Life is full of opportunity. Leadership is about taking those opportunities. Legacy is what you leave when you do.

~Jamie Munson
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<td>Leaving a Legacy of Love</td>
<td>Blue Zones in Barry County</td>
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Dear Friends,

On October 20 & 21, 2021 the Barry Community Foundation board and staff spent significant time looking back over the 26 years of service provided to build a healthy community.

Starting with the dissolution of the Thornapple Foundation, the Barry Community Foundation was formed with a gift of $350,000. The first order of business was to apply to the Kellogg Foundation to be part of a statewide expansion of community foundations. In 24 months, we became eligible to receive a grant from the challenge for $1 million – and the Barry County Youth Advisory Council was born!

In just 26 years, the foundation grew over 154 times – and has accumulated assets of nearly $54,000,000. The more impressive and rewarding statistic is the $24,000,000 that has been reinvested into the community in grants and programs!

As we explored how to improve lives in Barry County, we examined our values, what we want BCF to always be known for. These are the values that were considered to be most important:

- Demonstrate integrity, transparency, honestly, ethical and impartial in all we do.
- Distribute fund fairly and equitably
- Collaborate and innovate with community partners, local organizations, and businesses to help residents address challenges and problems
- To create an inclusive and welcoming community

Following the look back over 26 years, we pivoted to look forward. We are excited to enact positive changes in our community through our work in the next few years. A big thank you to our board and staff for the extra time and brainpower to work through all of the ways that we will “Bridge resources to improve lives,” for good, for Barry County. Forever.

Diane Gaertner, Board Chair  
Diane K. Lewshon, President & CEO  
Bonnie Gettys,  

Bonnie Gettys,  CEO
“Carve your name on hearts, not tombstones. A legacy is etched into the minds of others and the stories they share about you.”
Shannon Alder
Bringing together people who want to make a difference in their community and allowing them to be philanthropists with a minimal commitment of time and money is the goal of the Next Generation Network (NGN). The NextGen Network is aimed towards people aged 18-50ish who lead busy lives, filled with jobs, families and other commitments who want to network and give back. The NextGen Network was founded in 2006 to provide charitable support to Barry County and involve new and returning donors!

Grant focus areas are chosen based on one of the Barry Community Foundation’s seven elements of a healthy community: neighborhoods, economy, basic needs, education, health, environment, or arts & culture. The members of NGN decide the area of focus and are involved in all parts of the process. Members can encouraging non-profit organizations to submit grant applications, review those applications, select recipients, and after completion of the project or program learn about the successes of the chosen nonprofit.

“Meeting in person only twice a year can make the granting process difficult; but it forces us to be savvy about how we use our time and technology,” said Program Coordinator Jillian Foster of the Barry Community Foundation. “This is a great way for members to come together and network with like-minded people, and make an impact in the community without a huge commitment of time and money.”

The NextGen Network will complete a spring service project decided on by members based on which pillar of focus the group decides. Partnering with local agencies and groups is important to NGN as we are able to learn about our community and its needs. If you’d like to find out more information about the NextGen Network please contact: Jillian Foster by phone 269-945-0526, or email Jillian@barrycf.org
**FEB 2022**

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- Valentine’s Day
- Presidents’ Day

“Legacy is not what I did for myself. It’s what I’m doing for the next generation.”

Vitor Belfort

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A Legacy of Literacy

Teaching a child to love reading is a legacy that lasts a lifetime and can be passed down the generations. Reading to babies, even those who are still too young to talk has been shown to help them learn sounds, words, and develop early language and literacy skills. Parents who start reading to their babies early are more likely to continue to do so as their children grow and learn to read themselves. Studies have shown that children who are read to are more excited to read and read more often. Frequent reading and improved literacy mean children perform better in school and are better prepared for post-secondary education and the workforce. Two funds that support childhood literacy are Imagination Library of Barry County and Mrs. Murphy’s Reading Cart.

Imagination Library of Barry County is a local affiliate of Dolly Parton’s global Imagination Library program. Imagination Library sends, via U.S. mail, free age-appropriate books to children each month from birth to age five. The program fills a need for children who otherwise might not have access to books in their homes or public libraries.

Since the program began in 2016, over 66,000 books have been delivered to area children and 1,250 graduates of the program have entered kindergarten with confidence. Imagination Library of Barry County is open to all children meeting the age and residency requirements of the program. With COVID-19 disrupting schools and public library services, this program has become even more crucial to local families, ensuring children continue to have access to much-needed reading materials.

