

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

IMPACTING LIVES

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Serving communities within
Lapeer, St. Clair, Oakland and
Macomb counties.

ST. CLAIR

LAPEER

Four County
Community Foundation

Helping Our Community Grow

OAKLAND

MACOMB



NEWSLETTER

Four County Community Foundation Celebrates 35 Years!

From an initial endowment of \$2.5 million, from the sale of the Community Hospital by its board of directors in the late 1980's, to 35 years later, Four County Community Foundation has been able to award more than \$10.4 million in scholarships and grants for community projects through more than 144 funds in the four counties it serves. The foundation creates endowments, which are prudently invested, and the funds use the endowments' income to meet their missions. According to several past and present board members, the foundation, which "is a testimony to the quality of all the succeeding Boards," has grown as a result of "good leadership and careful investing" and has continually been able to meet their mission of "connecting local donors to local causes."

Carrying on a tradition of community members banding together to help each other, "one of the best things about the foundation is that it allows people to have a local and lasting impact with their charitable dollars."

Throughout the foundation's 35 years of serving the surrounding communities, it's mission can be summed up in three words, "For good. Forever."

"The new face of community foundations is all about leadership, not about waiting, but seeking out problems and solving them and seeking out partners to help."

—Kathy Dickens, Executive Director
Four County Community Foundation



Four County Community Foundation's 2022 Scholarships Make a Huge Impact!

The scholarship total awarded by Four County Community Foundation for 2022 was the largest amount awarded in their 35 year history. Out of the over 600 applications from students in the communities of Almont, Armada, Capac, Dryden, Imlay City, Memphis, Richmond, Romeo and Utica, scholarships were awarded to a total of 128 students. Several of these students received more than one bringing the grand total to 179 scholarships totaling \$334,800.

2022 Scholarships breakdown:

179 awards went to **128** students

Almont: \$41,000

Armada: \$26,500

Capac: \$68,250

Dryden: \$11,000

Imlay City: \$77,000

Romeo: \$84,800

All other: \$24,500

Students can apply for 2023 scholarships December 1, 2022 through March 1, 2023 by visiting: 4ccf.org/scholarships

Anyone wishing to create a scholarship fund through the foundation should call Kathy Dickens at 810-798-0909.

The Communities We Serve

Four County Community Foundation doesn't simply wait to hear of issues facing the residents and communities of the four counties it serves—Lapeer, St. Clair, Oakland and Macomb. It seeks out problem areas and then works to provide the resources necessary to solve these issues. 4CCF is currently engaged in mental health, affordable housing, public transportation in Lapeer County, and community

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2022 GRANT AWARDS

Four County Community Foundation funded projects addressing food security, education, health, community safety, mental health, child advocacy, reading, and the arts. Below are just a few examples of how the grants have benefited the local population. To date in 2022, the Foundation has awarded 35 grants totaling \$149,000.

Oxford Township Fire Department: Safety Begins at Home

Oxford Township received \$10,000 in grant funding for the Oxford Fire Department's "Safety Begins at Home" program to help purchase smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. These alarms will be installed, free-of-charge, for low-income individuals, senior citizens and those with physical or developmental disabilities.

Foundation Directory Online at Oxford Public Library

The lion's share of a \$5,000 grant was awarded to the Oxford Public Library which is now one of only seven libraries in Michigan with a

subscription to Foundation Directory Online (FDO), a service that gives non-profit groups access to nearly 250,000 grant-making foundations and agencies. Any non-profit within Four County Community Foundation's service area is able to come to the library and use this directory. The database is fairly simple to navigate. For more information on FDO contact Bryan Cloutier, Director and CEO of Oxford Library at 248-628-3034 or Kathy Dickens, 4CCF Executive Director at 810-798-0909. Kathy also plans to present grant writing workshops at Oxford Public library in the future. Anyone interested, please call Four County Community Foundation and leave their contact information.

Health and Wellness

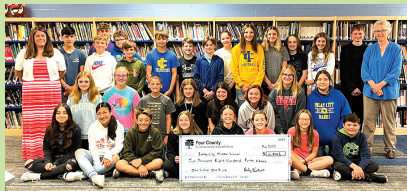
4CCF supported a number of wellness projects including:

- Senior Bingo-cize, Healthy MI Badge Camp, Teen Mental Health First-Aid Training and the ADA's Camp Midicha in Michigan where area youth with diabetes receive health education as well as enjoy summer camp activities.
- Susie Q's Kids received funds from the foundation's Healthy Senior-Healthy Youth Fund (HSYH) and Healthy Futures Fund which will assist them in providing comfort bags to children and teens in foster care, shelters and hospitals, and those grieving.

