



# Legacy Matters

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## Community PILLARS Certificate Program Initiated



### *Community PILLARS Class of 2023*

*Bottom row from left: Emeline Ferguson, WCCF; Sarah Angelo, Resurrection Power; Kelley Swift, CASA for Kids; Tracy Walnoha, Watchful Shepherd; Brandi Miller, Literacy Council of Southwestern PA; Traci Liberatore, Bradford House Historical Association; & Amanda Gabeletto, Monongahela Area Library. Top row from left: Mark Smith, Mon Valley Academy for the Arts; Michelle Bruce, Fix Ur Cat; Karen Bennett, Harmony Life Center; Megan Hegedus, Domestic Violence Services of Southwestern PA; & Natalie Ross, Healing Bridges.*



For several years, the Community Foundation has provided educational sessions for local nonprofits through a virtual speakers series. While we have been pleased with the results of the series, we knew that a more comprehensive governance training program was needed.

In response to that need, we developed a comprehensive governance certificate program, Community PILLARS. The objective of the program is to help charity representatives to become **Proactive, Impactful, Loyal Leaders** who are **Accountable, Resourceful, & Strategic**. The PILLARS program was modeled after an accreditation tool of the Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations. The inaugural Class of 2023 recently completed the program and a new class will be convened each fall.

### Many Thanks to the PILLARS Presenters!

#### **Nonprofit SideKick**

*Mission, Strategy & Evaluation*

#### **Dr. Geraldine Jones**

*Governance & Leadership: Board, Staff & Volunteers*

#### **Barbara Graham**

*Legal Compliance & Ethics*

#### **Michael Anderson**

*Finance & Operations*

#### **George Omiros**

*Fundraising & Resource Development*

#### **Megan Chicone, Heather Giampapa, & Joann Naser**

*Public Awareness & Advocacy*

## EQT Leaseholders Contribute to GIVE Washington County Fund

Kris Drach and Chuck Kreuzer understand leverage. When they learned of the opportunity to leverage their giving through a one-to-one match, they quickly responded with a \$50,000 gift.

“My husband and I were thrilled to learn about the *GIVE Washington County Fund*, which allows EQT leaseholders to double their WCCF donation dollars with matching funds provided by EQT. With the WCCF managing the funds, we also know our donation will be used to the greatest possible benefit across our community,” said Kris Drach.

As the first EQT leaseholders to make a contribution to the Fund, Kris and Chuck hope others will follow their lead.



*Kris Drach and Chuck Kreuzer*

“Kris and Chuck’s philanthropy has supported in a significant manner several worthwhile community organizations over many years. Their recent gift to the ***GIVE Washington County Fund*** not only continues their financial support of local community organizations, but it also serves as an example to other EQT landowners to leverage their community giving through the EQT match,” remarked Betsie Trew, WCCF President & CEO.



The ***GIVE Washington County Fund*** was created by EQT, who is encouraging its landowners to contribute by pledging to match up to \$10,000 per land lease for contributions to the Fund. Structured very broadly, the Fund may support any nonprofit providing charitable services in Washington County, with grantees selected through an open and competitive process beginning in 2024.

## Internship Grants Benefit Students and Nonprofits



*Athletic administration student Zachary Ford is learning important skills through his internship at the Brownson House.*

Zachary Ford has been a student intern at the Brownson House since the summer of 2021, but the local charity has always been a part of his life.

He remarked, “I grew up playing sports here . . . The place has such meaning for the city of Washington. It gives youth something to do and opportunity to build skills in a well-maintained facility.”

Having completed his undergraduate sports management degree at Waynesburg University, Ford is now pursuing a master's degree in athletic administration. As part of his internship, Ford coordinates the game schedules and works with various coaches. He is also a site supervisor in the evenings, ensuring good sportsmanship and participation among all the players.

Valuable real-world experiences such as this help interns to strengthen their resumes, but the students are not the only ones to reap benefits from internship programs. The nonprofits benefit from the fresh perspectives, energy, and extra hands the interns bring to the organization.

The Foundation currently administers two internship funds, the ***Three Oaks Internship Fund*** and the ***Betty Drach Internship Fund***. In addition to the

Brownson House, internship grants were awarded this year to the Bradford House Historical Association, Pennsylvania Trolley Museum, and Watchful Shepherd.



## Honoring Exemplary Board Service



*Brian J. Smith*

It was our intention to present the *Richard L. White Excellence Award for Board Service* to Brian Smith when he rotated off our Board in June 2021 because we wanted him to know his service had a profound impact on the Foundation. We so wish that Brian was still with us to accept this award personally, but this past October, we had the privilege of presenting it to his wife, Sherri.

