The mission of the Capital Region Community Foundation is to serve the charitable needs and enhance the quality of life in Ingham, Eaton and Clinton counties. We serve and seek out a wide range of donors to build permanent endowments that are used to meet the changing needs and interests of our community.
Pattie and Frank Reynolds enjoy seeing the impact of grants from their donor-advised fund.

Daughter's legacy lives on through endowment fund for volunteerism.

Big Brothers Big Sisters awarded 2012 impact grant for tri-county mentoring.

Also Inside:
- Building a stronger community
- 2012 financial summary
- Legacy Society
- Donor profiles
- Grants in action
- Youth Action Committee
- Meet our board and staff

Stay connected
Looking to get in touch with the Capital Region Community Foundation?

By mail
330 Marshall St.,
Suite 300
Lansing, MI 48912

By email
info@
crcfoundation.org

Online
http://
crcfoundation.org

By phone
(517) 272-2870

Connect with us for the latest foundation news:
Follow us on Twitter @givelansing
Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/givelansing
Since 1987, the Capital Region Community Foundation has partnered with visionary people and organizations committed to changing our community for the better.

Together, since our inception, we’ve provided nearly $36 million of support to address a number of broad and far-reaching issues facing our community—from basic needs and social services to arts and education. We’ve afforded thousands of students the opportunity to pursue their academic dreams.

In this year’s annual report, we celebrate just a few of the stories of our work, and those of the generous donors, partners and grantees who work with us to catalyze change.

In 2012 alone, we gave nearly $3 million in life-changing grants and scholarships. From the highly visible to the quieter differences, each gift contributes to a transformed community.

I invite you to explore our 2012 annual report and to take a moment to reflect on how you have helped make our community better. Thank you for your continued partnership. Together, we’re making a difference.
The Capital Region Community Foundation awarded $35,000 in grants to the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum. The board and staff had the opportunity to tour the building while it was under construction during the summer of 2012. Pictured from left are board members Robert Kolt, Brian Priester, Denise Schroeder, CRCF senior program officer Pauline Pasch and Charles Blockett Jr.
The Capital Region Community Foundation was created in 1987 to promote giving as a shared community value. Today, thousands of people rely on its help to tackle our region’s urgent challenges and provide for needs that will arise down the road. And tomorrow? We can’t see the future, but it will look back at us.

Giving through the Community Foundation is an enduring way to honor someone, celebrate good fortune by “paying it forward,” or simply to benefit the causes you hold dear. Whatever your dream, we can help make it a reality.

The story starts in 1987, when a few visionary residents from our region did something brilliant for all of us.

They imagined something that hadn’t been here before — an establishment belonging to everyone, where generous people could go to get expert support and hear creative ideas that would help them to amplify and achieve their charitable intentions.

They pictured a prudently managed hub overseen by a diverse board of civic leaders, where donations could be invested together to grow, where anyone could become a donor and where donors became true philanthropists — able, over time, to grant out even more than they had put in and able at any moment to call on a team of professionals with a knowledge of the community’s needs and resources that truly runs deep.

Their idea was, and is, your Capital Region Community Foundation. The secure, well-managed public resource they envisioned is now a $73 million collection of funds, growing so it can be deployed to tackle our region’s most urgent challenges and seize promising opportunities to improve lives throughout Ingham, Eaton and Clinton counties.

The Community Foundation is one public institution that is preparing us for the future instead of borrowing against it. If we owe anything to anyone, it’s simply to celebrate the foresight of the generous people who came before us and are all around us, still contributing, still imagining. Their example inspires every one of us to think about the needs of our neighbors and be good stewards of their gifts — and of our community — for those who will come next.
GIFTS

In 2012, we received **1,585 gifts worth more than $4.4 million**. Our total assets as of Dec. 31, 2012: **$71,453,256.99**.

**Net assets by fund type:**
- Undesignated: $6,275,978
- Field of Interest: $16,292,490
- Designated: $2,962,754
- Donor-advised: $5,683,656
- Agency: $33,189,218
- Scholarship: $5,888,031

*Preliminary numbers. The accounting firm of Maner, Costerisan & Ellis, PC, annually audits the Community Foundation's financial statements and has once again expressed an unqualified favorable opinion.*

Find a complete list of our 2012 grants and donors online at http://crcfoundation.org.

