

# Community Foundation

FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

# REPORT

Volume 30 / Issue 2  
September 2016



**OUTDOOR SPACES THAT TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES**

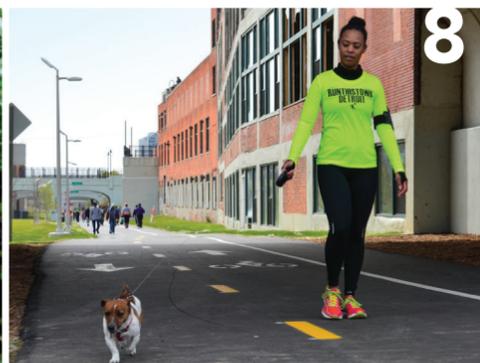
- 1** MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

---

- 2** SPECIAL FEATURE: Outdoor Spaces that Transform Communities
  - 2** Blazing a Trail Near Chelsea
  - 4** A Huron River Renaissance
  - 6** Protected Bike Lanes on Detroit's East Side
  - 8** The Dequindre Cut
  - 9** Summer Fun in Port Huron
  - 10** America's Newest National Battlefield Park

---

- 13** NEWS
  - 13** Scholarship Update
  - 13** Board News
  - 13** Staff Update



**COVER:** Kayaking on the Huron River near Wyandotte, MI. Story on page 10.

**EDITOR:** Karen Chassin

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Michelle Andonian, cover, pp. 8, 10-12; Brandy Baker and the *Detroit News*, pp. 2, 3; Katie Brisson, p. 9; Huron River Watershed Council, p. 5.

## Community Foundation

FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

333 W. Fort Street \ Suite 2010 \ Detroit, MI 48226-3134 \ 313.961.6675 \ [www.cfsem.org](http://www.cfsem.org)

More than 20 years ago, the sociologist Robert Putnam coined the term “bowling alone” to describe the decline of social capital in the United States, observed through the lens of decreased participation in community groups and social clubs such as bowling leagues. What we observe at the Community Foundation is not so much a decline in civic life as a shift in the ways people engage with their communities and spend their leisure time.

For example, the Dequindre Cut, an urban greenway in Detroit, did not exist ten years ago. Visit it today and you will see hundreds of people walking, biking or sitting on benches and people-watching. And the same can be said for many popular spots that have found a place in the hearts and routines of residents throughout our region. Playing outside — such an important part of enjoying the summer and fall months in southeast Michigan — has clearly grown in popularity in recent years, perhaps replacing some of the pastimes of our parents and grandparents.

We invest heavily in outdoor public spaces, such as those highlighted in this issue, because they improve the quality of life in our region. They offer places for people to enjoy nature, exercise and one another’s company. They are good for our health and our residential property values. They create a sense of culture and place in our towns and cities and attract visitors and tourists. They serve as natural flood plains that protect our waterways, and their vegetation improves the quality of our air.

In addition to our pioneering work promoting and building greenways in southeast Michigan, the Community Foundation supports many other kinds of public spaces in our communities. The list is extensive and probably includes a park, trail, cultural institution or kayak launch near you. We would like to hear about your favorite outdoor spaces and why you care about them.

We are pleased to report that our Healthy Food Connect Initiative has recently made \$2 million in grants to 20 programs designed to improve healthy food access for children and seniors — the two groups most affected by food insecurity. Through grantmaking and a series of coordinated education and training efforts, Healthy Food Connect will support and grow existing good work in food systems and foster additional collaboration and innovation in the sector.

We are grateful to the Michigan Health Endowment Fund for their participation in funding what is one of the largest regional healthy food access initiatives undertaken in southeast Michigan. You can read more about the programs that received grants and follow upcoming Healthy Food Connect educational programs at [cfsem.org/healthyfoodconnect](http://cfsem.org/healthyfoodconnect)

Thank you for following our work and for all you do to make southeast Michigan a healthier, more active and engaged place. If you have ideas or suggestions for us, we would be happy to hear from you. If you enjoy reading about the work being done with grants from the Community Foundation, you will find more stories on our Facebook page and at [cfsem.org](http://cfsem.org).

