ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

SUMMER 2023

A PUBLICATION OF

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MOHAWK VALLEY GIVES
POWERED BY THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

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THE BALANCED CHEF

CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE PRESS EVENT

MOHAWK VALLEY GIVES 2022 KICKOFF

MOHAWK VALLEY GIVES DAY

CORNHILL REVITALIZATION PROJECT PRESS CONFERENCE
Our region is transforming right before our eyes, in countless ways. We say this often to our peers, partners, and even ourselves, when we look at the mix of challenge and opportunity. This transformation isn’t happening overnight, and in fact, is something that the Community Foundation (and many others) have been working toward for years.

When I think about our organization’s transition from reactive grantmaker to community investor in my eight years as President and CEO, I’m proud and thankful that the Community Foundation has supported and engaged in efforts aimed at increasing community impact—proud of our team and our collaborative partners, and thankful for our dedicated Trustees and committed donors.

So, as an organization and as a two-county community, we have changed. We have changed with our community. And, we have changed for the better.

Over the years, we learned, we listened, we did our research, we had important conversations both internally and externally, and we have adapted our strategies to ensure that we are simultaneously supporting nonprofit organizations that help our communities thrive, while investing in bold initiatives to strengthen all of Herkimer and Oneida counties.

In this issue, we share a snapshot of our evolving work, including a peek inside the Community Foundation teams and processes that make that work come to life. We highlight our second annual Mohawk Valley Gives campaign—coming up September 20, so mark your calendar—and feature organizations and funds that have worked alongside us on this journey.

I hope while making your way through the pages of this issue that you feel the same sense of pride and gratitude that I do when I think about all the wonderful things happening around us. We are so proud of our community, of the future we are building today, and of the partnerships that make it all happen.

Alicia Fernandez Dicks
President/CEO
The Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties
The Utica Center for Development (UCD) has been assisting veterans and their families in the Mohawk Valley for the past 13 years through its CNY Veteran’s Outreach Center. The Washington Street building, once home to the Utica YMCA, now serves veterans and others in the community. UCD’s facilities include 30 housing units that provide transitional housing for homeless veterans and permanent housing for disabled and elderly veterans.

With housing needs among the population it serves on the rise, UCD has developed a program that raises funds to build more housing by recycling unwanted textiles.

“We invite residents who are spring-cleaning or discarding unwanted items from their homes to deliver clothing and textiles to our facility,” says Vincent Scalise, UCD founder and executive director. “Not only will these items be kept from landfill disposal, but they will be given new life while providing housing funding for the homeless in our community.”

This program started to take shape at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. With extra time on their hands, people began cleaning out closets, donating items to the center. The facility now accepts donations of clothing and footwear of all types and conditions; linens such as sheets, blankets, comforters, towels, draperies, and table linens; and accessories like hats, gloves, scarves, purses, bags, belts and ties.

Volunteers sift through donations, separating items in good condition for sale to the public from badly worn textiles. Typically, torn, stained clothing would be thrown away—but not in this case. Scalise and his team realized that they can not only generate revenue by selling them to bargain-hunters, but also by recycling unwanted items—and keeping them out of landfills.

“I have always been someone that cares very much for the environment and am always thinking of ways to avoid having to throw things in the trash,” Scalise says. “The idea came out of necessity. When the Salvation Army closed its downtown facility, we became overwhelmed with the amount of used clothing we were receiving. I had to find a way to deal with all the clothing. I knew there was a market for used textiles, so I started to research it and I was able to find a buyer.”

In partnership with the Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority, 50 Forward Mohawk Valley at the Parkway Center, and the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, UCD was able to get the program off the ground. The Community Foundation and the Mele Family Fund provided $49,000 to fund workspace improvements and purchase necessary equipment, including a baling machine, forklift, and loading ramp.

“We are very grateful for the help and support from the Mele Family Fund,” says Scalise. “We are excited to continue this work at the Utica Center for Development with the help of the Community Foundation.”
While the baling machine was an expensive investment, Scalise says, it has already paid for itself and then some.

“At one point, the old YMCA swimming pool was full top to bottom with clothes,” says UCD Housing Manager Scott Zoeckler. “It was about four tractor-trailer loads worth of textiles.”

With the help of staff and volunteers, the textiles are bagged and loaded into the baling machine, which transforms their bulk into 60-pound bales—ready for the forklift and loading dock. Once on trucks, UCD’s bales of discarded textiles are sold and shipped overseas, generating revenue to support UCD programs and services.

