

Madison Gives

Winter 2025



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Madison
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



Mission

MCF will engage Greater Madison in philanthropy to advance a more vibrant and equitable community.

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A Vision for the Future

"Madison Community Foundation will serve as a trusted philanthropic leader, enhancing the quality of life in Greater Madison, and fostering a community where fairness, inclusion and respect thrive."

This is MCF's Vision statement — the goal we strive for as we work with people in our community to make a meaningful impact and enhance the quality of life for all. Whether you have a donor advised fund, contribute to an MCF Community Impact or Field of Interest fund, or work for a nonprofit, you play a crucial role in achieving this vision.

MCF's Community Impact and Field of Interest Funds exist because donors like Michael and Cathy Baer have sought a place where they can support the community and entrust decisions about use of those resources to an organization that works in the nonprofit field every day. MCF approaches this responsibility with the recognition that while these endowments provide a perpetual source of support for our community, the needs and opportunities of the community evolve over time, and we need to be responsive to those changes.

Thanks to the many Community Impact donors over the years, MCF made grants of \$1.34 million to 20 organizations this past fall. We've shared some of our Community Impact and Field of Interest grants in the issue. Finally, as MCF grows, so does our capacity to create positive change. On page 3, we're delighted to celebrate the additions and promotions within our team.

Bob Sorge
President and CEO



Carmen Jeschke Recognized by *Madison365*

Congratulations to MCF's Vice President of Finance & Operations, Carmen Jeschke, on being named one of Wisconsin's 40 Most Influential Black Leaders for 2024 by *Madison365*!

MCF is proud to have such an inspiring leader on our team, whose efforts continue to make a difference both within our organization and in the wider community.



MCF Is Growing: New Roles and New Faces

In the past year, MCF has grown, with new staff members joining our team and others moving into new roles.

Andy Davey has been named the inaugural Director of the Goodman Nonprofit Center. Andy joined MCF in 2017 as Director of Research and Advocacy, where his research and convening of nonprofits helped MCF better understand the challenges facing organizations in our community. Andy's leadership skills, forward thinking and deep connections in the Madison nonprofit sector made him stand out in a strong field of candidates for the Director position.

Jeneen Hartley is MCF's new Vice President of Community Impact. Jeneen comes to MCF with more than 25 years of experience in the nonprofit sector, with a focus on education, public policy and capacity building. Previously, Jeneen held leadership roles at the Douglas Education Service District, The Ford Family Foundation and Family Philanthropy Advisors, driving equity-focused improvements, dynamic teams and managing multimillion-dollar grant portfolios. Jeneen will lead the Community Impact team in working with nonprofit organizations, offering technical support and connecting them with funding opportunities both within MCF and beyond.

Jazzmine Haygood is moving into the new position of Community Impact Coordinator. Jazzmine began at MCF in 2022 as an Administrative Assistant and soon took on more responsibility as the Grants Assistant for the Community Impact team. As Grants Assistant, Jazzmine received and processed Letters of Inquiry for multiple grant rounds throughout the year, organized all grantmaking materials, sent award and declination letters, and tracked evaluation reports. As Community Impact Coordinator, Jazzmine will continue her work supporting MCF's grantmaking and also will provide support for the Goodman Nonprofit Center.

Lex Page is MCF's new Donor Engagement Coordinator. Lex will work primarily with the Donor Engagement team to communicate with donors, welcome new fundholders and Legacy Society members, identify and encourage participation in events, and help plan events that celebrate philanthropy, such as Madison Gives and MCF's Advisor Webinar series. He will also help facilitate meetings, schedule events and manage projects for his team. Lex is a recent graduate of University of Virginia, where he received a degree in English. While at UVA, he engaged in community outreach and student advocacy work for his residential college and LGBTQ+ student groups.



Pictured left to right: Jeneen Hartley, Andy Davey, Lex Page, and Jazzmine Haygood

MCF Staff Out and About



Touring the new Madison Reading Project Bus.



At the unveiling of the plans for Madison College's future child care facility.



Enjoying the Madison Children's Museum's Adult Swim programming.

Stories of Impact

Each year, MCF's Community Impact staff, committee and Board of Governors work to identify organizations having an impact on our community to support with grants from our Community Impact and Field of Interest Funds. You can find the complete list of 2024 grants at www.madisongives.org/2024grants.

