Here in Utica we are celebrating the arrival of spring with its warmer temperatures and bright rays of sunshine. The season was named for the plants that ‘spring’ from the ground after a winter’s rest. In much the same way, our donors’ generosity is rooted in the community and from it great things spring forth.

As evidence of our fundholders’ remarkable dedication, our donor-advised funds have collectively awarded 75 grants totaling more than $890,000 in the first quarter of 2018. These investments are nearly double those made in the first quarter of 2017, and close to half of all donor-advised grants made in 2017.

This is a tremendous start to 2018 and demonstrates our donors’ commitment to fulfilling our community’s greatest needs.

The Community Foundation team works closely with partner organizations to identify projects and programs in need of support. In these pages you will find an assortment of these opportunities and I hope you’ll consider supporting those that align with your charitable interests. A selection of investment opportunities will be featured in each issue of this donor-advised newsletter, a resource we hope you will find beneficial.

As always, thank you for your continued support of The Community Foundation’s mission and helping our region reach its greatest potential.

Alicia Dicks | President/CEO
Former Congressman Richard Hanna may be best known for his political achievements throughout the years, but he has an equally impressive history of supporting philanthropic endeavors. He is committed to bettering the Mohawk Valley, a community in which he was raised and still cherishes to this day.

“This community has more heart than most,” said Hanna. “Any event held in this community is well-attended; people are enthusiastic, and these events raise money from that same caring base. This community has a lot of empathy. There is always that enthusiasm.”

Hanna was drawn to The Community Foundation after hearing about its impressive work in support of the community. He joined the organization’s Board of Trustees in 1996 and served as Board Chair from 2003 to 2005.

In 1997, Hanna established the sixth donor-advised fund at The Community Foundation. He was an early adopter of this now popular charitable vehicle, with nearly 100 others following suit in the decades that have passed.

The Richard and Kimberly Hanna Fund has awarded more than $600,000 in grants since its inception, providing support to more than 110 nonprofit organizations. The fund has given multiple grants to organizations such as The House of the Good Shepherd, Samaritan Counseling Center of the Mohawk Valley, Stevens-Swan Humane Society and two organizations of significant importance to Hanna: The Women’s Fund of Herkimer and Oneida Counties and Annie’s Fund.

The Women’s Fund of Herkimer and Oneida Counties is a nonprofit organization that supports women and young girls economically and educationally, helping them advance personal growth and community participation. A distinct program of The Women’s Fund, Annie’s Fund was established in 2004 by Hanna. He was inspired by a woman who questioned why the community had no program to help women overcome obstacles and transform their lives.

“I knew someone, named Annie, and I thought to myself, I am going to do this one day when I have the money,” Hanna said. “I was fortunate enough to get to that point, and Annie’s Fund is doing exactly what I wanted it to.”

Annie’s Fund is unique, offering monetary assistance to women experiencing immediate and temporary crises.

Hedy Ann Hage, board member of The Women’s Fund and co-chair of Annie’s Fund, refers to Annie’s Fund as Hanna’s brainchild.

“Richard heard these stories about these problems that women were having and how there weren’t any resources available, and he wanted to know how we could remedy that,” said Hage. “It’s a unique fund; it’s one-of-a-kind. Through Annie’s Fund, we do what no one else can.”
Empowering Women
ONE BY ONE

In 2000, The Women’s Fund of Herkimer and Oneida Counties became an independent nonprofit organization with the help of startup funding from The Community Foundation. Partnering with local organizations, The Women’s Fund provides grants to fund programs that work to benefit women and their families.

Through his involvement with The Community Foundation and The Women’s Fund, former Congressman Richard Hanna became increasingly concerned with the service gaps and lack of available resources for women. Hanna proposed his idea for more direct solutions, which led to the creation of Annie’s Fund, a sub-fund of The Women’s Fund. Created in 2004, Annie’s Fund is designed to provide small, impactful grants that directly assist individual women who have exhausted all other resources.

Advocates and case workers at several local partner agencies, including the YWCA, Resource Center for Independent Living and Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees, work to connect women with assistance through Annie’s Fund.

Hedy Hage, a long-time board member of The Women’s Fund and co-chair of Annie’s Fund, describes the impact the seemingly small financial investments can make in a woman’s life.

Hage recalls a young mother who was working at a local retail shop where she made slightly over minimum wage. She had just given birth to a baby who was born with a critical illness. Immediately, the newborn was transported to a Syracuse hospital to receive care. Postpartum, separated from her baby and without resources, the young mother needed to find child care services for her older children so that she could travel from Utica to Syracuse to visit her sick baby. Annie’s Fund stepped in with emergency funding to help the young mother pay for gas, tolls and travel expenses to visit her newborn for the length of the baby’s stay in intensive care.

“People are often perplexed that, with all the social programs that exist, we still have families in such great need,” said Hage. “When economic systems are stressed, women and children are the ones who suffer the most.”

Annie’s Fund grant applications are reviewed by a committee of 10 women, led by co-chairs Hage and Flossy Mitchell.

“We are women who care deeply about our communities,” said Hage. “We feel that we’re fortunate and it’s important to give back. If we don’t watch out for one another, who will watch out for us?”

Since its creation, Annie’s Fund has awarded more than 325 grants totaling nearly $150,000.

The Community Foundation has awarded more than $325,000 in grants to The Women’s Fund with support from 14 donor-advised funds and has given more than $65,000 in grants to Annie’s Fund with support from four donor-advised funds.
HOW TO GIVE

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WAYS TO GIVE

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*PHOTO TAKEN AT THE HAGE BUILDING, A LEED GOLD CERTIFIED FACILITY IN DOWNTOWN UTICA.