2024 **ANNUAL REPORT**

THE LEGACY



» **Nearly $1 million in new grants and scholarships support Isabella County children, families, individuals and communities today.**

Mt. Pleasant Area
community foundation℠
For **good.** For **ever.**℠



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A message from the CEO

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It has been over a decade since my family made Mt. Pleasant home. During this time, I have had the privilege of serving our community in various ways. I have come to appreciate our beautiful parks and the winding Chippewa River, the resources available for my children, and the slower, more intentional pace of life here. More than anything, I believe that the true strength of our community lies in its people. Individuals like you, with your unwavering commitment and generosity, make Isabella County special.

My journey with the Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation began with a desire to give back. I initially started as a scholarship reviewer, later served on the Community Leadership Committee, and then joined the Board of Trustees. Today, I am honored to serve as the CEO/COO, leading our commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all residents of Isabella County. Truly, it doesn't get better than this.

The Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation is a critical resource of grant funding across the county. We are a community partner dedicated to transforming shared aspirations into action. This year, we are launching a comprehensive needs assessment to gather input from local residents. Our collective understanding of the challenges in our community will position all of us, together, to create meaningful improvement that leads ultimately to lasting impact.

This annual report is more than a reflection on the past year; it is a celebration of you, the individuals and organizations that make our work possible. Thank you for your passion and your belief in the future of Isabella County. I look forward to continuing our partnership as we build an even stronger community for generations to come.

- Liz Conway
CEO/COO
lconway@mpacf.org

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EMERITUS TRUSTEES

9+ years

Emeritus trustees have served at least three full terms or nine consecutive years. Their names, and the *number of years served*, are as follows:

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Janet Maar Strickler, *15*
Tom Sullivan, *9*
Judi Sullivan, *11*
Bob Wheeler, *32*

**deceased*

Community Foundation serves as *hub of local philanthropy*

Annual grants funded by generous donors support families, individuals and communities

The Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation invests in local projects each year that improve lives and strengthen Isabella County. Through competitive grants awarded across focus areas such as mental health, community growth, education and youth development, the Foundation helps foster lasting, meaningful change.

"Every grant we award reflects our commitment to building a stronger, more vibrant Isabella County," CEO/COO Liz Conway said. "These projects represent the heart of what we do: supporting people, strengthening communities and creating opportunities for all who call this region home."

The six stories that follow reflect the variety of initiatives made possible by the generosity of Community Foundation donors and the dedication of local nonprofits. Together, these examples offer a glimpse into the power and enduring impact of community philanthropy.

HUB OF LOCAL PHILANTHROPY

Fueling hope for families

Even a short drive can feel out of reach for families living paycheck to paycheck.

A $5,000 grant from the Rise Family Fund is helping United Way of Greater Central Michigan expand its ALICE Support Fund to include transportation assistance — providing one-time $50 gas cards to Isabella County households in need. ALICE individuals and families — who are "Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained and Employed" — earn above the federal poverty level yet struggle to meet basic needs. Nearly 50% of mid-Michigan households are in this category.

"Transportation is a lifeline for ALICE families," said Brittany Stoneman, Community Impact Manager at United Way of Greater Central Michigan, who leads the ALICE Support Fund. "If they can't get to work, it can crumble so many other areas of their lives."

In one recent case, a family couldn't attend United Way's monthly diaper distribution because they didn't have enough gas to get home. A gas card made the trip possible — and ensured their children received the supplies they needed.

"These households are working hard toward a better future," United Way President and CEO Annie Sanders said. "This support has been a bright spot — a way to help families breathe a little easier while they navigate the rest."



HUB OF LOCAL PHILANTHROPY

Holiday cheer, served warm

In December 2024, Christmas Outreach of Isabella County introduced a new tradition to its annual giving event: ready-to-make breakfast baskets for families facing financial hardship.

With a $3,500 grant from the Mt. Pleasant Oil Industry Food Pantry Fund, Christmas Outreach packaged and distributed 582 breakfast baskets. Each included a one-pound ham, pancake mix, blueberry muffin mix and syrup — a comforting gift meant to bring warmth and connection to Christmas morning.

"The families are incredibly grateful, but it's so much bigger than that," Christmas Outreach President Peggy Burke said. "It's about the volunteers and the community coming together. This initiative makes me happier about the Christmas season than anything else."





HUB OF LOCAL PHILANTHROPY

Mental health support for youth

With youth mental health needs on the rise, Christian Counseling of Mid Michigan is creating space for healing — and hope.

Through parent consultations during a child's therapy sessions, counselors are helping families deepen their understanding of the child's world. It's a critical step in creating more consistency between therapy and home, thus improving outcomes.

A $13,500 grant from the Women's Initiative Fund; Isabella County Health Improvement Fund; Healthy Youth Healthy Seniors Fund; and Community Impact Fund supports the parent consultations, which often aren't covered by Medicaid.

