GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Centennial Campaign

A NEW CENTURY OF SERVICE AND IMPACT

OUR 100

GRAND RAPIDS *community* FOUNDATION





DEAR PARTNERS AND FRIENDS,

Our community knows that Grand Rapids Community Foundation puts our weight behind change efforts that are truly poised to improve lives. As we embark on a new century of service and impact, we have an opportunity to steward our community's vision for a more equitable West Michigan.

In my decades of professional work, I have seen time and time again the powerful impact of collective action. When partners come together, focus on their shared values and give of their time, energy and resources, the results are always more dynamic and powerful than anyone originally imagined.

Throughout our community's history, the Community Foundation has successfully brought partners together to make a positive difference. During the Great Depression, we provided grants to social service agencies to support individuals and families. During World War II, we initiated a postgraduate scholarship program in partnership with area hospitals to address the local nursing shortage. With the arrival of COVID-19 in 2020, we partnered to create an emergency response fund to serve one of the most vulnerable populations in Kent County: undocumented and mixed status families. The Community Foundation was able to do these things in part because our community supported us, generously providing funds and expertise and articulating a strong vision for the future.

As we enter our next chapter, the staff team, Board of Trustees and I are focused on expanding the organization's scope and impact. By focusing on proven strategies and investing in new ways, the Community Foundation will lead our community in making more equitable pathways to success—for everyone. We also take seriously how we do this work. Our commitment to equity means that our work will be informed by those we support and serve, since the people closest to the pain are closest to the solutions.

Please join us in addressing the racial, social and economic inequities that persist in our community and creating a more prosperous and inclusive future. Your support will help us meet today's most pressing issues—and lay a strong foundation for the next 100 years.

With gratitude,



LaSandra A. Gaddy
President and CEO

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to build and manage our community's permanent endowment and lead the community to strengthen the lives of its people.

OUR NORTH STAR

For West Michigan to grow and prosper, we must make sure that **everyone** can apply their **talents and creativity** to fuel our **future**. It is only by **connecting across perspectives** and **overcoming inequities** that we can build and sustain an **inclusive economy and thriving community**.

FOR 100 YEARS

Grand Rapids Community Foundation has connected people, passion and resources. Working alongside our partners, we use the tools of philanthropy to support the work of nonprofits, make education more accessible and find solutions to our community's most pressing issues.

Our North Star is the direction of our current and future work as we look to overcome the racial, social and economic inequities that persist today and act as barriers to opportunity, prosperity and belonging.

OUR WORK AS THE COMMUNITY'S FOUNDATION

We are proud of our past successes and the infrastructure we have built, together with our communities, for creating positive change with community input.

We are proud of the infrastructure we have built, together with our communities, for creating positive change with community input. At the same time, we also recognize the need to do more. With reinvestment in the infrastructure we have built and with additional resources, we can reimagine our role in harnessing the power of our community to improve the lives of our citizens. Celebrating our centennial in 2022 has given us the opportunity to dig deeper into our aspiration:

TO CULTIVATE A COMMUNITY WHERE THERE ARE EQUITABLE PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS—FOR EVERYONE.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

While our region is widely praised as a great place to live, many people of color face staggering disparities in almost all aspects of everyday life, including housing, education, income, employment and health.

"We have housing problems, problems with just finding equitable employment...our schools suffer."
– Mercedes Barragan, Donor and Volunteer Partner

"There are deep racial tensions that exist in Grand Rapids and in West Michigan that aren't often talked about."
– Ricardo Benavidez, Volunteer Partner

"I think it would be really fantastic for us to all take on the personal responsibility of being more inclusive. The Community Foundation is becoming a bigger part of how I advance equity and create more equitable outcomes in Kent County."
– Denavvia Mojet, Volunteer Partner

"I'm hoping to break the barrier of institutional racism to give low-income residents the opportunity to live a middle-class lifestyle."
– Ronald Jimmerson, Nonprofit Partner

We all want to see our region prosper. But this is only possible if everyone has opportunities to contribute. Currently, individuals with valuable perspectives and talents are being excluded. If we do nothing, we will continue to lose the aspirations, ideas, expertise and perspectives that make for an inclusive economy and thriving community.


Marilyn Lankfer

Ronald Jimmerson


Denavvia Mojet




Ricardo Benavidez




Mercedes Barragan

CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

To fully realize the direction outlined in our North Star, we are launching our Centennial Campaign to grow investment in our current programs and initiatives as well as build the endowment to ensure there is perpetual support for our work in the future.

The key components within the Centennial Campaign include:

Immediate Non-Endowed Support for:

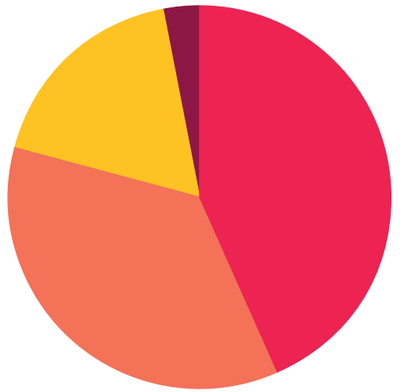
- Growing community-led philanthropy
- Investing in Community Foundation Operations
- Upholding our commitment to Challenge Scholars

Building the Endowment to:

- Enhance unrestricted grantmaking
- Ensure equitable education
- Support facility and technology improvements

The total investment being sought through the Centennial Campaign is $50 million, with $14 million designated for current programs and initiatives and capacity-building efforts, and $36 million designated for the endowment.

