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Community Foundation



Grand Haven Area

Community Foundation



Coopersville Area

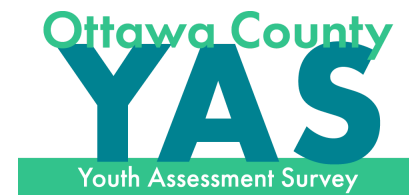
Community Foundation

As we move through the final weeks of summer, we're grateful for the generosity and partnership that continue to strengthen our community. Thank you for helping create opportunities and lasting impact throughout Northern Ottawa County.

Impact Community

YAC Kicks Off a New Year of Learning, Leadership, and Impact

This month, we welcomed five new members to the GHACF Youth Advisory Council (YAC), joining 16 returning members who are eager to build on last year's accomplishments and continue making a difference in our community.



The year began with a kickoff event featuring a presentation on findings from the Youth Assessment Survey (YAS), providing members with a deeper understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing youth across Ottawa County. The data highlighted important issues including youth mental health, food insecurity, health & safety concerns, the influence of social media, and substance use trends.

By grounding their work in local data, YAC members are better equipped to make thoughtful, informed grantmaking decisions and focus resources where they can make the greatest impact.

In addition to learning about community needs, members participated in team-building activities designed to strengthen connections, encourage collaboration, and build a strong foundation for the year ahead.



Housing Summit

Members of our team attended the West Michigan Housing Summit on August 6, joining housing professionals, community leaders, developers, and policymakers from across the region for a day of collaboration and learning focused on housing affordability, development, and regional solutions.

As one of the founders and regional advisory members of Housing Next a co-creator of the summit, we were proud to support this important gathering. The event provided valuable insights

and fresh perspectives, including the region's estimated shortage of 70,000 housing units, with 16,500 needed in Ottawa County alone. Discussions also highlighted the growing challenges facing first-time homebuyers, as rising costs and a lack of starter homes continue to impact access to homeownership.

Developers, nonprofits, and local governments shared strategies for increasing affordability and revitalizing underutilized areas, while emphasizing the importance of sustainable growth that preserves the character of existing neighborhoods. The summit reinforced the value of regional collaboration in addressing housing needs across West Michigan.

Inspire Philanthropy

August is Make-a-Will Month

August is a great reminder to put your wishes in writing and protect the people and causes that matter most to you. Creating or updating a will can be much simpler and more affordable than many people expect, and it provides peace of mind for you and your loved ones.

A will also creates an opportunity to leave a lasting impact through charitable giving. Whether you'd like to support your favorite cause(s) or strengthen our community for future generations, the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation can help you explore options that align with your goals.

To learn more about creating your legacy, contact Chris Riker at 616-842-6378 or criker@ghacf.org.

If you have already included the GHACF in your estate plans, please let us know so we can thank you and welcome you into our **Legacy Society**.

Leave a Legacy

Coopersville Area Community Foundation Connects with the Community

The Coopersville community came together on August 8 for the annual Coopersville Car Show & Summerfest, a beloved local tradition that filled downtown with classic cars, live entertainment, local businesses, and family-friendly activities.



The Coopersville Area Community Foundation was proud to be part of the celebration, connecting with residents, sharing information about the Foundation's work, and highlighting how community philanthropy helps strengthen Coopersville for generations to come.



Community Service Fund Spotlight: Grand Haven Lighthouse Rehabilitation Fund

The Grand Haven Lighthouse is one of our community's most recognizable and cherished landmarks. Through the Grand Haven Lighthouse Rehabilitation Fund, donors can support ongoing preservation, maintenance, and restoration efforts to help protect this local treasure. Together, we can ensure the lighthouse continues to shine as a symbol of Grand Haven for generations to come.

[Donate Here](#)

Other Community Service Funds Making an Impact

Looking for another way to support the places and projects that make our communities stronger? Explore these Community Service Funds and help invest in efforts that enhance quality of life across Ottawa County.