"This grant helps everyone in the child's life pull in the same direction — and that speeds up their success," Executive Director and Counselor Dr. Emily DeJong said.

Christian Counseling also received a $5,500 grant from the Kellogg Youth Fund for its Creating Confident Character program, which pairs teen girls with female counselors to build self-esteem and identify positive role models. Through art, music, play, and game-based therapy, girls explored emotions, built trust and developed a stronger sense of confidence.

"Without self-worth, it's hard to go out into the world and find success," DeJong said. "But with the right support, we've seen these girls light up — and carry that confidence into their communities."

HUB OF LOCAL PHILANTHROPY

Equipped to prevent youth suicide

When it comes to preventing youth suicide, the right words can make all the difference.

Through implementation of Question, Persuade and Refer training in Isabella County schools, Community Mental Health for Central Michigan is equipping students and adults to recognize and respond to signs of a mental health crisis. Certified youth intervention specialists train students ages 14 and older, along with staff, coaches, mentors and parents.

"One of our goals is to get everyone speaking the same language regarding suicide prevention," Youth Intervention Specialist Heather Owens said. "If the whole school is trained, everyone can help. It builds community."

This effort is supported by an $8,627 grant from the Kaufmann/Sauter Family Fund and the Kellogg Youth Fund.

The program teaches participants how to ask difficult questions, recognize warning signs, and foster connection and trust.

"Most youth won't tell an adult when they're struggling," Owens said. "This training helps students feel supported and gives them the tools to carry that into the community."



Jenny Justice, co-owner of Sleepy Dog Books and co-founder of the Sleepy Dog Book Foundation, poses with happy students in front of the book vending machine at Fancher Elementary School.

HUB OF LOCAL PHILANTHROPY

Turning the page on literacy

Students across mid-Michigan are discovering a new reason to love reading — and it starts with a token.

Book vending machines installed at two local schools allow young readers to choose books to call their own — all thanks to the Sleepy Dog Books Foundation. Each machine holds 300 books designed to inspire curiosity. With tokens in hand, students are empowered to select stories that spark their imaginations and build their personal libraries.

More than 70% of Michigan children read below a proficient level. By making books more accessible — and more exciting — these vending machines are helping shift that narrative.

"We're not just trying to get more books into schools, but more books into homes," said Riley Justis, co-executive director of the foundation and co-owner of Sleepy Dog Books. "Not only are we seeing a greater number of books go into the community, we've seen a change in the conversations kids are having. They're talking about books more and encouraging their peers to read."

Support for this literacy project was provided through an $8,000 grant from the Robert and Geraldine Krapohl Literacy Fund and the Connor J. Puhlman Memorial Fund for Youth.

HUB OF LOCAL PHILANTHROPY

Education for safer beginnings

Three lifelike dolls that demonstrate the effects of fetal alcohol syndrome, drug exposure during pregnancy and Shaken Baby Syndrome are helping local parents understand the risks and long-term impacts of those preventable conditions.

The new Infant Health Trio Simulator, with a tailored curriculum for each doll, expands the efforts of the Isabella County Child Advocacy Center (ICCAC) team to prevent child abuse and neglect.

"We are very focused on awareness and letting caregivers know they aren't alone," said Kyle Baker, Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Director. "You don't know what you don't know — and we're here to help."

Serving families often impacted by poverty and generational cycles, ICCAC staff approach each case with compassion, not judgment. The simulators spark conversations, foster awareness and empower safer futures.

"We aim to educate with the goal of prevention," Baker said. "We want to guide people to the resources they need in order to have a healthy pregnancy and keep their families safe."



The trio simulator was made possible thanks to a $2,500 grant from the Jerry M. and Marilyn A. Morey Community Fund; Kimber and Judy DeWitt Family Fund; Myler Family Community Impact Fund; and Steve and Sue Pung Family Fund.

Seeing is believing - Isabella County Child Advocacy Center staff members demonstrate the visible effects of shaken baby syndrome and fetal alcohol syndrome through the Infant Simulator models provided by generous grant funding.

All of us can be *philanthropists*

Every gift matters, no matter its size. The Community Impact Fund of the Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation addresses ever-evolving local needs, from the most pressing issues to emerging opportunities.

Every donation you make to the Community Impact Fund is preserved forever, combined with other donations and invested. The interest earned is used to support Isabella County communities and residents in ways that have the greatest impact for the times.

Please, make a donation today. Your gift will change lives *Forever.*

"It's not the honors and the prizes and the fancy outsides of life that ultimately nourish our souls. It's the things we're able to give to each other in the spirit of kindness and community."

- Fred Rogers

Impact.

It's why we all give so generously to support local residents.

This impact series features five stories that show how recent grants from the Community Foundation are making a real-life difference.

IMPACT SERIES

United against hunger

Grants support meal access and food distribution for local residents

From young children to veterans, food insecurity affects people from all walks of life. With support from the Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation, local organizations are rallying to fight community hunger.

