

CONNECTING

SUMMER 2020

IN THIS ISSUE

Page 3

Transform McHenry County

Page 4

Facing crisis, mother and son find hope

Page 5

Assistant principal's legacy lives on

Page 7

Creative ways to maximize your gift

Laura Turasky and her daughter Emily show their support to the Senior Care Volunteer Network.



Connecting People Who Care With Causes That Matter

**THE
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**
FOR McHENRY COUNTY

AN AFFILIATE OF
THE CHICAGO COMMUNITY TRUST



Welcome to our first issue of *Connecting*.

It's a fitting name for our newsletter, as The Community Foundation for McHenry County is built on the connections that bring hope to life. And that is what *Connecting* will provide—stories of hope and of the change-makers and inspiring work happening all around us that usher ideals into reality.

Because while hope is vital to progress, hope alone is not enough. It must be nurtured with action, energy, empathy, resources and teamwork to grow into something tangible.

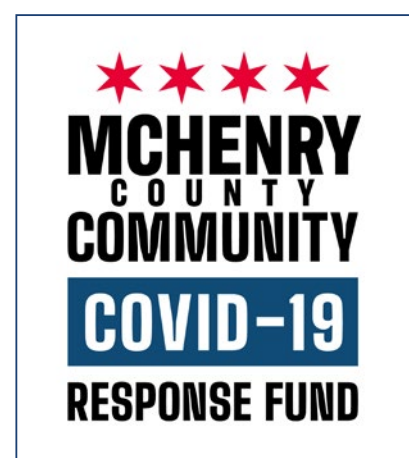
In the following pages, you will learn some of the many ways The Foundation is fueling tangible change. You'll read about Ron Bendis, whose legacy lives on in the students he's inspired. Carrie Freund, who dedicates her life's work to helping the homeless. Angel White, who found the support needed to help her son Alek as he battled depression and substance abuse. You'll also read about how our community came together to respond to the coronavirus pandemic. And you'll read about the exciting launch of our Transformational Grants program!

By choosing to support The Community Foundation for McHenry County, you are choosing to support your neighbors—the challenges they are facing, the solutions they are seeking and the hope that lives within all of us who call McHenry County "home."

Thank you for taking the time to connect with us,

Deborah Thielen

Deborah Thielen,
Executive Director



When a global pandemic impacted McHenry County, the community responded swiftly and generously.

Businesses, hospitals, schools, parks and neighborhoods have all felt the effects of COVID-19. As the reality of this health crisis descended upon McHenry County, The Foundation joined forces with United Way of Greater McHenry County to launch the McHenry County Community COVID-19 Response Fund.

The fund soon accumulated more than \$725,000 in donations from individuals and businesses. The first \$500,000 has already been granted to 29 charitable organizations working on the frontlines of the pandemic. The additional \$225,000 will be granted in the future to address long-term needs related to COVID-19.

Thank you to the area charitable organizations for their tireless work and to the generous donors who have been a source of strength and support during these trying times.



Introducing a New Era of Transformation in McHenry County

The Community Foundation for McHenry County is celebrating the launch of our Transformational Grant program, which offers three local charitable organizations the funding to launch groundbreaking programs, provide innovative services and be a source of positive change in McHenry County!

The Foundation recently announced the three inaugural recipients of the 2020 Transformational Grants. Each grant provides funding of up to \$75,000—some of our largest grants to date—empowering recipients to be true change-makers in McHenry County!

The 2020 Transformational Grants will help:

Friends of McHenry County College

Foundation break down barriers to unemployment through a six-week skill-building boot camp designed to provide specialized career training in manufacturing, health care or information technology.



Community Crosswalk works with the faith community to provide countywide access to diabetes screenings, health education, resources and health-care services in churches, potentially impacting 650 lives in the first year through this non-traditional delivery model.



The **City of Woodstock** achieve its goal of being an Age-Friendly Livable Community by identifying the distinct needs for residents ages 60+ with a comprehensive assessment of housing, transportation, medical, social and employment opportunities.



Each of these proposals demonstrated that these organizations have what it takes to be a source of innovation, problem-solving and progress in their community—and inspire real transformation from the ground up.

Thank you to the donors who have made the Transformational Grant program possible, and congratulations to the 2020 recipients of The Community Foundation for McHenry County's Transformational Grants! For more information, visit thecfmc.org.

Inspiring Future Breakthroughs

Applications for the 2021 Transformational Grants will open next January. The Foundation will provide workshops and additional resources for charitable organizations looking to "be the change" in their community. Organizations must apply annually to be considered for a grant of up to \$75,000. Organizations are eligible to win up to three years in a row, for a possible total of \$225,000.