GRANTS

In 2012, the Capital Region Community Foundation distributed **608 grants** totaling more than **$2.9 million** to support many worthy causes and make our community a better place.

From scholarships and after-school programs to health screenings and housing assistance, those charitable dollars are making a real difference, helping improve the lives of thousands of people in mid-Michigan.

**Since we began making grants in 1990, the Community Foundation has distributed nearly $36 million.**

FUNDS

The Community Foundation holds a collection of more than **400 charitable funds** created by individuals, families, businesses and organizations. In 2012, we added **12 new funds**.

We are grateful to each and every one of our donors.
The Capital Region Community Foundation’s Legacy Society was established in 2010 to honor the people and families who will leave an indelible mark on our community through gifts from their estates.

Too often, these thoughtful gifts go unrecognized because they come at the end of a donor’s life. The Legacy Society is our way of acknowledging your commitment to the future — today. It enables us to thank you for your generosity.

Our Legacy Society celebrates those who have chosen the Community Foundation as a way to improve mid-Michigan for future generations through a bequest or other planned gift.

Becoming a member is simple: Include the Capital Region Community Foundation in your estate plan through your will or trust, or make a contribution via a charitable gift annuity, life insurance, retirement fund assets or a charitable remainder or lead trust. And, be sure to notify us of your plan so that we can include you on our membership rolls.

The Legacy Society will always be recognized as contributing members of this generation, leaving a record of generosity and support for the charitable causes of our community for future generations to see, respect and, hopefully, emulate.

You may always choose to remain anonymous in your philanthropy with us. However, participation in the Legacy Society can be an inspirational experience and may encourage others to look toward the future and how they too may have an enduring impact.

As beneficiary of your deferred gift, the Community Foundation is charged with the trust and responsibility of carrying out your wishes. We have a permanent commitment to recognize and address community needs and take advantage of high-impact funding opportunities. Your gift helps us achieve that.

If you already have made this provision in your estate plan, please let us know so your name can be added to the Legacy Society. If you’re interested in joining the Legacy Society — or if you think you may already qualify — please call the Community Foundation at (517) 272-2870.

We look forward to welcoming you to our growing list of individuals and families committed to securing the future of our community. Together, we’re making a difference.
Legacy Society

Robert & Jane Becker
John E. & Jewel T. Bos
Eleanor A. Doersam
David & Connie Donovan
Ronald & Susan Eggleston
Dennis & Linda Fliehman
Betty Giuliani
Camron & Lisa Gnass
Michael & Deborah Harrison
C. Richard & Susan Herrold
Thomas E. & Lynne M. Hoffmeyer
Mark & Marcia Hooper
Charley & LeaAnne Janssen
Robert Kolt & Sue Wagner
Paul & Evie McNamara
Thomas J. Messner
Charles & Helen P. Mickens
Patricia K. Munshaw
Gerald L. Olson
Richard & Lorayne Otto
Pamela A. Paul-Shaheen
Frank H. & Patricia Reynolds
Kathleen M. Soltow
Heather Spielmaker
Peggy A. Parke & Denis W. Sullivan
Raymond R. Ziarno
It's been really important for us to be involved in some sort of philanthropic activities. Our heart is in that whole process, being able to do things to help folks out who really need a hand. Once you start doing things like that, it becomes a part of who you are and how you view the world. We get a lot of satisfaction out of that.

— Frank Reynolds
“The Community Foundation doesn’t sell a particular charity. It caters to donors. What’s your dream? They can make that happen. It’s more stable and secure than any one nonprofit.”

— Pattie Reynolds

Frank and Pattie Reynolds know the Capital Region Community Foundation well. Pattie was the president from 1995 to 2002. Frank, a criminal defense attorney, has spent many years serving on local nonprofit boards and seeing the needs and challenges of the community first-hand in the courtroom.

So when it was time for them to think about the legacy they wanted to leave, they knew exactly what to do: They established a donor-advised fund with the Community Foundation.

