



BERRIEN
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
For Good. For Ever.™

Berrien County Gives Back

Fall 2017

Keeping It Fresh

The Berrien Community Foundation revealed a fresh new look at its 2017 annual meeting.

The new logo symbolizes For **Good**. For **Ever**. by intertwining a heart and an infinity symbol. The Foundation also revealed the new mission and vision statements that will



lead them

to connect resources with needs throughout Berrien County.

The Board of Trustees worked with local marketing agency Holt Bosse to design the new logo as an expression of who we are in the community. “We connect resources with the needs in Berrien County,” said BCF President Lisa Cripps-Downey. “It’s everything from donor advised fund holders who want to know the needs in the community so they can help, to someone with a canoe in his garage... and we happen to know Five Pines is looking for a canoe... to a donor who wants to leave

a legacy through an estate gift. We provide an EASY way for donors to LOVE their community FOREVER and create a lasting legacy.”

The logo is new but what sets BCF apart - the core of what we do - remains the same as the idea that our founders had 65 years ago when they met and founded the Berrien Community Foundation at Holly’s Restaurant in Benton Harbor. “It is the idea of For **Good**. For **Ever**.” Cripps-Downey said. “Through endowments, we are creating lasting resources that help us love Berrien County forever.”

Mission:

To connect the power of people who care with causes and organizations that strengthen our communities

Vision:

To build strong, vibrant, and sustainable communities.

For **Good**. For **Ever**.



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Love Your Community Grant Announced

The Readiness Center in Benton Harbor was the recipient of the \$50,000 Stephen E. Upton Love Your Community Grant through the Berrien Community Foundation. The award was announced at the 65th Annual Meeting and Celebration of the Berrien Community Foundation.

“I can’t believe we got this,” said Readiness Center Director Sister Paulita Walters. “This will help us to continue on. When I started this, I asked for a grant for \$2,000. It’s always been hard for me to ask but it just shows the generosity of this community.”

The Stephen E. Upton Love Your Community Grant is an annual award to a non-profit organization in Berrien County. The Readiness Center project is a program to bridge the transition from the current director into a volunteer role while ensuring the future of this program for children and families in our community.



Coming Up Next at BCF

Volunteer with BCF to Provide Care Kits to Low-Income Seniors

November 28 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 500 kits including items such as shampoo, toothpaste, lotion, etc. to deliver to our seniors in need.

How You Can Help

Sign up to volunteer for **Giving Tuesday**
November 28, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. (one-hour shifts)
at the Berrien Community Foundation.

You can sign up on-line at www.berriencommunity.org/senior
or by calling Berrien Community Foundation 269.983.3304.

\$500,000 Trefz Family Scholarship Announced at BCF

Students all over Berrien County who need help paying for college will have the opportunity to apply for a scholarship through the newly-established **Trefz Family Scholarship Fund**.

“This is such a great story of how Josephine Trefz took the opportunity to care for this community and provide for others something that she always wanted – a college education,” said BCF President Lisa Cripps-Downey.

Josephine and Richard Trefz purchased 17 acres of beach front property in 1953 for \$7,500. Together, they worked and built their home on the property. They lived very simply. Josephine worked as a secretary at V-M Corporation in Benton Harbor and Richard worked at the Studebaker plant in South Bend.

In 1968, they sold the land to Lincoln Township for \$45,000. That land became part of what we now know as Lincoln Township Park. It was combined with another parcel to create the park which is now over 34 acres with more than 400 feet of public lake front access.

“I love the idea that this gift provided both a space so many people enjoy through Lincoln Township Beach and then went on to build a scholarship fund,” Cripps-Downey said.

According to family members, Josephine and Richard invested the \$45,000 for retirement. In 1997, Josephine used the investment to establish a trust that would help take care of her and her siblings during their lifetimes and, upon their deaths, the remainder would be distributed, predominantly to form the scholarship fund at the Berrien Community Foundation. Josephine’s three siblings had all gone to college and it was something she would have wanted for herself, according to her nephew. Though she never went to college, many students will have the opportunity through this fund.

“A land purchase that first helped create a public park for all of us to enjoy now becomes a \$500,000 scholarship endowment to support approximately \$20,000 in scholarships each year for low-income students in Berrien County through the Trefz Family Scholarship Fund,” Cripps-Downey said. “What a beautiful gift.”



Above: Josephine Trefz as a young woman. **Below:** Josephine (far right) with her siblings and nephews

Thank You for Your Leadership

As we celebrate our 65th year of philanthropy in Berrien County, we've learned so much about the many people who helped BCF succeed. Margaret Poole was the first full-time executive director of the Berrien Community Foundation and her leadership was inspirational. Under her energetic direction the activity, outreach and impact of the Berrien Community Foundation blossomed. Her leadership saw many firsts: scholarships, Golden Acorn Excellence in Teaching Awards, Golden Acorn mini-grants, Teens Exhibiting Able Minds Youth Committee, scholarship banquets, grant receptions, grantee tours, 100 Women Strong, Coast Cares for Kids, newsletters, speakers tours and amazing anniversary celebrations. Thank you, Margaret, for your leadership!



Margaret Poole speaks after being honored at the 65th Annual Meeting & Celebration.

Congratulations 2017 Golden Acorn Winners

Congratulations to the 2017 Golden Acorn Excellence Award winners! BCF volunteer Brittney Rogers was recognized for giving over 300 hours of volunteer time to the Berrien Community Foundation. As part of the recognition she was allowed to grant \$1,000 to the non-profit organization of her choice.



The Benton Harbor Summer Impact Project is a collaboration between Mosaic CCDA, YMCA, Benton Harbor Area Schools, 21st Century Schools program and the Boys & Girls Club of Benton Harbor. The program provided a safe place for kids to be all day during the summer including evening activity in the parks, job training for teens and nutritious meals. The award included a \$4,000 grant for 2018 programming.



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