In FY19, The Foundation granted to 82 charitable organizations – an increase of 8.7% from 2018

Finding Hope

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Offers Life-Saving Support to Mother and Son

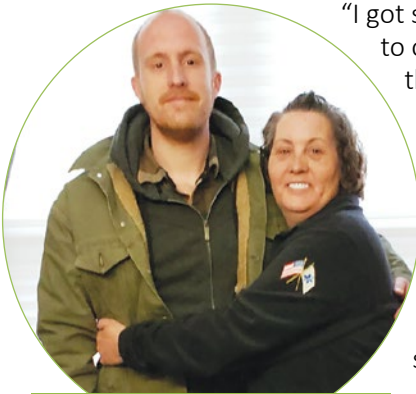
Angel White was running out of answers.

“At age 28, my son Alek was suffering from major depressive disorder, suicidal tendencies and anxiety,” said Angel.

In an attempt to self-medicate, Alek became a severe alcoholic. Angel found herself absorbing the fallout of his DUIs, hospitalization and a five-day “bender” that finally gave her the strength to say, “Enough.”

“Some of my friends knew my son was diagnosed with mental health issues. They recommended NAMI,” said Angel.

She attended a NAMI McHenry County caregivers support group and learned she and her son were not alone in their struggle.



Angel White and her son, Alek.

“I got strength from listening to others who were going through similar things,” said Angel.

She credits NAMI for not only supporting her, but helping her son get the help he so badly needed. After connecting with a family support advocate at NAMI, Alek was finally willing to check into rehab.

Since going through rehab in mid-2019, Alek has remained sober, found a good job and has the tools he needs to pursue a healthier life.

“It can be difficult to find help for those who suffer from mental illness or people who care for them. There’s often long waiting lists and insurance restrictions,” said Angel.

“But NAMI will help you. Their team will go to bat for you—even after rehab. They can connect you to other resources and hold your hand through the process. People might feel hopeless and helpless, but because of organizations like NAMI, you don’t have to,” said Angel.

Since 2013, The Community Foundation for McHenry County has provided nearly \$39,000 in grants to NAMI McHenry County, a staff- and volunteer-based source of mental health support, education and advocacy services available to the community at no charge. To contact NAMI, call 815-308-0851 or visit their website at namimchenrycounty.org.

Friends of The Foundation Profile

Shining a Spotlight on People Who Care



Carrie Freund (standing) with Karen Henderson, a resident of PADS.

Carrie Freund, MHP

Director of Homeless Services,
Pioneer Center for Human Services

About my job: I oversee five behavioral health residential group homes and the new 10,500-square-foot facility that just opened in Woodstock in June. The new facility will double our capacity, allowing us to provide food, shelter, clothing, laundry and shower facilities to 70 people.

I was drawn to this field: At the age of 7, I remember seeing a homeless person taking shelter under an overpass and saying, “Mom, someday I’m going to help that person get back on their feet.”

An interesting fact about PADS: Last year, we served 220 people at our site, from July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019. Of those, 145 left PADS for a more positive outcome. That’s a 66% success rate!

What I love most about my team: None of us are doing this for the money. We’re not getting rich doing this. Most people who get into this line of work (social services, human services) have known struggles in our lives and our loved ones’ lives. We all inspire empathy and understanding of each other’s circumstances.

It may surprise people to know: Homelessness can happen to nearly anyone. Most of the people we see through PADS are like you and me—they’re not lazy, and they don’t have problems with drugs and alcohol. Some are highly educated or once had a good job and nice home. We need to change the stigma, because many of us are one life event away from being homeless.

For more information, visit pioneercenter.org



Ron Bendis

Honoring Mr. Bendis

Scholarship Fund Continues Former Woodstock High School Assistant Principal’s Work

When Ron Bendis passed away in 2019, four retired teachers — John Headley, George Kazlusky, Dave Lichtenheld and Gordie Tebo — decided there was no better way to honor the beloved former Woodstock High School Assistant Principal than to develop a scholarship in his name—a scholarship that reflected Ron’s distinct values as an educator, citizen and friend.

John Headley was one of the four who pooled their own resources to establish the fund. The group approached The Foundation to manage The Ron Bendis Scholarship.

“The Foundation has taken such good care of us. They handle the finances, the paperwork and the details. They’ve been so amicable and easy to work with. They even came to the house to meet with us and made the process so simple,” explained John.

As the fund continues to increase from donations, the first recipient of The Ron Bendis Scholarship will be announced next spring. “We expect the scholarship to reflect the compassionate and unconventional educator who saw potential in every student,” expressed John.

Visit thecfmc.org or call 815-338-4483 if you are interested in contributing to The Ron Bendis Scholarship or any of The Foundation’s other scholarship funds, or if you would like to learn more about establishing a new scholarship.

