

Community Foundation

FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

REPORT

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**MAKING LITERACY A PRIORITY
IN SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN**

1 MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

2 SPECIAL FEATURE: Making Literacy a Priority in Southeast Michigan

- 2 Reading Works: Leading the Charge for Literacy
 - 4 A Second Chance to Graduate
 - 5 Supporting Family Learning
 - 7 Literacy Programs for Children
-

10 GIVING

- 10 Charitable Gift Annuities — A Simple Planned Giving Tool
-

11 NEWS

- 11 Noland and Huegli Award Winners Named
- 12 Chelsea Community Foundation Celebrates 20 years
- 12 New Website Launches
- 13 New and Retiring Community Foundation Trustees
- 13 Staff Updates



COVER: The academic success of children is directly influenced by the literacy of their parents and other significant adults in their lives. In southeast Michigan, adult literacy programs are helping many individuals improve their employment prospects and contribute to their communities and families in important ways.

EDITORS: Karen C. Goldbaum \ Kate French

PHOTOGRAPHY: 826michigan p. 9; Beyond Basics, p. 8; Michelle Massey Barnes, p.12; Allison Correll, p. 7, top; Myra Klarman Photography, p. 3; Mercy Education Project, p. 4 and p. 5, bottom; Larry Peplin Photography, p. 11; Jeffrey Smith and the Times Herald, p.7, bottom; Glenn Triest Photography, p.13; St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center, p. 5, top.

Community Foundation

FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In September, no matter what your age, there's a "back to school" feeling in the air. Yet while millions of students are beginning an exciting new academic year, for thousands of others, school is over. Many young people drop out of school before attaining reading proficiency and other skills needed for 21st century jobs. Often they are following in the footsteps of their parents, repeating an unfortunate multi-generational pattern.

Historically, low literacy wasn't necessarily an obstacle to a decent job, but in today's economy, it's a non-starter. One in three people in Michigan has low literacy — twice the national average. And that's a drag on our economy, affecting our ability to attract investment and opportunities to our region.

Fortunately, as you will read in this issue of the *Report*, southeast Michigan has a strong network of nonprofit literacy agencies working overtime to give people of all ages a second chance at the education they missed. These organizations are powered by thousands of volunteer tutors who work with people taking the courageous step of learning to read. They also help adult learners boost their math and computer skills or prepare for the GED high school equivalency exam. The demand for these services is greater than ever and more help is needed to truly move the needle on adult literacy.

Learning to read can be the first step in a transformational process of self-improvement. People with better skills get better jobs, become more confident and successful parents and have more to offer their neighborhoods and communities. We think you'll enjoy reading about some individuals who are working to achieve their goals and reach their full potential by returning to school. If you would like more information about the effort to improve literacy rates in southeast Michigan, please get in touch with us. There are plenty of ways to get involved.

Our region has many needs, but it also has generous, resourceful people working to make life better. Whether you are concerned about literacy, access to healthy food, the environment or support for the arts — whatever causes you care about most deeply — there are effective organizations engaged in finding solutions. Let us know how we can help you carry out your charitable interests. We're here to build a stronger region, now and forever.

Sincerely,

Mariam C. Noland
President

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MAKING LITERACY A PRIORITY IN SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

Adult illiteracy has many roots and causes, but it is also a problem with tried-and-true solutions. The techniques for helping adult learners improve their literacy skills, along with math and writing, are well-established and remarkably effective. Additionally, improved strategies for overcoming learning disabilities have helped many adults succeed where they failed as children.

Literacy rates can be difficult to measure, but the generally accepted statistic is that one in three Michigan residents has low literacy skills,* and the statistics are far worse in Detroit. Low literacy is defined as reading at or below fifth grade level. This means individuals lack the skills to read food and medication labels, fill out an application or read to a child. State workforce development programs, job training programs and community colleges — all gateways to employment and family stability — require levels of reading comprehension and math that are beyond the reach of tens of thousands of people. Many workers who were once productive in jobs where low literacy was not an issue now need to transition to 21st century jobs that require a complete retooling of their skills.