Education-based Awards

Nearly \$30,000 was awarded to local school districts for school and classroom projects. Some of these awards were given through a brand new grant called the 2021-2022 Grant Tank, modeled after the television show titled Shark Tank. Awards are

- Capac FFA received one of three YAC Grant Tank awards which will allow them to purchase their own livestock trailer to transport animals.
- The second YAC Grant Tank award was given to Imlay City High School. These funds will allow the launch of an after-school Music Club helping students learn songwriting, practice and performance and instrument repair.



Kathy Dickens (back row, far right) was on hand to present a 21st Century Education grant to Imlay City Middle School for a school-wide reading event that encompassed students, families and staff.

- Imlay City Middle School received a 21st Century Education grant for "One Book, One School," a school-wide reading event where students, families, and school staff all read the same book!

- Hamilton-Parsons Elementary in Romeo also received funds, for classroom library support, through the 21st Century Education fund.

- Weston Elementary will have access to STEM-based materials to use in the classroom thanks to funds from the third YAC Grant Tank award.

First graders pose with the newly purchased STEM-based kits made possible through grant funding from 4CCF.



determined by the 4CCF W.K. Kellogg-Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) and the teachers are encouraged to include the students in the grant process from start to finish, including creating a video to be submitted along with the written application.



A book vending machine unveiling was held last month at Capac Elementary. The machine was purchased with financial support from 4CCF.

- Capac Elementary students can now access books with the push of a button, a vending machine button, that will dispense the book of their choice. Financial support was provided by the Foundation to help purchase the book vending machine and 4CCF Executive Director Kathy Dickens was on hand for the ribbon cutting ceremony.

- Almont Middle School geography teacher, Lori Arnissi's students reached out to 4CCF for the funds to pay for new, up-to-date globes and maps of various kinds. To meet the application criteria, the students created short, comical videos where they played the parts of the teacher and students to demonstrate the need for updated materials.



Almont sixth graders pose with the globes awarded the middle school by Four County Community Foundation.

- The Discovery Center of Macomb and Armada Area Schools received grant funding through the Four County Community Fund and Shelby Community Fund.
- A donation was given, by 4CCF, to the Dryden High School Class of 2022 to help fund the cost of the Senior All Night Party.

4CCF FUND HIGHLIGHTS

Feeding Families Forever

A Feeding Families Forever Award of \$10,000 went to St. Mary Mystical Rose to assist with enlarging their food pantry space to better serve the expanding needs in the Armada area. The Stone Soup Food Pantry in Lapeer also received funding to expand and improve efficiency.



To be able to see the display in the grandeur of the Lighthouse Arthouse in Detroit made the experience that much more special for Almont High School students and staff.

Students Get Immersed in Van Gogh

Almont High School was recently able to take 50 students and staff members to the Immersive Van Gogh exhibit through grant funding from Four County Community Foundation. This funding, initiated through 4CCF's Youth Advisory Council, afforded the students a chance to gain a greater appreciation and love for the arts. In order to win the grant money, those applying were asked to identify a problem or need and then propose a solution, budget and short video pitch for their idea. "I hope this experience serves to inspire, build creativity and allows students to dream and think big," said Lisa Wright, Almont High School art teacher.



The Imagination Library gives over one million books each month to children around the world.

Raising Funds for Imagination Library

Staff and students from Borland Elementary in Imlay City joined forces with 4CCF recently to help raise funds for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, a program that spans five countries and gives over one million books each month to children around the world. For one week, students collected extra change to cast

their vote for the staff member they wanted to see compete in an Egg Roulette competition. By the end of the week, they had raised \$550. Needless to say, every staff member who earned the "privilege" to compete, ended up with egg in their hair.

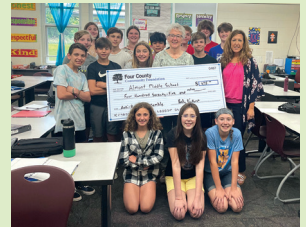
New Mental Health Fund Established

4CCF established a Mental Health Fund to assist local organizations in dealing with the recent rise in mental health concerns brought on by the pandemic. Any non-profit organizations whose programs impact mental health should consider applying for funding by calling Kathy Dickens at 810-798-0909.