“We have fields of interest that we support — education, basic needs, humane treatment of animals,” Pattie said. “We did it that way because you never know whether a charity will be there 50 years from now, and it’s the job of the foundation’s board to take a look at what Frank and I would have wanted to support and then fund the next closest thing to that.”

What appealed to Frank was being able to see the impact of their gifts.

“It’s been really important for us to be involved in some sort of philanthropic activities,” he said. “Our heart is in that whole process, being able to do things to help folks out who really need a hand.”

By establishing their fund now, Frank and Pattie are able to recommend each year how the grant dollars are disbursed. Their choices often are fueled by their work in the community, past and present.

Frank taught at Pattengill Middle School and Eastern High School. “I always wanted to fund anything that has to do with education,” he said. “I’m also a supporter of law enforcement and firefighters. I’m a criminal defense attorney, so those things were always important to me.”

“I try to give the majority of my grants to the Lansing community, because I know so many needs are there,” Pattie said. “But there’s also an animal reserve in Florida that I like to support. I can make those choices with our fund. I feel really good about that.”

“At the end of the day, this is our home, and we want to make it as good as we can,” Frank said. “That really makes for a much better community. Starting out, we didn’t have a whole lot to give away, but as we’ve progressed in our lives and our income has gotten better, we’ve been able to increase our giving. And we can see the impact of our gift.”
My husband, Charles, and I have strong feelings that we should give back to the community. We try to do that in a number of different ways. We’re very impressed with the Community Foundation and all it does. We love Lansing. We love the people, all the cultural opportunities, and we love the organizations working to make our region a better place to live and work.

In 2001 the Lansing Police Department, City of Lansing, Lansing School District and Lansing Community College joined to start the H.O.P.E. Scholarship Program, guaranteeing a college education to 500 of the neediest sixth-graders in Lansing each year. Thanks to the vision and leadership of the Community Foundation, we have raised enough money to fund H.O.P.E. into perpetuity.

The Community Foundation is a catalyst for addressing great needs. I am so impressed by the dedication of the people involved with CRCF. Everyone comes together to make a difference for our community. It’s so important that a foundation has the ability to meet the greatest community needs as they occur. Gifts of unrestricted dollars make that happen.

I’ve received many blessings living in this wonderful community. By creating a fund with the Community Foundation, I have, in a small way, repaid my debt for all I have been given. Supporting the Community Foundation assures our community remains strong and will continue to assist, nurture and enrich the lives of future generations. What better way to invest than to invest in the future of the community we love?
I got to know the Community Foundation through my work at St. Vincent Catholic Charities and the Power of We Consortium. Many of my programs were beneficiaries of CRCF’s funding. Now, as my husband and I have established our own fund, we have this unique opportunity to be funders and to provide some long-lasting community impact in an area of our choosing.

I value the concept that a life’s work and legacies created can be continued indefinitely. For families, this is a significant tool that can support and honor the values and goals created during the donor’s lifetime. This is wonderful. Our earthly life may end, but the positive philanthropic influence on the community may continue for generations, supported by the endowed funds within CRCF.

I love the arts because they’re a level playing field for everybody. Everybody is artistic and everybody enjoys some form of art. The arts make us better people. They make our community better. My mom and I have a donor-advised fund with the Community Foundation for people in our community who want arts opportunities but may not have the means to make it happen.

Though I’ve traveled the world, I’m always proud to call mid-Michigan home. Through my work in nonprofits and government, I’ve seen first-hand the impact the Community Foundation has in improving our region for the public good. My wife and I know we can play a part in making our community better through our support of local causes we care about through the foundation.
This fund gives scholarships to people attending the National Conference on Volunteering and Service who have only two to three years of experience in the field of volunteerism. "We felt the more seasoned individuals would already have their way paid to the conference," said Nancy Ballard, Sara’s mom. "This is the type of individual Sara would want to take with her when she attended the conference." The fund also supports schools in Washington and Michigan that undertake a "day of caring" project.
“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”

— Memorial at the first Washington middle school to implement a day of caring in Sara Ballard’s honor

Sara Ballard’s life was devoted to service. The Williamston High School and Alma College alum worked for the Volunteer Centers of Michigan, the American Red Cross and was the executive director of the Volunteer Center of Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties in Olympia, Wash.