With illiteracy representing such a grave threat to our communal well-being, one would expect that remedial adult education would be a generously funded part of Michigan's regional economic development strategy. Yet organizations providing literacy training and other basic skills have been left to their own devices to meet the growing demand for their services, and they remain outside the better-funded workforce development sector.

Fortunately, literacy organizations in southeast Michigan have a strong tradition of private and philanthropic support, as well as a corps of dedicated volunteers. As demonstrated by the dynamic programs profiled here, all of which are supported by the Community Foundation, there are promising trends in adult education and literacy training — and some inspiring stories. There is much more that needs to be done, but real progress is being made.

*Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2013.

READING WORKS: LEADING THE CHARGE FOR LITERACY

Fostering and teaching adult literacy is largely a volunteer-driven movement. Thousands of committed, trained volunteers throughout our region are helping their neighbors learn to read and write, with the support of a robust network of nonprofit adult education agencies. Many of these students are learning English as a second language, but the vast majority are native English speakers who have been sidetracked on the way to proficiency by a poor education system, challenging life circumstances or personal choices.

Reading Works was founded in 2012 to make a dent in adult illiteracy by enrolling 20,000 adult learners in effective literacy programs by 2020. It serves as the

backbone organization for nine partner literacy agencies in Wayne and Macomb counties that collectively serve more than 2,500 individuals each year. Together they are amplifying their collective impact by sharing a common agenda, data about their clients and what is working, and a communications strategy that has raised the profile of adult literacy.

Leaders in business, education, media and faith communities have come together around the Reading Works agenda and are helping promote the need for hundreds (if not thousands) of new volunteers and millions of dollars of public and private investment.

Reading Works provides the broad, cross-sector coordination that is allowing these nine agencies to



The reasons people fail to thrive in school are many and varied. Fortunately, there are well-established techniques for getting people of all ages back on the path to reading and writing proficiency. Those who have taken the journey say that the first step of asking for help is often the hardest part.

do their work more effectively and to scale their efforts to meet demand. This includes increasing awareness, recruiting new tutors and building their capacity to serve an entirely new and broader audience of adult learners.

One of the ways the program is expanding its scope is by working with people who are already committed to change. Some are being supported in their efforts to get off the street, end substance abuse, or re-enter the community after incarceration. Adding literacy

of learners, the best thing we can do for them is to help their parents. Nothing is more powerful than a parent's example."

The Community Foundation has supported Reading Works with grants for community outreach and for the services provided to its partner agencies, including a regional, cross-agency database that tracks and measures adult literacy. This tool is important not only for tracking progress toward the Reading Works 20,000 by 2020 goal, but for understanding the true

One in three Michigan residents has a low level of literacy – that's twice the national average. But there is hope. Adult literacy programs are highly effective, contributing \$7.14 back to our economy for every \$1 invested.
– Annie E. Casey Foundation

intervention to the suite of services for vulnerable individuals can be transformational, giving people solid skills on which to build the foundation of a new life.

Paula Brown, executive director of Reading Works, has seen this pattern time and again. "When adults can read, their world changes," she said. "They have new opportunities that enable them to sustain themselves and their families. If we care about the next generation

nature of literacy needs in southeast Michigan and targeting resources as effectively as possible.

Current Reading Works partner agencies are: ACCESS, the Dominican Literacy Center, Detroit Public Library-Parkman Branch, Focus: HOPE, Macomb Literacy Partners, the Mercy Education Project, the St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center, the Siena Literacy Center, and Southwest Solutions. ■

A SECOND CHANCE TO GRADUATE

Since the first General Education Diploma (GED) test was introduced in 1942, generations of Americans have taken the exam to secure the high school equivalency certificate they need for employment, higher education or their own sense of accomplishment. For those whose path to graduation has been interrupted, the GED represents a second chance.

A new version of the GED was launched in 2014 — only the fourth major overhaul in the history of the

Helping adult learners prepare for the new, more challenging, computerized GED exam is an important priority for literacy agencies in southeast Michigan.

test. The new test boasts higher standards and a computer-only delivery platform. Although the objective was to better prepare GED students to compete with traditional high school graduates, 83 percent fewer adults took and passed the new GED exam in its first year. While experts continue to debate the pros and cons of the new GED, the adult education community is working overtime to help clients prepare for the more challenging test and develop the computer skills the test requires.

