

WHAT'S YOUR WHY?

A newsletter from Four County Community Foundation

FALL 2024



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YAC in action

Take a look at everything Four County Community Foundation's **Youth Advisory Committee** (YAC) has been doing and you'll believe the future of local philanthropy is bright. This group of junior high and high school students from our service area have set their sights on doing community good both through grant making and community service projects.

In the **fall** of 2023, YAC members fundraised and purchased gifts and household items for a family in need and two children. They were honored to partner with 4CCF's Women's Fund who generously offered to purchase items for the mother of the family.

In **February** of this year, YAC members partnered with the Richmond Rotary Club to make Valentine's Day cards for residents of local assisted living facilities. *(Top right)*

In **March**, the group attended a production of The Little Mermaid at Imlay City Schools Performing Arts Center where they were able to see theater students utilize 4CCF grant-funded items including tap shoes and blacklights.

In **May**, YAC welcomed guests from the Community Foundation of St. Clair County to join them in packing Comfort Bags for Susie Q's Kids, Inc. The Comfort Bags were then distributed to children with family members in hospice care. *(Photo below)*

This summer, group members took part in various fundraising efforts with an eye toward helping another family in the 2024 holiday season and three of our incoming officers—Cooper Schapman, Wren Dennis and Emmerson Sullivan—attended the Council of Michigan Foundation's Youth Leadership Conference at Central Michigan University. *(Top left)*

The Youth Advisory Committee is always open to new members from Almont, Capac, Dryden, Imlay City, Romeo, Oxford and Richmond. For more information, visit <https://www.4ccf.org/yac/> or reach out to YAC advisor Maria Brown at mbrown@4ccf.org.



New scholarship season ready to launch!

The 2024-25 scholarship season is nearly ready to start! On December 1, Four County Community Foundation's scholarship portal will open and start accepting applications from high school seniors and recent graduates.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we are able to offer a wide range of scholarship opportunities whether a student is considering community college, trade school or a university to continue their studies. Many scholarships are renewable or open for past awardees to re-apply.

New this year, the Koerner Family Foundation scholarship has expanded their reach beyond Romeo and Almont to include Dryden students as eligible applicants.

Last year, 4CCF awarded more than **\$600,000** in scholarship funds and we look forward to another exciting awards season.

Please encourage any members of the class of 2025 and recent high school grads to visit <https://www.4ccf.org/scholarships/apply/> starting December 1.



Fiesta marks second successful year

In September, Four County Community Foundation hosted our second annual **Hispanic Heritage Fiesta** at the Eastern Michigan State Fairgrounds in Imlay City.

Under sunny skies, guests enjoyed live music and dance performances, a youth soccer clinic, inflatables, vendor shopping and food trucks. The event, designed to celebrate and recognize the contributions of the Hispanic population within our service area, was made possible by our generous sponsors and a group of volunteers who comprise our Hispanic Coalition.

Their dedication to organizing and promoting the Fiesta was much appreciated!



Want a copy of our 2024 Annual Report? Please reach out to us at mbrown@4ccf.org or (810) 798-0909 and we'll be happy to put a copy in the mail to you. A copy of the Annual Report will also be available on our website at <https://www.4ccf.org/about/>.

4CCF welcomes board fellows

Earlier this year, Four County Community Foundation was pleased to welcome aboard two board fellows, Ross McQuate (left) and Alex Ricketts (right), through the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business. Both Ross and Alex are pursuing a Master of Business Administration degree through U of M and, as a fellows, will attend meetings and contribute their insights on non-profit operations, including development.



Interns, hosts reflect on summer of learning

For the past three summers, Four County Community Foundation (4CCF) has paired area college students with local businesses as part of their Return to Earn internship program. This year, 4CCF also facilitated the connection of grant writing interns with local municipalities.

We asked our 2024 summer interns and their hosts to reflect on what they've gained through this program.

Return to Earn interns Lola Boyer and Larissa Hollingsworth spent their summer with the Oxford Downtown Development Authority and got a history lesson to go with it. In addition to coordinating and promoting special events and tackling website updates, Lola and Larissa took a step back in time and, in a collaboration with the Northeast Oakland Historical Museum, created historical signage that now graces several downtown buildings.