A $1,000 grant from the Women's Initiative Fund in 2024 enabled the Community Compassion Network to purchase baby formula, providing vital nutrition to the youngest members of the community.

What's more, a $17,280 grant allowed People Helping People of Isabella County to serve about 8,300 Sunday lunches at Max & Emily's for visitors of the Isabella Community Soup Kitchen. This funding came from the Andy Wheeler Community Needs Fund; the Foundation's Community Impact Fund; David B. and Susan K. Keilitz Family Fund; Sally and John Goodrow Fund; Sherman C. and Shirley J. Rowley Family Fund, and the W.E. Martin Fund.



At the soup kitchen, a $10,000 grant replaced an aging delivery vehicle thanks to the John and Sue Bradac Family Emergency Fund; Jane McNamara and Louise Williams Fund; Jerry M. and Marilyn A. Morey Community Fund; and the Foundation's Community Impact Fund. The new vehicle streamlines distribution, helping surplus meals reach more people while reducing trips and fuel costs.



"This vehicle isn't just about transportation — it's about maximizing every donation we receive," said Sarah Adkins, Executive Director of the soup kitchen. "By improving how we collect and distribute meals, we're reaching more people and making a greater impact on hunger in our region."

8,300 Sunday lunches served

at Max & Emily's for visitors of the Isabella Community Soup Kitchen

IMPACT SERIES

Equipped to save lives

Grant-funded tools enhance safety for first responders and local residents

In an emergency, every second counts. With support from the Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation, the city's police and fire departments have critical new tools to improve response times, promote safety and save lives.

A $2,550 grant from the David B. and Susan K. Keilitz Family Fund; Steve and Sue Pung Family Fund; and Sullivan Family Fund provided the police department with six Delia Tactical Raptor Breaching Tools. These multipurpose instruments break car windows, pry open doors, ram through barriers and even turn on fire hydrants. Last fall, an officer used one to shatter a windshield and rescue a person trapped inside a burning vehicle.

"These tools are game changers for officers in the field," Lieutenant Mike Williams said. "The car rescue video on our social media page was a powerful example of their necessity."

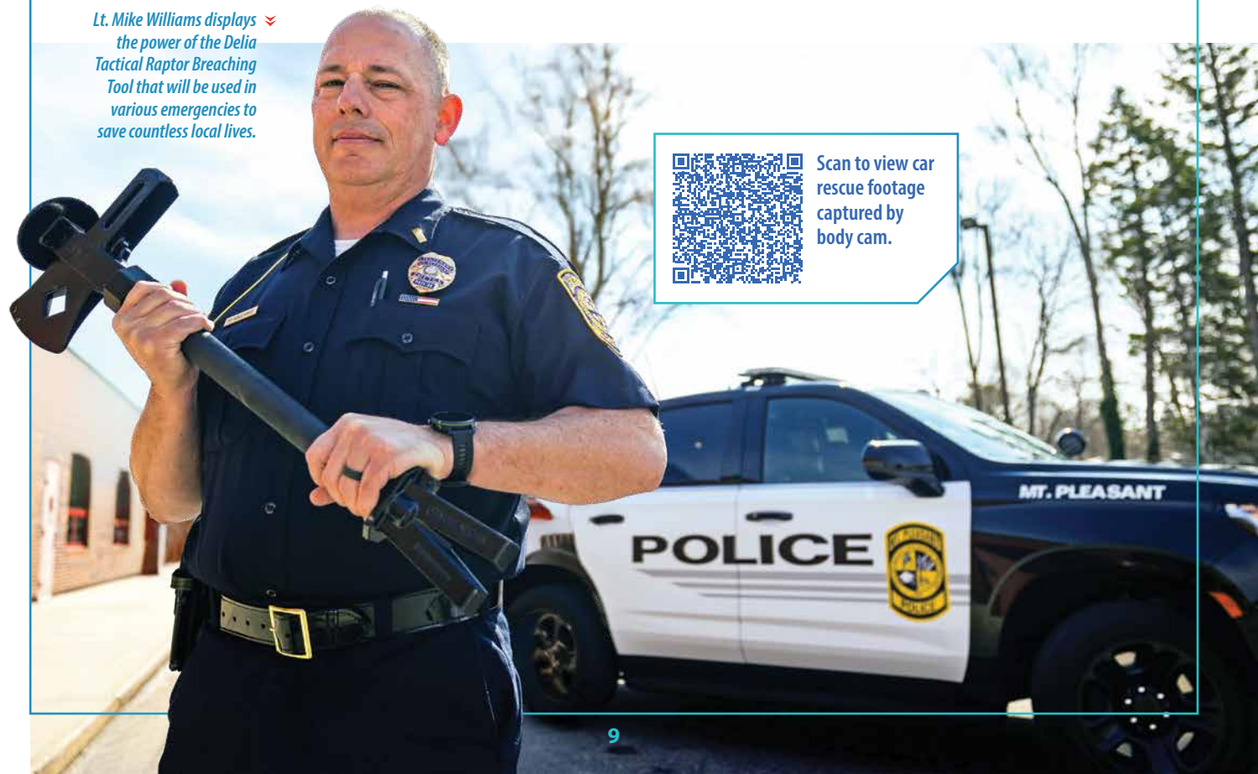
For the fire department, a $19,201 grant from the Barbara L. and George W. Dunn Family Fund; the Foundation's Community Impact Fund; Dr. Leonard E. and Louise A. Plachta Unrestricted Fund; and Tim and Mary Ann O'Neil Community Impact Fund funded two high-tech thermal imaging devices.