Brian helped us to grow financially by meeting with donors to encourage their support and through his personal financial support. He also helped us to grow our charitable services. There is no better example of that growth than our annual community-wide giving event, *WCCF Gives*. We were much smaller in 2013, which led some to believe we lacked the capacity to facilitate such an event. Others believed it would never be successful in Washington County. Brian's early endorsement helped us to

secure other supporters, enabling us to initiate the event. *WCCF Gives* has become the primary fundraising activity for many local charities and cumulatively has provided close to \$12 million in grants.

As the Chair of our Investment Committee, Brian led the effort to improve our investment policy and to define benchmarks to gauge investment performance. Brian also helped lead the effort to develop our first Strategic Plan in 2016, the basis of which is still being utilized today.



*WCCF Board Chairman E. Alex Paris, Sherri Smith, and Founding Trustee Richard L. White*

# Thank You!



Over  
**\$1.9 M**  
In Grants

### *WCCF Gives* 2023 Sponsors



*Alex E. Paris Contracting*

*Observer-Reporter*

*South Hills Toyota*

*WCCF Acorn Fund*

# President's Silver Award Rewards Organizational Excellence



*DVSSP CEO Lisa Hannum and Board Chairman Mike McClaine are all smiles after receiving the inaugural President's Silver Award. The \$25,000 grant will enable the organization to purchase a new website.*

## **President's Silver Award:** **Includes a \$25,000 Program Grant**

### **Eligibility**

- Annual audit;
- Board-approved Strategic Plan;
- Board-approved Annual Operating Budget;
- Board financial support at 100% annually;
- Established and enforced Board term limits;
- Defined recruitment process to secure new Board members;
- Board-approved policy on Board member responsibilities;
- Annual CEO (or highest-ranking employee) performance review, using established evaluation form;
- Annual registration in WCCF Gives.

### **Evaluation Criteria:**

- The impact of the program to the targeted audience; and
- The impact of the program to the general community.

## **Calling for Help, Finding a Lifeline**

After 10 years of marriage, Jennifer knew it was over. She needed to return to Pennsylvania to make a fresh start. Although nothing was more difficult, she left her children in the custody of her estranged husband, as he would be better able to financially provide for them. Jennifer and her children managed the distance as best they could.

Several years passed. Then, Jennifer suffered one of the most traumatic events that a mother can experience: the suicide of her 15-year-old son. Understandably, the event triggered a deep depression. However, Jennifer dealt with her grief by abusing drugs and alcohol. The addiction led her to a life of crime. In time, Jennifer recognized she needed to cope in a healthier way and reached out for professional help. She enrolled in a drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility and successfully completed the program.

At two years sober, she met Santiago. Not long after their relationship began, a baby was on the way. But by that time, Santiago had become verbally and emotionally abusive.

The severity of his abuse increased during their three-year relationship. When Santiago picked her up and slammed her down on the sidewalk, Jennifer reached a turning point. She knew she had to get away from him for her and baby Olivia's safety.

It was then that Jennifer turned to Domestic Violence Services of Southwestern Pennsylvania's (DVSSP) for help. After making a call to the DVSSP hotline, she and Olivia entered the safe house where they were provided with shelter, counseling, and domestic violence education.

Although the physical abuse she had endured caused her severe back and hip pain, Jennifer was diligent in her role as a waitress. She was granted full custody of Olivia who, at just three years old, needed special care for diabetes and thyroid issues.

Despite her triumphs, Jennifer still had one last obstacle to overcome. Due to her past drug and criminal history, she was not eligible for public housing. So, she searched for a landlord who would give her a chance. Through her persistence, Jennifer found a cozy house on a farm to rent. Because of her strength and determination, she and her daughter now live peaceful lives.

**DVSSP**  
Domestic Violence Services  
of Southwestern PA





# President's Crystal Award Rewards Organizational Improvement

## Reaching Out with Love: Providing a New Beginning

Fleeing a very violent domestic situation, Jackie and her three children were forced to leave their belongings behind as they sought safety in their new community. A local domestic violence shelter provided temporary housing for the fragile family, giving them time to heal and to adjust to their new surroundings.

But even after securing more permanent housing, it was a struggle to feed her family and to make ends meet. And so, Jackie turned to the Washington Christian Outreach where she and her children were welcomed with loving arms.

At the Outreach, Jackie was able to secure a hot meal for her children on a daily basis. She could shop in the Outreach store for clothing, personal care items and household items that they needed. Jackie had limited financial resources, but that didn't matter. The Outreach never turned her away.