The Mercy Education Project reached out to the Community Foundation for help in addressing needed

curriculum and technology improvements. Recognized as a “Best Managed Nonprofit” by Crain’s Detroit Business in 2013, it serves more than 300 girls and women each year with literacy, employment skills and GED preparation at their southwest Detroit center.

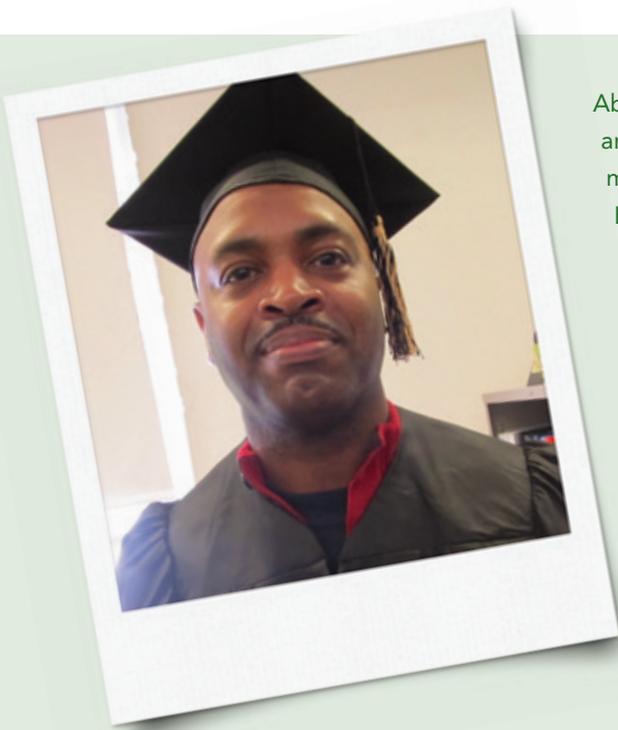
In anticipation of the GED changes and to support their clients’ overall need for computer skills, the Mercy Education Project had already secured more than 30 computers, 10 iPads, two interactive

whiteboards and a video recorder — all donated or grant-funded.

With these new tools in place, their next goal was to align their curriculum with the new GED standards and better integrate technology into all basic education programs for low-income women. A grant from the Community Foundation is funding consultants to help them achieve these short-term goals and to establish an educational technology group, made up of educators and experts from area high schools and universities, to assist in ongoing technology planning and integration. ■

In June, the Mercy Education Project celebrated the first class of graduates to receive their diplomas since the launch of the new GED. A mother and daughter, Cynthia and Jackie, were among the seven graduates. Twenty-five years ago, Cynthia dropped out of high school, and when their time came, her three daughters did so as well. Today, however, two have now graduated and one is studying for the GED.





Abraham L. attended the GED Tutoring Program at St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center and passed the GED. He attended the machinist program at Focus: HOPE and found employment. Both agencies received support from the Community Foundation through our grant to Reading Works. He went on to explore additional career opportunities through coursework at Washtenaw Community College and continues to grow academically and professionally.

Abraham said that going from a non-reader to a high school graduate and community college student has changed his outlook and personality. "I have gone to a new level as a person, with a confidence I lacked before. The more I learn, the more that doors open and I see how the system works and what I need to do to get ahead," he said. "I used to feel like something was missing, but now everything makes so much sense," he added.

SUPPORTING FAMILY LEARNING

Many people think of Washtenaw County, home of the University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University, as a bastion of education. In fact, more than 21 percent of county residents lack a high school education. The Ypsilanti School District has a 31 percent dropout rate, and the Willow Run district, before it was absorbed by Ypsilanti, had a 51 percent dropout rate. Low literacy is an important predictor of dropping out of school, and functionally illiterate adults have difficulty qualifying for jobs, passing the GED and sustaining their families.

In the first year after consolidation, the new Ypsilanti Community School District eliminated some adult education and GED preparation to save money, thus complicating the way forward for many county residents. Today, the district offers GED classes three days a week.