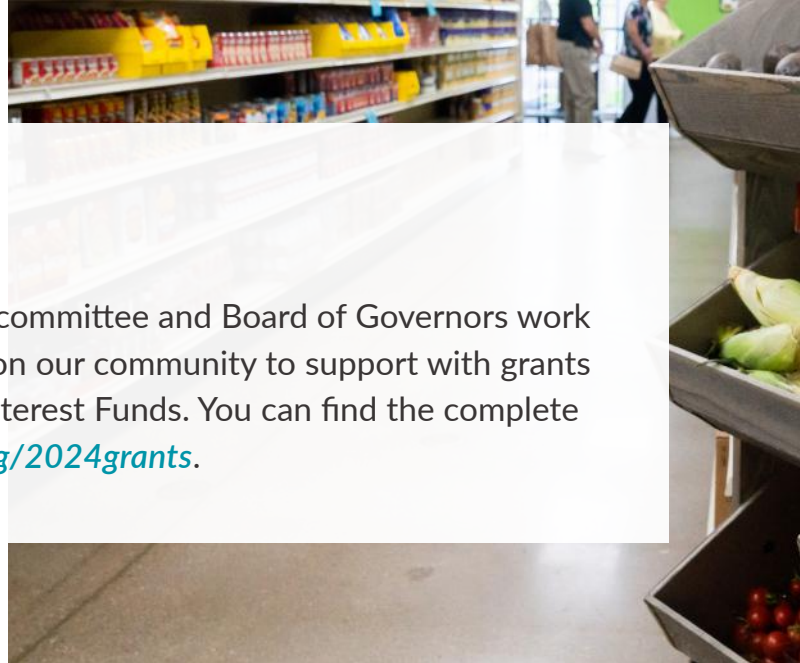


Badger Prairie Needs Network Has Grown From Closet to Warehouse

In 1986, a group from the Church of Christ in Verona recognized a growing need for food assistance among their congregation, so they started a food pantry out of a small closet at the church. By 1994, the pantry was seeing such high use that a larger, grocery-store-style food pantry was established in the basement of the Verona Public Library.

Today, that pantry is known as Badger Prairie Needs Network, and it has expanded to serve approximately 4,000 households and 12,000 individuals each year. "Our current 'mini warehouse' was designed to accommodate up to 500,000 pounds of food, but by filling every nook and cranny in the building, we've managed to distribute over two million pounds this year," said Lisa Marshall, BPNN's Communications Director.

BPNN has seen a dramatic increase in people needing its services. In response, BPNN is building a 12,000 square foot, two-story addition to its Verona facility that will double the amount of food it can distribute each year while creating a better experience for both guests and volunteers. MCF supported this expansion with a 2024 Community Impact grant.



"The \$100,000 grant from Madison Community Foundation is an amazing gift. It put us over the top on our \$4.5 million fundraising campaign," said Marshall. "The funds from MCF will be used to furnish the upper level that will serve as an open workspace for our 20-person volunteer leadership team and a training center for volunteers." The expanded space is expected to open in August 2025.

Learn more about Badger Prairie Needs Network at www.bpnn.org



Dane Dances Brings People Together

Every Friday in August, on the Monona Terrace rooftop, Dane Dances brings people together to celebrate inclusivity and goodwill through dance. The series features dance lessons, a variety of local bands, and delicious food from local vendors — all for free!



“Dane Dances’ concept is simple enough,” explained Al Cooper, the organization’s president. “By bringing different people together to enjoy each other’s cultures and each other’s company, they could learn to live together as a community.”

In 2024, MCF joined Dane Dances in celebrating its 25th anniversary, providing a \$5,000 grant to support programming. Across five nights, the celebration brought more than 10,000 people together to enjoy live music and dance.

Dane Dances features bands in a variety of genres, giving smaller bands the opportunity to perform for a larger general audience and providing opportunities for people to experience artists they may not have heard of otherwise. Each night features two bands from different genres carefully selected to bring diverse audiences together in one space.

“A Rhythm and Blues band will perform with a Pop band, or a Latin Band,” Cooper explained. “This combination of music brings the diversity of Dane County communities together.”

“The extraordinary music, outstanding food and energetic crowd make this event an example of what this community is all about,” Cooper said. “The Monona Terrace Rooftop site reminds one of a concert in New York’s Central Park, or Chicago’s Millennium Park. It is a space for the citizens of Dane County regardless of income, age or race. It is especially important now to bring the community together in a social activity to help break down the divide that has developed in our nation.”

You can learn more about Dane Dances at www.danedances.org

Felicia’s Donation Closet Eases Transitions

In 2020, Felicia Raye Diny posted on Facebook asking friends for furniture and essentials they might be looking to get rid of. Diny recognized that few resources existed for survivors after their shelter stay, a time when they are particularly vulnerable. That simple post would lead to the creation of Felicia’s Donation Closet.