Sincerely,

Mariam C. Noland  
President

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

James B. Nicholson  
*Chair*

Penny B. Blumenstein  
*Vice Chair*

David M. Hempstead  
*Vice Chair*

Reginald M. Turner  
*Vice Chair*

Mary H. Weiser  
*Secretary*

Michael T. Monahan  
*Treasurer*

Joseph L. Hudson Jr.  
*Founding Chair*

Terry Adderley  
Margaret A. Allesee

Gerard M. Anderson  
Michael E. Bannister

Albert M. Berriz  
Thomas C. Buhl

Andrew L. Camden  
Ahmad Chebbani

Matthew P. Cullen  
Paul R. Dimond

Lena R. Epstein  
John M. Erb

Jennifer M. Fischer  
Philip Wm. Fisher

Jenice C. Mitchell Ford  
Bradley M. Gayton

Allan D. Gilmour  
Alfred R. Glancy III

Kouhaila G. Hammer  
Steven K. Hamp

William M. Hermann  
Paul Hillegonds

George G. Johnson  
Bonnie Larson

Eric B. Larson  
David Baker Lewis

John D. Lewis  
Henry W. Lim

Dana M. Locniskar  
Florine Mark

Jack Martin  
Edward J. Miller

Eugene A. Miller  
Bruce E. Nyberg

Cynthia J. Pasky  
William F. Pickard

Stephen R. Polk  
Glenda D. Price

David T. Provost  
Christopher L. Rizik

Pamela E. Rodgers  
Gerald E. Rosen

Karen Sosnick Schoenberg  
Alan E. Schwartz

William W. Shelden Jr.  
Vivian Day Stroh

Gary H. Torgow  
Barbara C. Van Dusen

Linda A. Wasserman  
Dale L. Watchowski

Sean K. Werdlow  
Ken Whipple

## OUTDOOR SPACES THAT TRANSFORM COMMUNITIES

The public spaces in our communities say a lot about our values and priorities. Well-conceived public spaces provide a sense of culture and place. They inspire us, bring us together and even have the potential to strengthen bonds across barriers such as race, income, religion and other differences that sometimes divide us in our private lives and pursuits.

At the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, we invest in outdoor public spaces throughout the seven counties of southeast Michigan because they add so much to the quality of life in our region. In addition to intangible qualities like connectedness and sense of place, they boost property values, improve the environment and help us stay healthy by providing places to bike, walk and experience the restorative benefits of nature.

The stories that follow touch upon just a few of the diverse assortment of outdoor places that have been created, improved or sustained with grants from the Community Foundation. We hope you will get out and explore some of these parks and trails in the coming months, or enjoy time with family and friends at your own particular favorites in our region.

### BLAZING A TRAIL NEAR CHELSEA



A \$25,000 grant from the Chelsea Community Foundation, an affiliate of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, contributed to the completion of the first five-mile leg of an extensive trail system in the Waterloo State Recreation Area in western Washtenaw County. The Waterloo Trail, recently renamed the DTE Energy Foundation Trail in recognition of the utility's major underwriting, will total 20-miles of twisting, turning, sloping and climbing bike-optimized pathways upon its completion in 2020.

The cutting-edge, sustainable trail also accommodates trail-runners, hikers and cross-country skiers. It incorporates natural elements such as native rock and stone and reclaimed wood, and it is wide enough to safely accommodate users at varying speeds and ability levels.

The trail meanders through the scenic Waterloo Recreation Area, the largest recreation area in Michigan's lower peninsula, encompassing 21,000 acres of forests, lakes and wetlands. It draws 600,000 visitors annually for camping, fishing, swimming, horseback riding, biking and hiking.



*Volunteer efforts of the Potawatomi Mountain Biking Association have been instrumental in the development of a major new trail system in the Waterloo State Recreation Area. The Chelsea Community Foundation made a grant to help complete the first leg of what will become a 20-mile trail for biking, hiking and cross-country skiing.*

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources reports that plans are underway to connect the DTE Energy Foundation Trail to the popular Potawatomi Trail in the adjacent Pinkney State Recreation area, which attracts biking enthusiasts from neighboring states and Ontario, and the Huron-Waterloo trail, which is still under construction.

