Our team at the Community Foundation shares a goal with you to realize our vision: a vibrant region with opportunity for all. We often restate this vision because it captures the purpose of our work—and because it’s a vision that includes you, our fundholders.

Throughout 2021, a wide range of community priorities and needs have been addressed thanks to your generosity and engagement; in the arts, animal welfare, education, healthcare and human services… the list goes on.

Though you may not know each and every one of us by name, we all play a part in the process of ensuring that your charitable goals are met and that your contributions have the greatest possible impact in the community and beyond. Simply put, we are proud to be a partner in your giving journey.

From all of us at the Community Foundation, we wish you and your family a safe, happy and healthy holiday season.

Alicia Dicks, Allison Campbell, Lindsey Costella, Alicia Daddario, Erika Eastman, Kayla Ellis, Nick Grimmer, John Husnay, Jacque Klotzbach, Morgan Mielnicki, Olivia Paul, Eh Ka Paw, John Swann, Shannon Wheelock, Joseph Wicks
Our NEWEST fund

JOHN AND DEANNA SAMMON FUND FOR YOUNG SCHOLARS LIBERTY PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

A project fund established by John and Deanna Sammon to further the mission of the Young Scholars Liberty Partnerships Program.

YEAR-END GIVING REMINDERS

Per IRS guidelines, the following deadlines must be adhered to in order for gifts to count for 2021 tax deductibility.

ONLINE GIFTS
Online credit card transactions must be completed by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, December 31, 2021.

PHONED-IN OR IN-PERSON GIFTS
Phoned-in or in-person gifts must be received by 4 p.m. on Friday, December 31, 2021.

MAILED GIFTS
Gifts mailed to the Community Foundation must be postmarked on or before Friday, December 31, 2021.

GIFTS OF SECURITIES
Stock transfers must be received by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, December 31, 2021.
What do you call a place that offers programs and services for all young and old alike, with equal access for all and a mile-long list of daily activities?

The Y.

A vital piece to this community’s puzzle, the YMCA of the Greater Tri-Valley (“the Y”) has served this area for 150 years. With two main branches in Rome and Oneida, and a childcare center in New Hartford, the organization is deeply rooted here.

The YMCA focuses its work around three central pillars: youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. These focus areas include resources for those of all ages and abilities. Chief Executive Officer Hank Leo says that most people only see the Y as a healthy living place, but it has so much more to offer.

“Typically, when you think of a Y you think of a gym, maybe a pool. And we have all those things but what that doesn’t show you is the age range within that. We have newborns in our child watch program, we have 90-year-olds that are in our swimming programs. It’s really remarkable.”

The youth development pillar strives to nurture the potential of every child and teen while supporting families through a wide range of activities such as summer camp, music lessons, swimming lessons, before and after school care, and child watch. As one of the largest providers of childcare in local schools, Leo says this is one of its most utilized programs.

The healthy living pillar nurtures body, mind and spirit, with more than 150 classes offered each week. The halls of both buildings are lined, door after door, with exciting activities—some that you might not even expect, such as aquatic aerobics, archery, badminton, fencing, pickleball, yoga, Zumba, and many more.

“One of the big things is the pool. We teach kids to swim, or as we like to say, we prevent drowning,” said Leo. “Learning to swim when you’re young is a very important skill to have so we have lessons from six months old on up. The average age for our pool users is 50s or 60s, and we have a lot of seniors as well. Many of our members say they come to use the pool because of the warm water, it’s the best thing for joint, knee and hip replacements.”

The Y’s last pillar, social responsibility, seeks to support neighbors in the community and promote diversity, equity and inclusion. For example, the Y will never turn away anyone who can’t afford a membership. Through financial aid services, the organization has provided more than $400,000 in recent years to children, teens, adults and seniors so they can benefit from all that the organization has to offer.

“The goal is always to have you become a member, a part of the family, and if there’s a way that we can help make that happen, we are more than happy to do that,” Leo says.

To the Y, this pillar is the heart and soul of its mission.

“We focus on Christian principles and treat people with dignity, honor, and respect. The other big part of social responsibility is that we want to be a good community partner to other organizations—the hospitals, the schools, the arts, you name it.”

The Community Foundation and its donor-advised funds have supported the Y for years,
support that Leo says continues to help the organization operate as an effective, efficient hub of community activity.

As is the case with many things, the shutdown in 2020 took a huge toll on the entire operation of the Y and its exciting plans that had recently started gaining momentum.

The Rome branch had just entered the beginning stages of a move to a new location. This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity was a chance to repurpose a good portion of the large Woodhaven site on Floyd Avenue in Rome and create a Y that was more accessible to all. With close connections to the Griffiss Business and Technology Park and Mohawk Valley Community College working in combination with the potential that a new space like this could bring, the vision for this project became clear.

Keeping its members and the general community in mind, the Y conducted a feasibility study to ensure that the move would benefit everyone. The results confirmed overwhelming support from current members and the public. And while the plans are big, the hope for the project to come to fruition is even bigger.