No Bullies Allowed

Almont Middle School received a portion of these funds for an anti-bullying assembly.

4CCF Executive Director, Kathy Dickens (standing center), was on hand to present the check to Almont Middle School.



Students and staff at Imlay City High School took in a presentation by Anthony Grupido, a Detroit-based magician and keynote speaker, titled "The Magic of Hope."

Students and staff at Imlay City High School took in a presentation by Anthony Grupido, a Detroit-based magician and keynote speaker, titled "The Magic of Hope." personal journey with anxiety and depression, gave the students tools and coping strategies to help with any struggles they may be having due to the pandemic and other traumatic events of the past year and a half.

Mental Health and Magic

A mental health assembly for Imlay City middle and high school students was made possible with grant funds from 4CCF. The assembly, which combined the use of magic and the presenter, Anthony Grupido's, own

personal journey with anxiety and depression, gave the students tools and coping strategies to help with any struggles they may be having due to the pandemic and other traumatic events of the past year and a half.

Child Advocacy Center of Lapeer

4CCF awarded \$25,000 to the new Child Advocacy Center (CAC) of Lapeer to help build a facility better equipped to assist the CAC in coordinating the investigation and prosecution of the most severe cases of child abuse in Lapeer county and also providing care and treatment to the affected children and families.



An artist's rendering shows what the exterior of the new Child Advocacy Center (CAC) of Lapeer County building will look like when finished.

Seven Ponds Nature Center says, "THANK YOU, 4CCF!"

Seven Ponds "feels so lucky" to have the support of Four County Community Foundation. Once again, they are able to help reach students in Almont, Armada, Capac, Dryden, Imlay City, Oxford, Richmond, and Romeo schools. Students can come to them for a field trip at the nature center, or the center can go to them and teach at their schools.



Kathy Dickens (pictured at left) presents a check to Carrie Spencer, Seven Ponds Director of Environmental Education.

4CCF PROJECTS

Along with grant funding initiatives that enhance communities and the lives of those that live within them, Four County Community Foundation is involved in several new and ongoing projects.

4CCF Addressing Community Need for Senior Public Transportation in Lapeer County

Formation of the Lapeer County Transportation Coalition

Always seeking to fulfill community needs in innovative ways, 4CCF applied for and was awarded a grant from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund to improve health outcomes of the senior citizens in Lapeer County, specifically the eastern rural portion. A general community survey conducted by 4CCF in 2019 identified several areas of need, one of which was public transportation. This brought about the formation of the Lapeer County Transportation Coalition which is working together to *"Enhance quality of life in Lapeer County through accessible, safe and reliable and sustainable transportation."* The coalition is

comprised of Community Stakeholders with broad professional backgrounds in healthcare, local governments, senior services, emergency services, transportation and other expertise. The coalition's purpose is to create a plan with diverse transportation options that meet the needs in the under served areas of Lapeer County. As part of this endeavor, the coalition partnered with the Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority (GLTA) and contracted with consultants from RLS & Associates, Inc. and Easter Seals Project Action Consulting to conduct a transportation needs assessment that would assist community leaders with identifying the transportation issues that are barriers to healthy outcomes for seniors. Through cooperation with the GLTA and National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM), which has successfully worked with three separate transportation coalitions around the U.S., RLS was able to conduct peer research that explored ways other rural communities have succeeded in coalition-building and launching innovative transportation services and pinpoint specific areas of need within Lapeer County. The informational report put together by RLS will inform efforts to plan and fund a pilot transportation project that will guide future initiatives to expand public transportation service to these unserved areas. If you would

Senior Trans continued on back page

College Internships

Connecting Local Student Talent with Local Businesses Through the 4CCF "Return to Earn" Internship Program

One of 4CCF's ongoing initiatives is to not stop after providing college scholarships to area high school seniors. Taking this one step further, the foundation is partnering with local governments, businesses and non-profits to assist these students with paid internship positions with local businesses and government agencies in their chosen fields. Students are paid no less than \$4,000 for the summer with funding from 4CCF, the employer and some from Ann Arbor STEM Forward. Below is a list of this summer's interns, their high schools, chosen fields and employers.