- [Coopersville Area North Bank Trail Fund](#)
- [Coopersville Cares Capital Campaign Fund](#)
- [Fire Barn Park Fund](#)
- [Grand Haven Children's Museum Community Service Fund](#)
- [Grand Haven Lighthouse Rehabilitation Fund](#)
- [Mulligan's Hollow Ski Bowl Capital Campaign Fund](#)
- [North Bank Park \(formerly Central Park\) Improvement Fund](#)
- [Save Our Forests Grand Haven](#)

Community Wishlist Spotlight:

Every child deserves the opportunity to start school ready to learn and thrive.

Ready for School is seeking community partners to support Reach Out and Read Michigan, an evidence-based program that promotes early literacy by connecting young children and their families with books, reading resources, and support during pediatric visits.

Your support will help provide literacy education, training, books, and resources for families served through more than 1,000 well-child visits each year at the Corewell Health West Grand Haven Clinic.

Current Funding Needs

- Medical Provider Training & Support (including network fees) – **\$5,000**
- Literacy Materials – **\$1,000**
- Culturally Relevant and Developmentally Appropriate Books – **\$3,000**
- Administrative Support – **\$500**

How You Can Help

- Recommend a grant through your Donor Advised Fund
- Make a direct gift to [Ready for School](#)

Together, we can help build strong literacy skills, support families, and ensure more children enter school ready to succeed.

Manage Investments

Impact Investing Renewals Approved

The Foundation recently renewed two impact investments with Michigan Community Capital and IFF, reinforcing our commitment to creating both financial returns and positive community impact. The renewals were approved following a review by the committee, with updated documentation now being finalized.

The committee also welcomed the opportunity to continue working with Debby Kasemeyer, former GHACF impact investing advisor at Northern Trust, who now serves as Chief Capital Architect at IFF.

These renewals reflect the Foundation's ongoing commitment to investing in ways that strengthen communities while responsibly stewarding charitable assets.

Welcoming New Committee Members

The Grand Haven Area Community Foundation is pleased to welcome several new volunteers to our committee leadership structure. These individuals bring valuable expertise, fresh perspectives, and a shared commitment to strengthening our community through philanthropy. Following are the GHACF Community-at-Large Committee Members:

- Joy Gaasch to the Impact Investing Sub-Committee
- Elenor Hitsman, Chair of the Youth Advisory Council (YAC), to the Grants & Program Committee
- Kirsten Runschke to the Grants & Program Committee
- Abby Selby to the Audit Committee
- Steve Scholler to the Investment Committee

Our committees play a critical role in guiding the Foundation's stewardship of charitable assets, community investments, governance, and grantmaking. We are grateful for the time, talents, and leadership these volunteers contribute and look forward to the impact they will make in the years ahead.

Thank you for helping us build a stronger and more vibrant community.



Lakeshore Community Foundation Gathering

What began years ago when the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation hosted a gathering with the Community Foundation for Muskegon County and the Community Foundation of Holland/Zeeland has grown into a valued tradition of connection, collaboration, and shared learning among our neighboring community foundations.

This year, the Community Foundation of Holland/Zeeland welcomed us to the beautiful Holland Ice Park, where we enjoyed meaningful conversations, exchanged ideas, and strengthened the relationships that help us better serve our communities. Together, we remain committed to learning from one another and advancing positive impact across the lakeshore region.

Holiday Hours

The Foundation will close at noon on Friday, September 4, and remain closed on Monday, September 7, in observance of Labor Day. We will reopen on Tuesday, refreshed and ready to serve our community. We wish you a safe and enjoyable holiday weekend!

Thank You for Investing in Our Community

Because of donors, fundholders, nonprofit partners, and community members, together we are creating opportunities, strengthening organizations, and improving lives throughout Northern Ottawa County.

For more information about establishing a Donor Advised Fund, joining the Legacy Society, or if you're simply interested in making a difference, email the VP of Advancement & Donor Services, Chris Riker.

[Support a Fund](#)

[Support a Local Nonprofit](#)

[Start a Fund](#)

For **good**. For **all**. Forever.

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