



transforming RURAL

Accelerating Community-Based Philanthropy



Photo credit: Greenbrier Valley Community Foundation & Hope Village

Telling the Stories of Transformative Community Foundations in Action

Transformative Community Foundations in Action

West Virginia's community foundations have grown significantly in the last 20 years with transformative impact for rural and urban places. This is a growing base of permanent resources and support to create thriving West Virginia communities for our residents now and throughout the future.

Community-based philanthropy aka community foundations make a MIGHTY impact in small and big ways across our state. This collaborative leadership includes local community foundation board members, staff, donors, nonprofit partners, and volunteers working humbly every day.

It is important for the general public, business, government, and other leaders to know that community foundations are critical community infrastructure improving our state's economy, education system, human services, health, disaster response, and overall quality of life.



The following are some highlights of the extensive quality impact and MIGHTY work underway.



Economic Impact

West Virginia's community foundations are important partners in strengthening West Virginia's economy, such as: supporting downtown revitalization, entrepreneurship, workforce development and small business survival during the pandemic. A few examples of this work includes:

- The **Parkersburg Area Community Foundation & Regional Affiliates'** creation and management of their Civic Leaders Fellowship Program to strengthen the workforce by attracting young leaders to the region to live, work, & play (*nationally awarded program*)
- **Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation's** partnership with community development financial institution, Natural Capital Investment Fund, to lend funds to small and micro businesses in the Eastern Panhandle counties of: Berkeley, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, and Morgan.
- **The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation** funding the West Virginia Women Work's Step Up for Women Construction Pre-Apprenticeship Training Program

Civic Leaders Fellowship Program



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THE FUTURE
WITH HOPE**
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Education Impact

Improving the quality of education for West Virginia's students requires partners at all levels. West Virginia's community foundations are fortunate to support student success from early childhood to adulthood in both grantmaking and scholarships. A few highlights of this work includes:

- Statewide West Virginia's community foundations award more than **\$2.1 Million** annually in scholarships to traditional and adult students
- Since 1996, the **Beckley Area Foundation's** Students First Mini-Grants program provides special grant opportunities for local teachers supporting creative and innovative instructional programs impacting thousands of students in Raleigh County
- **Community Foundation for the Ohio Valley** in partnership with Southwestern Energy is bringing STEM-based learning to life by supporting students and teachers to explore and understand real world concepts.



Human Service Impact

A strong community, economy, education system, and future requires effective delivery and access to human services for our residents. Thanks to the leadership of local nonprofits in many counties this work continues on quietly yet robustly to ensure every West Virginian can succeed in life. Community foundations are humbled to support the work of dedicated charities and nonprofit agencies providing services in many ways such as:

- **Your Community Foundation of North Central West Virginia** and its component fund the Women's Giving Circle of North Central West Virginia (WGC) awards grants to support women and girls such as: The Shack Neighborhood House, Libera, Inc, Pantry Plus More
- **Tucker Community Foundation** coordinates annually "Run for It" 5K/2K each September in partnership with local charities raising historically \$250K or more each year that is awarded to dozens of human service charities serving citizens in the Potomac Highlands
- **Community Foundation of the Virginias** invest in programs benefiting all ages with grants to the: Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens, Children's Home Society of West Virginia, and others



Health Impact

A stronger West Virginia requires healthier residents, workforce, and access to critical health services. West Virginia's community foundations working in partnerships with local nonprofits, healthcare providers, businesses, and foundations are creating impact together in many ways. Here are a few examples of that work:

- **The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation's** support of Keep Your Faith Corporation's (KYFC) West Side Grown Extension Program: "KYFC saw that gardening opens paths to other good things, too, and explored that at Mary C. Snow (Elementary School)."
- **Hampshire and Hardy County Community Foundation affiliates** are two separate affiliates of the Eastern WV Community Foundation of which they annually support health programs for youth health and wellness, substance use prevention, and local food and nutrition programs in their respective counties.
- **Community Foundation for the Ohio Valley** works with numerous companies in the northern panhandle region to have the greatest impact for their corporate philanthropy case in point, CFOV works with XTO Energy to make grants to programs for seniors ensuring warm meals, physical and mental health activities, and social engagement.



Disaster Response Impact:

The Mountain State has experienced its share of major disasters over the past several years from five years ago with the tragic once in a thousand year floods impact central and southeastern West Virginia to the events since March 2020. Community foundations in partnership with United Ways, other foundations, businesses, and generous citizens have responded in tremendous ways. A few illustrations of this leadership work includes:

- **Greenbrier Valley Community Foundation** in partnership with the United Way of the Greenbrier Valley is doing tremendous work responding to major disasters. Whether it is the 2016 tragic floods coordinating months of flood response and recovery grantmaking such as coordinating entire neighborhood rebuilding efforts to emergency support grants. In 2020-2021, this expertise was put to use for pandemic response grantmaking: education access, safety and protective equipment for seniors, and providing basic needs assistance.
- When COVID hit Huntington, the **Foundation for the Tri-State Community** and the My Huntington Fund worked together to support local restaurant survival and healthcare workers. They raised funds to provide food to healthcare workers and keep restaurants in operation.
- **Community Trust Foundation** worked with and funded local food pantries to feed the children and families in Mineral County, West Virginia.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** *The majority of West Virginia's community foundations and united ways managed COVID Response/Relief Funds since March 2020. A future Philanthropy WV report will detail the impact of this work across all of Philanthropy WV's members serving West Virginia.*



Quality of Life Impact

By their nature, West Virginia's community foundations are focused on improving the quality of life for citizens and communities at the present day and for generations to come. Community foundations are investing in and working for programs, organizations, and strategies to improve the quality of life. Here are a few examples of that work in action:

- A coalition led by Huntington, WV Mayor Steve Williams in partnership with the **Foundation for the Tri-State Community**, the City of Huntington, businesses, nonprofits, and others secured the 2017 America's Best Communities. This collaborative achievement is focused on revitalization plans aka the Huntington Innovation Plan (HIP) to jump-start the local economy and enhance quality of life.
- **Hinton Area Foundation's** Making a Difference (MAD) Fund awards annually grants for numerous Summers County projects. For 2020, grants were funded to address dilapidated building removal, reclamation of open space to build a playground and community garden, and generators to ensure Camp Summers water supply works during power outages.
- **Nicholas County Community Foundation** is a growing community foundation providing critical funding for several organizations and programs in Nicholas County, WV. Recently, they worked with WV Nonprofit Association and Philanthropy WV to deliver grant writing, communication, and other trainings to strengthen the operations of Nicholas County nonprofit organizations.



NICHOLAS COUNTY
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



For more information about West Virginia's community foundations in action and transforming rural places, please contact Philanthropy WV at info@philanthropywv.org or 304.517.1450