“The best way to grasp the impact of Imagination Library is to witness the excitement of a young child discovering their book in the mailbox each month,” said Chelsey Foster, who worked to bring the program to Barry County. “They tear the plastic covering off immediately and read it, or find someone to read it to them.”

Mrs. Murphy’s Reading Cart puts age-appropriate books into the hands of students at Delton Kellogg Elementary School. The program started when the school’s literacy curriculum teacher Elizabeth Jane Murphy passed away suddenly. Rocked to its core, Murphy’s family created Mrs. Murphy’s Reading Cart as a way to honor her memory and continue her legacy of promoting literacy and the joy of reading. Six carts were built by her brother-in-law and painted with a fun theme by her sister. The lending libraries carts were stocked with Mrs. Murphy’s favorite books for kindergarten through fifth grades. A memorial fund was established with the Barry Community Foundation to replenish the books as necessary over the years. There are now additional carts, one for each classroom rather than one traveling cart per grade level.

Reading and literacy open a child’s mind to the world and all its infinite possibilities and enables them to be successful. Visit www.barrycf.org to learn more about these programs and how you can support a lasting legacy of literacy in Barry County.
A LEGACY OF CREATIVITY

Alice was thrilled, in her hands was a letter from a student who had written to tell her how much she enjoyed writing and what it meant to have her story selected as a winner in the Ken and Alice Jones Write Away Contest.

Ken and Alice Jones established a fund in 2003 to support the annual Write Away Contest in 2004 as a way to encourage students throughout Barry County to write creatively. Each year all students in all Barry County public, private, as well as homeschool students are invited to enter their creative writing—whether a poem, short story, essay, or feature story to the Foundation. Topics include the history or stories about life in Barry County. A panel of judges, with representatives from J-Ad Graphics, WBCH Radio, the Thornapple Arts Council, a Barry County library, and the Barry Community Foundation judge review entries based on criteria set by the fund. Students are critiqued on originality, clarity, writing style, effective and correct use of language, and proper punctuation and spelling. In May, three winners in each of the five categories are announced. While the monetary awards may be enticing the impact of winning such a contest can have a lifelong impact.

Although Ken passed away in 2015, Alice takes joy in knowing that she and Ken have created a legacy that continues to inspire young writers.
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“Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another.”

Gilbert K. Chesterton
OUTDOOR EDUCATION, EXERCISE, LITERACY:

PCCI STORY WALK IS A TRIPLE TREAT

Getting outdoors, going for a walk, and reading at the same time is easier than it seems with Pierce Cedar Creek Institute’s Story Walk. Funded by a $1,500 grant from the Barry Community Foundation’s Wilson H. Craig Jr. Fund, 20 permanent signs, in which story boards can be inserted, were installed along the Black Walnut Trail at the Institute.

The Story Walk was finished in June 2020, shortly after the pandemic closed schools, shuttered libraries, daycares, summer camps, and the Institute itself. The walk proved to be a boon for many families during the intervening months. Parents, caregivers, and grandparents could bring children to the trail where they could get outdoors and learn. The books are changed monthly and reflect current programming at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. PCCI staff select the books not only for the story but also to promote diversity and inclusivity. This means that children reading the stories can see and relate to someone who looks like them.

The benefits of the Story Walk are many, it can be used to improve science and overall literacy. Walking the trail to read the story incorporates the Blue Zones concept of integrating physical activity into people’s daily lives. Homeschool groups, Delton Public Library, and Hastings daycare centers all make use of the trail. The trail was also part of No Family Left Indoors and Barry Great Start Collaborative’s Stroll and Read program in 2020. Once schools are able to resume field trips Sara Syswerda, the Institute’s education director, will use the Story Walk particularly for preschool to second grades.
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“Please think about your legacy because you are writing it every day.”

Gary Vaynerchuk
Communities throughout Michigan are working hard to attract and retain businesses, but the lack of suitable housing options for our growing workforce makes that difficult. As housing resource coordinator for Barry County United Way, Angie Metzger was familiar with the issue. But it wasn’t until she married Brad Jousma that the lack of attainable housing became personal.

“Our housing search began in 2020 after we blended our family and became a household of seven. At that time, we were living in a two-bedroom house. Although the kids get along, it was not an ideal living situation," she said.