To date, 66 tons of clothing have been saved from landfills and instead have been recycled and reused globally. Next steps for the program include increasing the bale size and doubling the number of monthly truckloads bound for Ontario.

For UCD all of this is only the beginning, Scalise says.

“The goal is to make this program successful and long running, while using the proceeds from the sale of the textiles to build more housing for the homeless and fund other programs that help those in need.”

Visit UCD’s website at ucdevelopment.org for more information about drop off locations to donate unwanted textile items to the program.
One important way that those who give back to the community create a legacy is planned giving, the practice of donors making arrangements for a gift that will benefit a nonprofit organization in the future. Such gifts are charitable contributions, part of a donor’s financial or estate plan, that can be realized in many ways—each providing benefits to meet a donor’s unique circumstances or tax situation. To meet the needs of those who want to plan their philanthropy in this way, the Community Foundation offers expert advice to help individuals, couples and families make the best possible choices. While many choose to make gifts of cash or stock, bequests, or even gifts of real estate, a charitable remainder unitrust can provide unique advantages.

In 2021, Bill and Claire Fahy established a charitable remainder unitrust at the Community Foundation. The Fahys were looking for a tax efficient vehicle that would provide maximum benefits when gifting appreciated assets, while also supporting the community through a future gift.

“We had a number of motivations when it came to starting this unitrust, but the biggest one was that we were trying to set up and secure our legacy,” said Bill. “It gave us the incentive to do something now and set up the trust to establish the legacy, identify the recipients, and take the headaches away.”

Ultimately, a charitable remainder unitrust pays the donor(s) income that reflects the value of the trust’s assets, and that income has the potential to increase over time as the trust grows in value.

Charitable remainder unitrusts also give people the opportunity to help support and donate to nonprofits of their choice. The Fahys wanted to give back to their hometown of Rome and other organizations near to their hearts, so the decision to support local organizations made perfect sense.

“Claire and I are both involved with the Rome Art and Community Center, and I’m also the president of the Mohawk Valley Bluegrass Association,” Bill explained. “Music and arts are near and dear to us and as long-time members of the Rome community, we wanted to see that our donations stayed local. We identified some local arts organizations and other service organizations that we wanted to support for the long haul and ones that held meaning in our lives.”

In addition to supporting Rome organizations, Bill also explained that he and his family are strong supporters of the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CABVI).

“My brother was born with a vision impairment that left him blind, and he had been working at CABVI for years,” he said. “The support they’ve given him and our family over the years is a main reason as to why we wanted to support their organization and give to them through our unitrust.”

Setting up a charitable remainder unitrust does not have to be a long and complex process. Staff at the Community Foundation are here to help you and your tax advisors along the way, as Bill and Claire came to find out.

“It was a team effort with us,” he said. “Claire was involved every step of the way with me as we started setting up our trust. I would definitely start with the Community Foundation and talk to Nick Grimmer. There is a lot of planning that goes into setting one up, but Nick and everyone else at the office worked together in a way that made me realize that I was in good hands and that the trust would be set up the right way.”

If you are interested in learning more about charitable remainder unitrusts or would like to set one up for you and/or your family, please contact Nick Grimmer, director of giving strategies, at ngrimmer@foundationhoc.org.
Around the holidays and during the colder months, residents facing economic challenge and food insecurity rely heavily on food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and human service organizations. To help address the annual need, the Community Foundation started the Helpful Harvest Fund last year. In 2022, $38,500 was awarded to 33 human service organizations in 12 municipalities, with each organization receiving at least $1,000 to help those in need.

“The Rescue Mission of Utica has faced increased demand for food due to the economic challenges brought on by inflation,” said Wendy Goetz, the organization’s executive director. “The Helpful Harvest grant we received has assisted us in providing food to those most vulnerable in the community who are most affected by food insecurity.”

Many Community Foundation fundholders donated to the fund or recommended that grants from their own funds go to eligible organizations, resulting in an additional $5,700 to area nonprofits.

“The Helpful Harvest grant made it possible for over 100 families to receive Thanksgiving food baskets complete with fresh fruits and vegetables,” said Jane Domingue, executive director of the Thea Bowman House. “It made for a really special holiday season.”

The Community Foundation’s primary goal in establishing the fund is to create a lasting impact on those served.

“Knowing that our fund was able to provide meals and groceries to an even greater number of residents this past year really warmed our hearts,” said Olivia Paul, director of community engagement at the Community Foundation. “This simple idea that turned into reality is benefitting so many, and we are very proud and encouraged to do even more.”