STUDENT	HIGH SCHOOL	FIELD OF STUDY	COMPANY INTERNING
Lindsay Albrecht	Dryden/Almont	Mechanical Engineering	Village of Almont
Adriana Annoni	Armada	BioChemistry	Village of Armada Wastewater
Justin Apley	Romeo	Business	Pond Guy
Nick Fringer	Romeo	Mechanical Engineering	Synergy
Josh Hellebuyck	Almont	Business Administration	Village of Almont
Samuel Lovell	Romeo	Government/Pre-Law	Lapeer County Clerk
Aleda Miller	Romeo/Armada	Environment Science/Sustainability	Indigo Farms
Jacqueline Perry	Imlay City	Biochemistry	Romeo Wastewater
Madison Ross	Imlay City	Animal Science	Pond Guy
Madison Roush	Armada	Communications	Romeo DDA

If you wish to find out more about this 4CCF project, about Ann Arbor STEM Forward or if you are interested in donating or hiring interns for the 2023 summer session, contact Kathy Dickens at 586-798-0909 or by email at kdickens@4ccf.org.

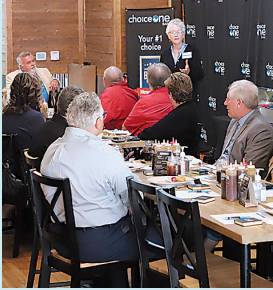
Romeo's Inaugural Vintage Fest Brainchild of 4CCF Intern

Madison Roush, a 4CCF 2022 intern hired by the Romeo DDA, conceived and facilitated the first ever Romeo Vintage Fest. The event, which took place on Saturday, July 9th, featured a classic car and camper show, antiques auction, kids activities, food trucks and vendors, a beer and wine tent, pie eating contest, costume contest and Main Street dance party!



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Getting out into the community is a key factor in spreading the word about Four County Community Foundation, its purpose, and how people can benefit from its programs, funds, scholarships and group activities.



Kathy Dickens, executive director of 4CCF, was the guest speaker at the MAY-king a Difference program in Lapeer.

MAY-king A Difference

Executive Director, Kathy Dickens is passionate about the communities the foundation represents and is happy to offer her free services as a speaker at local meetings and events. This past May, Kathy was a guest speaker at the ChoiceOne Banks MAY-king a Difference program presentation at Woodchips BBQ in downtown Lapeer. ChoiceOne Bank employees, who raised the money

through a voluntary payroll deduction program, presented \$1,000 checks to 15 nonprofit organizations of their choice in Lapeer County. 4CCF was one of the recipients and Kathy spoke of the importance of local nonprofit organizations that are able to quickly address the needs of a community. If your group is in need of a speaker for an upcoming event, contact Kathy Dickens at 586-798-0909 or by email at kdickens@4ccf.org.

Celebrating Local Grads

May was a busy month as the foundation also hosted a luncheon at The Bells Event Center, May 22, in Almont to celebrate the accomplishments of the communities graduating seniors, award scholarships and wish them well on their next adventure. Two hundred people from area communities attended the announcement of 179 scholarships which totaled \$334,800, the largest total in 4CCF's history.



Students from Almont, Armada, Capac, Dryden, Imlay City, Oxford, Richmond, Romeo and Utica were invited to the Four County Community Foundation luncheon.

"Tee It Up for Mental Health" raised \$8,000!

This past June, the 4CCF hosted the Tee It Up for Mental Health golf outing at Cherry Creek Golf Club in Shelby Township. Many thanks go out to our Title Sponsor—Verlinde Insurance, Trophy Sponsor—Tri-County Bank of Romeo and all the individuals and local businesses that donated items for the Golf Auction. Proceeds from this event benefit the foundation's Mental Health Fund—For a Better Tomorrow which will provide grants to local non-profit organizations that offer mental health services. This fund was established recently to let schools and non-profits know that mental health is a priority of 4CCF. Statistics from Mental Health America's 2022 report shows that in 2019, just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 19.86% of adults experienced a mental illness, the equivalent of nearly 50 million Americans. The report also notes a growing percentage of youth in the U.S., 15.08%, have also experienced a major depressive episode in the past year, a 1.24% increase over the prior year.



