Dubuque residents Mike and Judy McCoy experienced the generosity of others firsthand growing up in Shullsburg, Wisconsin.

“When we were young, we had a lot of people in our lives who were really good to us,” says Mike.

Judy was raised rural in a large family. “You depend on each other, and you find that sharing and helping each other out makes everybody happy,” she says.

As the family business became increasingly successful, the couple knew they wanted to pass along the kindness they’d been shown. After years of personal philanthropy and volunteerism, the McCoys learned about the benefits of creating a private foundation using a donor-advised fund, which they did through the Community Foundation.

“Coming to the Community Foundation has been a great experience for us, and it makes us feel good,” says Mike.

With the Community Foundation taking care of the administrative responsibilities, the McCoys are able to focus on the joy of giving while benefitting from Endow Iowa 25% state tax credits.

Mike and Judy were recently named Outstanding Individual Philanthropists by the Association of Fundraising Professionals for their record of exceptional generosity, their outstanding civic and charitable responsibility and inspiring others to...
A History of Generosity

“Our hope is to leave the world just a little bit better and help children along the way.”
-Mike and Judy McCoy

take leadership roles in philanthropy and community affairs. The couple was honored at an event on National Philanthropy Day, November 15, at the Grand River Center in Dubuque.

“We know a lot of tremendous people who have inspired us,” says Mike.

The McCoys support many local nonprofits — particularly those focused on youth — through their end-of-year giving to the Community Foundation, including Hillcrest Family Services, the Boys & Girls Club, Teresa Shelter and Maria House.

“We have a soft spot in our hearts for young people,” Judy explains. Recently, they’ve supported the Miracle League of Dubuque’s new inclusive baseball park and playground for children of all abilities.

“Our hope is to leave the world just a little bit better and help children along the way,” the couple says.

Learn more about donor-advised funds at dbqfoundation.org/donor-advised

MEETING OUR NEIGHBORS

At this year’s Dubuque City Expo in September, community members had a chance to learn about the Community Foundation’s work, including numerous initiatives that are improving lives throughout the city. While adults talked with Community Foundation staff, children spent time reading books and designing their own bookmarks at the foundation’s kids’ table.

GIVE MORE FOR LESS WHEN YOU RECEIVE THE ENDOW IOWA TAX CREDIT

2019 credits are running low; give today

Your endowed gift to the Community Foundation will cost you far less thanks to the generosity the Endow Iowa 25% state tax credit.

But you must hurry and give soon before the 2019 credits run out. As of October, only half of the credits — about $3 million — remain for 2019.

With this tax credit, a $10,000 gift will cost an individual or couple in the 24% tax bracket only $5,100. You will be able to endow $10,000 to support your passions and favorite causes as well as receive federal tax deductions on the final gift amount.

Learn more at dbqfoundation.org/endowiowa
Grant To Hillcrest Family Services Supports Access To Mental Health Resources

One afternoon this summer, Gretchen Bradshaw and Beth Hemmer gathered in Hillcrest Family Services’ Hadley Chapel with their colleagues for a new kind of training: mental health first aid.

Bradshaw and Hemmer directed the staff through role-playing scenarios, in which the group experienced — and then discussed — how to respond to someone experiencing a mental health crisis. Topics included recognizing signs of common mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, psychosis, and substance abuse. From there, they learned how to approach someone who appears to be in crisis.

“We are there to assess and get them to where they need to be,” Bradshaw, a therapist on the Hillcrest staff, told the group.

The Dubuque-based agency, which offers mental and physical health services among other health and family needs, received a $4,000 Community Impact Grant from the Community Foundation earlier this year that enabled Bradshaw and Hemmer to become certified Mental Health First Aid U.S.A. trainers. With the certification, they can train others at Hillcrest and beyond, establishing a network of knowledgeable mental health first responders who can help address a growing need in the Dubuque region.

With training underway at Hillcrest, Bradshaw, Hemmer and the Community Foundation now see the potential to train members of the broader community, such as education staff, members of law enforcement and business leaders.

“The fact that this grant allows Hillcrest to train all staff across the board is so valuable, because Hillcrest touches so many lives, particularly people with acute mental health issues and many underserved populations,” said Chris Corken, a Community Foundation board member and retired Dubuque prosecutor who serves on the Community Impact Grant Review Committee.

Corken is exploring ways to bring the training to local law enforcement as an alternative to a more in-depth and time-consuming crisis intervention training that some have already completed. Combined with the Community Foundation’s work connecting law enforcement and mental health providers as part of the Project HOPE initiative, this could increase understanding of how to recognize mental health crises and refer someone to treatment rather than make an arrest.

“What I love about this training is that it is really open to everyone,” Hemmer said. “You never know when you might encounter someone who needs help.”
GIVING MATTERS

Following a workshop in September, representatives from 20 Dubuque-area nonprofits reached the midpoint in Advancing Racial Equity, an interactive training process for building the skills to address structural racism and advance racial equity through community engagement strategies and communication about race.