The creation of a destination-worthy trail system in the Chelsea-Waterloo area positions the region to benefit from the economic impact of mountain biking — currently the fastest growing tourism niche in Michigan. While hunting and fishing still account for more than \$5 billion in annual economic impact, license sales

for those sports are down 10 percent and 33 percent, respectively. This generational shift is leading rural communities to look for new ways to market themselves to people looking for a mix of nature, recreation and fitness.

If examples from other parts of the country are any indication, the trail will also attract some of the amenities that accompany ecotourism — such as bike shops and outfitters, microbreweries and bed and breakfasts. Not only do these new businesses create jobs, but they also contribute to a quality of life that attracts new residents, including young professionals and retirees with leisure time and resources. ■

**The creation of a destination-worthy trail system in the Chelsea-Waterloo area positions the area to benefit from the many economic impacts of mountain biking, hiking and cross-country skiing.**

## A HURON RIVER RENAISSANCE

Waterways that are clean and well cared for represent a priceless asset. They are a source of beauty, clean drinking water, recreation opportunities and much more. There is a river renaissance occurring in south-east Michigan, as communities take better care of their rivers and attempt to reclaim unused industrial sites for greener, 21st century economic opportunities.

The Huron River is considered the cleanest urban waterway in Michigan. Much of the credit goes to the Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC), which has been protecting the Huron River since its 1965 founding as the first watershed council in the state. Based in Ann Arbor, HRWC serves 73 townships, villages and cities across seven counties, conducting research, water quality assessment, and conservation and restoration activities. The organization also deploys more than 500 volunteers for much of its monitoring and clean-up work.

shop, dine or enjoy music and art within sight of the river. A 104-mile-long stretch of the Huron River, starting at Proud Lake in Oakland County and ending at Lake Erie, has been designated a National Water Trail by the National Park Service.

RiverUp!, which has received grants totaling more than \$155,000 from the Community Foundation for this multi-year effort, involves close coordination among leaders of the five largest riverfront towns and cities along the Huron — Milford, Dexter, Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti and Flat Rock — which are designated Trail Towns. Fostering relationships and public-private partnerships within and among the communities is an important aspect of the project.

Paddlers on the river this fall will see tangible results of HRWC's efforts along the Water Trail, such as standardized information kiosks dotting the shoreline at liveries and key public parks. HRWC has published the second edition of the Huron River Water Trail Paddler's Companion, a detailed, waterproof map that includes safety tips, river etiquette, river conditions and skill levels, paddling times, and information about natural and man-made attractions along the trail. Copies are available at [huronriverwatertrail.org](http://huronriverwatertrail.org).

In each of the Trail Towns, RiverUp! champions are raising funds to purchase boat lockers so paddlers can secure their boats while they stop along the route. A visitor study undertaken with Grand Valley State University will help determine who is using the river, the quality of their experience, and the overall economic impact of river use. New marketing and advertising efforts are aimed at promoting river tourism and helping visitors plan multi-day trips that include top attractions in the Trail Towns.

HRWC has leveraged an estimated \$30 million to date through the RiverUp! initiative to make improvements along the Huron River Water Trail, ranging from recreational infrastructure to habitat improvements that benefit the fisheries and animals in and around the river. More hard work and funding will be required to fully realize the Huron River's potential in the civic life of the communities along its banks, but there is strong momentum. ■



An innovative initiative at HRWC called RiverUp! is moving beyond conservation to lead riverside communities in a strategy to thoughtfully and sustainably make the Huron River their signature asset and find ways to make it easier for more residents, visitors and tourists to enjoy. This means improved infrastructure and access points as well as new waterfront developments where people can live,



Canoeing, kayaking and tubing on the Huron River are favorite pastimes, and the Argo Cascades in Ann Arbor (above) are a highlight. The Huron River Watershed Council has received several grants from the Community Foundation to enhance access to the river and make it a focal point of the cities and towns along its banks.

In a few short years, Detroit has become one of the most bike friendly cities in the nation.



## PROTECTED BIKE LANES ON DETROIT'S EAST SIDE

Nearly 200 miles of painted bike lanes have been added in the city of Detroit since 2006. In a few short years, the city has become one of the most bike friendly in the nation. However, a trip to world capital of biking culture, Copenhagen, Denmark, taught city planners some valuable new lessons about the merits of creating better bike lanes that separate cyclists from motor vehicle traffic with physical safety barriers.

