

Greetings!

With summer wrapping up and fall right on its heels, this is always a busy time of year! Grant recipients have been announced; our team and board members have been gathering, learning, planning, and growing; YAC is back to school and back at it; and our affiliate Advisory Boards in Coopersville and Allendale have been hard at work—here's to a fabulous fall! Just look at all that has been going on:

Gathering Together Helps us Grow

Our Board of Trustees held their third quarter meeting this past month, first for a tour of the **Momentum Center**. We always appreciate the hospitality and the opportunity to work out in the community!

The GHACF engaged the **Center for Effective Philanthropy**—a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the effectiveness of philanthropic funders by providing data, feedback, and insights to help foundations and donors enhance their performance and impact in the philanthropic sector. **Thank you** to those who shared their feedback through the Donor Perception Survey and Grantee Perception Survey. *A summary of results will be shared soon and we look forward to implementing what we learned!*

GHACF Team News



End of Summer GHACF Staff Lunch

Members of the GHACF team recently gathered for food and fellowship while enjoying lunch together in the Mart & Dottie Johnson Courtyard Garden before the chilly air sets in!



Welcome Amy Moore!

The search is over, and we are pleased to announce that Amy Moore will be joining our staff as Vice President of Grants and Program.

Amy comes to us with extensive philanthropic and community foundation experience, and we are grateful to have found someone whose passion, experience, and energy align so well with our mission.

All are invited to meet her at an open house on **Wednesday, October 1st from 3 to 5 pm.**

[**Register Here!**](#)



Go Cora!

GHACF team member Cora Russ is participating in the Chamber's 2025-2026 Leadership Connect program, which combines leadership training and community awareness.

The educational sessions provide skills training to participants to help them lead more effectively, enhance contributions to their organizations, and aid in improving the quality of life in Northwest Ottawa County.

Way to go Cora! Thank you for taking the initiative to help strengthen our service to the community.

Nearly \$650k Awarded Through Community Impact Grants

Nearly \$650,000 in grants were recently distributed to five organizations in our community. The **Outdoor Discovery Center** which was awarded \$250,000 to support the transformation of Mary A. White Elementary into the Duneside Discovery Center, is a nature-based early childhood education center. Funding will help create nature playscapes, interactive outdoor learning environments, trails, comprehensive landscaping, and habitat restoration efforts such as dune and meadow revitalization, native landscaping, and tree planting. Many outdoor areas will be accessible to the public, benefiting the greater community. Other grants awarded include:

- **Hand2Hand** was granted \$31,000 in support of facility upgrades to ensure efficient operations and the ability to meet growing demand. Our Coopersville and Allendale Foundation affiliates also contributed \$2,000 each to help the cause, so students in need can enjoy nutritious meals over the weekends and on extended school breaks.
- **Tri-Cities Family YMCA** received a \$63,000 grant to aid in expanding their Learning Tree Preschool program at their West Michigan Academy of Arts and Academics location. Funding will help address growing local demand, improve school readiness, support working families, and enhance long-term educational outcomes for children in northwest Ottawa County.
- **Spring Lake Public Schools** was awarded a \$73,290 grant to support Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) across the district, with the

goal of building a sustainable system of collaboration that ensures high levels of learning for all students, fosters a thriving educational community, and improves teacher support and retention.

- **Lakeshore Advantage Foundation** received a grant of \$225,000 over 3 years (up to \$75,000 per year) to take on the next phase of the Housing Next initiative, addressing access to affordable housing in Ottawa County. Funding will support hiring a Community Development Director to sustain momentum built over the past eight years and ensure housing strategies and solutions remain proactive and locally responsive.

Interested in applying for our next grant round?

[Learn more about the process.](#)

Affiliate Spotlight: New Members!

Our two affiliate foundations—Allendale Community Foundation and Coopersville Area Community Foundation—are led by dedicated Advisory Board Members making a difference in their communities. We are grateful for their work in making Northwest Ottawa County a great place to live, work, and play, and we wish the following new members a warm welcome:

Allendale Community Foundation

- Hadaas Brower
- John Dice

Coopersville Area Community Foundation

- Rusty Gilbert
- Shana Hansma
- Scott Kosten

Youth Advisory Council Kicks Off Academic Year

New members of our Youth Advisory Council (YAC) have been welcomed aboard, and returning members are diving right into their duties. First, though, a kickoff event was recently held, along with a parent orientation to provide parents a glimpse of what their students do as YAC members.



Community Wish List: Caring Camps

Our **Community Wish List** is regularly updated with local charitable opportunities, and is a great place to find organizations and/or causes that you'd like to support! This month we're highlighting **local camps and retreats** helping bring joy and healing to others:

- Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp – Donations will help fund items needed to improve camper experience, medical needs, staff training, and accessibility.

- [Bluebird Cancer Retreats](#) – Help spread joy by supporting the Holiday Happiness Project which creates holiday gift bags for cancer patients.
- [Camp Blodgett](#) – Support upgrading beds to ensure a clean, healthy, and comfortable environment for young campers.
- [Camp Sunshine](#) – help support accessibility improvements, including crisis interaction training and ASL interpretation at camp programs.

Check out the link below to see the full list, donate to any organizations on this list, or to support another cause close to your heart. **Thank you!**

[**See Our Community's Greatest Needs**](#)

Interested in making a difference for others?

Send an email to VP of Advancement & Donor Services [Chris Riker](#) or Advancement & Donor Services Manager [Sarah Enlow](#).

For good. For all. Forever.

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Grand Haven Area Community Foundation | 6 Sherman Ave. | Grand Haven, MI 49417 US

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