When her children were enrolled in school, the Outreach provided them with backpacks filled with school supplies, coats and shoe vouchers. At Easter, the family received Easter Baskets, and at Christmas they received a box filled with nutritional foods and a voucher to purchase protein items.

Through the years, Jackie and her family have grown stronger and the horrors of their past life have become a distant memory.

Jackie is very grateful for the support of the Washington Christian Outreach. She said, "They have been so helpful to me over the years. I don't know where I would be without their support—most likely homeless."

In addition to the tangible assistance Jackie and her children received from the Outreach, they also received unconditional love.

"We want to reach out to others who need to see the love of Jesus Christ and provide basic support to them," said Debbie Boardley, Board Secretary.

With the help of the Outreach, Jackie's family has found both love and peace.

***Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.***  
~ Proverbs 14:31



*WCO Treasurer William Rauch, Secretary Debbie Boardley, and Vice President Gary Beam said the charity will use the \$10,000 grant as part of the Crystal Award to make some repairs to their facility.*

## President's Crystal Award: Includes a \$10,000 Unrestricted Grant

### Eligibility

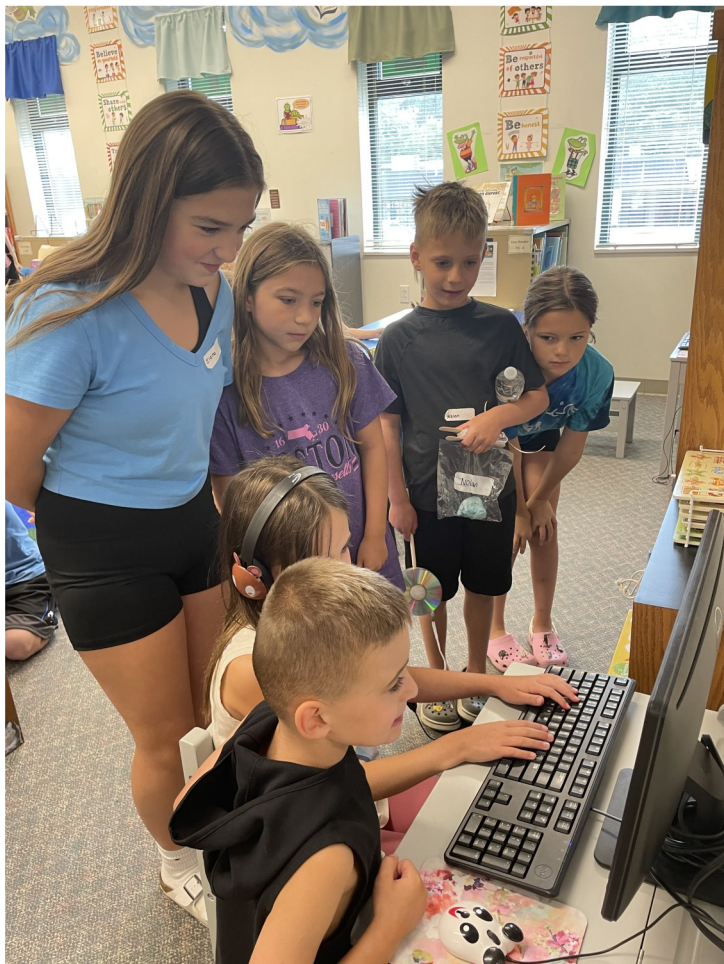
- Operating budget of less than \$250,000;
- Operated for at least three years; and
- Provide a program in at least one of the eight funding areas supported by the Acorn Fund.

### Evaluation Criteria:

- Quality of programming;
- Community impact as gauged by the number of people served, programs offered or other measurable component; and
- Improvement in the organization's financial position since inception or over the last five years.



## Enhancing Educational Opportunities



*New computers and software have engaged these young library patrons in learning.*

Heritage Public Library has experienced a technological transformation, thanks to a \$25,000 grant from the **Community CARE Fund** in 2021.

The Library's new website takes center stage in the transformation. Not only is it a hub for distributing information about library services and events, but it also serves as a resource center catering to learners of all ages and plays a pivotal role in streamlining the donation process.

The grant also enabled the library to purchase computers and age-appropriate software programs, marking a significant step forward in making the library more accessible and efficient for its community.

These upgrades perfectly align with Heritage Public Library's commitment to providing top-quality materials and services that address educational, informational, cultural, social, and recreational needs.



[www.heritagelibrarypa.org](http://www.heritagelibrarypa.org)

## Making Our Communities A Little Safer

Local first responders received a financial boost from the **Range Resources Good Neighbors Fund** to enable them to be better prepared to respond when the community needs them.