Two years after that trip, a half-mile stretch of Jefferson Avenue on Detroit's east side, between Alter Road and Lakewood, boasts the city's first protected bike lanes. Approximately seven more miles are planned along Jefferson. It's all part of a "road diet" for the broad avenue, designed to calm traffic, promote safer walking and biking, and encourage businesses to settle in the historic business district.

The new bike lanes are expected to get more people on bicycles and will make commuting between the downtown business district and east side residential neighborhoods more feasible and inviting. Landscaped traffic islands have been added at intervals, improving both the aesthetics of the area and pedestrian safety.

The project was completed with funding from the Community Foundation and other private and philanthropic funders. Future bike lanes constructed by the city will include physical barriers wherever roadways are wide enough to accommodate them and funds are available.

The protected lanes remove about 14 feet from 90-foot wide Jefferson. There are now two five-foot lanes on either side of the road, each separated from traffic by a 2-foot-wide buffer zone.

Protected bike lanes, traffic calming measures and landscaped medians are contributing to a more inviting, human-scaled streetscape along Jefferson Boulevard in Detroit. The improvements are part of a GreenWays Master Plan created with funding from the Community Foundation.

The new bike lanes and landscaping along Jefferson Avenue are the latest improvements to an area that has seen more than \$1 billion invested in the five neighborhoods from Alter Road to downtown Detroit. The Community Foundation alone has invested more than \$35 million in neighborhood development, crime abatement, a marketing and branding campaign for the area, greenways and biking infrastructure, economic development and human services. The streetscape improvements and bike lanes are part of a East Side GreenWays Master Plan created with Community Foundation funding. ■



Bicycling in Michigan generates an estimated

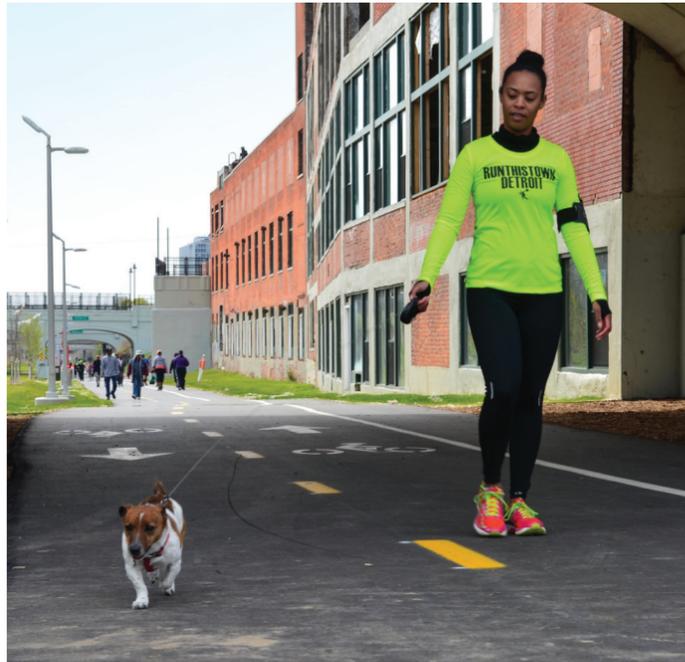
**\$668 million**

in economic benefit per year, including reduced health care costs.

## THE DEQUINDRE CUT

With the recent completion and opening of the northern extension of Detroit's Dequindre Cut, the dream of connecting the riverfront to Eastern Market and the market to Midtown has finally been realized. Since the 2009 opening of the first stretch of the Cut, it has become one of the most used and beloved public spaces in the city, drawing residents and visitors by the thousands. It provides a safe transportation route among important parks, cultural amenities and city neighborhoods, and it is an inviting place to enjoy fresh air, activity and people-watching.