Convened by the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, the training is part of a comprehensive effort to strengthen the region by encouraging leaders from the civic, nonprofit and business sectors to approach their work through a perspective of diversity, equity and inclusion.

The training also fits into the foundation’s longstanding tradition of fostering communities that are welcoming to all people by addressing social, economic and structural conditions that contribute to poor life outcomes and recognizing that race and racism play major roles. The foundation has partnered with the organization Race Forward to bring Advancing Racial Equity to Dubuque.

As part of the training, participating nonprofits have researched the history of racial groups in the region and begun developing racial equity statements. During the second session, each nonprofit applied a racial equity tool discussed in the training to a project specific to their work.

“After using the tool, we have a plan for a project I really think is attainable and could truly impact our organization and Dubuque's Marshallese population,” said Marie Duster, educational specialist at Mercy Medical Center. Celena Vesely, chair of Mercy's Diversity and Inclusion Council, explained that the Race Forward training is guiding the hospital’s work around improving racial equity in employment and in patient care.

The Community Foundation’s work with Race Forward is one of several initiatives it is taking to help Dubuque’s major institutions and employers build inclusive communities. In partnership with the YMCA/YWCA, the foundation and the Inclusive Dubuque Network are in the midst of an eighth-month peer-learning workshop series known as Best Practices in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. These monthly learning opportunities empower individuals, businesses, nonprofits and other organizations to enhance and improve self-awareness, recruitment, retention and workplace culture.

The foundation has also established the Business Leader Equity Cohort, a working group of local business executives who will share experiences and learn best practices for creating a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion across their organizations.

“It’s exciting to have all the different organizations here talking about these issues,” said Suzi Stroud, a social worker with Crescent Health Center attending the Advancing Racial Equity training. “I think it’s something we really need.”

Workshops help leaders understand, advance racial equity

Left: Dwayne Marsh leads a workshop in Dubuque. Right: Noon Elobaid of the Multicultural Family Center in Dubuque takes part in a Race Forward workshop with other nonprofit leaders.
Summit kicks off cross-sector planning to address region’s child care needs

The Dubuque region is a “child care desert” — but a diverse group of leaders convened by the Community Foundation is now working toward solving this critical problem.

Presented in partnership with other regional organizations, the Community Foundation’s first Child Care Solutions Summit in October brought together more than 100 community members invested in improving child care access, affordability and quality.

“To tackle a thorny issue like child care, we need to dream big,” said Nancy Van Milligen, president and chief executive officer of the Community Foundation. “We must come together as a community to address this issue head on.”

The Community Foundation has led research over the past two years into the region’s child care challenges. The summit was the first opportunity for leaders from different sectors — including business, civic and service — to meet in the same room and begin discussing solutions, such as training programs for providers, flexible spending accounts for care, and on-site centers at parents’ workplaces.

Two community projects get big boost thanks to one grant

A rendering shows the new Delmar splash pad, which will be made possible thanks to a Community Impact Grant that funded grant-writing services.

Since 1974, the East Central Intergovernmental Association (ECIA) has helped municipalities and Iowa nonprofits secure $285 million in grants for community development projects through its grant-writing service. However, the association has faced a challenge: Smaller nonprofits often struggle to afford the service, missing grant opportunities as a result.

To address this, ECIA turned to the Community Foundation, applying for a Community Impact Grant to help make its grant-writing service more accessible. Securing a $1,000 grant from the foundation, ECIA was able to support two nonprofits and leverage $105,000 for community projects.

“The grant paid for my services to help these small nonprofits secure funding toward important community projects that will benefit thousands of people from all walks of life,” said ECIA Grants and Municipal Coordinator Marla Quinn.

Many nonprofits depend on outside funding from grants. Working with tight budgets and relying on the time and ability of their volunteers, many organizations often lack resources to effectively pursue grant funding.

With funding from the Community Foundation, the ECIA staff was able to research appropriate grants and write compelling, effective applications free of charge. This allowed for smaller nonprofits to have a chance at funding their projects.

Two organizations ultimately benefitted from the grant: Miracle League of Dubuque received $25,000 to build an inclusive baseball field and playground, and Delmar Development received $80,000 to build a splash pad and basketball court.

“By funding capacity-building, we are able to help nonprofits increase their ability to do good work by implementing these dollars in strategic ways,” said Katie Decker, grants management coordinator for the Community Foundation.

Learn more at dbqfoundation.org/grants/community-impact-grants.
Women’s Giving Circle celebrates year’s successes

In the past year, the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque’s Women’s Giving Circle has touched the lives of many struggling women and children in the region through work that leaders highlighted during the group’s annual social and brief meeting in September.

About 50 women representing multiple generations from Dubuque and beyond gathered to connect with one another, report on the group’s activities and celebrate achievements, such as awarding more than $14,000 this year to five organizations serving women and children in need.

Donna Loewen joined as coordinator of LCAN, supporting access to college and career opportunities for the next generation of students. Shirley Templeton Vaughn is the new executive director of ECEP, helping ensure youth succeed in school, a career and our community.

