

BCF Scholarships

Developing our Greatest Assets

When John & Dede Howard asked the Berrien Community Foundation if it was possible to endow a scholarship for deserving music students 18 years ago, they may not have known that their idea would spark a robust program that helps send over 100 kids to college every year.

Since that first music scholarship, donors have created scholarships that honor and remember loved ones, promote career paths and reward excellence in everything from academics to community service. The scholarships come in all shapes and sizes providing help for students throughout the community.

Because of the generosity of donors who see the value in education, this year **the Berrien Community Foundation awarded over \$185,000 in scholarships to Berrien County students.**

It's More Than Just Finances

The scholarships do more than ease a financial burden. Scholarships also provide **a vote of confidence** for students as they head out into the world. Some come with mentoring help from the donors or their companies. Some hold the students accountable for performance in order to renew the funding.

The other hope as students receive help is that when it is their turn to look back and help, **they will remember how someone made their burden lighter.**

“Our hope is that wherever you go, when you reach success in your careers, you will look around you and see the needs,” BCF President Lisa Cripps-Downey told scholars at the event. “That you will come back to the Community Foundation and say ‘can you connect me with a need in my community?’”

“In numerous circumstances, I have had to decide which was more important, getting clothing for my three beautiful children or paying for school supplies. The Dunn Scholarship will help me pay for my education without having to take out several student loans.”



- Ruby, 2018 Dunn Scholarship Recipient

“Thank you for helping me to believe that I can tackle college, and to believe in myself and in my dreams.”



- Sydney, Upton Opportunity Scholarship Recipient

“By being the first in my family to go to college, I know that I will be an inspiration to my three younger siblings as well as the many children in my community in a similar situation.”



- Andrew, 2018 Trefz Family Scholarship Recipient



A Legacy of Determination - The Drews Family Scholarship

**“You can be whatever you want to be if you put your mind to it,”
- Al Drews**

When Al Drews graduated from high school he asked his dad if he should go on to college. His father showed him a paycheck and told him he only needed to work hard. He didn't need an advanced education.

Al ended up joining the Navy and serving in the Korean War. He became a senior project designer at Whirlpool but “he was limited by his education,” said his son David Drews. “He couldn't advance even though he knew as much as some of the engineers.”

Al Drews worked hard and supported his family of five boys but knew his education limited his success. He was determined that wasn't going to happen to his sons.

He gave them a message of hope and choice “*you can be whatever you want to be,*” and a challenge to work hard and persevere “*if you put your mind to it.*”

All five of his sons went on to get college degrees including several masters degrees. His grandchildren did the same. Education is part of his legacy.

“Education is the key to opportunity,” said his son David. “We needed help when we were going to school.” Scholarships were key and it was time to “pay it back.”

In honor of Al and their mother Virginia, Al's son David Drews and wife Lisa created the Drews Family Scholarship at the Berrien Community Foundation. Al Drews passed away this year but the legacy of his commitment to the importance of education will live on forever through the Drews Family Scholarship.



BCF Awards Over \$117,000 in “For Good” Grants

The Berrien Community Foundation awarded “For Good” Grants of over \$117,000 to Berrien County nonprofit organizations. “For Good” grants are made possible through donations to the BCF Community Endowment.

The grants come in two sizes - “For Good” Major (\$1,001-\$10,000) and “For Good” Minor (up to \$1,000).

“For Good” Minor Grant recipients were **Girls on the Run of Southwest Michigan, Coloma Community Schools, African American History and Literature Gallery, Boy Scout Troop 570, Southshore Concert Band, SW MI Human Trafficking Task Force, and Watervliet Free Methodist Church.**

“For Good” Major Grants went to:

- **100 Women Strong** for Emergency Financial Assistance to Berrien County Women
- **Berrien County Council for Children** for the Child Abuse Prevention Education Program
- **Berrien County Youth Fair Association** to fund a Sanitary Sewer Study
- **Boys and Girls Club of Benton Harbor** for the Summer Literacy Program
- **Chikaming Township** to support the Cherry Beach Preservation and Expansion Project
- **Children's Music Workshop** to support new

equipment for theatrical productions

- **Cornerstone Alliance** to fund the 2019 Mini Maker Faire
- **Eau Claire Public Schools** to support the Music Program
- **Friends of the Harbor Country Trails** to support a Trail Path on the Marquette Greenway
- **Grace Christian Schools** for a new Safe Stage
- **Humane Society of Southwestern Michigan** for the Animal Rescue and Re-homing Program
- **LOGAN Community Resources** to purchase Window Blinds to Aid Sensory Needs
- **Mosaic Christian Community Development** for the Jobs for Life Program
- **Niles District Library** to renovate unused space for a Community Center at the Library
- **Southwest MI Symphony Orchestra** for the production of the musical In The Heights
- **St. Augustine of Canterbury Episcopal Church** to support the Community Food Pantry
- **YMCA** to support the Benton Harbor Summer Impact Program

How to Apply

The next round of “For Good” Grants is due September 10. To apply online visit www.berriencommunity.org.