The Helpful Harvest Fund accepts donations throughout the year and aims to support even more organizations during the 2023 holiday season. Gifts can be made online at foundationhoc.org/helpfulharvestfund or mailed to the Community Foundation. Applications from nonprofit organizations will be accepted in October so awards can be distributed in time for the holiday needs of recipients.

Paul says creating the Helpful Harvest Fund is an example of the Community Foundation putting its vision—a vibrant region with opportunity for all—into action.

“We can’t think of a better way to give back to our community during the giving season, and we hope to impact even more lives with this year’s grant round.”

2022 FUND STATISTICS

| $38,500 | AWARDED |
| 33 ORGANIZATIONS |

““The Helpful Harvest grant made it possible for over 100 families to receive Thanksgiving food baskets complete with fresh fruits and vegetables.””
Connor Arthur Lynskey, son of Mike Sr. and Donna Lynskey, was the epitome of a natural-born leader. He excelled academically, was a talented athlete, went above and beyond to help others, especially young people, and was an amazing son, brother, friend, and teammate.

When the Holland Patent Central School District 2017 graduate and pre-med student was killed by a drunk driver on August 11, 2018, his family decided to establish the Connor Arthur Lynskey Memorial Scholarship Fund, supported by an annual event. Connor's Way 5-Mile Scenic Memorial Run/Walk in Hinckley, which follows the route that Connor used to run, first took place on October 13, 2018.

“[It helped us] get through the darkest days, knowing we were doing this for Connor. We didn’t know if we were going to succeed or fall flat on our faces, but it’s been wonderful,” says Connor’s uncle Don Lynskey. “The run and walk is a celebration of life more than anything else. Each year, we feel like he is there with us.”

Since Connor’s dream was to become a rural doctor and establish a practice with his older brother, Mike Jr., the scholarship fund supports seniors at Holland Patent and other area high schools headed for a variety of four-year institutions, as well as students enrolled in the Upstate College of Medicine Early Assurance Program especially those in its Rural Medical Doctor program.

Don, who had experience working with scholarships programs, volunteered to assist in administering the initial scholarship process with the help of BOCES. He created the first application forms, got in touch with high schools and guidance counselors to spread the word, and established award criteria.

“Connor was superior as far as academics and athletics, and we didn’t want to leave out either facet of that,” he said. “We decided to make academic awards based on GPA and well-roundedness, and with the athletic/character awards, we tend to look at a student’s essays and letters of recommendation. Students who emulate Connor’s sense of caring and giving 100% will likely be considered for the athletic/character scholarship.”

In 2021, the family decided to expand the fund’s scholarship opportunities. The...
Joey R. Ventura Tradesman Award was created in memory of a close family friend and member of the Connor’s Way team who passed away at age 28. Because he was a welding instructor, the award honoring Joey R. Ventura supports students pursuing careers in the building trades. The scholarship award was first presented in 2022, soon after the family decided to make the Connor Arthur Lyskey Memorial Scholarship Fund a partnership with the Community Foundation.

“It was a very long process, and I’m grateful that the Community Foundation has taken it over and does such a fine job with the fund,” said Don. “Given the Community Foundation’s wealth of expertise, that’s why I was happy to put it into their hands, knowing we weren’t missing anything.”

As for Connor’s Way, more than 200 people participated in the first memorial run/walk, and that number has grown to over 500 in 2022. The sixth annual event will take place on Sunday, September 17, 2023.

Behind the scenes making this all happen are the parts of what Don calls a “well-oiled machine.” Connor’s family and friends, Connor’s Way board members, volunteers, Hinckley neighbors, and everyone who loved and supported Connor. Don says his nephew’s memory will live on, not only in the hearts of all who knew him, but through the annual celebration of his life—and through scholarship recipients who realize their dreams.

As Connor said, “Don’t cry because it’s over, smile because it happened.”

“ Don’t cry because it’s over, smile because it happened.”
Among the assets that donors have entrusted to the Community Foundation are more than 500 funds established by individuals, families and organizations—some recently, others dating back years. These active fundholders work diligently to make a difference in the community. One fund of note that recently celebrated an important milestone is the M&T Bank/Partners Trust Bank Charitable Fund (MTPT), established when its corporate founders—M&T Bank and Partners Trust Bank (the former Savings Bank of Utica)—joined forces in 2007.

Since its creation 15 years ago, the MTPT fund has awarded more than $5 million to nonprofit organizations in support of a broad range of programs and services in Herkimer and Oneida counties, including education, human services, health, animal welfare, and arts and culture. Over 170 nonprofits have received support from the MTPT fund and its nearly 400 grants.

