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Building Our Forever

2023 Annual Report

Our Board of Directors

Building Our Forever Together

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Community Foundation of
Greater Dubuque



FRONT COVER: Community Foundation staff member and retired Lincoln Elementary School Principal Donna Loewen celebrates during a Latinx Fiesta in Dubuque's Washington Park. The Community Foundation is proud to sponsor this event each year.



Transforming Our Region Together

Our Mission

Empower communities and ignite generosity

Our Vision

A vibrant and inclusive Greater Dubuque region

Our Values

- Equity & Opportunity
- Stewardship
- Knowledge
- Collaboration

Our Strategic Priorities

- Operational Excellence
- Regional Approach
- Community Leadership
- Trusting Relationships

WELCOME TO OUR 2023 ANNUAL REPORT!

In our conversations with people, we like to pose a question: **What is your "Forever"?** The idea is to encourage them to think about what matters most in their lives and their community, and then dream of how to ensure those things remain vital long into the future.

The responses are insightful and heart-warming: *Family, Health, Safety, Community.*

Most people share similar values. They want to live in a place where their children and grandchildren feel welcome, have access to opportunities, and can thrive.

Our role is to be their partners in ensuring that "Forever" becomes reality by helping them invest in efforts that tackle complex challenges, break down barriers, and create a vibrant region.

In this report, you will read stories about our neighbors who are working together to make "Forever" better.

We hope these stories inspire you to think about your "Forever" and the role you can play in making it a reality. Dubuque's "Forever" is in your hands.

Nancy Van Milligan
President and CEO

Chris Corken
Board of Directors Chair

DRIVING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY



CONNECT

We connect caring people with opportunities for positive change.



GRANT

We fund to strengthen the social fabric of communities.



STRENGTHEN

We support nonprofits' capacity to address systemic issues.



INVEST

We invest prudently, reflecting our role as stewards of resources entrusted to us.



RESEARCH

We use data and research to identify community needs and priorities.



ADVOCATE

We use our position and influence to inform and advocate for solutions.



PARTNER

We create lasting, authentic relationships with all who want to improve our region.



ENGAGE

We initiate dialogues that lead to action and community impact.

Our Forever is *a healthy and connected community.*

Medical appointments can be nerve-racking – even more so when you are worried you might not understand the language your doctor or nurse is speaking. That's where Dustin Alfred comes in.

Dustin is one of four interpreters and translators at Crescent Community Health Center in Dubuque and just one of two who can speak the native language of Dubuque's growing Marshallese community. Now, he is working to become the first certified medical interpreter for Marshallese patients in the Dubuque region, helping meet a need identified in the Community Foundation's Immigration Community Assessment.

"At this clinic, we work to build trust with the community," says Dustin, who moved to Dubuque with his family from the Marshall Islands when he was 10. "People come to us for more than just medical care. This is where they come if they need anything, from transportation to housing to a job."

People from the Marshall Islands represent one of numerous growing communities of foreign-born residents in Dubuque who have helped make the region's population the most racially and ethnically diverse in its history. While these expanding communities have brought much cultural and economic vibrancy to the region, they also face barriers to opportunities that would help them to thrive for generations to come.

Recognizing demographic trends, a group of local religious sisters partnered with the Community Foundation to conduct an assessment of the strengths and needs of immigrants in the region. The goal was to

close service gaps and connect people with resources like jobs and translation services.

"We published our Immigration Community Assessment just last year, and it already has provided insights that service providers and nonprofits previously never had," says Alex Baum, the Foundation's director of advocacy, data and learning, who facilitated the assessment.

One of the most significant outcomes has been formation of the Better Together Committee, a group of about 50 leaders from nonprofits, civic agencies and immigrant communities working collaboratively to tackle the priorities outlined in the assessment, including the need for certified medical interpreters.

In addition to pursuing his certification, Dustin also serves on the committee. He acts as a connector with Dubuque's Marshallese community, providing cultural context for issues like health care. For example, he explains that in the Marshall Islands, people typically don't see a doctor for regular exams, instead going only when they are sick or hurt, and the cultural norm is for patients to only work with interpreters of their same gender.

Having leaders like Dustin working together to address community issues has meant more people can access the resources they need. In one case this year, Dustin interpreted for a Marshallese patient who was diagnosed with an unforeseen condition and was able to receive critical follow-up care thanks to his visit to Crescent.

"He said he really loved Dubuque and Crescent for having an interpreter," Dustin says. "It gave him peace of mind to trust us."