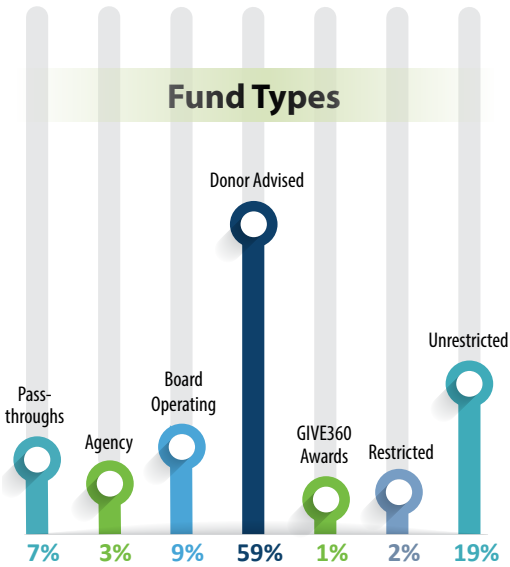
4 Things to Know About My Friend, Ron Bendis

By John Headley

- 1 Ron was especially adept at working with students struggling with significant academic or personal issues. He worked hard at keeping them in school, and in many cases, being a guiding hand toward high school graduation and opportunities beyond.
- 2 When Ron won the prestigious Susan Palmore Award of Excellence in 2018, many students shared their stories about Mr. Bendis at the awards ceremony. One student who dealt with drug abuse in the past said “If it wasn’t for him, I’d probably be dead.”
- 3 Ron was a patient man and would bend over backward to make sure his “kids” had what they needed to succeed. He made sure they received recognition for their efforts.
- 4 Even as Ron battled mesothelioma, as long as he could stand, he was committed to serving others. He worked at the food pantry three days a week, almost until the very end.

FY19 saw the creation of two new scholarship funds – The Ron Bendis Scholarship Fund and The LeeAnn Golembiewski Memorial Scholarship.

*2019 At A Glance



Total Grants

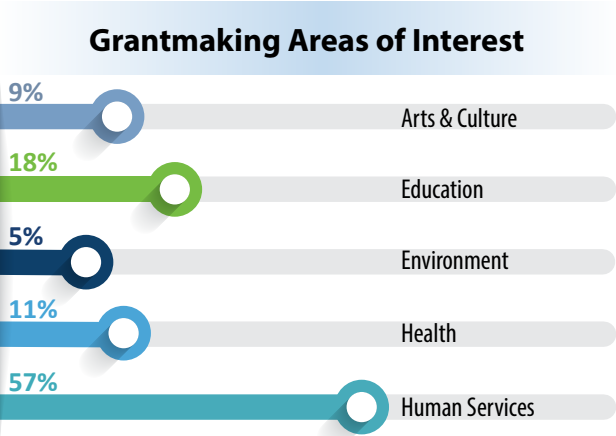
196

\$2.23 million

Total Scholarships

33

\$41,211



\$38 Million

Total Assets

Grantees

Association for Individual Development	Mano A Mano Family Resource Center
Bear Necessities Pediatric Cancer Foundation	Marengo Area Schools Education Foundation, Inc.
Bernie's Book Bank	Marril Corsen Media Project LTD
Big Brothers Big Sisters of McHenry County	McHenry County Department of Health
Cary Fire Protection District	McHenry County Farm Bureau Foundation
CASA of McHenry County	McHenry County Music Center
City of Woodstock	McHenry County Planning & Development
Clearbrook	McHenry County Youth Sports Association
Creative Arts, Inc.	Mental Health Resource League for McHenry County
Crystal Lake Food Pantry	NAMI of McHenry County Illinois
Crystal Lake Teen Center NFP	New Directions Addiction Recovery Services
Culture Arts and Music	NISRA Foundation
Enivronmental Defenders of McHenry County	Northern Illinois Food Bank
Family Health Partnership Clinic	Northwest Community Music Academy
Farmworker & Landscaper Advocacy Project	On Angels Wings, Inc.
First Congregational Church	Openlands
Free Guitars for Future Stars	Options & Advocacy for McHenry County, Inc.
Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge	Pioneer Center for Human Services
Friends of McHenry County College Foundation	Prairie State Legal Services, Inc.
Friends of Moraine Hills State Park	Raue Center for the Arts
Gigi's Playhouse, Inc.	Refuge for Women
Girls on the Run of Northwest Illinois	Rosecrance Foundation
Greater Elgin Family Care Center	Sage YMCA
Habitat for Humanity of McHenry County	Samaritan Counseling Center of the Northwest Suburbs
Harvard Broadcasting Incorporated	Senior Care Volunteer Network
Harvard Community Senior Center	The Salvation Army—Crystal Lake
Home of the Sparrow, Inc.	TLS Veterans (Transitional Living Services)
Hooves to Heal, NFP	Townsquare Players Inc.
Huntley Community Radio NFP	Turning Point, Inc.
Independence Health & Therapy	University of Illinois Extension
JourneyCare Foundation	Veteran's Network Committee of Northern Illinois
Judson University, A Baptist Institution	Volunteer Center McHenry County
Lake County Extension Foundation	Woodstock Christian Life Services (Hearthstone Communities)
Lakeside Legacy Foundation	Woodstock Christmas Clearinghouse
Land Conservancy of McHenry County	Woodstock Fine Arts Association Incorporated
Last Chance House, Inc.	Woodstock Food Pantry
Leadership Greater McHenry County	Woodstock Rotary Foundation
Lilac Tree Resources for Divorcing Women	Youth and Family Center of McHenry County
Loeffel Epilepsy Foundation	
Lutheran Social Services of Illinois	
Main Stay Therapeutic Farm, Inc.	