These tools allow firefighters to locate people inside burning structures, quickly assess layouts and respond with greater precision and speed.

"These devices let us navigate with greater accuracy," Fire Chief Doug Lobsinger said. "We can swiftly — and safely — do our jobs when time is of the essence."

> "These tools are game changers for officers in the field."
>
> **- Lieutenant Mike Williams**
> *Mt. Pleasant Police Department*

Lt. Mike Williams displays the power of the Delia Tactical Raptor Breaching Tool that will be used in various emergencies to save countless local lives.



Scan to view car rescue footage captured by body cam.

IMPACT SERIES

Building 'hope' for families

Hope Childcare Center will expand child care access in Isabella County

Isabella County faces a critical childcare shortage, leaving families with limited options for early childhood education. As a designated "childcare desert," the region has an urgent need for accessible, high-quality care.

Hope Childcare Center, to be located in the First United Methodist Church in Mt. Pleasant, is working to change that. A $20,200 grant has helped bring the center closer to fruition by funding construction, fire safety compliance and critical supplies.

The grant came from the Hersee Family Fund; Jerry M. and Marilyn A. Morey Community Fund; Jane McNamara and Louise Williams Fund; the Foundation's Community Impact Fund; Dr. Leonard E. and Louise A. Plachta Unrestricted Fund; Fabiano Family Fund; and Kay Smith Family Fund.

"Before launching the center, our church asked how we could better serve the community," said Sue Pung, the Hope Childcare Center board chair overseeing the center's development. "With the childcare crisis and unused space in our church during the week, this felt like the perfect opportunity to make a meaningful impact."

Navigating regulations has been challenging, but Pung and other church leaders are optimistic it will open just in time for the 2025-26 school year, serving about three dozen children.

"We know the need is urgent," Pung said. "It's taken time and resources, but we're honored to be part of the solution for local families."

> "With the childcare crisis ... this felt like the perfect opportunity to make a meaningful impact."
>
> - **Sue Pung,** *Hope Childcare Center board chair*



Liz Conway (left), CEO/COO of MPACF, discusses the progress of the much needed Hope Childcare Center with Sue Pung (right), First United Methodist board chair and project leader.



IMPACT SERIES

Breaking barriers to student health

BlueJay Wellness Center brings no-cost medical, behavioral health care to Shepherd Schools

For families in Shepherd Public Schools, accessing quality health care is no longer a challenge. A $25,000 grant helped launch the BlueJay Wellness Center, an on-campus clinic providing no-cost medical and behavioral health care to youth aged 3-21.

The grant came from the Bandit Industries Community Fund; the Foundation's Community Impact Fund; Healthy Youth Healthy Seniors Fund; Isabella County Health Improvement Fund; Jerry M. and Marilyn A. Morey Community Fund; Shepherd Community Fund Honoring Robert H. Bates; and the Foundation's Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)-advised Kellogg Youth Fund.



District nurse Alayna Nederhoed cares for a student at Shepherd Public Schools' new BlueJay Wellness Center.

The clinic opened in February 2025 and served about 60 students in its first few weeks. Its services align with priorities identified in the YAC's youth needs assessment, which highlighted a growing demand for mental health services. Now, with a full-time nurse practitioner and behavioral health therapist, students can receive routine check-ups, immunizations, mental health support and more — without parents having to take time off work.

> "Through the clinic, we can meet students where they are."
>
> - **Alayna Nederhoed,** *district nurse*

"We're helping kids overcome some of those health-related barriers to staying in school," district nurse Alayna Nederhoed said. "Through the clinic, we can meet students where they are."

By offering care during the school day, the center ensures students get the support they need with minimal disruption to their education.

"The response has been overwhelmingly positive," Superintendent Carrie Gauthier said. "Having these services on campus is a tremendous convenience for families."