“I started Felicia’s Donation Closet because I am a survivor myself,” said Diny. “I wanted to give back to the community by helping women who were just like me. I never in my life thought that the nonprofit would be this HUGE!”

In the last four years, Diny and her team of volunteers have been able to provide furniture and other household essentials to 158 women and 270 children, all of whom were living below the poverty level. “Between 2022 and 2023, the number of families in need tripled,” Diny said. “The need is growing and we are growing with it.”

Felicia’s Donation Closet was using a moving truck to pick up and deliver furniture. To keep up with demand, they had to move warehouse spaces three times in 2024. As an entirely volunteer run organization, this posed some major challenges.

So Felicia’s Donation Closet launched a campaign, which MCF supported with a \$75,000 Community Impact grant, to purchase a van to make smaller donation pick-ups more cost-effective. The money raised also allowed the organization to expand its warehouse space and hire full-time staff.

“This grant has already helped us so much! We were already able to purchase the van, which was much needed. We also rented another warehouse space next to our current one. I am in hopes to start hiring staff soon,” commented Diny. All of which will help support families during their transition to safe housing.

Learn more about Felicia’s Donation Closet at www.feliciasdonationcloset.org



Building a Foundation for Future Giving

In 2015, Michael and Cathy Baer established the Baer Family Futures Fund at MCF as a starting point for their long-term giving plans. “It was intended to be a placeholder for now,” Michael said. “Our goal was to use this as a way to start growing a fund and investing in long-term community support.”

As a financial advisor, Michael spends his time devising strategies for his clients, and he applies these same strategies to his own philanthropic plans. “I’m a firm believer in creating a framework to support organizations over the next 50 or 100 years,” he said. “While Cathy and I contribute to various organizations with annual donations, we wanted to complement this with an endowment to ensure our support continues long after we’ve stopped making yearly gifts.”

Michael’s strategy to enhance his philanthropic impact will accelerate as he begins to take the required minimum distributions from his retirement accounts. By using qualified charitable distributions, he can leverage their tax benefits to direct more funds toward his charitable giving.

“If my planning was successful, we should have accumulated more in our retirement accounts than we’ll need,” Michael noted.

The Baer Family Futures Fund currently supports MCF’s Community Impact grantmaking. “We wanted the funds to be unrestricted so that MCF could strategically decide their best use. Today that’s grantmaking, but it could evolve in the future,” Michael said. MCF’s deep local knowledge was, in fact, part of what drew Michael to MCF, both for himself and his clients.

“With MCF, I don’t need to be an expert on every aspect of charitable giving. Their talented staff brings strong expertise about charitable giving to the table,” Michael added. He values this expertise for himself and for his clients. “MCF’s team shares the same goal: to help people realize their charitable and legacy goals.”

“MCF offers the strategies and tools that financial advisors and donors need to make informed decisions about how to achieve their individual philanthropic goals. Also, MCF has its finger on the pulse of our community’s evolving needs.”

Speaking of his own giving, Michael concluded, “Organizations come and go and change. We trust MCF to be here and to make smart decisions for allocating resources to make our community caring, active and vibrant.”



Advisors: Our 2025 Webinar Series Kicks Off April 16

MCF’s Advisor Webinar series features free quarterly lunchtime webinars to help you deepen your knowledge on charitable giving topics. Our 2025 series kicks off on Wednesday, April 16 at noon. Links for registration and more information will be available soon. If you’re not currently on our advisor mailing list, contact Alison Helland at ahelland@madisongives.org.

When a Private Foundation No Longer Fits

Private foundations can be valuable tools for families that want to direct charitable gifts to their favorite nonprofits or develop charitable programming of their own and even hire staff (including family members) to manage their giving. But they can also be time consuming to manage and costly to operate.

What if you've created a private foundation and discover it's no longer meeting your goals, or are now seeking a simpler way to manage your family's giving?