YAC alumna Tiffany Ellis shows off a copy of the first Needs Assessment, produced while she was a YAC member at Capac High School in 1999.

Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) Reunion

In February, the foundation held the first ever reunion of the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC). More than 30 past and current members got together at Blake's Backyard in Almont to reconnect and offer up ideas for future projects. Over the past 33 years, YAC members, made up of local area students in grades 6-12, have awarded 746 grants totaling \$643,172 for projects benefiting their communities. The group now comprises eight area school districts. Attending members spoke of the positive benefits being a part of YAC has had on their lives. Tiffany R. Ellis, an associate attorney with the Detroit law firm of Weitz & Luxenberg who joined the group as a seventh grader in Capac, said that her time in YAC gave her a foundation of connectivity, collaboration and community that remains an integral part of her life today. To learn more about YAC, call Kathy Dickens at 810-798-0909 or visit www.4ccf.org.

Oxford Legacy and YAC Students Partner Together to Make Blankets for Robb Elementary

Having been through the tragic Oxford School Tragedy, a few Oxford HS students initiated an effort to make and send blankets to students at Robb Elementary. The students, who are part of "Oxford Legacy" partnered with 4CCF YAC students on July 17 to complete several blankets.

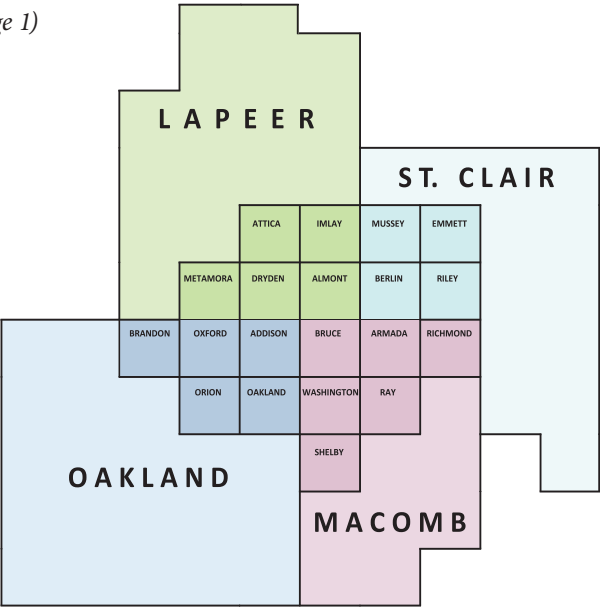


Golfers enjoyed a beautiful day on the links and helped raise money for the 4CCF "Tee It Up for Mental Health" initiative which will provide grants to local non-profits that offer mental health services.

Communities (cont. from page 1)

economic growth. Through these efforts, 4CCF grants have supported education initiatives and community improvements in the local area. Communities in the four counties currently being served are:

- Lapeer County**—Almont, Attica, Dryden, Imlay and Metamora
- St. Clair County**—Berlin, Emmett, Mussey and Riley
- Oakland County**—Addison, Brandon, Oakland, Orion and Oxford
- Macomb County**—Armada, Bruce, Ray, Richmond, Shelby and Washington



4CCF Addressing Affordable Housing in Partnership with MSHDA
Building Michigan Together Plan

Another new enterprise, part of the *Building Michigan Together Plan*, has come about with a grant from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority’s (MSHDA) MOD program. The foundation received \$200,000 in a repayable loan to create a modular build/modified technology home. These homes are built efficiently in sections in a climate-controlled home building facility, then transported to the home site. Modular housing typically offers a 30 to 50 percent shorter construction schedule, is less impacted by weather delays and the difficulty of finding skilled laborers, reduces the build timeline and allows for a more affordable home that families can move into immediately. It is hoped that these grants, seven in all across the state, will increase the incentive for the construction of affordable housing, empowering workers and have a positive effect on local economies.

COMMUNITY EVENTS (cont. from page 5)

Brave Rocks

One of the YAC members service projects was to paint rocks with compassionate and supportive messages on them. These rocks were then placed at the Lapeer Children’s Advocacy Center so youth who have undergone some type of traumatic event can choose one or more to keep for themselves.



YAC members paint rocks with supportive & compassionate messages for the Lapeer Children’s Advocacy Center.

Senior Trans (cont. from page 4)
like to assist with or learn more about this project, call Kathy Dickens at 810-798-0909.