IMPACT SERIES

A legacy of community and creativity

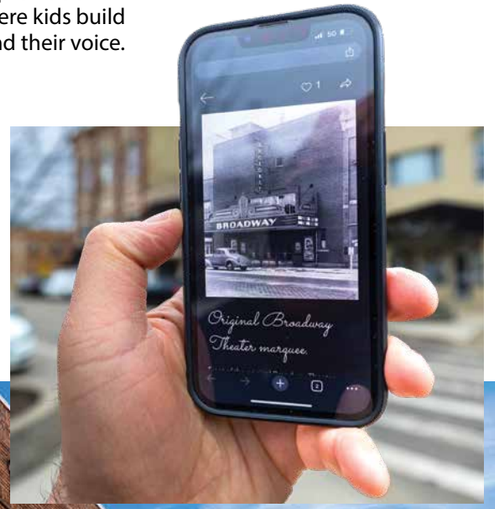
Broadway Theatre upgrades ensure an enduring legacy and future for the arts

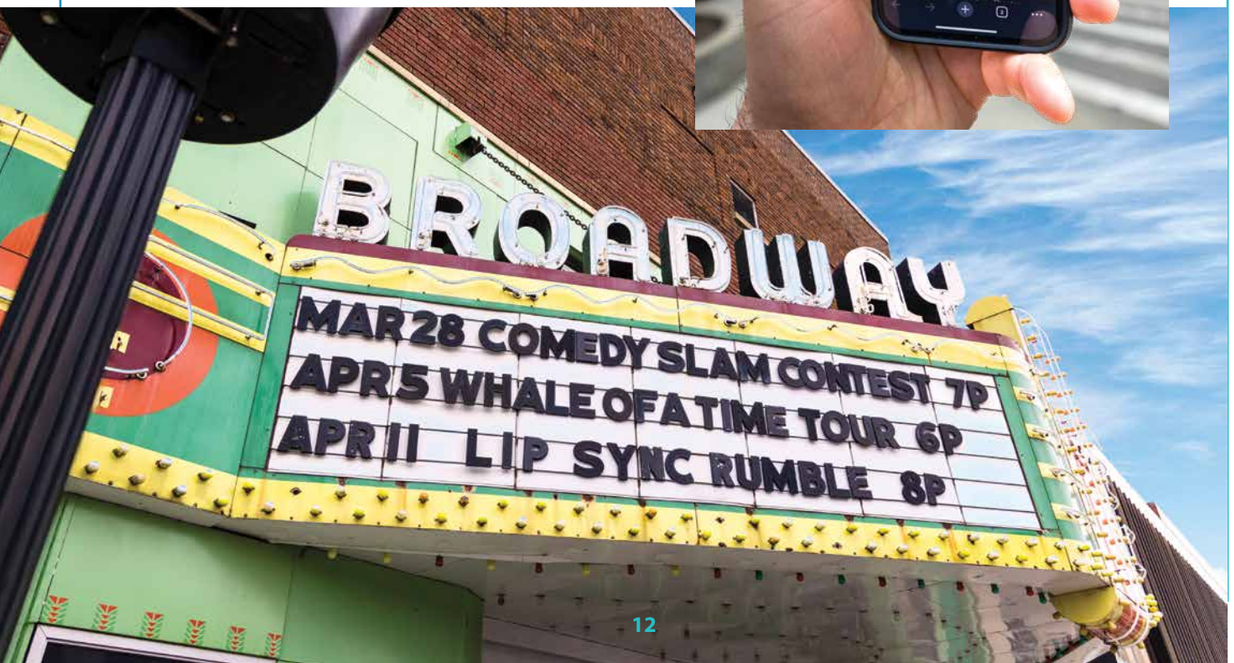
For more than a century, the Broadway Theatre has been a cultural cornerstone, providing a space for live performances, comedy skits, community events, youth programs and more. Now, with an $18,000 grant from an anonymous Donor Advised Fund and the Foundation's Community Impact Fund, the theatre is making critical upgrades to house lights and air conditioning, improving energy efficiency and enhancing audience and performer experience.

But these updates go beyond infrastructure — they solidify the Broadway's position as a vibrant hub for the arts in our community. As the only live theatre venue within 35 miles, it welcomes about 5,000 attendees annually, bringing together patrons and volunteers for shared cultural experiences. Additionally, youth theatre programs provide a creative outlet where kids build confidence and find their voice.

"My daughter has found a place where she belongs," said Amanda Hutchins, board member and director of the theatre's kids' programs. "She and so many others have come out of their shells here. The Broadway is more than a stage; it's a home for young people to be themselves."

> "My daughter has found a place where she belongs."
>
> - **Amanda Hutchins,** *board member and director of the theatre's kids' programs*





2024 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Homegrown *hope*



Community Foundation scholarships support more than 100 students each year

Abbie Dzuik is well on her way to fulfilling the dream of teaching students in her hometown.

A Central Michigan University junior studying special education and elementary education, Dzuik's journey is deeply rooted in mid-Michigan. Mt. Pleasant is the community that shaped her, starting with her early days at Ganiard Elementary, and now, thanks to local scholarships, she's preparing to give back to future generations.

Dzuik received support from the Ganiard History Project Scholarship Fund and the Gary Moe Memorial Scholarship Fund, two of the 114 scholarships awarded by the Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation in 2024.

In total, the Community Foundation awarded over $182,000 to help local students continue their educations — a remarkable tradition it continues year after year.