That's quite a transformation — from abandoned rail corridor to proud symbol of revival in just 10 short years. While the Cut owes its existence to the hard work of an entire community — including the public, private and philanthropic sectors and countless champions throughout the region — we are proud that the initial ideas and plans for it were nurtured right here at the Community Foundation. In addition, we provided more than \$4 million of the \$10 million in funding that went into the making of the Cut. We look forward to continuing our support for greenways and keeping you abreast of the impact they are having on our region. ■



*The land that is now the Dequindre Cut once served as the passageway for freight trains carrying food to Eastern Market and raw materials into Detroit for the stove, pharmaceutical and other industries on or near the Detroit River. Because the floor of the Cut is more than 60-feet wide and more than 25 feet below grade, it offers a tranquil park-like setting amidst a bustling urban environment.*



*Water features in public parks, such as the splash pad recently opened in Port Huron, help to ensure that all children can enjoy summer fun in a safe, outdoor setting. According to the American Planning Association, public parks with a variety of amenities for a diverse range of city residents contribute to improved mental and physical health and a sense of well-being and connection to the community.*

## SUMMER FUN IN PORT HURON

Kids and water go together in the summer time like peanut butter and jelly. At Lakeside Park, on the shores of Lake Huron in the city of Port Huron, kids can now beat the heat at a new splash pad. The splash pad opened in May, thanks in large part to a grant from the Stebbins Family Fund at the Community Foundation.

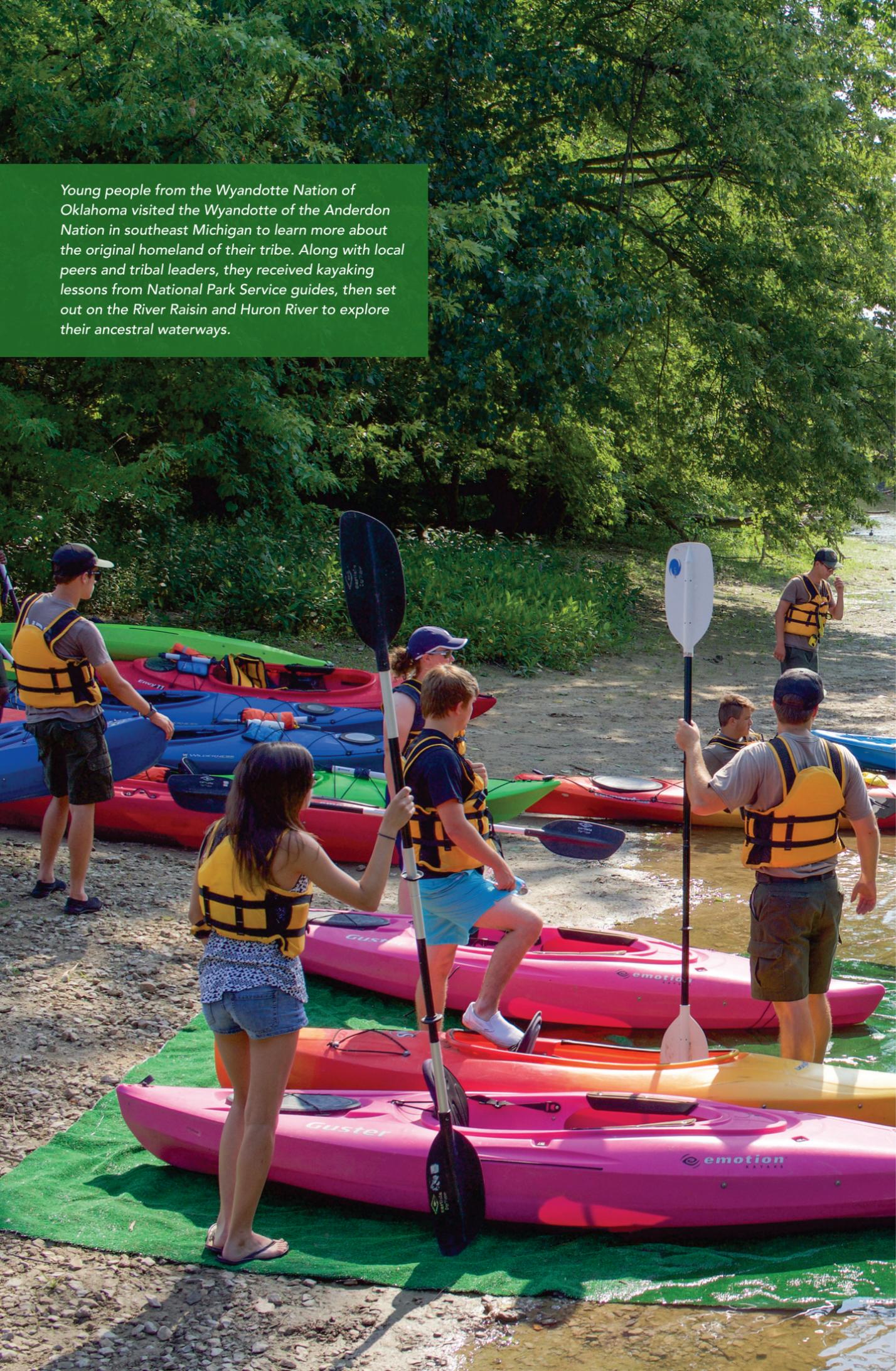
Open to all residents of the county, the splash pad is fully ADA-accessible — which means that it is barrier-free and can be used by individuals of all levels of physical ability. It features structures that pay homage to local sites in Port Huron, such as the Blue Water Bridge and the lighthouse. The splash pad is the cornerstone of a variety of improvements to the park, including landscaping, new benches, showers and drinking fountains and a security station. A pavilion suitable for large gatherings is also in the planning stages.