Initially focused on supporting literacy programs, the MTPT fund expanded its community investments to address additional areas of need and to focus on partnering with organizations that provide educational enrichment that builds and strengthens the community.

“At M&T, we are deeply committed to our communities and to making a positive difference in people’s lives, so I’m particularly proud of the tangible impact that our partnership with the Community Foundation has generated during these past 15 years,” said David Manzelmann, M&T Utica market president. “We are proud of our community, and we look forward to continued collaboration as we work to further strengthen our neighborhoods and empower our neighbors.”

As a donor-advised fund, the MTPT committee collectively decides what organizations or projects to support. Potential grant opportunities are reviewed quarterly by a local advisory committee led by Manzelmann.

The MTPT fund has supported a number of signature projects throughout the last 15 years, including ICAN’s new Family Resource Center, children’s room renovations at the Utica Public Library, Masonic Medical Research Institute’s Summer Fellowship Program, and other education and literacy focused programs.

One such signature effort supported by the fund, Utica University’s Young Scholars Liberty Partnership Program, has hosted a summer learning program for high school students. For the past seven years the MTPT fund’s backing has enabled participants to engage in interdisciplinary Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) courses designed and delivered by college professors, strengthening their academic preparedness and preparing them for STEAM careers.

“One of Young Scholars’ goals is to graduate students who are comfortable with STEAM subjects and are more likely to stay in the Utica area and work in STEAM fields,” said Pamela Matt, executive director of Young Scholars. “We greatly appreciate M&T Bank/Partners Trust Bank Charitable Fund for its continued support of this unique life changing experience for our students.”

The fund continues to build lasting relationships with collaborating organizations through each grant round.

“One of the most important things we do is to support organizations that are making a difference in our community,” said Danielle Smith, chief executive officer of the UNHS HomeOwnership Center. “We thank MTPT for being such a great member of the HomeOwnershipCenter’s housing partnership for 15 years and for helping to make a real impact in our ability to deliver quality, affordable housing and homeownership opportunities for Mohawk Valley families. Support like this ensures that no
matter what an individual's goal is, our team can coach, guide, and support customers through some of their most important decisions.”

The MTPT fund advisory committee’s decision to expand grantmaking to causes that wouldn’t typically fall under the education or literacy umbrella has opened the door to participate in unique and impactful partnerships.

For example, the fund awarded $50,000 to The Center in 2022 to support Ukrainian individuals and families resettling in the Utica area. The funds provided basic needs and personal items to the refugees seeking assistance. Formerly known as The Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees, The Center offers a variety of services to newcomers and non-native English-speaking residents of the Mohawk Valley region. Center officials said the grant helped families with rent, food and household expenses such as furniture, and immigration and citizenship expenses.

“We feel incredibly grateful that the Community Foundation has been able to support the MTPT fund’s charitable commitments for the past 15 years, and we are excited to see where this collaboration goes from here,” said Alicia Fernandez Dicks, president/CEO of the Community Foundation. “The MTPT fund represents an important legacy that has carried generations of financial dedication forward into the 21st century, and the community has benefited greatly.“
HOW A COMMUNITY FOUNDATION works

Like place-based funders across the country, the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties exists to invest and grow donor dollars from the community in perpetuity while continuously supporting the communities it serves. “Forever planning” takes trust, knowledge, community donors and an experienced staff to carry out the work. The result is a never-ending cycle of benefit to the community.

The cycle starts here!

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS $

Individuals, organizations and businesses wanting to make an impact on Herkimer and Oneida counties can direct donations to our Community Fund, which aims to address the community’s greatest needs as they arise, or they can give to any of our other 500+ funds addressing needs such as equity, educational advancement, neighborhood improvement, and much more. Planned gifts can also be arranged as a way to give back to the community years from now. Our development team can assess your unique situation and goals and introduce you to charitable giving options that meet your needs.

Ways to give:  
• Bequests  
• Cash  
• Charitable Trusts  
• Life Insurance  
• Retirement Assets  
• Stocks

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES ☀

Our vision is "a vibrant region with opportunity for all," and as this graphic illustrates, we are moving closer to fulfilling that vision as each step of the cycle repeats. Our work and progress inspire residents and other partners to join the effort, ensuring that the cycle will continue.
COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

The sum total of our work is where real impact comes to life—community investment. This is the funding we award to nonprofit partners, from grants for programs, projects and services to larger multiyear commitments. Our Community Investment team works closely with nonprofit organizations to learn about their work, needs and plans, to better understand our community’s nonprofit landscape and how we can shape our support to meet the needs of those they serve.