Both say their horizons have expanded as a result of the internship.

"This internship with Oxford DDA has opened my eyes to an entirely different career path that I never would have known I had interest in. I studied Marketing and Business Management at Grand Valley State University, but because of this internship, I have gained a new interest in government," Larissa said.

Lola is grateful she gained experience in marketing—her major in college—along with other fields. "Although I am still not exactly sure what I want to do in the long term, I am now open to working in different fields," she said.

Russ Bahri, General Manager of the Jack Frost Auto Museum in Washington Twp., said their business has greatly benefitted from adding Lindsey Stone to their payroll through the Return to Earn internship program. They've gained another team member who's passionate about collector vehicles and could develop a future career with the company. In addition to being a museum, Jack Frost offers full service restoration and storage facility services.



Return to Earn intern Lindsey Stone was able to work on a variety of restoration projects at the Jack Frost Auto Museum this summer.



This year's annual **Golf Outing** brought Four County Community Foundation to Oxford's Boulder Pointe Golf Club where funds were raised for three funds with local significance—the **Hana St. Juliana Memorial Fund, For the Love of Nature...The Forever Justin Shilling Foundation and Oxford Permanent Memorial Fund**. Proceeds totaled nearly \$13,000 and will boost continued efforts to remember the victims of the Oxford High School tragedy in 2021.

"The difficulty for students and younger people is that not too many people give them a chance or opportunity to learn a trade because they have a business to run," Russ notes. Since Jack Frost Auto Museum receives a stipend from Four County Community Foundation and the RPM Foundation—an organization that supports restoration and preservation training programs for the next generation of automotive, motorcycle and marine craftsmen—it makes it easier for the local business to cover the cost of instruction time that Lindsey receives from their staff.

"I would encourage any business to participate in a program like Return to Earn. If they can connect with a student who has the same mindset as Lindsey, it would definitely benefit their business," Russ added.

In December 2023, Four County Community Foundation received a Rural Readiness grant from the Michigan Office of Rural Prosperity to hire grant writing interns for local municipalities. 4CCF was able to place grant writers with the city of Imlay City and the villages of Armada, Dryden and Romeo.

To read the full 2024 Return to Earn press release, visit <https://www.4ccf.org/news/>. For more information about 4CCF's internship opportunities, reach out to Executive Director Kathy Dickens at kdickens@4ccf.org or call (810) 444-8852.



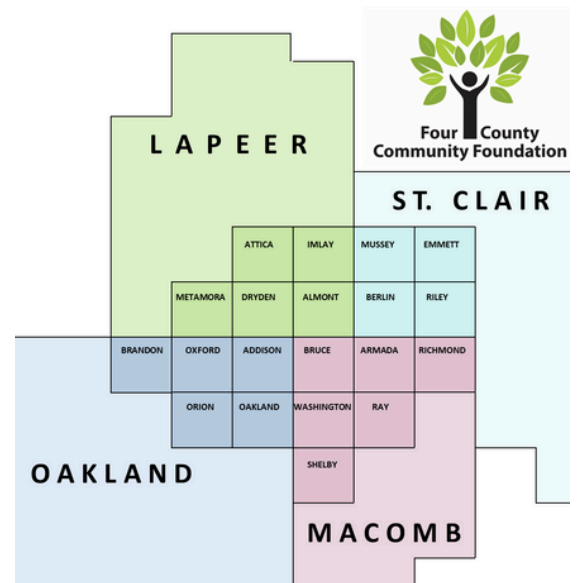
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Four ways you can support 4CCF's work in the community

- 1** **Make a donation!** Giving to 4CCF is tax deductible and can be made as a one-time or recurring gift.
- 2** **Name 4CCF as a beneficiary in your will or trust.** Need help getting started on estate planning? Be sure to check out our no-cost FreeWill resources at <https://4ccf.mygiftlegacy.org/>
- 3** **Direct a Required Minimum Distribution** from a retirement account directly to 4CCF and forgo paying income taxes on the amount.
- 4** **Create a Donor Advised Fund** with 4CCF. Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) are a great tool for supporting causes important to you in a tax-smart way. To learn more about DAFs, reach out to Kathy Dickens at kdickens@4ccf.org.



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