When Sara suffered a stroke and died at the age of 36 in 2011, her parents, Jim and Nancy, thought the best way to honor their daughter was by establishing an endowment fund in her name that gives other young people the opportunity to learn more about the power of service.

“Sara’s genuine passion for volunteerism created a space at the Volunteer Center for people like me to be filled with encouragement, support and information,” said Breezie O’Neill, community development manager for the Girl Scouts of Western Washington. O’Neill attended the National Conference on Volunteering and Service thanks to funding from Sara’s endowment. “By sharing her knowledge and being a champion for volunteerism, Sara unlocked the potential of countless individuals. She is greatly missed.”

Jim said he and Nancy were surprised and amazed by how many lives Sara touched in her 36 years.

“As her dad, I had no idea,” Jim said. “She passed away on a Tuesday, and on Thursday there was a memorial service with hundreds of people. She had only been in that community for two years, and in Washington for only four years and had that kind of impact.”

“There is not a better place than the Capital Region Community Foundation to house the contributions from friends and family for the Sara A. Ballard Volunteerism Fund,” Nancy said. “The Community Foundation’s mission to help donors change the lives of thousands of people in our community is an effort Sara was so passionate about.”

After her death, Jim and Nancy found Sara’s bucket list. One item on her list was to leave a legacy. “The Capital Region Community Foundation will help do just that,” Nancy said.
Marathon grant review session

Dozens of community volunteers and committee members come together each May for a daylong session to discuss the 100-plus grant applications submitted to the Community Foundation. They submit their recommendations for funding, and the CRCF board review and ratify the awards.
The Community Foundation builds flexible community endowment to ensure there are philanthropic resources available for future generations to meet the community’s most pressing needs and promising opportunities.

We can’t predict the future, but we can prepare for it.

So many of the solutions our charitable dollars make possible now are the result of gifts made by yesterday’s donors, who recognized that today’s needs may not be tomorrow’s. Unrestricted gifts require not only generosity, but also donors’ confidence, trust and vision for the future.

Giving is very personal; we all have specific causes and charities we’re passionate about supporting. At the same time, we feel part of a larger community and want to see it thrive. For more than a generation, thousands of people like you, giving gifts ranging from $5 to $5 million, have pooled their resources in our community’s flexible endowment. By giving together, they have achieved greater impact today and for future generations.

These unrestricted dollars are the heart of our competitive grantmaking. The Community Foundation typically receives applications requesting nearly four times the amount of money available for grants from unrestricted funds. The flexibility of unrestricted gifts allows the Community Foundation to use our expertise to make the best possible community investments.

For donors interested in general causes, field-of-interest funds let them identify an area of personal passion — such as human services, the arts, the environment, youth, seniors, economic development, animal welfare or housing. Within that area of interest, the foundation will identify the best philanthropic use of the fund’s distributions.

Since we began awarding grants in 1990, the people of mid-Michigan have relied on the Community Foundation as an effective, trusted hub of philanthropy. We work with individuals, nonprofits, businesses and community partners to promote effective philanthropy and connect people who care with causes that matter.

Together, we’re changing lives. Won’t you join us?
2012 grant: 
$5,250

Fair Food Network: Double Up Food Bucks

When a person eligible for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits uses his or her Bridge Card to shop for food at a farmers’ market, the amount of money he or she spends is matched with Double Up Food Bucks bonus tokens. The tokens can then be exchanged at the market for Michigan-grown fruits and vegetables.
Happendance: mid-Michigan's professional dance company, staged a modern dance interpretation of Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon." Executive director Missy Lilje said she hoped by using a mainstream, popular piece of music, Happendance would expose a broader audience to modern dance.

2012 grant: $3,381

Happendance: "Dark Side of the Moon"

Happendance, mid-Michigan's professional dance company, staged a modern dance interpretation of Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon." Executive director Missy Lilje said she hoped by using a mainstream, popular piece of music, Happendance would expose a broader audience to modern dance.