Grants of \$159,500 were awarded earlier this year to 32 local first responder organizations. The grants will help purchase a variety of items including rescue tools, personal protective equipment, and communication devices as well as support critical facility upgrades.

Max Oravetz, field security coordinator for Range Resources, said he knows what first responders go through every day. "We appreciate the dedication and hard work of our first responders; they are always there for all of us when we need them the most. We hope the Good Neighbors Fund can help make their jobs a little easier, and our communities a little safer."



*Mike Kazmarski, Chief Stanley "Stush" Sadowski, and Ron Stanton of the Cecil Township Volunteer Fire Company #1.*



# Celebrating a Milestone Anniversary



*"I've admired this building for years and always wanted to see inside."*

*"Thank you for taking such great care of this historic treasure."*

*"What a lovely place to come to work."*

These were common sentiments of the more than 200 guests who attended the 175th anniversary celebration of the Samuel T. Brownlee House this summer.

Built in the antebellum period when the United States flag had only 30 stars, James K. Polk served as President, and the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 ignited the women's suffrage movement in the United States, the Brownlee House has weathered many storms, both political and physical.

*Visitors to the 175th Anniversary Open House enjoying the grounds.*

Samuel T. Brownlee commissioned the House to be built on the family's sprawling sheep farm in 1848, as a wedding gift to his wife Catherine Clark. From a written account by Charles Miller who, along with his wife Lucille, owned the house when it was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1976, it is believed that most of the materials to construct the house were obtained locally.

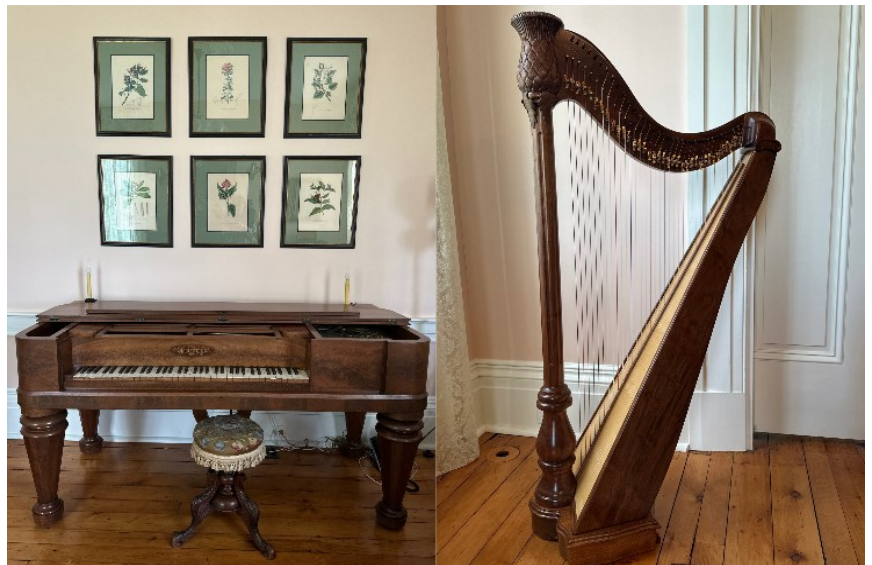
James D. Van Trump, notable architectural historian and co-founder of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, prepared the National Registry application, writing "The Brownlee House is one of the best preserved and well-maintained formal Georgian-Greek Revival Houses in Washington County."

Over time many families owned the former farmhouse and used it as either a primary or summer residence. When William and Sandra Stout owned the House, they used it to operate their business. In December 2013, the Stouts generously donated the House to the Community Foundation for its use and for the enjoyment of the community.

A multi-phase rehabilitation project of more than \$1.0 million followed and was completed in March of 2020. As the result of those rehabilitation efforts, local historian and coordinator of the Washington County History and Landmarks Foundation, Sandy Mansmann, referred to the house rehabilitation as "a jewel in the preservation crown of Washington County."

The Scotch-Irish Heritage Rooms on the first floor represent how an immigrant family whose hard work gained wealth in "the new world" might have lived in Washington County during that period. Multiple references to the national flower of Scotland, the thistle, are visible throughout the Heritage Rooms, including a thistle-bordered floor cloth in the Heritage Hallway and the Brownlee Harp, a hand-crafted reproduction Celtic harp crowned with a thistle carving.

The Foundation hosts historic groups at the House throughout the year and is currently preparing for its annual holiday celebration, the *Brownlee Yuletide*.



*An authentic 1855 Chickering Piano, which was the first antique item donated for the Brownlee House, and the Brownlee Harp on display in the Zoog Family Music Room.*



# Washington County Community Foundation

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