Another key resource in addressing the urgent need for adult literacy services is **Washtenaw Literacy**, Michigan's oldest and largest literacy council. They have been delivering programs throughout the county for more than 40 years. Their 750 volunteer tutors are



At the heart of every literacy success story, there is a trained and dedicated volunteer tutor. Literacy experts estimate that nearly 10,000 additional tutors are needed in southeast Michigan to meet the demand for services.



English as a Second Language training is among the offerings at most literacy agencies. Supporting immigrants and foreign visitors to become comfortable in their new language helps them be more productive and engaged in the life of the community.

well trained in research-based tutoring strategies that deliver results. On any given day, hundreds of tutors and adult learners work together on reading, writing, math, English as a second language, citizenship skills and overcoming learning disabilities.

To help Washtenaw Literacy reach even more adults, a new partnership with **Grace Fellowship House of Solutions**, a church and community center in Ypsilanti, is taking comprehensive literacy training right to the heart of an already thriving community hub. Grace Fellowship, located in a low-income neighborhood, offers a food pantry, a subsidized preschool, after-school tutoring, job counseling through MichiganWorks and computer training through Washtenaw Community College.

Washtenaw Literacy's participation in this community center helps them capitalize on two important trends: the delivery of services to multiple generations at a time, and introducing literacy training where people are already seeking help with other life needs, such as food assistance and jobs.

A grant from the Community Foundation is helping Grace Fellowship and Washtenaw Literacy roll out a computer-based literacy program for individuals age 16 and older. The lab is surrounded by tutoring

rooms where participants receive individual assistance with basic reading, writing, computer, math or communication skills. Washtenaw Literacy has enrolled 22 members of the Grace Fellowship congregation in its nationally recognized tutor training program. With its array of services and ability to provide daycare, Grace Fellowship is becoming a one-stop education center for the entire family.

Washtenaw Literacy executive director Amy Goodman said there is power in co-locating literacy training in an established community center.

"Adults will see other adults working on their basic skills and may become encouraged to do the same themselves," Goodman explained. "We know that investments in early childhood education and literacy are diluted when children go home to adults who can't read. Children here will benefit from the example of adult learners and the prospect that their own parents might take advantage of the services," she added.

In addition to the Community Foundation, contributors to the program include the Comcast Foundation, the Digital Inclusion Project at Eastern Michigan University, the Family Learning Institute, Washtenaw County Michigan Works and the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office. ■

Persistence has paid off for Willie S. His third time seeking help from Washtenaw Literacy has proved the charm. He graduated from high school unable to read, and soon found employment in construction and the laboring trades. Over time, however, low literacy held him back from promotions and better jobs. The single dad of three tried a couple of times to work with a tutor to improve his reading, but each time, long work hours and caring for his family got in the way.

Two years ago, Willie returned to Washtenaw Literacy at the age of 44. He is shown here with tutor Jan Zehms-Stankrauff. Now a proficient reader, he contributes essays to the nonprofit's student publication, *STARS*. He has gone into business with his brother and is able to help his eight-year-old son with homework and support his other two sons,



ages 19 and 24, with their college and career endeavors.

"Reading has given me the confidence to pursue my dreams," said Willie. "Now I can express myself in writing, too, and share my life experiences with others through stories."

LITERACY PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

We could truly turn the page on adult literacy if more children arrived at school ready to learn and became proficient readers while still in elementary school. Here is a small selection of Community Foundation-sponsored programs that foster reading skills and a love for learning in very young children and youth.

Literacy and Beyond is a literacy champion for children and families in St. Clair County. Their Community Learning Center, located in the First Congregational Church in Port Huron, is abuzz with first-through-eighth-grade tutoring in reading, writing, math and study skills. The organization also gives books to low-income elementary school students to help them experience the fun of owning a book and perhaps beginning their own library.

The program acknowledges that students will be more successful when parents understand how to support their children's academic success and have a sense of



Literacy and Beyond works to improve the reading skills of at-risk children and their parents in the Port Huron area.

accomplishment about their own lives. Parent programs at Literacy and Beyond include literacy training, GED preparation and resumé writing, along with coaching on ways to encourage and help young learners.