Immigration in the Dubuque Region 2010-2021

75%

Growth of Dubuque County's foreign-born population

46%

The city of Dubuque's overall population growth attributed to foreign-born residents

97%

The overall population growth of the Community Foundation's seven-county region attributed to foreign-born residents

*U.S. Census Bureau

My name is *Dustin* and my Forever is *my community's well-being.*



Dyslexia Facts

Dyslexia is a neurological condition that causes difficulty identifying and separating speech sounds within a word and how letters represent those sounds.

*Yale University

20%

Estimated percentage of people who have a form of dyslexia*

20K

Estimated number of children and adults in Dubuque County with a form of dyslexia

1.5

Number of hours by car to reach the dyslexia tutoring center nearest to Dubuque

Reading Proficiency in Dubuque Public Schools

35.25%

K-12 students not proficient in reading*

*Iowa School Performance Profile, Iowa Department of Education
**Annie E. Casey Foundation

43.61%

Third-graders not proficient in reading*

4x

Students who do not read proficiently by third grade are four times more likely to leave high school without a diploma than proficient readers**

6x

The graduation failure rate for children who cannot read proficiently and are poor for at least one year is more than six times the rate for all proficient readers**



My name is Sara and my Forever is children and families.

Our Forever is Dubuque's children.

When a family invites Sara Burley into their home, she gets a perspective on the lives of parents and children few non-relatives see. She sees the family members' strengths, the barriers they face, and the love they feel for one another.

Her role with Four Oaks' Parents as Teachers program – first as a parent educator making home visits and now as program coordinator – inspired her to sign up for the Community Foundation's new dyslexia tutor training. In her work, she has seen first-hand how children could benefit from specialized tutoring.

"In Parents as Teachers, we look at the whole family to see how they can be successful. What resources do they have? What do they need?" Sara says. "Knowing that dyslexia tutoring is a resource we don't have in our community – and for such a prevalent issue – I wanted to help bring that to families."

The Foundation's dyslexia tutor program came about through a connection between its Every Child Reads initiative and a donor who has dyslexia and understands how access to resources can help those with it become confident, skilled readers.

Community organizations, such as Parents as Teachers and Four Oaks, collaborate with the Foundation's Every Child Reads initiative, a network of educators, service providers and civic leaders working together toward a

common goal: Helping children read proficiently by the end of third grade.

Children who do not meet this milestone – especially if they come from a low-income family or have different cognitive abilities like dyslexia – are more likely to drop out of high school and face challenges later in life.

Dyslexia is not just a literacy issue, it's a community issue, says Dubuque resident, business owner and advocate for dyslexia resources J.B. Priest. Both he and his son have dyslexia, and he participated in the Foundation's first community meeting on the issue.

"Our community will benefit when dyslexics are allowed to use their unique skills to contribute," he says. "Unleashing the dyslexic brain to work within our society benefits everyone through creative invention and unique perspective."

The training, which began in January 2024 and takes place twice a week, has been eye-opening for Sara. She has begun to understand the experiences of her friends with dyslexia and see how children she has met through Parents as Teachers could benefit from the services she and a dozen others will be able to provide. By understanding there are multiple ways to learn, Sara is confident she and other tutors can help build a strong future for children across the Dubuque region.

Our Forever is *strong nonprofits.*

When individual people are inspired to get involved in their community, they can make a big impact. When those individuals are inspired to work together, that impact can grow exponentially.

Just ask Beth Gilbreath and Jill Hogstrom.

Each was inspired to give back in her own way – one by forming a nonprofit, the other by joining the Community Foundation’s Women’s Giving Circle. By forging a connection, they have increased capacity to address a significant community need: access to period products.

When Beth learned that many teens and adults were going without these essential products because they couldn’t afford them, she stepped up.

“I only learned about the need through a friend in 2016,” she says. “We asked, ‘Where do people go for period products?’ and neither of us knew. We went to the Dubuque Rescue Mission and Dubuque Food Pantry and asked how they address this. Both said it was a tremendous unmet need in our community no one was tackling.”

That day, she co-founded The Red Basket Project, a nonprofit that distributes packages of period products to sites across the region, including schools, food pantries and service organizations. All products are distributed in discrete, yet stylish, totes that are available for free to anyone who needs them.

Since Beth started the nonprofit, word of its work has spread, and many more sites have requested products. That awareness and growth is positive, but it also creates challenges. Like many nonprofits, The Red Basket Project runs on a shoestring budget and relies on the generosity of volunteers and donors. Beth herself

estimates she spends 25 hours a week volunteering with the organization on top of her real estate job.

That’s where the Women’s Giving Circle comes in. The group, founded in 2006, comprises hundreds of women coming together to make donations and award grants that support the needs of women and children.

While reviewing grant applications in 2023, the members noticed that many organizations were requesting funds for period products. Rather than award grants to the individual nonprofits, the group focused its efforts on the organization supplying the products: The Red Basket Project. Many nonprofits hadn’t been aware of its work.