The Stebbins family sees the new splash pad as a way to make sure every child has a safe, fun place to play and enjoy the summer. Their approach to philanthropy was shaped by their own experience of childhood poverty and a wish to improve the quality of life for children and families in their home county. Since 2005, the Community Foundation has been privileged to help them make grants totaling more than \$7.5 million to support programs and services that can be made available to all, regardless of ability to pay.

The Community Foundation has been a leader in the accessible recreation movement in our state since 2006, bringing education and resources for building accessible public spaces to municipalities and organizations throughout the region. The splash pad at Lakeside Park is the 9th accessible park or playscape funded by the Community Foundation since that time. ■



universally accessible parks, playgrounds and water features have been built in southeast Michigan with support from the Community Foundation. A new park on the Huron River at Gallup Park in Ann Arbor will open in 2017.



Young people from the Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma visited the Wyandotte of the Anderdon Nation in southeast Michigan to learn more about the original homeland of their tribe. Along with local peers and tribal leaders, they received kayaking lessons from National Park Service guides, then set out on the River Raisin and Huron River to explore their ancestral waterways.

## AMERICA'S NEWEST NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK

Did you know that the River Raisin National Battlefield Park in Monroe is the most recent Battlefield Park to become part of the National Park System? It is the only National Battlefield Park to preserve, commemorate and interpret the Battles of the River Raisin in the War of 1812 and their aftermath, and the only such park to tell the story of all the competing interests of the time. It's a growing institution, poised to welcome 100,000 visitors this year.