Beyond Basics offers academic enrichment to students in Detroit and Pontiac schools, including one-on-one tutoring, field trips to cultural institutions, art lessons, college and career readiness programs

services to low-income families, including medical and dental care and adult literacy.

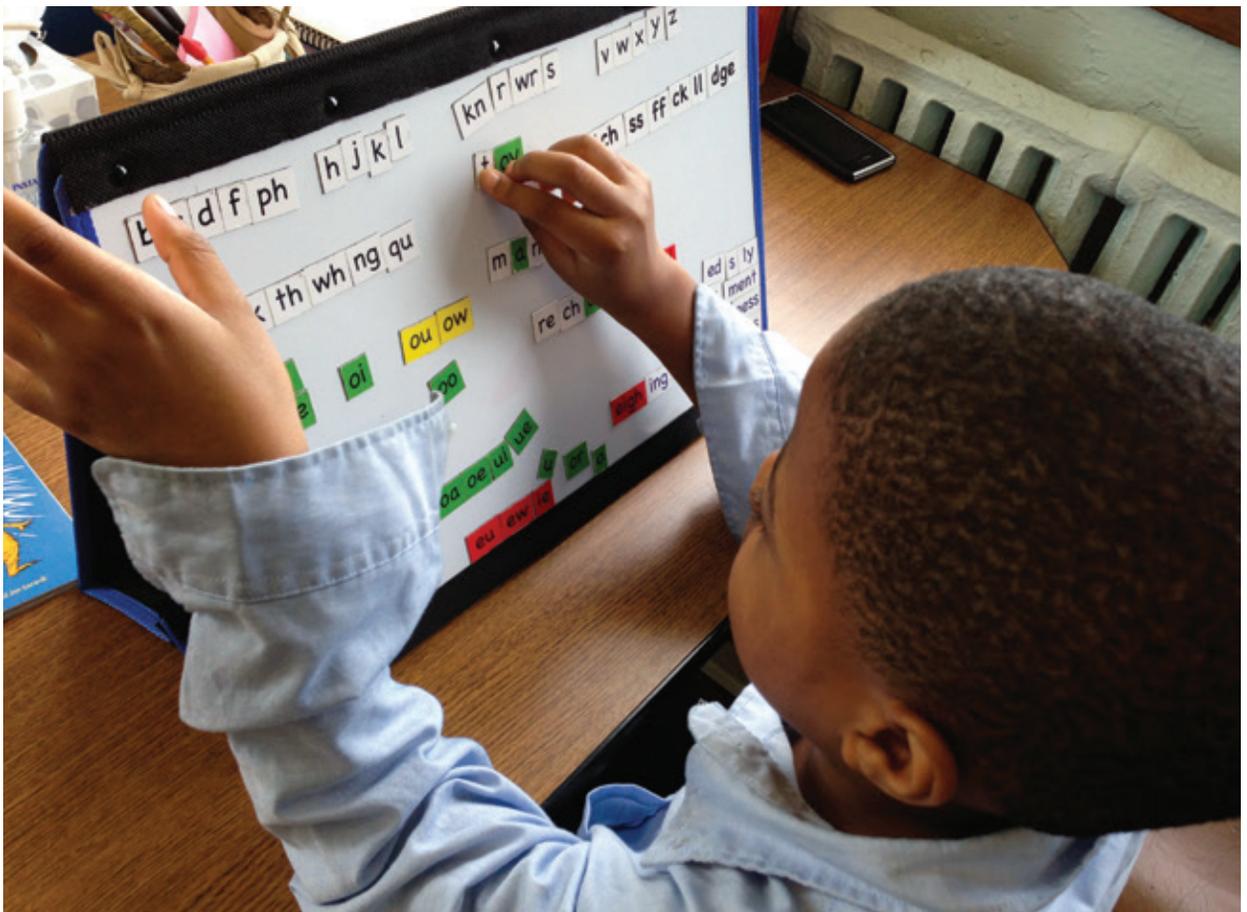
The Beyond Basics approach involves pairing children reading below grade level with highly trained paid tutors who work with each child, one-on-one, several times a week. After 25 to 30 sessions, virtually every child in the program is reading at grade level and can progress to vocabulary building, with the help of one of the organization's 3,000 volunteers.