Judy Porter

Creative Ways to Give

Smart Donor Strategies from Judith Porter, long-time donor and friend to The Community Foundation for McHenry County

- ✓ The **GIVE360** Program is a wonderful place to start! It's a great way to get involved and learn about philanthropy. The program opens your eyes to causes you never thought of. And it's fun to participate!
- ✓ Consult your **financial advisor**. They can do a financial analysis that ensures your daily cash flow needs are met while developing strategies that make the most of your long-term and future charitable goals.
- ✓ Think outside the checkbook. **Life insurance policies, appreciated stock or IRAs** can also be donated directly. In many cases, this ensures more will go to intended charities than if donated after paying taxes on income or capital gains.
- ✓ Partner with an **established, respected foundation**, like The Community Foundation for McHenry County, that has longstanding relationships with local charitable organizations. No more dealing with mysterious solicitation calls or spending hours doing in-depth research on charities, because you'll know your charitable intentions are in good hands.

Call The Foundation at 815-338-4483 to learn more.

**Census 2020:
Your Community is Counting on You!**

Health clinics.
.....

Fire departments.
.....

Schools.
.....

Roads and highways.
.....

The census influences vital features of our community.

Have you responded to Census 2020?

Participation is 100% confidential and easier than ever with the option to respond online, by phone or by mail.

This opportunity only happens once every ten years when the Census Bureau counts everyone living in this country—a count that can shape your community by determining funding for essential services like health clinics, fire departments and schools. It even helps non-profits better understand local needs in the neighborhoods they serve.

Just visit 2020census.gov to get started. Later this summer and fall, census workers may visit homes that haven't yet responded. If you've already responded, encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same!



A Permanent Home for The Foundation

At our February 18 Board of Directors meeting, The Foundation board members voted unanimously to purchase property at 33 East Woodstock Street in Crystal Lake. While The Foundation offices have moved four times in the past five years, this new property will allow us to establish a permanent home—physical roots that represent our steadfast presence in and commitment to McHenry County. Stay tuned for more details to come.

*Fiscal year Oct. 1, 2018 – Sept. 30, 2019

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630 N. Route 31, Suite 101
Crystal Lake, IL 60012

Reflecting on Our Emeritus Celebration

On Sunday, January 19, The Foundation hosted an emeritus celebration at the Woodstock Country Club honoring **Barbara Oughton** and **Vern Schiller**, who each dedicated the maximum nine years—or three terms—of service on the Foundation board.

We thank Barb and Vern for their leadership, distinct gifts and perspective that contributed to a vibrant and impactful board of directors.



The Community Foundation for McHenry County Board of Directors

Steve Middaugh, Board Chair – *Village of Lakewood*
Financial Advisor, Edward Jones Investments

Tamara Marshall, Vice Chair – *Algonquin*
Partner, Zanck, Coen, Wright & Saladin,
Attorneys at Law

Sheila Henson, Treasurer – *Harvard*
President, Brown Bear Daycare

Kate Wade, Secretary – *Crystal Lake*
Managing Editor, Utility Business Media

John Buckley – *Woodstock*
Executive Director, Independence Health and Therapy

Bob Cormier – *Crystal Lake*
Executive Vice President, Home State Bank

Mark Davids – *Union*
Wealth Management Advisor,
Dorion Gray Retirement Planning

Shelly Casella-Dercole – *McHenry*
Managing Partner, Eder Casella & Co.

Lizeth Dela Cruz – *Harvard*
Universal Banker, Prairie Community Bank

Susan Schott – *Cary*
Program Manager, Susan Schott, LLC

During our 19-year history, 45 community members have served as Community Foundation for McHenry County board members, with nine members completing nine years of service and achieving emeritus status.