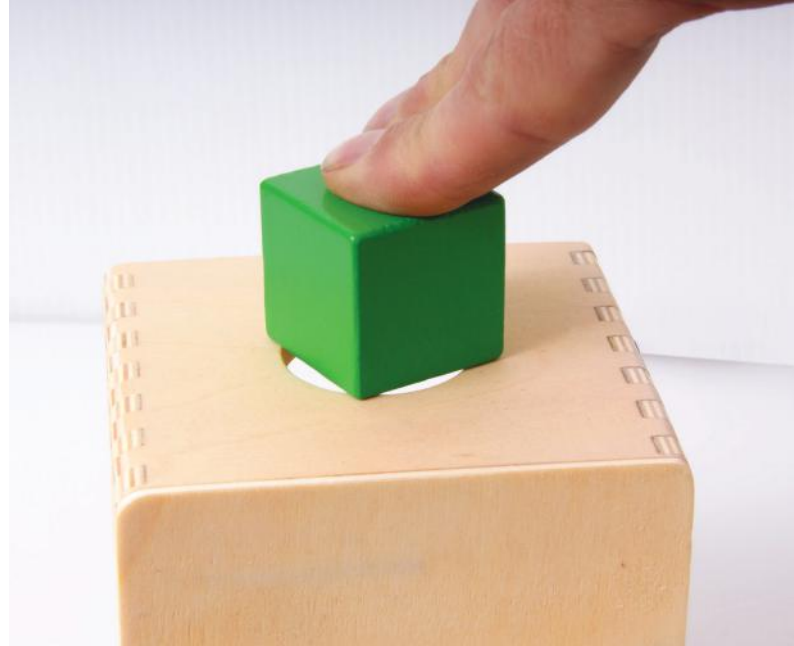
Donor Advised Funds Can Provide an Easy Succession Plan

There are many reasons you may find that your private foundation is no longer meeting your needs. Perhaps the foundation is relatively small or has given away a substantial amount of its assets and is paying significant annual legal and accounting fees to maintain relatively modest holdings. Or maybe your busy family members still enjoy deciding who to give grants to each year but no longer have the time to manage the investments or administrative tasks required to operate a family foundation. Or perhaps you would prefer to adopt an even more hands-off approach and have your giving priorities supported automatically each year.

Whatever the case may be, transferring your private foundation's assets to a donor advised fund may provide real benefits. Once you establish a donor advised fund, you or your designated representatives can continue to recommend distributions to your charitable priorities on your timeline, while being freed from any of the responsibilities (mailing checks, maintaining books, managing investments, preparing tax filings, recording minutes, etc.)

This can allow you to focus on giving and making a difference for the causes you care about. Many families involve children, grandchildren or others in the decision-making process, providing an opportunity to explore your family's values and share in the joy of philanthropy.

With a donor advised fund, the responsibility of directing distributions can be passed from generation to generation, continuing a family's charitable legacy in perpetuity. You also can set up a named fund to support certain causes or entire fields of interest into the future.



Finding the Right Fund Sponsor

Not all donor advised fund sponsors administer funds the same way. To ensure the fund continues to achieve your goals, select one that aligns with your values and giving goals. At MCF, for example:

- We can help you identify local nonprofit organizations working in specific areas here in Madison, across Wisconsin or beyond.
- The fees paid for the administration of a fund at MCF stay in Madison and benefit the work we do in our community.
- Your donor advised fund can facilitate multi-generational giving when you name your children or grandchildren as successor advisors to your fund.

Navigating the Transition Process Requires Some Attention

If you plan to transfer your private foundation's assets to a donor advised fund, understanding the required steps is key to your success. It is also critical that you bring your legal and tax advisors into the conversation before you initiate the transfer. Failure to take the correct actions in the correct order can have significant legal and tax consequences.

MCF has worked with many families to create donor advised funds to serve as a successor to their private foundations. While people's goals for giving are as unique as they are, MCF can help them continue to meet their giving goals long into the future.

SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday, May 20
Madison Gives

Monona Terrace

Reception: 5:00 pm

Dinner & Program 6:15 pm

Registration information coming soon.

Thanks to our sponsors!

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The Power of a Sewing Machine

The Sewing Machine Project started in 2005 when, in response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, founder and director Margaret John Jankowski collected donated sewing machines and, in collaboration with the local chapter of the American Hindu Association, shipped 25 sewing machines to orphanages in affected regions.

The following year, the project expanded to serve Hurricane Katrina survivors in New Orleans, and it has continued to grow. To date, they have delivered more than 4,500 sewing machines, and have added sewing classes locally to help students, often women and recent immigrants, make culturally appropriate and comfortable clothing.

With support from \$2,500 grant from MCF, the Sewing Machine Project plans to offer more sewing classes, doubling its current capacity.

"A sewing machine is a remarkably powerful tool. Of course, on a practical level, machine recipients are able to mend what they have rather than having to buy something new. They learn to sew for their children. Some start small sewing businesses," commented Jankowski. "On an even deeper level, students find community when they come together to sew, and when we sew together, our conversations go far beyond sewing. We problem-solve together. We are not alone."