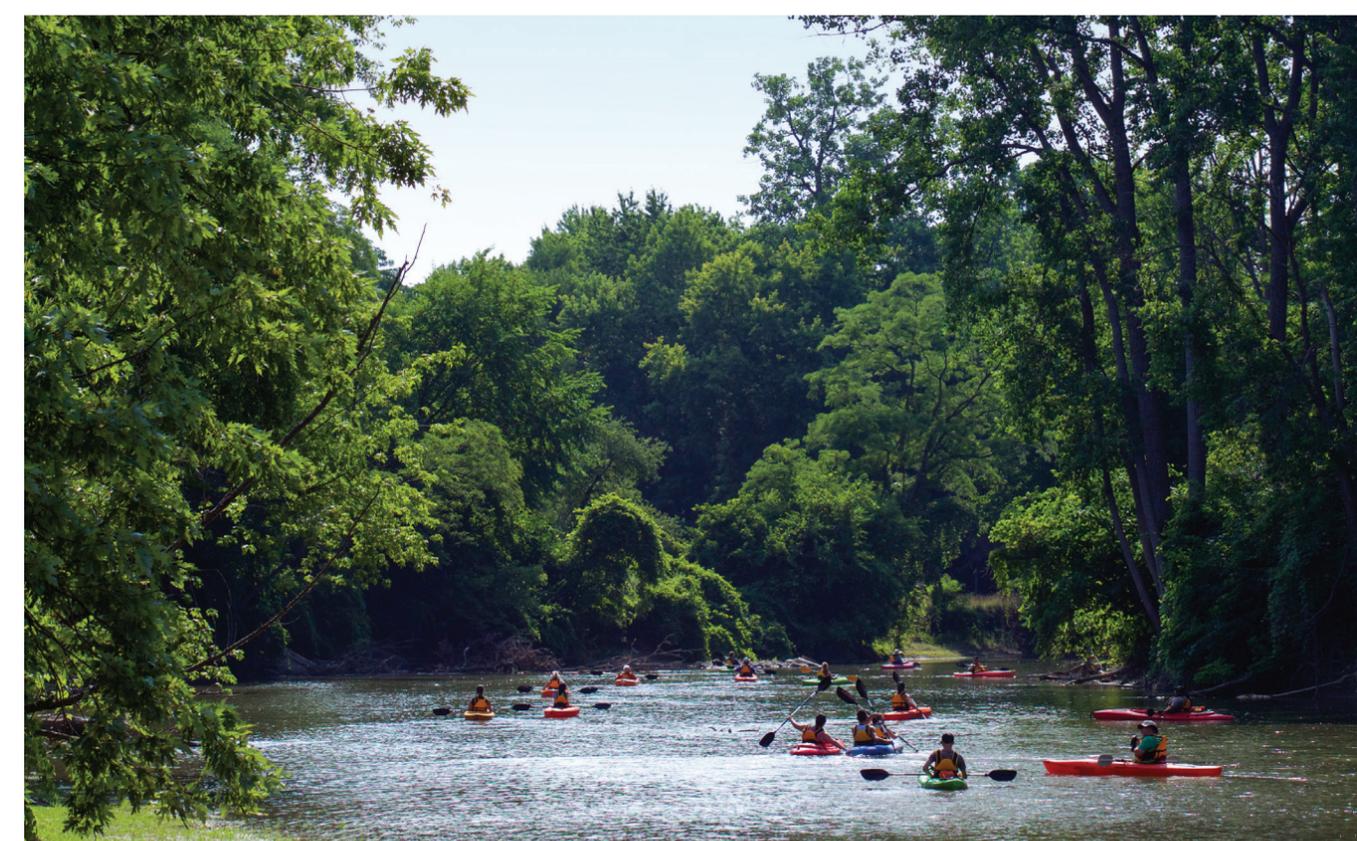
The park is at the site of the great Frenchtown Battle on the River Raisin, where Tecumseh's native American confederation triumphed over the U.S. forces. That battle galvanized the young United States, and at the Battle of the Thames the battle cry "Remember the Raisin," changed the course of the war.

It also shaped U.S. policy toward tribal nations in often tragic ways, setting the stage for the Indian Removal Act of 1842 and moving the tribes to Kansas, including the powerful Potawatomi and Wyandotte nations. This forced migration was popularly referred to as the Trail of Tears, both for the wrenching loss of homeland and the many who died along the way.

An \$84,400 grant from the Community Foundation is helping the park tell this complex story from the many perspectives of real people in our region. American settlers, American military leaders and troops, British soldiers, native tribes, freed slaves — all had life-and-death decisions to make among divided loyalties and unforeseen risks.



A grant from the Community Foundation is helping the River Raisin National Battlefield Park engage native tribes in telling the story of their culture and history during the War of 1812 and its aftermath in southeast Michigan.



BOARD NEWS

At its June 2016 Annual Meeting, the Board of Trustees of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan honored Vice Chair W. Frank Fountain for his 18 years of dedicated service as a Trustee. Though his wise counsel will be missed at the Community Foundation, the region will still benefit from his service as a newly-appointed trustee of the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation.

Also at the Annual Meeting, the Board elected four new Trustees. The new Trustees are Lena R. Epstein (Co-Owner and General Manager of Vesco Oil Corporation), Bradley M. Gayton (Vice President and General Counsel of Ford Motor Company), Christopher L. Rizik (CEO and Fund Manager of Renaissance Venture Capital Fund), and Karen Sosnick Schoenberg (Principal of REDICO LLC). The Community Foundation has long benefitted from an active and involved group of Trustees and we look forward to working with our new and long-standing Trustees.

Want to receive  
Community  
Foundation news  
digitally?

Sign up for e-news at  
[cfsem.org/newsletters](http://cfsem.org/newsletters).



Kayak lessons on the banks of the Huron River. Below: Grand Chief Ted Roll of the Wyandotte Anderdon nation addresses visitors from other Wyandotte nations and tribes with ties to the region.