The couple applied for a traditional mortgage only to learn that they would have to put their plans for a new home on hold. Fast forward to early 2021, the Barry Community Foundation started taking applications from families interested in purchasing Barry County’s first modular home built with funds from a Michigan State Housing Authority (MSHDA) pilot program. Angie and Brad applied and were thrilled when they were approved to buy the home.

The couple’s happily ever after is the result of a 2019 partnership formed by the Barry Community Foundation, City of Hastings, Barry County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Alliance, and Tracy Baker of At Home Real Estate. Working together, they applied for and received one of MSHDA’s first $196,000 five-year repayable mod grants. The grant program promotes the construction of modular homes in communities that are facing a shortage of attainable family housing. Modular homes reduce timelines for the construction of single-family homes and provide practical housing for income-eligible homebuyers.

“As parents, we want nothing more than to ensure our children are taken care of and in a safe environment. The opportunity to purchase this home was a big relief for us, knowing the kids would have ample space to call their own,” said Metzger. “We now have space to eat our meals together, play games, watch movies, host family gatherings, or just be all together.”

The funds from the sale of the Hastings mod home will be reinvested in another home, this time in the Village of Nashville.

Investing in affordable housing across the county is a priority for the Barry Community Foundation and partners.
LEAVING A LEGACY OF LOVE
The Stephen and Sharon Jacobs Fund

Steve and Sharon Jacobs had a storybook marriage. He was the son of the newspaper publisher in Hastings and she was the daughter of a newspaper publisher in Freeport. They loved animals and traveling. While Steve and Sharon did not have children of their own, they enjoyed attending activities, sports, and spending time with their nieces and nephews. Steve loved rooting for the Detroit Tigers and had an amazing ability to remember stats and players. Both had a heart for animals, youth, and their community. This is evident through the legacy of the Stephen and Sharon Jacobs Fund, established in 2021.

Steve passed away in 2013 and the following year, with the help of her legal advisor, Dave Tripp, Sharon created a will.

Her priority was to make certain that the estate provided for the continued care of her beloved cats, left lasting gifts to St. Rose of Lima Catholic School, Hastings Kiwanis Club, and family members. She left the remainder of trust assets to the Barry Community Foundation. The assets were used to establish an endowment to fund scholarships for men and women in sports at Hastings High School, provide funds for the Barry County Commission on Aging and the Barry County Animal Shelter for spay and neuter programs, food, and blankets for animals throughout Barry County.

Anyone interested in leaving a legacy for causes, groups, and organizations they care about may call the Barry Community Foundation, 269-945-0526, for more information.
BLUE ZONES TAKING ACTION IN BARRY COUNTY

In September 2019, Barry County was the first community in Michigan to join Blue Zones in a movement to create healthy environments for people to work, live and play for generations to come! Our county is one of 53 locations in the United States working towards a similar goal.

Over fifty community members from Barry County serve on the steering, built environment, and food systems committees. Stemming from these three committees, action teams formed around community priorities such as a countywide trail plan, complete street plans, Safe Routes to School in the Maple Valley School District, exploring a community food center, a culinary medicine program through Spectrum Health Pennock, and developing a food policy council.

Creativity and flexibility have been key to engaging the community throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Partnering with community organizations, Blue Zones Activate has been able to distribute seed packets, farm to family food boxes, and host a hybrid walking challenge. Blue Zone mailboxes, website, social media, and a monthly newsletter with great articles, recipes, and tips are sent to over 1,000 subscribers!

Blue Zones has three phases. The first is Readiness Assessment, which brings Blue Zone experts to perform a structured exploration of the community and collaborate to build a plan for creating change for a healthier environment. With the first phase completed, the second, Blue Zones Activate Barry County has begun!

The second phase is Blue Zones Activate, a three-year initiative to create policies in the areas of food systems and built environment. The areas selected have the potential for the greatest lasting impact! During this phase, community leaders are learning and encouraged to make key policy changes leading to lasting transformations throughout the county. Built environments of streets, parks, and infrastructure are crucial to a healthy community.

Over the next year, Blue Zones Activate teams will work to implement the programs, policies, and projects identified by community leaders and stakeholders. Following Activate, the vision is to expand to a full Blue Zones Project, the third phase, which encompasses people, places, and policies to help build bridges and access for all throughout the community. This will help Barry County strengthen economic development, improve public health outcomes and create a healthy environment to work, live and play for our future.
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“What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others.”
Pericles

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The first class of KickStart to Career students is entering middle school this year and KickStart to Career is going too!