"I'm so grateful to have had such a strong start in Mt. Pleasant schools," she said. "It's incredibly special to receive help from the community to fuel my passion to teach here."

The Ganiard History Project Scholarship Fund, established with inspiration from longtime teacher Valerie Wolters, was sparked by a student's question: "Who was Ganiard?" That curiosity led Wolters to years of research — and ultimately, to uncovering a connection to longtime superintendent George Ganiard's granddaughter, who contributed the key gift needed to fully endow the fund.

"What I'm proudest of is that we're looking forward and helping build hope for the future through the young people who are recipients of the scholarship," Wolters said. "These students deserve it, and we're honored to support them."

$182,100

Total awarded by the Community Foundation to help local students continue their education

11 new funds support
students, entrepreneurs, children, families, veterans and homeless residents

Beal City Sports Boosters Fund

The Beal City Sports Boosters are taking care of today's student-athletes and ensuring future Aggies can forever take the field. Their namesake endowment fund, created in 2024, will cover athletic trainer costs and essential student-athlete medical care; help fund freshman sports, including coaches, officials and transportation, and support the purchase of sports equipment.

Dr. Jessica Block, M.D. Dream Memorial Scholarship Fund



Jessica Block, a 2004 valedictorian at Beal City High School, graduated from Philadelphia's Drexel University College of Medicine in 2018, then completed an orthopaedic surgery residency in Buffalo, New York. Before passing away, Jessica received The Ruth Jackson Orthopaedic Society's Courage Award via Zoom — in her hospital room — in November 2023.

Jessica was known for "living the dream." This scholarship supports a graduating Beal City senior or Central Michigan University or Mid Michigan College student pursuing their dream of serving others through careers in fields such as medicine, social work, teaching, childcare, nonprofit leadership, and other impactful fields.



Terra Lynn (Morey) Boone Memorial Fund

Terra Boone had many passions. Her family was always first, but she also strived to help children, the homeless, and individuals with special needs, both mental and physical. To carry on that legacy, her mother and sisters created this endowed fund to have a lasting impact on Isabella County children, homeless individuals and families, and individuals with mental or physical disabilities.

Terra was a 1993 graduate of Mt. Pleasant High School and attended Central Michigan University and the University of Utah. Among her many interests, she guided outdoor youth adventures, co-authored children's books and doted on her children and husband.

Entrepreneur Like Me CMURC Fund

This fund, created by the Central Michigan University Research Corp., exists to support entrepreneurs through various stages of business — from launch to sustainable growth. The resulting efforts will, in turn, be a catalyst for local job creation, the provision of fair wages to local employees, and economic impact in communities across Isabella County.

Elmer And Mary Feltman Health Care Professional Scholarship Fund

This fund supports Isabella County residents accepted into a medical school or nursing, EMT or other healthcare programs. It honors Elmer, who had a sixth-grade education and was attending seminary but left to work on the family farm in Shepherd. Mary worked for Ferro Manufacturing for 45 years and advocated for simple pleasures such as gardening and cooking.

Their son, Lawrence, who created the fund, was an emergency room physician at Central Michigan Community Hospital/McLaren Central Michigan. Their son, Howard, took over the family farm and writes a comic book series called "Silverwolf."

Fisher Companies Construction Education Scholarship Fund

This fund was established in 2024 and celebrated in 2025 as a part of the Fisher Companies' 100th anniversary, honoring a century of hard work, determination, unwavering faith and community involvement. The companies include heavy/civil contracting, concrete, asphalt, heavy-haul transportation, aggregate production, diesel engine systems, freshwater ports, and a championship golf course.

The scholarship is for those seeking a degree or skilled trades apprenticeship, or planning to attend CDL trucking school or a specialized construction institute.

Isabella County Child Advocacy Center Fund

The Isabella County Child Advocacy Center established its namesake fund in 2024 to enhance its service to children who are victims of sexual or severe physical abuse or who witness violence. The nonprofit center provides a safe, child-friendly environment, and its compassionate team members conduct forensic interviews, collaborate with community professionals for effective casework, provide family advocacy services and deliver prevention education programs.



Lisa Yanick Litwiller Legacy Fund

Lisa Yanick Litwiller was a relentless advocate, revered journalist, passionate mentor, community pillar and spirited explorer of the natural world. This fund will empower and uplift the community for generations to come, as did Lisa when she gave a voice to the voiceless, shone a light on untold stories, and fostered a community of support, creativity and collective growth.

Grants from Lisa's fund will advocate for social justice, nurture educational opportunities, promote environmental stewardship and outdoor exploration, and encourage community engagement and development.

Michigan POW/MIA Memorial Fund

POW/MIA veterans and families from across Michigan will be honored by a new memorial planned for Mt. Pleasant's Island Park. A steel eternal flame sculpture, bronze statues of veterans, and a granite wall with the names and birthplaces of more than 13,600 POW/MIA Michigan veterans — from the Revolutionary War to today — are planned. The remembrance space will be located next to the existing Vietnam Veterans Memorial. All donations will be held and disbursed by the Community Foundation.