“The only limitation to achieving a completely literate school district, with all children reading at grade level or above, is manpower and resources.” – Pamela Good

and counseling. A grant from the Community Foundation is making it possible for their acclaimed elementary school tutoring program to reach more students at two organizations in Pontiac: the Whitmer Human Resource Center Elementary School and the Dream Center, a nonprofit that provides an array of

“The program absolutely works,” said Pamela Good, executive director of Beyond Basics. “The only limitation to achieving a completely literate school district, with all children reading at grade level or above, is manpower and resources. Every child can become a proficient reader with this support.”

A child works on phonics as a part of Beyond Basic's tutoring program in the Pontiac public school system. All children completing the program reach grade-level reading proficiency regardless of their initial reading level.





Students at the 826michigan's Washington Street Tutoring Lab in Ypsilanti get healthy snacks and homework help along with the support they need to express themselves well in writing.

826michigan is dedicated to supporting students ages 6 to 18 in the development of their creative and expository writing skills. Support from the Community Foundation has helped the organization expand from its base in Ann Arbor to nearby Ypsilanti, where it serves a diverse new group of learners with after-school tutoring. Founded in San Francisco by author Dave Eggers as 826 Valencia, named for its original location, it is now a national organization that recruits adult volunteers to share their talents with students. 826michigan honors its literary roots by approaching after-school tutoring and all of its activities through the lens of creative self-expression. An active

publishing program allows students to experience the pleasure and pride of seeing their words in print.

The Ypsilanti location, known as the Washington Street Tutoring Lab, is housed in a well-known local café near public transportation routes. This is part of the 826michigan approach to providing tutoring in accessible, low-overhead locations in partnership with area businesses. The Lab, which is available on a drop-in basis, has become a popular after-school hub in a community with significant youth crime and gang violence. Tutoring is provided by trained volunteers from nearby Eastern Michigan University. The Lab also offers access to computers, healthy snacks, art supplies and enrichment activities. ■

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES – A SIMPLE PLANNED GIVING TOOL

Charitable gift annuities are a “win-win” way for donors to support their favorite causes while receiving tax benefits and lifetime income. Since 1998, the Community Foundation has offered this simple planned giving tool for donors.

The Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan has the largest charitable gift annuity program among community foundations nationwide. It’s in keeping with an important part of our mission — building permanent endowment to support our region.

Here’s how it works. With a charitable gift annuity agreement, a donor contributes cash and/or marketable securities to the Community Foundation. We agree to pay the donor, or up to two beneficiaries, a fixed annuity payment for life. Payments may begin immediately, or they may be deferred for a number of years. Deferred annuities typically result in a higher annuity rate.

There are many benefits for the donor. First, he or she gets an immediate income tax deduction in the year in which the gift is made. Also the donor and/or beneficiaries retain the right to receive lifetime income from the gifted property in the form of an annuity payment (possibly higher than the income currently being generated by the gifted property) which is partially tax free. They also realize a deferral or avoidance of capital gains taxes if the gift is made with appreciated securities. And they can be confident that the annuity payments will be paid because of the size of our asset base and organizational stability.

After the lifetime of the last income beneficiary, the remaining funds are added to the Community Foundation endowment funds specified in the contract. Donors may support any unrestricted or field of interest endowment fund, an endowed donor advised fund, or certain agency endowment funds. Donors interested in establishing a charitable gift annuity should contact the Philanthropic Services department at 313.961.6675.

Planned Giving Support for Our Agency Partners

Typically, charitable gift annuities are offered by

larger nonprofit organizations such as hospitals and universities. The Community Foundation has offered this planned giving tool to our agency endowment partners that have endowment funds of \$100,000 or more. We take on the administrative and investment costs, as well as the risk of administering the annuity program.

