



# The Community Foundation focus

Spring 2016

The Community Foundation  
OF MACON COUNTY

Serving Donors. Leading Change.

## Great Ways To Gift

*“Generosity consists not of the sum given, but the manner in which it is bestowed.”* – Mahatma Gandhi

When it comes to generosity, Decatur residents are reputed for stepping up to support a wide range of local causes — from annual food and toy drives to cash contributions to favorite charities and fundraisers.

What local donors may *not* realize, however, is that signing a check is only one way to make a difference. Often overlooked are several less traditional “manners” of gifting mechanisms, all of which are straightforward, rewarding, and geared for maximum impact.

### Gifts Stocks And Mutual Funds

When he advises clients on managing and maximizing their portfolios, Registered Investment Advisor Kip Reiss, President of Reiss Financial Group LLC and a LPL Financial Advisor, often points to the benefits of donating appreciated stocks or mutual funds. “Typically, this is part of an overall financial plan,” Reiss says. “Holding a stock or mutual fund for longer than a year helps to maximize the tax efficiency of gifting.”

Putting the plan in action is very straightforward, Reiss adds. Through The Community Foundation’s brokerage account, stocks and mutual funds can be sold — often within a day — thereby locking in gains. “A donor simply works with The Community Foundation and their process to accomplish the gift; that’s it,” Reiss says.

“A common misconception is that donors think stocks have to be of large value,” he adds. “But there’s no minimum amount. The only requirement is that stocks are from a publicly-traded company and any amount is appreciated.”

Reiss also notes several benefits to donors: Reducing a concentrated equity position; avoiding capital gains tax; and, if an individual itemizes, receiving a tax deduction.

“The biggest non-tax benefit is that you can preserve your cash for other needs,” Reiss says. “Instead of writing a check, you can donate appreciated stock or mutual funds.”

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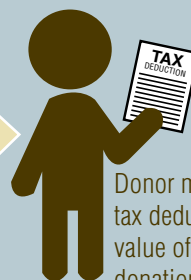
### DONATING APPRECIATED STOCK



Donor buys stock and holds for at least one year.



Donor gifts appreciated stock to The Community Foundation.



Donor may receive tax deduction for value of stock donation.



Donor does not pay capital gains tax on appreciated value of the stock.

## Giving IRA Required Minimum Distributions

The annual guesswork is gone: Federal tax code now allows some donors to make charitable gifts directly from their Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) to their charity of choice.

The result? A permanent win-win scenario for charities and donors, says Beth Nolan, Wealth Management Specialist and Certified Financial Planner practitioner for The Brechnitz Group of Raymond James.

“It’s important that a donor not take possession of the money, but that it is paid directly from the IRA to the charity,” Nolan explains. “Normally, Required Minimum Distributions must be taken at age 70-1/2, and by gifting all or part of that amount to charity, donors can circumvent taxes.” Annual gifts are capped at \$100,000.

By opting for this gifting mechanism, donors also can make an immediate — and substantial — impact on a charity.

“A charitable gift from an IRA might be bigger in terms of gross amount than it would be if a donor had to pay taxes on the gross amount, and the charity was left with the net amount,” Nolan says.

Contributions also go right “to work.”

“These funds cannot be used to open a donor-advised fund,” says Nolan. “Instead they must immediately benefit a charity, such as being directed to a scholarship fund or an endowed fund to support a particular agency or field of interest.”

## Reaping Rewards From Life Insurance Policies

“Being in the life insurance business for 67 years, I have seen the wonders of gifts of life insurance in action, both personally and through clients,” says Bill Braun, a financial broker with Foster, Braun & Associates. “The positive benefits to our community and the individuals served are countless.”

As are rewards enjoyed by the donor, Braun adds. Personally, he’s had the satisfaction of witnessing his gifts in action throughout his lifetime. And professionally, he’s quick to share his knowledge about this gifting mechanism with potential donors.

“By naming The Community Foundation as the owner and beneficiary at the inception of a life insurance policy, the one-time or annual premium is fully deductible,” Braun says. “If existing policies are given, the value of the policy is a tax-deductible gift.”

The process is simple: To gift a new life insurance policy, the donor is subject to the underwriting rules of the insuring company, which may require medical information from the donor’s physicians plus the formal application papers; to gift an existing policy, the donor requests forms from the insurance company to absolutely assign the policy to The Community Foundation.

“Besides retaining other assets for their heirs, these types of gifts enable many donors to raise their sights and to make major contributions throughout their lifetimes that normally are reserved for the very wealthy,” Braun adds.



## Giving From The Good Earth

A less common, but “growing” option among area farmers is gifting grain.

“This is a very straightforward process for donors,” says Helga Towler, a partner of May, Cocagne & King, P.C. “There are no restrictions in the tax law — the amount of grain donated is completely an individual choice.”

Grain can be donated in the year of production, or a subsequent year, and can be gifted at any time during the tax year. The key, Towler explains, is that the donor must surrender control of the commodity.

“A farmer can’t go to the elevator, sell the grain, and send the check to charity,” she says. “They must receive documentation from the grain elevator that the charity is the owner. After the transaction, the charity assumes all risks including storage, transportation and marketing costs, as well as price risk.” Charities typically sell the grain immediately, rather than hold these gifts.