The grant has supported outreach to local Native American communities to engage them in creating curriculum and teaching materials that reflect the authentic voice and cultures of their ancestors. Park historians, local teachers, and native leaders have developed close relationships and a true partnership in pursuit of a more nuanced and complete understanding of those troubled times.

A distance learning component to the curriculum is connecting Wyandotte youth in Oklahoma with young people here in their ancestral land. An unexpected bonus of the work has been closer ties among the four branches of the Wyandotte, including those in Quebec and Kansas.

The Battlefield Park has become a gathering place for the Wyandotte, according to Grand Chief Ted Roll of the Anderdon nation of Wyandotte in Monroe. "We hosted a reunion of the four chiefs and a youth exchange," he said. "People have a desire to learn about their roots and see and experience the places where their ancestors walked."

The Wyandotte Nation of Oklahoma purchased ancestral land near Gibraltar, Michigan, which includes ancient burial grounds. The Wyandotte of Anderdon Nation is working on a masterplan for the site, which will include teaching and recreational facilities and places to hold ceremonies.

According to Roll, this is all directly related to the curriculum project. "In the process of teaching our history to others," he remarked, "we are growing and learning about ourselves as a community today." ■



**"People have a desire to learn about their roots and see and experience the places where their ancestors walked." – Grand Chief Ted Roll**

STAFF UPDATES



LISA A. DANCOK has joined the Community Foundation as vice president, marketing and communications. She most recently served as vice president, corporate philanthropy, marketing and communications at Rock Ventures where she created and implemented the "Opportunity Detroit" campaign, oversaw Rock's philanthropy program and helped launch the Detroit Homecoming program with Crain's Communications. Her background includes creating the "Pure Michigan" campaign while serving as senior vice president, marketing and legislative affairs at the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

Dancsok's civic leadership includes service on numerous boards. She holds an executive master's in business administration and bachelor's degree in advertising, both from Michigan State University.



MARIA LALONDE has joined the Community Foundation as a senior program officer for the New Economy Initiative. LaLonde previously served as the recruiting and development leader for Bizdom, a startup business accelerator that helps entrepreneurs launch, fund and grow web and tech-based startups. An entrepreneur herself, she has founded businesses in the recruiting, automotive and real estate industries. LaLonde is a graduate of Michigan State University.



MATTHEW LEWIS is the New Economy Initiative's new communications officer. Lewis previously served as the managing editor of Model D, a local news site, and at Wayne State University in the Office of Economic Development. As a freelance writer, Lewis has contributed to various local and national publications, including *Next City*, *Crain's Detroit Business*, *Detroit Free Press* and *MLive*. Lewis earned a B.A. from the University of Michigan and a Master of Urban Planning degree with a focus on local economic development from Wayne State University.

# Community Foundation

FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

333 W. Fort Street  
Suite 2010  
Detroit, MI 48226-3134  
313.961.6675 \ www.cfsem.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

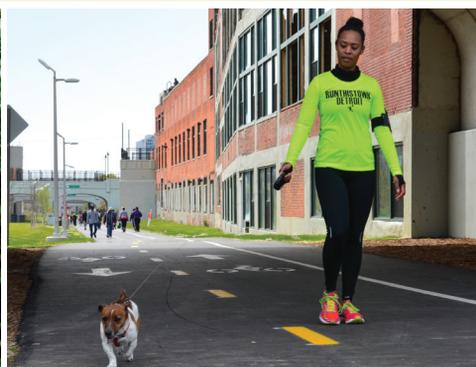
Presorted  
First-Class Mail  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 1525  
Detroit, MI

## The Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan is here to permanently support our region.

We promote and facilitate permanent change in the seven counties of Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Monroe, Washtenaw, Livingston and St. Clair, and we help donors invest in organizations they care about nationwide.

We do this by:

- Making strategic investments in programs and organizations that benefit the region
- Equipping organizations and the public with knowledge and information that will lead to positive change
- Building endowment — community capital — to meet our region’s needs today and tomorrow, and
- Providing expert assistance to donors and their advisors in their charitable planning



### INSIDE

Blazing a Trail Near Chelsea

The Dequindre Cut

America’s Newest National Battlefield Park