Jeff Danna and Molly Moser joined the Foundation as communications manager and communications coordinator, respectively. Danna and Moser use written and visual storytelling, social media and marketing tactics to generate awareness of the Foundation’s work and drive engagement among donors, nonprofits and community members.

Lovisa Hogstrom and Andrew Kirkland also joined as AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers. Hogstrom is supporting communications and donor relations, while Kirkland is helping with research to support Grade-Level Reading in local communities.

The group gathers throughout the year to participate in educational programming, review applications and award grants. Over the last 12 years, it has granted $98,000 to over 40 projects.

Supporters participate in a variety of ways. “Some people can attend most events; others support the endowment and are not able to attend events. Both are impacting the needs in our community,” says Faye Finnegan, who serves as director of donor relations for the Community Foundation and works with Women’s Giving Circle on the Foundation’s behalf.

Positions on various committees allow deeper involvement with the group’s mission to share the joy of giving, build the ethic of living generously for future generations, and meet community needs as a group.

For more information, visit dbqfoundation.org/wgc or contact Faye Finnegan at faye@dbqfoundation.org or 563.588.2700.

NEW STAFF MEMBERS JOIN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Community Foundation recently welcomed new staff members as part of Local College Access Network (LCAN), Every Child Every Promise and Campaign for Grade-Level Reading initiatives as well as communications and philanthropy efforts.
The Community Foundation and its rural affiliates recently hosted Betsey Russell and Kim Moore, consultants tasked with creating case studies on rural philanthropy for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. “Our goal is to capture the stories of what’s going on in rural places with local or regional funders and tell those stories in a way that makes a national or regional funder recognize the value there,” the consultants said.

Russell and Moore visited state and regional health funders in Washington State, New Hampshire and Maine before traveling to Iowa and New Mexico. Because of its unique approach to rural philanthropy and affiliate support, the Community Foundation is the only organization of its kind included in the study.

Russell noted the importance of recognizing local leadership and the effectiveness of rural philanthropy in places with formal connectors like the Community Foundation. “What I would say we haven’t seen other places is this foundation’s commitment to having foundation boots on the ground in these communities,” she said.

Russell and Moore were curious about the support the Community Foundation provides to its rural affiliates and the value of this relationship. Affiliate representatives were quick to note the benefits.

LincolnWay Community Foundation affiliated with the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque after establishing its own community stewardship in Clinton County. “As the foundation grew, the requirements for more record-keeping sophistication became apparent,” said Al Tubbs, philanthropist and chief executive officer at Ohnward Bank. “A community foundation has to be accredited and follow standards to give Endow Iowa tax credits.”

Andy Reimer, financial advisor and Clayton County Foundation for the Future board member, identified another benefit: access to a communications staff. “The big thing is the nice-colored literature that has everything laid out so I can show people, ‘This is where your money is; this is who’s watching it,’” he said.

Jane Hasek of Harpers Ferry, who is one of three Community Foundation board members representing the rural affiliates, told Moore and Russell, “You need the voice of the affiliates, and you need the people in the community to be doing the planning.”

At the conclusion of their visit, Russell and Moore left with a better sense of how the Community Foundation supports its rural affiliates and how the affiliate representatives can tap into their communities’ generous spirits.

“You’ve cultivated this really strong sense of giving, which is also one of the characteristics of rural areas that really stands out,” Russell said. “I think the next step is to think, okay, so we are great fundraisers. Now how do we become strategic grant-makers, and then, how do we become transformative grant-makers?”

Campbell University will publish the case studies in early 2019.
Governor taps foundation staff member for task force

Jason Neises, community development coordinator for the Community Foundation

Jason Neises has his finger on the pulse of rural communities in eastern Iowa.

As coordinator of the Community Heart & Soul® engagement process, he works hand-in-hand with residents of Dubuque-area communities to shape the future of their towns.

Now, Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds’s office has taken notice of Neises’ work, naming him to the Growing Rural Iowa Task Force, part of the new Empowering Rural Iowa initiative.

“I’m honored to be chosen to participate in the governor’s task force,” says Neises. “While Iowa has several urban hubs, it is largely a rural state. The small towns throughout our rural areas must be part of any strategy to strengthen communities and provide opportunities for people to prosper.”

Announced in July, Empowering Rural Iowa brings together leaders from across the state to identify legislative, regulatory and policy changes that would strengthen rural communities.

Neises will work with leaders from the nonprofit, government, education, civic and business sectors to tackle issues of rural vitality, quality of life and empowering local leadership.

As the Community Foundation’s community development coordinator, Neises helps empower residents of rural areas identify their towns’ best attributes and use them as the basis of future decision-making.

The Heart & Soul process was established by the Vermont-based Orton Family Foundation and has been used in 65 towns across 14 states to strengthen communities. Neises and the Community Foundation have led the Heart & Soul process in Monticello, Bellevue, Madison County, and Cascade, and aided a project in Mercer County, Ill.

Learn more at dbqfoundation.org/heartandsoul.