Community Investments (Inception Through December 31, 2022)
- $124M invested
- 10,875 grants
- 2,750 scholarships

FUND ESTABLISHMENT

We work one-on-one with donors who want to have a long-lasting impact on the community to establish named funds at the Community Foundation. Donors decide who and what the fund will support, how grant recipients will be selected and more.

Fund types include:
- Designated
- Donor-Advised
- Field-of-Interest
- Memorial
- Nonprofit Agency
- Scholarship

FUND STEWARDSHIP

Funds established at the Community Foundation benefit from staff’s financial acumen and administrative oversight. A team of experienced professionals and our Board of Trustees work closely with an investment consultant to set policy, establish performance benchmarks and monitor portfolio diversification. The outcomes speak for themselves: robust investment returns enable funds to create and sustain long-term philanthropic impact in the community.

Investment options:
- Short-Term
- Intermediate-Term
- Long-Term
- Segregated Charitable Gift Annuity
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE

The Community Foundation’s 70+ years of serving dedicated donors who want to give back have given us a wealth of community knowledge and experience. We know where challenges lie, where investment is most needed, and where opportunity presents itself. We take this knowledge, and everything that we’ve learned, to create meaningful impact, embrace partnerships that work to better our communities, and ultimately make strategic decisions and investments that guide philanthropic progress—now, tomorrow and forever.

These are the teams working to make our vision a reality:
- Board of Trustees and President/CEO
- Business Communications/Operations
- Community Investment
- Development
- Finance
- Systems and Strategy

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT
A “system” can be defined in many ways, and in business the word often suggests computer hardware and software management, but at the Community Foundation the term means much more. Our Systems team focuses on how people and things work together, how to make processes easier and more efficient, and how to make the best use of data, software and tools used across the organization.

The Systems team drives the administrative operations that support what we do as a community foundation, integrating and coordinating our work so we can best serve donors, nonprofits and the entire community. Informing and helping guide the Community Foundation’s every project, initiative, and activity, the Systems team includes Jacquie Klotzbach, director of business systems and strategy; Kristen Smith, fund and systems strategist; and Allison Campbell, fund administration coordinator.

The Systems team members often ask themselves, “How can we do what we’ve always done but do it better? How can we create the mechanisms to ensure that what we put in place stays in place?” Answering those questions leads to evolving enhancements and best practices, the team’s ultimate goal.

“When everything is in place and all systems are working together, that’s when we’re able to more fully embrace and achieve organizational strategy,” says Jacquie. “In order for the Community Foundation to evolve beyond a transactional grantmaker, we had to develop workflows to more efficiently and effectively do our core work so that we had the capacity to evolve into the proactive community investor we are today. Information and data are essential to everything we do, especially when it comes to our initiatives and major projects. Making sure that information is accurate and readily available is one of the System’s team’s more important responsibilities.”

“From an operational standpoint, we provide the checks and balances to other processes across the Community Foundation,” Kristen says. “In many ways, we’re the glue—the connection that networks so much of the work together.”

Within the department, each team member has a specialty. Allison supports the Community Investment team, managing grant applications and engaging with nonprofits when they receive support from designated funds. She also administers the Community Foundation’s scholarship program, working with Utica Dollars for Scholars and local educational institutions to match eligible students with available scholarships. Kristen collaborates with the Development team to provide information and reports that help enhance our relationships with donors and fundholders, while also supporting the creation of new funds. And Jacquie works closely with the Finance team on reporting and cross-departmental workflows to ensure that all information is accurate and complete. She also leads what the team calls “tactical meetings,” where staff collectively problem-solve and brainstorm in real time.

In addition to their individual areas of expertise, Systems team members wear many other hats. An event planner at heart, Kristen helps organize staff team building events alongside Business Communications and Operations staff. Jacqie’s research, editing and design expertise proves invaluable in the preparation of Community Foundation publications. (Many staff members also rely on her for restaurant recommendations, too.) And those big presentation checks you’ve probably seen at events and on the news? Allison’s handwriting is so artistic—and legible—that she writes them out for us. (She even has her own computer font!)

“We all have such unique professional and personal strengths,” Kristen says. “That’s what makes our team work so well together.”

The three-member Systems team can be summed up in just three words: dynamic, dependable, and efficient. At their core, they are problem-solvers essential to the Community Foundation’s successful support of our partners and the entire community.
Mohawk Valley Gives, a 24-hour community-wide giving day to benefit nonprofit organizations serving Herkimer and Oneida counties, will be returning for its second year on **Wednesday, September 20, 2023**! Last year, our community raised more than $630,000 to support local organizations doing great work. Let’s come together to make year two even bigger and even better!