KickStart to Career began in 2016 with an endowment from the DeCamp Family Foundation. The Barry County Foundation collaborated with Highpoint Community Bank to set up post-secondary education savings accounts for every kindergartner in all Barry County school districts, including private and homeschool. Each student was given $50 seed money from this endowment.

The accounts grow as the students and their families contribute to the account. Students also receive savings incentives through the generous donation of the Richard and Merilyn Foster Trust held at the Foundation. Throughout their elementary school years, the students have opportunities to earn account incentives by participating in various activities, summer reading programs, exhibiting good behavior, and contests.

“"In middle school, we want the program to be more student-driven,"" said KickStart to Career Coordinator Amy Murphy (the KickStart Lady). ""We’re not exactly sure what it will look like—maybe an early scholarship program with a mini-application. For now, we’ll just say, ‘More information will be coming soon.’""
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“Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing.”
Benjamin Franklin
Wilson H. Craig Jr. was born in Lafayette, Colorado on September 4, 1918. At age 3, his family moved to Bedford, Michigan. He graduated from Battle Creek Central High School in 1937 and attended Central Michigan University.

Before his draft into service in 1941, he was employed by United Steel and Wire Company. Later, he was employed by Kingman Museum of Natural History where he developed school loan exhibits through a Works Progress Administration project grant. In 1976, he donated a collection of 34 astronomy reference books, sky charts and start catalogues to the museum.

Craig served active duty for 28 years in the US Air Force serving in World War II, Vietnam and the Korean wars. He was a weather observer, weather forecaster, radar technician, electronics officer and instructor in the Minute Man Missile System. He earned an associate’s degree while in the Air Force and retired after a career as a warrant officer.

It is easy to see why his passion was to spur innovation in the STEM field for students in Barry County. He created the Wilson H. Craig Jr. Foundation as a private foundation with his estate. In 2006, the advisors of the foundation felt that the Barry Community Foundation could honor Mr. Craig’s legacy and move his fund to the Foundation.

Each year the Barry Community Foundation awards $25,000 - $30,000 in grants from the Wilson H. Craig Jr. Memorial Fund. Grants are used to encourage improvements in K-12 science, mathematics, and astronomy education programs promoting creativity, critical thinking, and inventiveness. Area schools have received grant funds to set up labs, purchase 3D printers, robotics equipment, classroom books and materials, and plant butterfly gardens. Schools are not the only organizations that can apply for and receive grants from this fund. Pierce Cedar Creek Institute, public libraries, and after-school programs have all been recipients of the Wilson H. Craig Jr. Memorial Fund.
A single working mother trying to support her family while going to nursing school; a factory worker who wants to become a certified CNC operator, the high school graduate who decided to work a few years before going to college or trade school, these are just a few examples of what it means to be a non-traditional student.

The Barry Community Foundation has 25 scholarships available for non-traditional students. Some are specific, such as the Mom’s Scholarship in Memory of Virginia Hoover Harrison Root. This scholarship is open to students who are mothers residing in Barry County and have custody and daily care of their children under 18-years of age. “We are so pleased each year when we are able to award this scholarship to a deserving mother,” said Christine Schad-Hinklin, the scholarship fund holder. “My mother was such a wonderful woman who gave so much of herself not only to our family but to the students and community she served. She was a very hard working driven person. It is great to find those qualities in mothers today and helping them achieve their dreams would have made my mother proud.”

“We want non-traditional students to know that scholarship funds are not limited to books and tuition. If someone needs tools for their vocational training scholarship money can be used to cover those expenses,” said Annie Halle, Barry Community Foundation Vice President of Operations adding, “One of our biggest challenges is letting non-traditional students know that scholarships are available.”
LEAVING A LEGACY

“Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.” – Warren Buffett

As we move through life, we start to wonder what is my legacy? How will I be remembered?

For some the answer is easy. Their legacy is a career or giving time and talents for the betterment of their community. For others it is their families, being a positive influence for their children and grandchildren, who in turn will influence future generations.

But sometimes we ask, “Is it enough? What can I do to have an impact on generations to come?” As our loved ones pass away and we may ask, “How can I be sure they will be remembered? What can I do to honor their life?”