In the fall of 2023, the Circle members invited Beth to speak at their annual meeting and organized a service project, giving members the chance to assemble period packs and see first-hand what The Red Basket Project’s work entails.

“It was great experience,” says Jill, who serves as chair of the Circle’s Grantmaking Committee. “It was wonderful to not only learn in depth about a nonprofit’s needs but also for attendees to give back. That night, everybody got to give time, talent and treasure.”

For Beth and The Red Basket Project, the opportunity to connect with the Women’s Giving Circle had immediate and long-term impact. The volunteers helped assemble 400 period packs in one evening, and the entire group gained awareness of the community need. During the holidays, many Women’s Giving Circle members made individual donations to The Red Basket Project.

“This is a total community project,” Beth says. “We could not do this without the community’s support.”

Red Basket Project By the Numbers

1,900

Period packs assembled and distributed monthly

\$90k

Annual cost of period products to distribute

45

Volunteer hours per week

\$0

Cost of period products to users

Women’s Giving Circle By the Numbers

200

Current members

\$500k

Women’s Giving Circle Endowment Fund

\$170k

Grantmaking impact since 2006

65

Grants made since 2006



My name is *Jill* and my Forever is *making a small difference in how women and children thrive in our community.*

My name is *Beth* and my Forever is *accessible period products.*

Small Towns, Big Investment

814

Donors invested

11

Communities that have committed to or completed the challenge grant

\$4.5M

Funds raised to date by Small-town Dreams communities

10

Communities that have participated in Community Heart & Soul

Our Forever is a connected and vital region.



My name is Alethea and my Forever is my hometown.

Alethea Cahoy didn't grow up in Clinton, Iowa – she was raised over 1,200 miles away in the Pacific Northwest – but for 23 years, she has called the city home. And she wouldn't have it any other way.

“When I came to Clinton I fell in love with this community,” says Alethea, who settled in the city after graduating from college with a teaching degree. “There’s just something about it. People are very sincere and friendly. They welcomed me into the community.”

Today, she is proud to raise her family in Clinton, a city of about 25,000 people that overlooks the Mississippi River 60 miles south of Dubuque. Her love for Clinton inspired her to join the River Bluff Community Foundation, one of the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque's eight affiliates, as its executive director, and lead the new Energize Clinton community development and fundraising campaign.

Energize Clinton is a two-phase initiative that empowers the community to achieve two goals: Identify what matters most to residents and build an endowment fund that will help enhance those positive qualities for generations to come. It's a hybrid of Community Heart & Soul and the Small-town Dreams Initiative, two programs led by the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque.

Through the Heart & Soul process, Alethea and the Energize Clinton team connected with over 1,200 residents through surveys and meetings to understand what they care about. What emerged was a new narrative for Clinton.

“Previously, people's feelings about their hometown fluctuated,” says Alethea: Either they took a negative attitude toward its trajectory or engaged in boosterism while ignoring real challenges.

The Heart & Soul process, facilitated by Foundation staff, helped people connect over their shared passion for Clinton while also identifying concrete areas for investment, including downtown and neighborhood revitalization and brain health resources.

The six “values statements” that emerged from the Heart & Soul process will become the guiding principles for the Small-town Dreams phase. Clinton is one of 11 towns across Eastern Iowa taking part in this initiative that empowers people to build strong futures for their communities. The goal is to leverage a \$100,000 challenge grant and raise matching funds to eventually build a \$450,000 endowment. This permanent funding source will grant out about \$25,000 annually to support local organizations and projects that respond to the needs and opportunities of the day.

Equipped with homegrown ideas for strengthening the community and the funds to do so, leaders in Clinton will be prepared to ensure their city can remain a vital place to live, work and play forever.

“The campaign has really invigorated residents; they feel part of the process,” Alethea says. “At the end of the day, everyone loves the people here. They are our friends, our neighbors. It's about feeling part of one giant family in Clinton.”

Our Forever is *a strong region for years to come.*

A passion for strengthening nonprofits and addressing community issues has long been important to Carrie Schmid and her extended family. With her late husband, Dick Schmid, and a close partnership with the Community Foundation, Carrie has channeled that passion into endeavors that have brought much-needed resources to the Dubuque region. Residents have greater access to support services for nonprofits and health care thanks to Dick and Carrie's generosity.

Today, Carrie's philanthropic spirit shows no sign of waning. Her latest bequest to the Dubuque region is one that honors Dick's memory while supporting the community she loves for generations to come. Last year, she committed a legacy gift to the Forever Fund that, when she passes, will be pooled in an endowment that addresses whatever needs and opportunities Dubuque faces in the future.

"What Dick and I have been able to do for Dubuque is possible because of our partnership with the Community Foundation," Carrie says. "They offer the guidance, processes and resources to help us give with focus and intelligence."