Wieczorek Family Fund



Steve Wieczorek saw the impact of the Isabella County Restoration House on a friend who leaned on its support to regroup and rebuild his life. When Wieczorek retired from his building and remodeling business in Mt. Pleasant, he created this namesake family endowment to give back to the community that has been an integral part of his life since 1978. Interest earned from the fund will support the Restoration House and homeless individuals in perpetuity.

Basil and Theresa Zimmer Scholarship Fund

Lifelong educators Basil and Theresa Zimmer established this scholarship fund to support the next generation of teachers. Theresa taught third through sixth grade students at Sacred Heart, while Basil was an economics professor at Central Michigan University from 1969-2009. Their son, Andrew, continues the legacy teaching middle school mathematics in Midland.

This scholarship is available to graduates of Sacred Heart Academy and Mt. Pleasant High School who aspire to be teachers and demonstrate financial need.

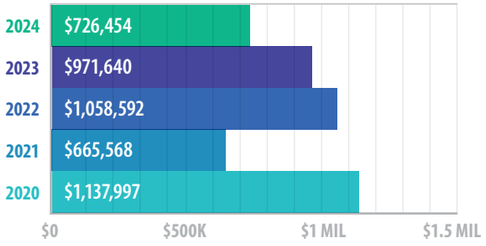
Foundation grants $1 million to Isabella County initiatives

The Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation supported local residents and communities in 2024 through grants worth almost $1 million. Almost 75% of total funding supported human services, education, and community and economic development.

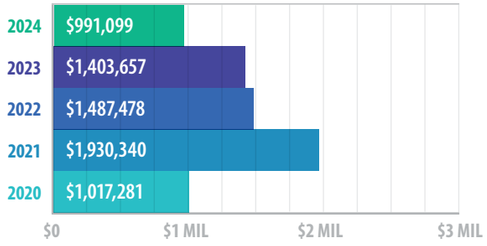
The following results are influenced by factors such as when major gifts, including from estates, come to fruition and by fluctuations in the stock market.

> "The Board and I are solidly focused on increasing donations and are confident the local commitment to helping others is stronger than ever as local needs continue to evolve."
>
> **- Liz Conway,** *CEO/COO*

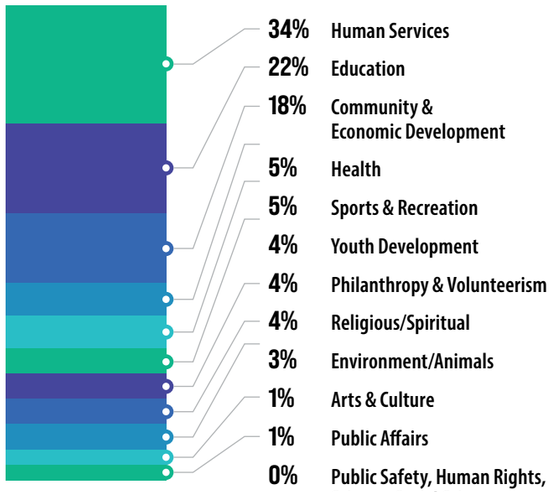
GRANTS & SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED



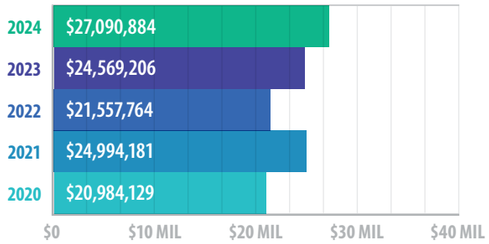
GIFTS/DONATIONS RECEIVED



GRANTS AWARDED BY PROGRAM AREA, 2024



FOUNDATION ASSETS



INVESTMENT RETURNS

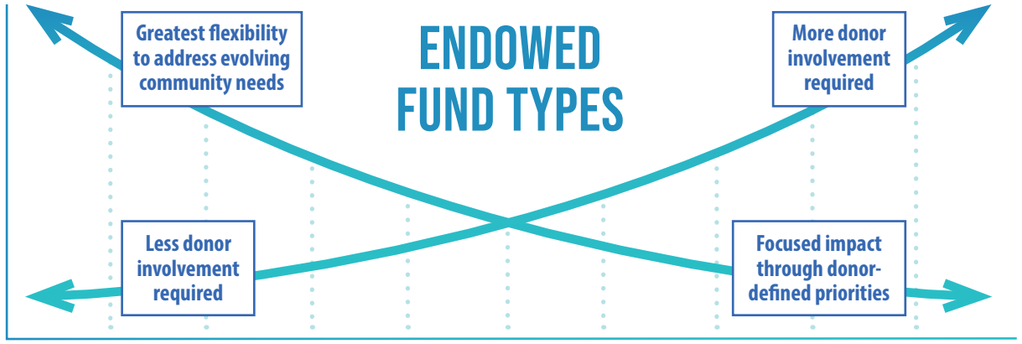


Make an immediate impact, *build a lasting legacy*

The Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation serves as the bedrock of philanthropy in Isabella County, enhancing the community and improving life for all citizens, now and for generations to come.