Read on to learn about some of 2022’s tremendous outcomes—and how you can get involved this year! [www.givemv.org](http://www.givemv.org)
$630,000+ RAISED

$5 SMALLEST ONLINE DONATION

$4,800 LARGEST ONLINE DONATION

1,700+ UNIQUE DONORS

...And our nonprofit partners can’t wait to do it again!
How to get involved

Two key ingredients make a giving day successful: 1. Nonprofit organization(s) seeking support, and 2. Community donors looking to help provide that support. The Community Foundation is actively working with nonprofits so they can participate in the giving day, but how can you get involved? Here are some possibilities:

DONATE
This option is the simplest and most effective. Everyone in our community is encouraged to join us on September 20 at givemv.org to support causes they care about. Last year, we proved that even the smallest gifts, when pooled, make a huge impact on the nonprofit organizations serving our two counties. We found that 88% of donations were just $100 or less, 66% were $50 or less, and 42% were $25 or less—proving that ANYONE can give and help support nonprofits through Mohawk Valley Gives year after year.

MATCHES & CHALLENGES
A great way for organizations to attract more donors to give by doubling their impact.
Organizations with a match or challenge raise on average 8% more than those without one. A match is a pool of funds donated from a person or company that is intended to be used to double the amount raised by a specific nonprofit organization.

For example, ABC Corp. commits a $5,000 dollar-for-dollar match to XYZ Nonprofit. XYZ Nonprofit will receive $1 from ABC Corp. for each $1 donated by supporters. XYZ Nonprofit can now promote this match as a chance for donors to double their impact—a $25 gift becomes a $50 gift, a $50 gift becomes $100, and so on.

A challenge is a gift that can be unlocked by meeting a goal. The goal can be measured by total dollars given or total donors engaged.

For example, the XYZ Nonprofit sets a goal of receiving support from a total of 25 donors. ABC Corp. agrees to donate $1,000 once the XYZ Nonprofit reaches that goal of 25 donors.

SPONSOR A PRIZE
A fun way to support Mohawk Valley Gives participants. Read more about this option on the next page.

SPREAD THE WORD
One of the easiest ways to get involved in Mohawk Valley Gives is to follow us on social media and help spread the word to your friends, family and colleagues leading up to the big day.

PEER-TO-PEER (P2P) FUNDRAISERS
Are you planning on donating, but want to also extend your reach and inspire more donations? This option may be for you.
If there is a special organization you care about, a P2P Fundraiser is the perfect way to support it during Mohawk Valley Gives. At givemv.org, you can easily create an account and launch a fundraising page for a specific organization that you can then share with your networks, helping to inspire additional donations.
Let’s talk about prizes!

For our nonprofit partners, prizes may be the most exciting part about Mohawk Valley Gives! All throughout the day on September 20, we will be awarding prizes—extra cash incentives—to participating organizations. Prize criteria vary; last year award categories were based on place, time, service and other factors.

2022 PRIZE STATISTICS

- **27 CATEGORIES**
- **93 AWARDS TOTALING $31,925**
- **65 PARTICIPANTS RECEIVED ONE OR MORE AWARDS**

SPONSORING A PRIZE

If you are an individual or business looking for a unique way to support Mohawk Valley Gives, sponsoring a prize of your choice is a perfect option! We’re actively seeking prize sponsors so that we can award even more than last year. Here’s how it works:

- You commit to a prize amount that you would like to award
- Community Foundation staff will create a custom prize named for you, your family, or your business
- We’ll work with you to determine prize criteria
- Your name or business name will be featured on:
  - A givemv.org prize page
  - Custom social media promotional graphics
  - Facebook Live announcements on the giving day
- Prize sponsors can remain anonymous if they choose

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about Mohawk Valley Gives, please reach out to the Mohawk Valley Gives team at hello@givemv.org.

Stay up to date on the latest #MohawkValleyGives updates by following our social media pages, and help us spread the word by liking and sharing our posts!

- **Instagram** @foundationhoc
- **Twitter** @foundationhoc
- **Facebook** @facebook.com/foundationhoc
When and why did you become a Community Foundation Trustee?
I joined the Board of Trustees in the summer of 2022 because I saw it as an opportunity to learn about my community from a different lens. Joining the board, I knew that it would be a learning experience for me to understand how nonprofits, government, and different stakeholders work together to make a difference in the community and create change in whatever ways possible.

