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Berrien County Gives Back

October 2016

Introducing: *The Stephen E. Upton Love Your Community Endowment at BCF*

Thanks to a generous endowment gift to the Berrien Community Foundation from Steve and Elizabeth Upton, Berrien County non-profit organizations will have the opportunity to receive a grant of at least \$50,000 each year to support needs in the community.

The Stephen E. Upton Love Your Community Endowment was announced at the Berrien Community Foundation's 64th Annual Meeting & Celebration at the Heritage Museum & Cultural Center. The endowment gift will be part of Steve Upton's legacy of giving.

"Steve not only loves Berrien County, he believes in the hearts and spirits of the people who live here," said BCF President Lisa Cripps-Downey as she announced the new endowment. "Steve never says it's time to give up when a problem is too big. He says we have to look at it in another way. We have to try harder. We have to come back to the table. We have to love more."

The \$1.2 million endowment will allow non-profits to participate in a competitive grant process resulting in one grant of at least \$50,000 each year. The grant will be awarded to a different non-profit organization each year and is available to any area of interest.

"This is just too generous," Upton said to the crowd that immediately began a standing ovation upon hearing the announcement. "My father started a little company called Whirlpool and this community has been so good to my family. We wanted to keep that money right here where it came from."



Continued from Page 1

“The endowment will forever serve as a reminder of the kindness, generosity and love Steve and his wife Elizabeth have shown to Berrien County,” Cripps-Downey said. “Through this endowment he will continue to give to us and to teach us what it really means to love and believe in your community.”

Members of the community were also able to surprise Steve Upton at the meeting when a choir came from the audience to thank him for the amazing gift. Representatives from the many areas the Stephen E. Upton Love Your Community Grant could support presented him with a rose as a way to say thank you and then joined the choir in a performance of “Seasons of Love.”

In a surprising twist, the first grant winner was announced at the meeting. The Therapeutic Equestrian Center (TEC) in Watervliet was the first \$50,000 grant recipient for the TEC for Vets Program. The program uses horses to provide therapy for our wounded veterans. Whether the need is emotional due to post traumatic stress or physical because of injuries suffered during service, the horses find a special way to relate to and help our veterans.



Thank You Hillary Bubb!

Berrien Community Foundation Board of Trustees Chair Hillary Bubb was honored for 16 years of service to the Berrien Community Foundation. Bubb came on to the Board of Trustees in 2000 to fill the remainder of her husband Larry Bubb’s term on the board following his death.

Hillary is from New Buffalo and has worked as a trustee and grant committee member also serving as board secretary and vice chair.

Hon. Mabel Mayfield assumes the position of Board Chair, with Larry Schuler becoming the Vice Chair, Bob Harrison was appointed Secretary of the Board and Jeff Dorn will continue as treasurer.



Hon. Mabel Mayfield presents Hillary Bubb a plaque in appreciation of her service.



Coming Up Next at BCF

Volunteer with BCF to Provide Care Kits to Low Income Seniors

November 29 is **Giving Tuesday** and BCF is asking you to give some time to help us provide care kits to low income senior citizens in Berrien County. Through a partnership with Honor Credit Union Foundation, BCF and its volunteers will package 300 kits including items such as shampoo, toothpaste, lotion, etc. to deliver to our seniors in need.

What We Know

- 1 in 5 seniors skip, delay or cut back on medical expenses to afford household necessities.
- Nearly 20% of Berrien County seniors live at 150% of the poverty level (\$17,505 annual income).

How You Can Help

Sign up to volunteer for **Giving Tuesday**
November 29, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. (one-hour shifts)
at the Berrien Community Foundation.

You can sign up on-line at www.berriencommunity.org/senior or by calling Adrienne Glisson at 269.983.3304 ext. 3.

Great Job Mobile Food Pantry Volunteers!

On August 17 a mighty group of Berrien Community Foundation volunteers helped to distribute 8,300 pounds of food to almost 200 families. This was part of a BCF grant made to Feeding America for the Mobile Food Pantry.

The event was held at the Mosaic Resale Store parking lot in Benton Harbor and is set up much like a farmers market

where people can come and shop for the food that is best for their family. "This was a great experience," said BCF member and volunteer Richard Hensel. "So glad to share an important moment... serving others."



Congratulations Golden Acorn Winners!

The 2016 Berrien Community Foundation Golden Acorn Excellence Awards are given to organizations that previously received BCF grants. The winning organizations showed excellence in their programming in the areas of Volunteerism, Innovation, Community Impact and Overall Excellence. The winning organizations receive an additional \$1,000 for the program with the Overall Excellence winner receiving \$2,000.

The Golden Acorn Award for Overall Excellence was awarded to Curious Kids Museum for its Dream with DaVinci program. Dream with DaVinci is the Curious Kids' Museum's first in-house designed traveling exhibit. It took a volunteer army to make this happen.



The Golden Acorn for Excellence in Volunteerism was awarded to Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank for the Mobile Food Pantry. The mobile food pantry through Feeding America provides thousands of pounds of both fresh and shelf stable food to families in Southwest Michigan who are in need.

The Golden Acorn for Excellence in Community Impact was awarded to The Boys & Girls Club of Benton Harbor for the Night Court Program. Night Court is a unique program that combines mentoring and basketball to help members focus on positive behaviors and develop strong relationships with adult volunteer community leaders.



The Golden Acorn Award for Excellence in Innovation was awarded to The Heritage Museum & Cultural Center for their Sports in Southwest Michigan Exhibit. "Sports in Southwest Michigan" is a colorful display of historic uniforms, equipment, trophies, sporting event photos and media, inspires visitors with local stories, while providing interactive activities for all ages.



Berrien

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