jean Krumenauer
Elizabeth's Golden Birthday	Sloane Brehmer
Gordon E. Haugli	Steve, Carrie and Andrew Sazama
Great Granddaughter Rayna	Susan Westbrook's Birthday
Hannah	The Szatalowicz Family
Jerry Jacobson's Retirement	
Jim and Arlene Wright	

Honor Someone Special. Make More Possible.



When you make a donation in honor or in memory of a loved one through the Community Foundation of Chippewa County, you're not only celebrating their impact — you're also supporting the people and places that make Chippewa County thrive.

Your gift creates lasting change, today and for generations to come.

Donors

We gratefully acknowledge and thank all donors for the generous contributions to charitable funds that were given to the Foundation during our fiscal year that ended June 30, 2026.

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Thank you to those who supported the Foundation with Matching Gifts and In-Kind Services.

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Green Oasis
Josef's Cheesecake
Laura Baalrud
MOR
Northwoods Grazing
Premium Waters
Wiley Law, SC

The Operations

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Jeff Bowe
President/Owner
Bohl & Proulx Plumbing



Kathy Facklam
Retired HR Consultant



Teresa Germain
Attorney
Wiley Law, S.C.



Brian Guthman
Semi-Retired Educator



Sue Kern
Retired Human Resources
Professional



Erik Larson - Past Chair
VP of Operations
PMI



Erik Lemay - 2nd Vice Chair
IT Director - Applications
Wipfli



Mary Randall
Retired Superintendent



Kristine Sterling - Treasurer
Real Estate Closer
All Title Services



Barb M. Stevens
Retired Health Care
Operations Manager



Craig Toycen - Vice Chair
President
Toycen Ford



Tony Willkom - Chair
Business Banking Officer
Royal Credit Union



Chuck Frenette - Ex-Officio Member
Retired CFO



OUR STAFF

Jill Herriges
Executive Director

Ashley Ashley
Programs & Community Engagement Associate

Christine Dusick
Fund Accounting Manager
Provides financial & accounting services through HP&A Solutions LLC

Robin Reed
Executive Assistant

INVESTMENT ADVISOR

Orgel Wealth Management

Samir A. Murty
CFA, Senior Relationship Manager, Principal

Jonathan P. Ippel
CFP, CIMA Relationship Manager, Principal

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR

Bauman Associates

The public may view governing documents, conflict of interest policies, and the most recent copies of our audited financial statements, IRS Form 990.

To view these during business hours please call 715.723.8125

Financial Statements

Statements of Financial Position (June 30, 2026 & 2025)

	2026	2025
Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,720,854	\$ 1,380,875
Investments	40,705,438	35,185,095
Cash Surrender Value of Life Insurance	-	7,272
Pledges Receivable	78,633	193,000
Prepaid Expenses	6,392	117
Furniture and Equipment - Net	2,295	-
Total Assets	\$42,513,612	\$36,766,359
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$ 5,752	\$ 469
Accrued Payroll	17,169	10,642
Deferred Revenue	5,800	-
Agency Endowment and Pass-Through Funds	12,852,617	10,997,443
Total Liabilities	\$12,881,338	\$11,008,554
Net Assets		
Without Donor Restrictions	2,117,699	1,792,278
With Donor Restrictions	27,514,575	23,965,527
Total Net Assets	\$29,632,274	\$25,757,805
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$42,513,612	\$36,766,359

*Complete and audited financial statements are available upon request. Auditors for 2026 and 2025: Bauman Associates, Ltd.

Condensed Statement of Activities*

(Year Ended June 30, 2026)

Contributions, Gains, and Other Support

	All Funds	Funds Held For Others	Total Excluding Funds Held for Others**
Contributions of Cash and Other Financial Assets	\$2,161,118	\$1,318,728	\$842,390
Contributions of Nonfinancial Assets	1,017	-	1,017
Investment Income (Loss)	5,805,001	1,585,590	4,219,411
Administrative Fee from Funds Held for Others	118,327	-	118,327
Special Events	13,024	-	13,024

Total Contributions, Gains, and Other Support **\$8,098,487** **\$2,904,318** **\$5,194,169**

Grants and Expenses

Grants and Distributions	\$1,861,714	\$930,814	\$930,900
Management and General	77,760	-	77,760
Program Services	272,160	-	272,160
Administrative Fee for Funds Held for Others	118,327	-	-
Fund-raising	38,880	118,327	38,880

Total Grants and Expenses **\$2,368,841** **\$1,049,141** **\$1,319,700**

Change in Net Assets	\$5,729,646	\$1,855,177	\$3,874,469
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	36,755,248	10,997,443	25,757,805

Net Assets - End of Year **\$42,484,894** **\$12,852,620** **\$29,632,274**

* This is summarized financial statement presentation. Complete and audited financial statements are available upon request. Auditors: Bauman Associates, Ltd.

** The activity of agency and pass-through funds held for other not-for-profit organizations are eliminated from the total statement of activities in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.



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