Photo: David Grist
Community Music School: Music therapy

The Eric "RicStar" Winter Music Therapy Camp is a day camp that provides opportunities for musical expression, enjoyment and interaction for people with special needs and their siblings. The camp is also dedicated to breaking down barriers. The "BuddyUp" program pairs campers with their peers without disabilities. Buddies and campers develop friendships and an understanding of one another's lives.

Photo: Erik Taylor Photography
Greater Lansing Housing Coalition: Tuesday Toolmen

This program assists seniors and people with disabilities with minor home repairs and improvements to keep them safe in their homes. In 2012, Tuesday Toolmen volunteers gave 2,510 hours to the program and completed 69 projects, including building 12 ramps. The program also keeps the volunteers healthy by providing moderate exercise — both physical and mental.

Photo: Lansing State Journal

2012 grant: $10,000
The Leavenworth Collection, a landmark acquisition for the Archives of Michigan, features decades of photos taken by Leavenworth Photography in Lansing. An estimated 200,000 negatives trace Lansing's history from the dirt roads of its pre-capital days through its boom into a major industrial city and automotive capital. Negatives in the collection have been deteriorating; a 2012 grant allowed for the purchase of specialized equipment to maintain the collection.

2012 grant: $12,500
Sierra Rose Farms: Healing Hearts with Horses

In the "How to Be a Leader in Your Herd" social interaction and anti-bullying program, Sierra Rose Farms uses equine interactive learning to help kids heal through horse therapy. The program engages the kids in a fun and physical way while also teaching them life lessons and valuable communication skills. Kids who face troubles with bullying, their parents and other personal issues can find healing through their interaction with miniature horses.

2012 grant: $3,166
The mayor’s annual Senior Fair is designed to put local seniors in contact with resources and services concerning their health and well-being. The fair, held at Gardner Middle School, drew 400 seniors who enjoyed a meal, danced to oldies music and visited the three dozen health, wellness, financial and education vendors.

It takes just 21 days to form a habit, and the most influential habits are formed before the age of 21. Building Twentyone targets diverse students, ages 13-18, primarily in south Lansing and Holt, for its free, after-school program. Students are given the opportunity to define and develop their goals and dreams through education and recreational activities and individual and group coaching.

Ele’s Place provides sessions that allow children to interact with peers who have suffered similar loss, and to express their fears, anger, guilt and sadness in a secure and empowering environment. The use of music, art, storytelling, writing and play promotes the healing process. Clinicians and trained volunteers, supervised by professional clinical staff, facilitate age-appropriate groups.

The Meridian Downtown Development Authority hosted its annual “Celebrate Downtown Okemos” event on June 7, 2012. The entire community is invited to this free, family-friendly event each year that includes live outdoor concerts, food, games, inflatables, dance entertainment, free ice cream and more. The 2012 event featured the unveiling of a sculpture installation.
Greater Lansing Food Bank: Sorting tables and pallet truck

The GLFB relies on more than 1,000 volunteers to clean and sort donated food. To ensure they can complete this important job in a timely, yet comfortable environment, the GLFB needs to provide a safe, clean space. The sorting tables and the pallet truck make this job easier and safer for the volunteers. This grant indirectly impacts more than 110,000 people served by the GLFB.

HGB's ALIVE: Interactive Learning and Recreational Area

The Interactive Learning and Recreational Area is housed in ALIVE’s youth space called “Grow.” The grant allowed Hayes Green Beach Memorial Hospital to purchase and install computers and software for children and youth. The technology is integrated into programs that enable and extend the youth programs to be more effective and engaging.

Legal Services of South Central MI: Homelessness prevention

LSSCM represents homeowners and tenants facing a loss of their home, assists individuals in attaining and maintaining a stable household income and represents survivors of domestic violence to assure they have a safe home and have income to provide for basic needs. In the past year, this program provided free legal advice and/or representation to 1,934 low-income families in the tri-county area.