Since 1990, the Community Foundation has awarded more than $13 million to local services, initiatives and scholarships, thanks to endowments created with donations from generous individuals from all walks of life.

As a donor, you may contribute to any of our charitable endowments or establish your own. Your donations will never be spent; their investment returns however, will go back to the community forever.



	COMMUNITY IMPACT FUND	FIELD OF INTEREST FUND	ORGANIZATION FUND *(Designated or Agency)*	SCHOLARSHIP FUND	DONOR ADVISED FUND
PURPOSE	Addresses ever changing needs of community	Targets specific area of community life	Benefits specific charitable organization	Benefits individual according to specific guidelines	Addresses charitable interests of founders
REQUIRED	$10,000 in 10 years	$10,000 in 10 years	$10,000 in 10 years	$20,000 in 10 years	$10,000 in 10 years
FEE	1% annually	1% annually	1% annually	2% annually	2% annually
AWARDS	Grant Review Committee recommends two times per year	Grant Review Committee recommends two times per year	Organization requests grants as needs arise	Scholarship Committee recommends grants once per year	Advisors (fund representatives) recommend grants anytime
TOTAL 2024 GIFTS	$151,963	$98,913	$207,288	$227,473	$220,230

All contributions qualify for federal and Michigan tax incentives.
Contact us at 989-773-7322 or info@mpacf.org to discuss your options.

Community Foundation is a trusted source for *creating a legacy*

Mark, Shelly Smith follow his mom's lead with lasting gift

Mark and Shelly Smith learned in 2008, after the passing of Mark's mom, Kay Krapohl Smith, that she had left $50,000 to the Foundation. It wasn't a surprise that the Foundation was a priority; Kay was well known for community service. Yet finances had sometimes been tough in retirement after her divorce.

Her gift was a timely ah-ha for Mark and Shelly: Kay had decided years earlier that she could manage the premiums of a life insurance policy. The value of the policy would grow, and the community would benefit forever through annual grants from the endowment her policy would fund.

That foresight made Kay a member of the Community Foundation's Legacy Society. Inspired, Mark and Shelly also purchased a life insurance policy, even though they had three young sons and were saving for college. They designated Shelly's passion, the Mt. Pleasant Discovery Museum, and Kay's endowment as beneficiaries.

"We're both invested in this community and want to see it continue to grow and thrive," Shelly said. "We put a lot of time into the community, and it's nice to know a permanent financial impact will follow our time."

"The Community Foundation gives all of us the ability to protect the future," Mark said. "We can help others by joining the Legacy Society — by filling out a piece of paper and leaving a gift to your favorite causes."

> "All you have to do is fill out a piece of paper saying you've left something to the Foundation in your estate. It's that easy."
>
> - **Mark Smith,** *on joining the Legacy Society*

Mark and Shelly Smith, community philanthropists and Legacy Society members. Mark also serves on the MPACF board.



To explore options or discuss your gift, please contact Liz Conway, Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation CEO/COO, at 989-773-7322 or lconway@mpacf.org.

Scan for a list of The Denison Legacy Society members.

Scan for a complete list of our generous donors who gave gifts of $100 or more in 2024.

Empowering youth, *strengthening community*

Youth Advisory Committee identifies and addresses issues facing county students

For many Isabella County students, stress, peer pressure and bullying are daily realities. The Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation's Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) is taking action by funding solutions and amplifying youth voices.

Every three years, the YAC surveys 8th and 10th graders to understand their biggest challenges. The 2023 survey highlighted rising mental health struggles, shaping the YAC's grant funding and volunteer efforts in 2024 toward meaningful change.

A key investment was an $8,000 grant from the YAC-administered Kellogg Youth Fund to support the new BlueJay Wellness Center, a no-cost medical and behavioral health clinic at Shepherd Public Schools.



YAC members in a session with their advisor discussing ways to maximize their efforts and community impact.



The hardworking MPACF Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) team at their April 2025 meeting.

The Kellogg Youth Fund awarded more than $28,000 in 2024 to initiatives such as suicide prevention, autism services and character development programs.

"We focus on funding initiatives that align with what students tell us they need," said YAC President Sophie Ludwig, a junior at Beal City High School. " Bringing youth together to share perspectives is powerful. We're making a difference on a personal level."

Beyond grantmaking, members volunteer with local organizations. For many, the YAC is their first introduction to philanthropy — a lesson that lasts long after high school.

"We talk about what we're doing with our friends, and the understanding spreads," Ludwig said. "Then, all of us carry that sense of impact with us into the real world."

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