“Our members have been behind us, the community has been behind us, now everybody is kind of waiting for when this is going to happen,” Leo says. “The hardest part was when COVID hit, it really put the brakes on everything because we lost about 50% of our members, and we have to regain those members before we expand and bring this project to life.’’

The launch of a capital campaign to raise funds for the project will begin soon. Through the ups and downs, the highs and lows, the Y’s optimism is unshakeable.

“We’re still here, we’re still serving the community, we’re recovering, and we’re doing better,” Leo says. “Considering all the lives the Y has influenced it’s very important to us that we stick to our goals, continue along this path and keep going.’’
or the Griffith family, it’s all about giving back to the community—from generation to generation.

Established in 2008, the David and Janet Griffith Family Fund has awarded more than $1,000,000 to nearly 30 organizations. The Griffiths are well-respected members of the community where David served as president and CEO of M. Griffith Investment Services in New Hartford. Both born and raised in the Utica area, they believe that philanthropy begins at home.

“Our parents were involved in a lot of organizations, and giving back to the community was just a natural thing to do,” says Janet. “We like to keep possibilities open and whatever organization is in need, we want to be able to give right at that moment. It also reminds our family that because we have the means to do so, we should always look to put these resources to good use by donating back to the community.”

After following their parents’ example, the Griffiths have passed on their philanthropic traditions to the next generation. Their daughter, Megan Rowlands, shared that her parents have taken the family to New Hartford Presbyterian Church on Thanksgiving Day for as many years as she can remember. The family volunteers to deliver turkey dinners to those unable to prepare their own. Megan, who lives in New Hartford, recalls that her parents would always remind her and her two siblings that they should never take anything for granted, and to always appreciate what they have. Those lessons have stayed with her throughout her life.

The Griffiths say the commitment of nonprofit organizations and community members makes giving back an easy decision for them.

“People within the greater Utica and Rome area have demonstrated over and over how they care about each other,” said David. “You can see...
that from the Community Foundation to the American Heart Association’s Greatest Heart Run and Walk. You can see it with how local citizens help others that are made homeless by the flooding we’ve had. We just think it’s a very caring community."

For over a decade, the David and Janet Griffith Family Fund has supported a wide range of causes and organizations, such as the Rescue Mission of Utica, Hope House, the Presbyterian Home, Women’s Fund of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, YWCA of the Mohawk Valley and the Community Foundation’s Racial Equity and Social Justice Fund.

“We want to contribute to organizations that do their mission well,” said David. “We find that all of the organizations we support are efficient in the delivery of the dollars that we donate to the intended ultimate beneficiary.”

The Griffiths’ community generosity is more than just awarding grants; both David and Janet have been involved with many organizations throughout the years and are among the Community Foundation’s most dedicated supporters.

The Griffiths would be the first to tell you they don’t give back to the community for the accolades, but their generosity hasn’t gone unnoticed. In 2016, they received recognition for their outstanding community contributions and were presented the Rosamond Childs Award for Community Philanthropy. The award is given to individuals who exhibit the spirit of giving and a profound commitment to the community as exemplified by Rosamond G. Childs, the Community Foundation’s first major donor. Recipients are known for their selflessness, leadership, compassion and generosity.

“If you look at the past recipients, we are deeply honored to be a part of that group,” said David. “We always say, we want to do this because it inspires others.”

From 2016 to 2019, David Griffith served on the Community Foundation’s Board of Trustees and witnessed the organization go through a transformation from a traditional grantmaking organization to a leader in identifying and tackling fundamental community issues. He cherished being a part of the decision making and offering input on creative ways to enhance the community.

He continues to support the Community Foundation’s strategic initiatives including racial equity and the COVID-19 Response Fund. After concluding his board service, David continued to serve the organization as a member of an investment advisory group made up of Community Foundation Trustees and investment strategy experts. He also serves on the Board of Trustees at his alma mater, Boston College.

“We are so fortunate to have an organization like the Community Foundation that is so knowledgeable about the needs of this area,” says David. “You can set up a donor-advised fund anywhere but what do they know about Utica and its surroundings? They don’t know a thing. It’s that local knowledge that is key.”
MAKE A GIFT THAT WILL FIT YOUR PHILANTHROPIC GOALS AND BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY FOR YEARS TO COME.

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foundationhoc.org

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Utica, NY 13502

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315.735.8212

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Please provide your bank or broker with the following instructions for transfer of stock to our account at Robert W. Baird & Co. Inc.:

DTC #: 0547
Account #: 1854-6383
Account Name: The Community Foundation

Notify Nick Grimmer, director of giving strategies, 315.731.3737, ngrimmer@foundationhoc.org, that a gift is being transferred. Provide the donor name, number of shares, and the name of the stock or the stock code, as well as the designation.

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LINDSEY COSTELLO
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INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE? CONTACT OUR TEAM >

A copy of our most recently filed financial report is available from the Charities Registry on the New York State Attorney General’s website (www.charitiesnys.com) or, upon request, by contacting the New York State Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 28 Liberty Street, New York, NY 10005, or The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties, 2608 Genesee Street, Utica, NY 13502. You also may obtain information on charitable organizations from the New York State Office of the Attorney General at www.charitiesnys.com or 212.416.8401.