Kids Repair Program: Bicycle repair classes

Curt “Grandad” Eure started the program in 1995 while working with Lansing’s northside youth. Grandad discovered kids were losing their bikes to theft and neglect. His solution: Teach them responsibility through bike ownership, safety and maintenance. Students learn to tear down a bike, put it back together and repair it. After the class, they get to keep their bike, a helmet, lock and key.
Big Brothers Big Sisters Michigan Capital Region targets youth who are most at risk and prioritizes those from low-income, single-parent households. “The Community Foundation has a great interest in collaboration — both for ourselves and for the programs we support through grants,” said Dennis Fliehman, president and CEO of the Community Foundation. “It’s wonderful to see the impact of this project.”
The Capital Region Community Foundation selected Big Brothers Big Sisters Michigan Capital Region as the recipient of its $75,000 impact grant for 2012.

The organization is using the grant for its newly created Tri-County Quality Mentoring Demonstration Project. It is leading a collaboration with the YES Center in Eaton County, the Turning Point of Lansing and MSU Extension 4-H in Clinton County to match 75 new children with one-to-one mentors who will change their lives for the better, forever.

“There was a need for more one-to-one mentoring in these counties, but they didn’t have the capacity to develop it,” said Phil Knight, executive director of BBBSMCR. “We don’t do programming, we do mentoring. They’re doing what they do best, we’re doing what we do best. It’s been work, but it’s work that’s worth it. The trends we’ve established on both sides of collective impact have been life-changing for us. The Community Foundation has made that possible.”

The idea for the project came from Kelly Young, program director for Big Brothers Big Sisters. “Leaders should see further and farther and faster, and Kelly absolutely did,” Knight said. “This is the trend in mentoring: Collective impact.”

“I’m really excited to see how things have come together,” Young said. “Still, I would say there’s a ways to go in terms of collaboration. I’ve discovered the nuances with individual counties with culture and community. It’s definitely not a cookie-cutter approach.”

BBBSMCR will create 25 new matches in each of the three counties; they are well on their way in Ingham County, Eaton County is coming along strong, but Clinton County has proven to be tougher.

“Normally it’s about money,” Knight said, referring to the challenge of creating matches. “This time, it’s all about mentors. If we had the ‘bigs’ in Clinton County, this story would be nothing but good news.”

Still, they are excited about the success of the collaboration.

“When you think about impact, it’s not just what happens in one calendar year,” Knight said. “It’s 75 kids you’ll be able to track until they graduate.”
Your charitable goals, simple or grand, can be realized at the Community Foundation. Here are three ways you can make a difference:

1. Start a fund
   We offer a variety of fund options and will work with you to create a giving plan that meets your goals. Establishing a fund at the Capital Region Community Foundation enables you to:
   • Help meet a need in our community.
   • Provide a scholarship for worthy students.
   • Support your favorite nonprofit organization.
   • Make a difference in a charitable area.

2. Give to an existing endowment
   We administer permanent endowment funds for more than 100 charitable organizations. To find your favorite nonprofit’s endowment fund, visit our online directory at http://crcfoundation.org/funds. We accept a wide variety of assets as charitable gifts. Regardless of the type of gift, because we are a 501(c)(3) public charity, contributions to us qualify for the maximum deductibility for income, gift and estate tax purposes.
   Some examples of assets we accept:
   • Cash
   • Publicly traded securities
   • Closely held stock
   • Real estate
   • Life insurance
   • Private foundation assets

3. Include a charitable gift in your estate plan
   A planned or deferred gift is a charitable gift made as part of your tax or estate plan that provides a tax deduction for the gift and possibly an income stream. We are able to work with you and your professional advisor on the following options:
   • Charitable gift annuity
   • Retirement plan assets
   • Life insurance
   • Charitable remainder trust
   • Charitable lead trust
   • Bequest
Undesignated funds enable the Community Foundation to respond to the ever-changing needs of our community. They provide the maximum flexibility to meet future challenges. Through an open application process, grant committees and the board determine how to best use the income earned on the funds to benefit our community.

Donor-advised funds offer donors the opportunity to create a low-cost, flexible method of charitable giving as an alternative to direct giving or creating a private foundation. Donors recommend each year what nonprofit organizations they want to invest in, and we do all the work of administering the grants.

Field-of-interest funds support broad fields, such as arts and culture, community development, health and human services, education or scholarships. The donor chooses the field of interest for which their fund will be used, while the board and grant committees determine the specific organization or program that will receive support.