How did you hear about the Community Foundation?
I first heard about the Community Foundation through Dollars for Scholars when I was in high school at Proctor. I received a scholarship through the help of the Community Foundation, and my mentor always said, “It’s a really important organization, they do so much in the community,” and that was my first experience of being impacted by the Community Foundation.

I began to learn more about it through Jawwaad Rasheed, chair of the Board at the time. He ran the Junior Frontiers program that I attended while at Proctor. After graduating college and spending about a year in Thailand teaching English, I decided to come back to Utica and landed my position at the Midtown Utica Community Center (MUCC). Mr. Rasheed encouraged me to join the board, so I went for it.

Can you tell us a little bit about your role as Executive Director at MUCC?
I do a little bit of everything. My role goes from making sure that the building is functioning, to making sure that students have rides to programs. I seek out funding opportunities for different programs—it’s a lot of logistics. I always try to observe and see what the needs are in our community and find ways to address them. Trying to adapt to and listen to community needs I think is the most important part of my job.

Right now, my focus is building capacity, trying to establish donor relations and a funding stream for the future to maintain stability, and building renovations. I want this community center to be around for a long time and for it to be a safe place for kids to go to. I want it to be a “third space.” First, you have your home. Second, you have your school, but kids need a third space where they can go to hang out, a safe place to go that’s neither of the other two spaces. I want MUCC to be that for people, and for it be accessible and inclusive.

What was your professional career like prior to your positions at MUCC and the Community Foundation?
After I graduated from Mount Holyoke College in May of 2020, I worked as a contact tracer for COVID-19. My job was to identify contact exposures, instruct affected people to stay home, ask them what they needed, and find out their symptoms. I’ve always had an interest in public health.

Then, I spent almost a year in Thailand teaching English through Fulbright. I studied anthropology in college and always had a love for culture and cultural immersion, so I was very excited to be able to return to Thailand to teach. I was able to relearn my Thai and be immersed in that culture. It was a really great experience for me.

I was born in Burma, but I lived in Thailand for a few years before coming to the United States. We lived differently when I was a child versus when I went back as a US citizen teaching there. It was interesting to me to compare my experience of living as a kid and as a refugee, versus going back as a teacher and having these privileges of being able to navigate Thailand with so much freedom. It was an eye-opening experience.

What do you love most about this community?
We have a very supportive community. I love seeing the good work that so many people and organizations are doing. Knowing that there is that support and a growing network that community members can access is great.

What do you enjoy doing outside of the office?
I like to go out to eat and try new restaurants. I love spicy food. I’m very passionate when it comes to food. My favorite are pho noodles and Thai dishes. They’re flavorful, spicy, sour – I love it!
I also enjoy going to the gym. In the summer, I like to be outdoors and enjoy nature and do activities like hiking and kayaking.
Neighborhood revitalization—what is it exactly? Revitalization is the act or process of giving new life, fresh vitality or energy to someone or something, in this case neighborhoods in need. Every neighborhood can benefit from some form of revitalization as time goes on. This can look very different for different communities. It may take the form of improvements to local parks, creation of community art and murals, bringing vacant buildings back to life, new homes and housing options, pulling in resident-focused services that are currently lacking. These are just a few examples of ways that a community can embrace and really start to realize neighborhood revitalization.

The Community Foundation has spearheaded a revitalization strategy to benefit both counties for nearly the last decade and its roles are many: partner, collaborator, funder, facilitator. This strategy is described as “multi-focused,” so that positive change can happen in multiple places now and for years to come. Utica, the largest community in the area, has multiple neighborhoods throughout the city with many pressing needs. Together with nonprofit, public and private sector partners, we are addressing critical longstanding challenges in innovative ways.

In Utica, the Cornhill Revitalization Project—an effort undertaken with Mid-Utica Neighborhood Preservation Corporation, Collective Impact Network, People First and the City of Utica—will create 100 new apartments and 30,000 square feet of commercial and community space at two newly constructed “impact centers” on West and James streets. In addition to addressing the city’s affordable housing needs, the centers will seek to provide residents and the neighborhoods with access to things like nonprofit partner programs and services, community meeting spaces, a business incubator, a dedicated arts and media studio, gym and wellness facility, an urban grocery store, and much more. Dedicated staff and an online navigational platform will connect people in the neighborhood with the programs and services they need, and the organizations that provide them.