NON-ENDOWED



$6.1 MILLION
Community-led Philanthropy

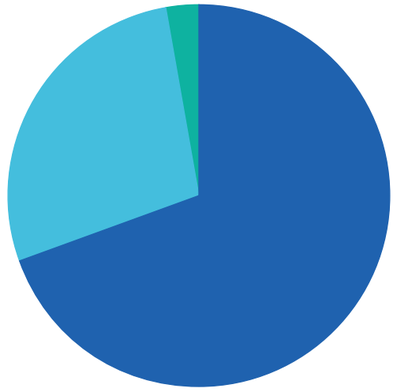
$5 MILLION
Challenge Scholars Scholarships

$2.5 MILLION
Organizational Operations

$400 THOUSAND
Fundraising Campaign Expenses

TOTAL NON-ENDOWED:
$14 MILLION

ENDOWED



$25 MILLION
Unrestricted Grantmaking

$10 MILLION
Equitable Education

$1 MILLION
Facility and Technology

TOTAL ENDOWED:
$36 MILLION

GROWING COMMUNITY-LED PHILANTHROPY

We believe that, equipped with resources, the community knows how best to solve its most complex problems. Our experience with community-led funds such as our Black Legacy Fund, Our LGBTQ Fund and Somos Comunidad Fund shows that those experiencing inequities can identify the issues affecting their communities and implement solutions, acting as agents of their own change.

We will use the unrestricted resources designated for community-led philanthropy to support and equip our community partners for a variety of activities—including immediate grantmaking, advocacy, community organizing, training, staff support, enhanced fundraising efforts and more.

VOLUNTEER PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:



"The most important thing for us in this space is agency and self-determination and what we envision for ourselves. What we can dream up for ourselves, the Community Foundation is never going to be able to dream up for us."

Sergio Cira-Reyes, Community Organizer and Volunteer Partner

UPHOLDING OUR COMMITMENT TO CHALLENGE SCHOLARS

Our Challenge Scholars program covers the cost of tuition for college or career training for graduates of Union High School on Grand Rapids' west side. Since the first Challenge Scholars were inducted, the educational landscape has changed significantly. As our approach to advancing equitable education adapts to better reflect the community needs and opportunities of today, our commitment to current Challenge Scholars students remains.

Dollars raised will fulfill our current scholarship commitment to Challenge Scholars students in the classes of 2020-2028 through 2032 and continue to support post-secondary navigation and guidance before, during and after the student's senior year.

CHALLENGE SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHT:

Melanie Orozco-Zavala
Class of 2020 Challenge Scholar
with her mother



ENSURING EQUITABLE EDUCATION

Removing barriers to academic success requires more than just addressing the financial cost of education. Our community has told us that strong relationships, supportive transitions, high-quality teaching and learning, and financial stability are crucial to student success.

This campaign will allow us to permanently endow a fund to support equitable education while strengthening our capacity to regularly assess and respond to community needs. Together with our partners, we will dismantle barriers to academic success by growing our investment in community-led grantmaking and advocacy, while continuing our robust scholarship program.

DONOR PARTNER SPOTLIGHT:

"I've gone through my life knowing there are people who want to succeed and don't necessarily have the means to. If we can be of some kind of aid to those people, that's what we intend to be."

Ken Betz, Donor Partner (Remembered)

"To get an education elevates those who get it and everyone around them."

Pat Brewer, Donor Partner



ENHANCING UNRESTRICTED GRANTMAKING

COVID-19 demonstrated the critical importance of unrestricted grantmaking assets. By increasing our unrestricted grantmaking capacity, we will strengthen our support of efforts that advance racial, social and economic justice and ensure a growing source of capital to meet the needs of an uncertain future.

This effort will generate nearly $1 million in additional funds each year to be invested in initiatives that move our community closer to an equitable, inclusive and more prosperous future.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:



Baxter Community Center, Nonprofit Partner

CONCLUSION

To reimagine our community, we must rethink and reshape all practices that keep people locked out of participation. As a community foundation, we know there is more we can do to meaningfully engage those who have not had a place at the table and build a more inclusive philanthropic culture and community. By leaning further into our existing partnerships, inviting new relationships and deepening our listening, we can build equitable pathways to success.

We invite you to join us in supporting educational and career opportunities, housing and financial prosperity, and opportunities for community building and belonging. Together with current partners and people throughout our vibrant city and region, we are confident we can meet today's most pressing issues and lay a strong foundation for a new century of service and impact.

PLEASE JOIN US IN SUPPORTING AN EQUITABLE FUTURE FOR EVERYONE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

FROM OUR CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRS

"I have lived and worked in the Grand Rapids area all my life. As a community volunteer in many areas, I have realized how difficult it is to provide opportunities for all our community members. I am thrilled that the Centennial Campaign is dedicated to facing this challenge and doing the hard work to make this dream a reality."

Earle S. "Win" Irwin

"My main goal is to best serve our community, especially the folks that are often at the margins or underserved. That's my anchor value and why I'm involved as a chair of this campaign."

Brandy Lovelady Mitchell

"As a former board member, I know what the Community Foundation has done, and I know what we can do. I have loved to see the transformation of this organization. I accepted this role because of the community and all of the people that we are serving and will serve and need to serve. This campaign is going to keep us focused."

Juan R. Olivarez



Grand Rapids Community Foundation Centennial Campaign Chairs: "Win" Irwin, Dr. Brandy Lovelady Mitchell, Dr. Juan Olivarez

Grand Rapids Community Foundation
Centennial Campaign
A new century of service and impact

For more information about the Centennial Campaign, please contact:

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