The Barry Community Foundation is here to help those who wish to donate funds or create an endowment in their own name or in memory of loved ones. We have many types of funds, such as the Ken & Alice Jones Write Away Contest (see April), the Steve & Sharon Jacobs Community Fund (see July), and Mrs. Murphy’s Reading Cart (see March). You may choose to remember family in an anonymous way, like the Love of Barry County Fund or honor long ago generations such as the S.C. Blood Family Fund, one of the first families to settle in Barry County.

By creating a fund, you can realize your philanthropic goals in a meaningful way during your lifetime—and beyond.
December 2022

Notes:

"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.”
Mahatma Gandhi
FINANCIALS

The Barry Community Foundation’s and Barry Community Enrichment Center’s financial statements are audited by Plante & Moran, PLLC. A full set of the audited financial statements will be available by contacting info@barrycf.org.

$14,995.63
Total Grants Awarded in Fiscal Year 2021

$48,800.00
Total Scholarships Awarded in Fiscal Year 2021

GEOGRAPHIC AFFILIATES
The Barry Community Foundation supports philanthropic growth through affiliate foundations in the neighboring Middleville and Delton communities by providing administrative support and investment services.

Each affiliate is represented by an advisory committee that reviews proposals and recommends grants. Detailed affiliate information is available upon request.

TAEF
Thornapple Area Enrichment Foundation

$2,466,897.00
Net assets as of 6/30/2021

$20,409.74
Total Grants Awarded in Fiscal Year 2021

$53,600.00
Total Scholarships Awarded in Fiscal Year 2021

DKEF
Delton Kellogg Education Foundation

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION
Barry Community Enrichment Center

Established in 2011, this building is owned and operated by the Barry Community Enrichment Center. It currently brings together 11 partner organizations for centralized access to assistance and support services.

$2,916,926.00
Net Assets as of 6/30/2021

SUPPORT PROGRAMMING
KickStart to Career

Established in 2015, KickStart to Career was created to inspire students to believe in their future. Each year, every Barry County kindergartner receives a deposit-only, long-term savings account at Highpoint Community Bank seeded with $50 for their future college and career expenses. Now in its sixth year, KickStart has developed incentive programs to inspire additional deposits.

$200,350
Account Seed Money to Date

4,007
Number of Accounts Open to Date
COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS
The 2021 fiscal year grant dollars from our community granting fund were awarded to the organizations shown below from 7/1/2020-6/30/2021.

TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS • $165,550.00
- Barry Community Foundation: $63,150.00
- Geographic Affiliates: $102,400.00

FOUNDATION ASSETS • $53,981,839.00
- Barry Community Enrichment Center: $2,916,926.00
- Barry Community Foundation: $42,536,083.00
- Thornapple Area Enrichment Foundation: $2,466,897.00
- Delton Kellogg Education Foundation: $4,470,716.00
- The Maple Valley Memorial Scholarship Foundation and Route 66 and The Valley Foundation: $1,591,217.00

INVESTMENT ALLOCATION as of 6/30/2021
Shown as percentage %

TOTAL GRANTS • $1,585,706.60
- Barry Community Foundation*: $689,168.30
- Community Grants: $41,698.00
- Healthy Youth Health Seniors: $2,200.00
- Barry Health Access: $12,127.00
- Geographic Affiliates: $35,365.37
- Youth Advisory Council: $30,115.14
- Donor Advised: $775,032.83
*Includes all other BCF granting funds
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

L to R: Marcia Szumowski, Bob Perino, Dave Coleman, Bonnie Gettys, Korin Ayres, and Fred Jacobs

L to R: Barb Case, Annie Halle, Tammy James, Debbie Jackson, Jillian Foster, and Jenny Haywood

L to R: Scott McKeown, Kim Norris, Amy Murphy, Diane Gaertner and Luke Froncheck
STAFF

BONNIE GETTYS  
President and CEO

ANNIE HALLE  
Vice President of Operations

AMY MURPHY  
Program Director

JILLIAN FOSTER  
Program Officer

LUKE FRONCHECK  
Program Assistant

TAMMY JAMES  
Office Manager
UNITED BY COMMON GOOD

Giving through the Barry Community Foundation isn’t just a mark of generosity, it’s a commitment to the greater good. Your gifts, whether they are of time, talent or treasure play a significant role in building the foundation for meaningful work in Barry County.

By uniting together, we can achieve outcomes beyond measure that will provide a positive impact for years to come.