When a charitable gift annuity contract is established to benefit an agency endowment partner and the contract matures, 90 percent of the remaining funds go to the organization’s endowment fund and 10 percent benefits the Community Foundation’s unrestricted endowment fund.

The nonprofit’s role is to identify prospects who would benefit from this form of planned giving. Most utilize their volunteers and planned giving committee to assist them in identifying prospects. Complimentary customized marketing materials are available to them from the Community Foundation.

Community Foundation staff members support agency staff in creating proposals for interested donors. We provide all the paperwork, illustrations, disclosures and agreements — directly to the donor or to the agency staff, whichever is preferred. We handle gift processing and tax acknowledgments, make the annuity payments and send annual tax information to the annuitant.

The Community Foundation can help secure planned gifts that build endowment and help to secure a nonprofit organization’s future over the long term. Agencies interested in learning more about charitable gift annuities should contact the Philanthropic Services department at 313.961.6675.

Qualifying nonprofit agencies are invited to join us for our Fall Charitable Gift Annuity Training Session on Wednesday, October 7, from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. at Lawrence Technological University. For more information, call 313.961.6675 or visit cfsem.org/give/nonprofit-agencies/to-enroll.

NOLAND AND HUEGLI AWARD WINNERS NAMED

ROGER L. MYERS, president and CEO of Presbyterian Villages of Michigan (PVM), was selected as the recipient of the **2015 Mariam C. Noland Award for Nonprofit Leadership.**

Since 1992, Myers has served as the president and CEO of PVM, which provides high-quality residential accommodations, services, programs and care to more than 4,300 seniors of all faiths and financial means. During his tenure, the organization has grown from five locations to 25, including seven within the Detroit city limits. Myers is a leader in advancing housing options that promote dignity and choice. He has championed public, private and philanthropic partnerships throughout the region that created economically viable new options in senior living and care. He has also worked to prevent the displacement of seniors in the wake of new development in Detroit.

Named after the Community Foundation's first and current president, this annual award recognizes a nonprofit president or CEO in southeast Michigan whose service exemplifies the importance of nonprofit leadership not only to his or her organization, but also to the wider nonprofit community. The award recipient receives a grant of \$10,000 from the Community Foundation, with the preference that it be used for executive leadership development opportunities.



Noland award winner Roger L. Myers (right), CEO and president of Presbyterian Villages of Michigan, with Community Foundation board chair James B. Nicholson.



HAVEN CEO and president Beth Morrison, board chair Carole Winnard Brumm, and vice chair Sue Perlin receive the 2015 Richard F. Huegli Award for Program Excellence.

HAVEN of Bingham Farms, Mich., is the recipient of the **2015 Richard F. Huegli Award for Program Excellence.**

Founded in 1975, HAVEN is Oakland County's only agency dedicated to the treatment and prevention of domestic violence and sexual assault. It also provides shelter, advocacy and educational programming to nearly 30,000 people each year at multiple sites. As part of the award, HAVEN will receive a one-time grant of \$5,000 to support general operations.

In 2014, HAVEN was the first organization ever to receive a 100 percent Quality Assurance Review score from the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board. Currently, HAVEN is expanding its services through a new facility in Pontiac that will consolidate forensic exam sites, a shelter and a counseling center under one roof. In addition, it will provide room for additional on-site supportive services.

The award annually recognizes a nonprofit that reflects Mr. Huegli's vision, high standards in human services programming and belief in human potential. Mr. Huegli served in the region's human services sector for nearly half a century before his death in 1988.

CHELSEA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

The Chelsea Community Foundation, an affiliate of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, celebrated its 20-year anniversary Sunday, June 14, by doing what it does best — supporting organizations that enhance the quality of life in the Chelsea, Michigan, community.

In an unexpected announcement at its anniversary banquet, held at St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea Hospital, the Foundation surprised nine community organizations by awarding them a total of \$40,000 in grants.

