Freeport Community Foundation Grants
Over Half Million Dollars in 2020

As of publication, the Freeport Community Foundation (FCF) has awarded $505,927 in grant funding this year – an all-time high for the organization. Of that, $365,000 came in the form of COVID-19 emergency relief funding benefiting at-risk residents, families and non-profits throughout Stephenson, Jo Daviess and Carroll counties.

When the COVID-19 crisis began to unfold in late spring, the FCF leveraged regional and statewide relationship to garner three separate rounds of Illinois COVID-19 Response Fund (ICRF) emergency grant funds to the benefit of northwest Illinois.

“`The Foundation Board of Directors is very proud of the pandemic emergency relief work our organization was able to do in partnership with the Illinois COVID-19 Response Fund. Not just the significant amount of money that our staff was able to garner from out-of-area resources to benefit our struggling nonprofit partners in Stephenson, Jo Daviess, and Carroll counties, but also the way our organization was able to so quickly pivot from our day-to-day operations to take advantage of this opportunity to the benefit of our neighbors throughout northwest Illinois.” — Brad Stewart, FCF Board President

2020 Matt Marvin Community Needs Grants

The Freeport Community Foundation also continued distributing grant awards from its Matt Marvin Community Needs Fund. Seven agencies shared $51,667.93 in grant support as part of the Spring 2020 grants cycle. For the Fall cycle, 13 grants totaling $94,248.93 were distributed to 13 northwest Illinois agencies.

Please refer to the Foundation’s website at www.freeportcommunityfoundation.org for a complete list of 2020 grants awarded.

Awards included $365,000 in COVID-19 Emergency Relief

Between April and August, the Freeport Community Foundation (FCF) distributed $365,000 in support of 48 emergency needs grants to 31 northwest Illinois organizations. This included funding for 14 northwest Illinois organizations offering assorted COVID-19 Emergency Needs Support programs to citizens impacted by the pandemic, ten toward emergency food distributions throughout the region, seven assisting with emergency childcare programming, four supporting short-term economic stimulus projects, and four emergency non-profit operational assistances as related to COVID-19 losses.

Round 1 included $100,000 in Illinois COVID-19 Response Fund (ICRF) funding and a matching $100,000 from the FCF Matt Marvin Community Needs Fund. The FCF distributed the funds in partnership with the United Way of Northwest Illinois (UWNWIL), which added an additional $5,000 from an anonymous donor.

Round 2 of ICRF emergency relief funding was an additional $100,000 earmarked by ICRF specifically for Jo Daviess county.

The final round of ICRF funding, an additional $60,000, came to the FCF via a partnership with the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois and was restricted to Stephenson county-based organizations.
The mission of the Freeport Community Foundation is to empower non-profits to develop solutions that help northwest Illinois communities thrive.

An improved quality of life for everyone!

Coming Next Time

• 2020 End of Year Donor Fund distributions
• FCF FY2019 Audit and FY2020 Financials summaries
• Partner Spotlight – United Way of Northwest Illinois.

The Craig Allan Wilson Trust Awards HCC Scholarships

Four Highland Community College students received Craig A. Wilson Agriculture Scholarships – Shane Houzenya (2020/2021 academic year), Shelby Judd (2019/2020 academic year), Cody VanDyke (2020/2021 academic year), and Natalie Wilkinson (2019/2020 academic year).

Craig Wilson, a lifelong resident of Freeport, passed in 2016. He worked for many years alongside his father on the family farm and was known for his dedication to the Freeport area.

Students Wilkinson and Judd are pictured here, along with Wilson’s mother, Betty Wilson, and his sister, Sherry Sager, at the 2019/2020 HCC Scholarship Awards program. The 2020/2021 program was canceled due to the pandemic.

Dan & Nancy Schmitt Family Fund Awards Three Grants

In September, Dan and Nancy Schmitt distributed three grants from their Donor Advised Fund, the Dan & Nancy Schmitt Family Fund. Recipient agencies were Freeport Area Church Cooperative (FACC), the Family YMCA of Northwest Illinois, and Amity Learning Center.

Amity Director Ashley Harms is pictured between Dan and Nancy Schmitt.

FCF Announces 2021 Matt Marvin Community Needs Grant Schedule

Seeks Volunteers for Grants Review Committee

Area non-profits are encouraged to mark their calendars for key dates in the 2021 Matt Marvin Community Needs Grant Cycle:

• January 26
  – Virtual Grant Writers Workshop (details to be announced)

• Spring Grant Cycle
  – Open February 2; Close March 3
  – Recipients announced late April

• Fall Grant Cycle
  – Open July 26; Close August 23
  – Recipients announced late September

The FCF is also seeking volunteers for a limited number of Community Grant Reviewers, especially from Jo Daviess and Carroll counties. Volunteer responsibilities involve about 15 to 20 hours per grant cycle and all grant reviewing and meetings are conducted virtually. Interested parties are encouraged to email fcfdirector@freeportcommunityfoundation.org.

Community Connections Moving to Bi-Monthly Schedule

The FCF is excited to announce that, starting in February 2021, our Community Connections newsletter is moving to a bi-monthly schedule. Doing so will allow the Foundation to better communicate our programs and projects to you, our neighbors and supporters throughout northwest Illinois, as well as provide more opportunities to spotlight and thank our donors and key partners. Community Connections will be available in either postal mail or e-mail format.