Carrie and Dick, who passed away in 2017, always looked to the Foundation to help understand the needs of the community and how their giving could address them. For instance, ENVIS10N 2010, a community visioning process the Foundation and Dubuque Chamber of Commerce spearheaded with funding from the Dubuque Racing Association, was a major inspiration to the Schmid's.

The 2005 initiative encouraged community members to gather and brainstorm ideas for the next 10 projects that would move Dubuque forward. Carrie, Dick and the extended Schmid family took notice. Through their



philanthropy, they were instrumental in establishing Crescent Community Health Center, one of the ideas that came out of the process.

In 2014, they worked with the Community Foundation and the Gronens to establish the Schmid Innovation Center, a mixed-use building in the historic Millwork District with space for nonprofits to operate and grow.

Partnering with the Community Foundation on these types of philanthropic efforts has been intentional, Carrie says: "It's about trust, and what I trust about the Foundation is its leadership and the Board of Directors."

That trust extends to the Forever Fund, she says. It's impossible to know what issues the Dubuque region will face in the future. However, with thoughtful, knowledgeable people stewarding the fund and guiding its grantmaking, anyone who gives to it can be assured that their contributions will address the most important needs – whatever they might be.

"The Foundation has the ability to prepare, make thoughtful decisions, and direct funds where they are needed most," Carrie says. "I recognize them as trustworthy leaders. It's a winning team."

My name is *Carrie* and my Forever is *the vitality of our nonprofits and community.*

Our 2023 Financial Summary

\$150M

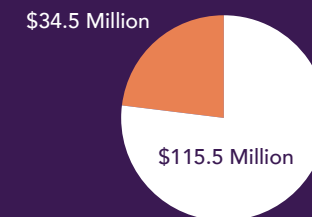
Total Assets

\$12.9M

Total Gifts Received

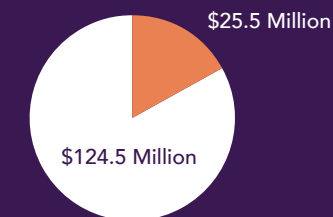
\$7.8M

Total Grants Awarded



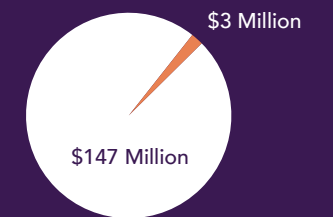
**77% Endowed
23% Non-Endowed**

Endowed funds are invested and grow in perpetuity, paying out to fund-holders annually; non-endowed funds are immediate sources of income to be used according to the donor's wishes.



**17% Agency
83% Non-Agency**

Agency funds are held by local nonprofits to support their work; non-agency funds are investments by individual donors for specific causes outlined in their fund agreements.



**2% Discretionary
98% Non-Discretionary**

Discretionary funds are available to use to address a variety of issues in the community; non-discretionary funds are reserved for specific purposes as outlined in fund agreements.

Performance Comparison

	YTD	5-Year Annualized	10-Year Annualized
Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque	14.66%	8.84%	6.18%
Institutional Custom D Portfolio Blend	13.70%	8.76%	5.65%

Institutional Custom D Portfolio Blend is a segment blended benchmark based on historical asset class targets for the MIAS D composite using Morningstar peer group average returns, net of management fees.

All funds hosted by the Community Foundation make a direct impact on nonprofits and residents in our region. Most of these assets are held in donor-advised funds, nonprofit funds and other types of funds that are designated for specific programs and causes. A small percentage is reserved to address needs as they arise.

Our Forever is *you.*

Cultivating Positive Change



WE ARE REGIONAL

With our eight affiliate foundations, we work collaboratively to build strong communities in Eastern Iowa and empower our neighbors to lead.

WE ARE CONVENERS

In bringing together diverse community stakeholders, we spur collaboration that addresses pressing challenges.

WE ARE A CATALYST

The challenges our communities face are complex, which is why we work across sectors to bring about systemic solutions.

WE KNOW OUR COMMUNITIES

By listening to voices from all corners of our region, we understand people's deep love for their communities and the issues they are passionate about.



My name is Leslie and my **Forever** is *improving life through food.*

We can't predict the future – but we can prepare for it.

That's why we created the **Forever Fund**. It's a way for you to help address tomorrow's needs and opportunities today.

Learn more and give: [DBOFUNDATION.ORG/FOREVER](https://dbofoundation.org/forever)

Leslie Shalabi, co-founder of Convivium Urban Farmstead in Dubuque, shows off kale from her organization's garden. In 2023, Convivium was awarded a grant through the Theisen's More For Your Community program, a partnership between the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque and Theisen's Home-Farm-Auto.