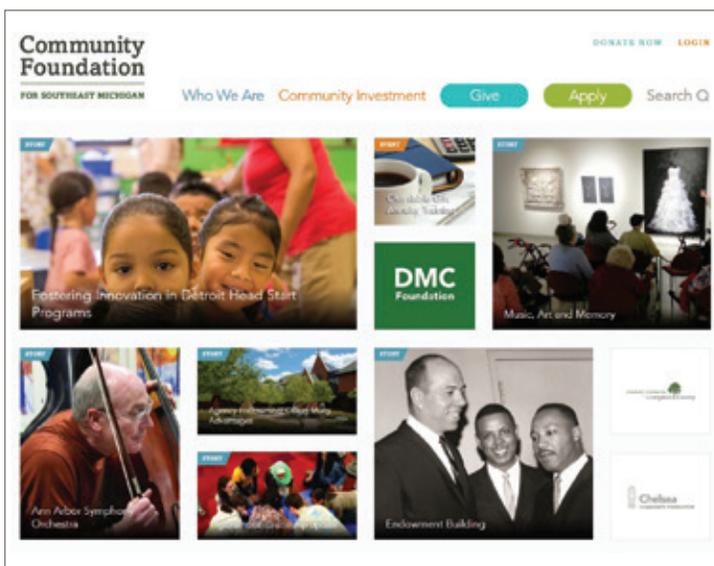
Seven grants of \$5,000 each were presented to: the Chelsea Area Historical Society, the Chelsea District Library, the Chelsea School District, the Chelsea Senior Center, Faith in Action Inc., Purple Rose Theatre Company, and the St. Louis Center.

In addition, two grants of \$2,500 were given to: the Silver Maples of Chelsea and the UMRC Foundation.



The Chelsea Community Foundation is a permanent community endowment that has awarded more than \$1.25 million through more than 100 grants to nonprofit organizations to support and improve the public well-being and quality of life for Chelsea residents.

NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHES



We are pleased to announce that our website, cfsem.org, has been thoroughly revised and has a fresh, new look. It features many more stories about the Community Foundation and the programs and projects we support as well as an enhanced interface for donor advisors and agency endowment partners. Please visit the site and let us know what you think.

NEW AND RETIRING COMMUNITY FOUNDATION TRUSTEES

The Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan was founded in 1984 by a visionary Board of Trustees. We continue to benefit from the wise counsel and oversight of these accomplished civic leaders, and we are grateful for their service. We especially wish to acknowledge retiring Trustees Frederick M. Adams Jr., Deborah I. Dingell and David T. Fischer, who made many contributions to the Community Foundation

during their years on our Board. We wish them well in all their future endeavors.

At the June Annual Meeting, the Board of Trustees elected three new trustees. We welcome to the Board Jennifer Fischer, civic leader; Stephen R. Polk, president and CEO of Highgate, LLC; and Judge Gerald E. Rosen, chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan.

STAFF UPDATES



RANDALL S. ROSS was promoted to associate vice president, Donor Relations. Ross will be responsible for developing and managing donor stewardship programs in support of our asset development activities. He will also continue to be involved in complex donor advised fund grants, and will manage both the Community Foundation for Livingston County and the Chelsea Community Foundation development and donor stewardship activities. Ross's previous positions at the Community Foundation include manager, Philanthropic Services and senior program officer.



GLADYS SANTIAGO is the Community Foundation's new grants manager. Santiago was most recently operations manager in the School of Business at the University of Detroit–Mercy. Santiago has a master's degree in library science from Wayne State University and an undergraduate degree from the University of Tampa in liberal studies, with a minor in fine arts and social science. She is fluent in Spanish.



MELISSA J. SMILEY has joined the Community Foundation as Special Assistant and Strategy Officer, Office of the President. In this position she will provide strategic counsel across a variety of projects and initiatives. Smiley most recently served as Deputy Chief of Staff in Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan's office, where she monitored performance metrics and assisted with the implementation of the Plan of Adjustment approved by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court. Smiley holds a PhD in Epidemiological Science and master's degrees in urban planning and public health from the University of Michigan. She was a member of the first cohort of Detroit Revitalization Fellows.

Community Foundation

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

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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

Making Literacy a Priority in Southeast Michigan

Charitable Gift Annuities — A Simple Planned Giving Tool

Chelsea Community Foundation Celebrates 20 Years