An agency fund enables tax-exempt organizations to set up a fund to benefit their exempt purpose. Designated funds are created for the benefit of a specific nonprofit to provide perpetual support. The donor specifies how the agency will use the funds, and the Capital Region Community Foundation provides ongoing stewardship and oversight to ensure the donor’s intentions are fulfilled.
YAC Facts

• The Youth Action Committee is a youth grantmaking body of the Community Foundation with a permanently endowed youth fund. YAC members focus on serving their community by addressing issues of concern and importance to local young people through grantmaking from the revenue earned on the youth endowment.
• Since it began in 1992, the Capital Region Community Foundation’s Youth Action Committee has distributed more than $750,000 in grants.
• Over the years, more than 200 local students have participated in the YAC.
• Want to join? Learn more online: http://crcfoundation.org/content/youth-action-committee
High school clubs have come a long way. Did your alma mater offer you the chance to be a philanthropist? That’s exactly what Michigan teens in every county of our state have the chance to do today.

There are 86 groups of teen givers all over Michigan who work through community foundations to help young people in need — people they don’t even know — to have access to healthy food, tutoring, arts and cultural opportunities and recreational programs.

The groups, called Youth Action Committees (YACs), got their start in the 1990s, when the W.K. Kellogg Foundation issued a challenge to Michigan community foundations: For every $2 raised for unrestricted endowment funds, Kellogg would give $1 to a youth endowment fund so teens could give grant money forever. Today, the collective assets of all 86 youth funds are nearly $40 million, and the funds provide $2.5 million to Michigan communities every year.

Each regional committee is made up of high school students committed to changing their communities through philanthropy. They learn about fund development, youth empowerment and grantmaking. They volunteer with nonprofits that help other young people in their communities. About 1,900 teens serve on YACs across the state.

The Capital Region Community Foundation’s YAC has three dozen students, representing 14 high schools in Ingham, Eaton and Clinton counties. These kids serve meals in shelters, volunteer at the annual Special Olympics games and work during the school year to make our community better for all kids and teens.

They are also grantmakers, reading dozens of applications and making decisions about how tens of thousands of dollars are distributed. In 2012, our YAC awarded $41,505 to 25 nonprofits in mid-Michigan. An additional $5,000 went to 18 local elementary school classrooms for environmental and anti-bullying projects.

Marjai Kamara, a senior at Lansing Eastern High School, said her family is low-income, and growing up she didn’t think people cared about families like hers. But through her community service — and the grants she had a hand in awarding — she saw just how much people did care. And she was proud to be a part of it. She’ll head to the University of Michigan in the fall, where she will pursue a degree in social work.

“Everyone can make a difference,” she said. “I know that now because of YAC.”
Top row: Chair Sam Davis, jail administrator, Ingham County Sheriff’s Office; chair-elect Robert Kolt, president/CEO, Kolt Communications, Inc.; treasurer Denise Schroeder, director, Alerus Retirement Solutions; secretary Kira Carter-Robertson, president/CEO, Sparrow Specialty Hospital

Second row: John Abbott, president, Summit Community Bank; Bo Garcia, director of strategic planning and economic development, Lansing Community College; Helen Mickens, professor and associate dean emerita, Thomas M. Cooley Law School; Doug Mielock, attorney/shareholder, Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, PC

Top row: Dennis W. Fliehman, president/CEO; Richard Comstock, vice president of finance; Traci Goulding, executive assistant/scholarship administrator; Robin Lynn Grinnell, vice president for donor and community relations

Second row: Ashley Gulker, YAC advisor; Lisa Levandowski, finance associate; Robin Miner-Swartz, vice president of communications; Pauline Pasch, senior program officer
OUR BOARD AND STAFF

Our Board and Staff

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Capital Region Community Foundation
330 Marshall St., Suite 300
Lansing, MI 48912
(517) 272-2870
info@crcfoundation.org
http://crcfoundation.org

The Capital Region Community Foundation meets the Council on Foundations’ National Standards for operational quality, donor service and accountability in the community foundation sector.