To complement the Cornhill Revitalization Project and its centers, other neighborhood improvements are shaping up to tie together and enhance the overall plan. These improvements include:

- Neighborhood Fitness & Art Trail
- Pedestrian-friendly infrastructure including sidewalks, street crossings
- Wayfinding, murals and informational markers
- Lighting upgrades
- Bus shelter improvements

Revitalizing neighborhoods is just part of what the Community Foundation does in partnership with donors, nonprofit organizations, local government and others dedicated to our shared vision: A vibrant region with opportunity for all. With the area’s resurgence in recent years, progress is happening—and there’s a lot more to come. To support these ongoing neighborhood revitalization efforts or to learn more, visit foundationhoc.org/revitalization.
Other “impact centers” are poised to make a big difference in the Mohawk Valley. Some of the following are already meeting needs, others are preparing to do more—and some will come online in the next few years.

**50 FORWARD WEST SIDE**
Utica – Court Street building renovation that will provide senior and neighborhood-focused programs, services, events, and more.

**ARTSPACE**
Utica – Planned new construction project on Park Avenue that will realize a national artist-specific concept. Affordable housing will be available to artists and others, and the building will feature community and gallery spaces.

**CAMDEN LIFE CENTER**
Camden – A project of the Center for Family Life and Recovery, this multi-partner Main Street facility is providing a range of behavioral and mental health services, and community-use space.

**JOHNSON PARK COMMUNITY CENTER**
Utica – New build that will offer a food pantry, low-income housing, and community-use spaces.

**LITTLE FALLS YOUTH AND FAMILY CENTER**
Little Falls – The former YMCA on Jackson Street is building on its long history of providing youth and family programs offering services such as childcare, recreation, swimming, community-use spaces, and a food pantry.

**MIDTOWN UTICA COMMUNITY CENTER**
Utica – Rehabilitation of community-use and meeting spaces for new-resident-focused multicultural programs and services through building renovation and upgrades.

**REACH CENTER**
Rome – An expanded facility that will help close service gaps in behavioral and mental health, and substance abuse and addiction services.

**UTICA CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT**
Utica – Washington Street building rehabilitation will provide enhanced community and meeting spaces, recreational programing, and an updated gym.
Our Newest Funds

BERNARD “BEN” TURI MEMORIAL FUND
Donor-advised fund created in memory of Bernard “Ben” Turi for general charitable purposes.

COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR FUND
Field-of-interest fund created to administer the Community Navigator Program.

FRIENDS OF THE NEW HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY FUND
Designated fund established by the Friends of the New Hartford Public Library to promote awareness of and interest in the New Hartford Public Library and its services.

HELPFUL HARVEST FUND
Field-of-interest fund established to address increased Herkimer and Oneida county resident need stemming from economic difficulty and food insecurity.

LESLIE P. AND MARIE D. CARROLL FUND
Donor-advised fund established by the late Marie D. Carroll to support certain organizations in Oneida County that provide programs for seniors, families with children, and homeless veterans.

LLEWELLYN C. AND ELIZABETH R. HOWELL FUND
Field-of-interest fund established to support charitable causes within 10 miles of Old Forge.

MASONIC CARE COMMUNITY ENDOWMENT FUND
Designated fund established by the late Armand and Roberta Trivilino to benefit the Masonic Care Community.

OLMSTED CITY OF GREATER UTICA FUND
Agency fund established by Landmarks Society of Greater Utica to support the O Imstead City of Greater Utica program.

PHILIP AND MARIE (MERCIER) DUPUIS MEMORIAL FUND
Field-of-interest fund established by the late Gerard A. Dupuis to support specific nonprofits located in or serving the citizens of Raquette Lake, Old Forge, or Inlet.

PHILIP AND MARIE (MERCIER) DUPUIS MEMORIAL HONORARIUM FUND
Scholarship fund established by the late Gerard A. Dupuis to award honoraria to Town of Webb or Hamilton County high school graduates that are sworn-in as a member of the U.S. Navy or the U.S. Marine Corps.

PHILIP AND MARIE (MERCIER) DUPUIS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND
Scholarship fund established by the late Gerard A. Dupuis to award scholarships to graduates of high schools serving the Town of Webb or located in Hamilton County.

VERA S. BRINDISI FUND
Field-of-interest fund established through the Estate of Vera S. Brindisi for the support and advancement of cultural pursuits throughout Central New York.

WHITE LAKE ADK ASSOCIATION FUNDS
Agency funds established by White Lake ADK Association, an organization that aims to conserve, protect, monitor, and safely regulate the precious resources of White Lake, a spring-fed lake in New York’s Adirondack Park.