Donors benefit by excluding the sale of the cash crop from their income, and deducting the cost of growing the crop.

## Extraordinary Assets; Valuable Opportunities

Like many charitable organizations, The Community Foundation of Macon County has a Gift Acceptance Committee of the Board of Directors. The Committee’s job is to review offers to donate extraordinary or unusual assets and make recommendations to the Board about accepting such gifts.

Unusual gifts are assets outside of those described in this issue of Focus. Examples include real estate, automobiles, art, jewelry, and closely held stock.

The Committee discusses the liquidity of the gift — how quickly it can be converted to cash; donor restrictions on the use of the gift — a donor may insist that the donated artwork be displayed for five years before it can be sold; and the ease of securing an appraisal of the gift’s value — for instance, rare collections may be difficult to appraise in the Macon County region.

“Unusual or extraordinary gifts are exciting opportunities for donors and charities,” says The Community Foundation President Wegi Stewart, “but we must also carefully consider how to best use these gifts to meet our charitable mission.”

Inspiring Students; Expanding Opportunities . . .

# Web-Based Career Cruising Program “Drives” to the Next Level

Imagine sixth-graders getting first glimpses of careers that match their interests and pique their curiosity; or college-bound high school juniors that gain hands-on experience through summer internships.

Such are the possibilities presented by Career Cruising InspirED Futures (CCIF).

The basic level of Career Cruising — which offers students online resources such as career, ability, and learning skills assessments; portfolio, resume, and cover letter creation; and career and college searches — has been in place throughout Decatur Public School District 61 and Macon County schools since 2000.

But the recent expansion of Career Cruising to the more advanced level of CCIF opens even more doors for middle school through high school students, pathways that can link them to local employers, career coaches, and work-based learning opportunities. The software is user-friendly, creative, and engaging, with a multi-tiered structure.



Anne Rosenkranz

“CCIF is the piece that’s been missing,” says Education Coalition (EdCo) of Macon County InspirED Futures Manager Anne Rosenkranz.

“It’s essential to prepare students for the world after high school

graduation, and to remove any barriers that keep them from college or career opportunities.”

“Our students are thirsty for opportunities to gain hands-on work experience.”

Their eagerness is welcomed by groups such as Grow Decatur, a collaborative grass-

roots development and growth initiative focused on enhancing the quality of life for Decatur residents. Workforce development is among the group’s top priorities, and education links specifically to this goal.

*“Our students are thirsty for opportunities to gain hands-on work experience.”*

—Anne Rosenkranz  
EdCo InspirED Futures Manager

“Providing well-qualified local candidates for jobs that are available in Decatur requires more than just classroom education,” says Grow Decatur leadership team member Larry Altenbaumer. “Work-

force development requires creating opportunities for students to get exposure to present and future jobs.

“For this to happen successfully, businesses must play an integral role in the development of our students.”

To date, fifteen local businesses have taken advantage of the no-cost CCIF opportunity. They can participate at one of three levels: Level 1, provide a company profile; Level 2, serve as an online career mentor for students; or Level 3, offer work-based learning activities, such as company tours, mock interviews, job shadowing, and internships.

“CCIF is a win-win for our students and for local businesses,” says Rosenkranz. “A key part of EdCo’s mission is to build cradle to career partnerships that improve educational achievement, prepare students for the workforce, and meet the needs of area employers.

“The opportunities and potential represented by CCIF are endless.”

Usage totals to date indicate that momentum is in full swing. Throughout the last academic year, August- May 2014/2015, student log-ins totaled 15,000. At the mid-point of this academic year,



## Many Ways to Motivate

InspirED Futures represents a growing body of work that encompasses partnerships and collaborations among a wide range of educational entities and businesses throughout Decatur. In addition to Career Cruising InspirED Futures (CCIF), other components include:

- ▶ Bridging the Gap
- ▶ Decatur Public School internships
- ▶ Dual credit courses through Richland Community College and Heartland Technical Academy
- ▶ iBio Educate Center/ADM partnership
- ▶ Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) partnerships with Millikin University and Richland Community College
- ▶ 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Fair at Richland Community College

December 2015, student log-ins already had totaled 11,000.

“One of the ways Grow Decatur defines success in public education is graduating students that are prepared for the next chapter of their lives, be it work, technical training, community college, or a four-year university,” says Altenbaumer.

“The collection of activities that are moving forward in our schools, such as CCIF, are critical elements of what our education programs need to be.”

*The Education Coalition of Macon County is funded through The Community Foundation’s Communityworks Endowment and support from local, corporate, and private funders.*



# Unique Partnership Builds Life Lessons

**A**t first glance, a group of sixth and seventh graders might appear to have little in common with a seasoned cadre of builders, electricians, painters, and plumbers.

Yet a closer look at the bond between 22 Dennis Lab School students and Decatur’s Habitat For Humanity volunteers shows a common foundation: Big hearts and spirits for service.

“Our whole partnership started because these kids wanted to provide a safe home and learning environment for a fellow Dennis School student and family,” says Ed Smith, director of Decatur’s Habitat For Humanity. “It’s a very ambitious project, but I don’t put anything past them.

“They’ll get it done!”

BUILDING TOWARD  
OUR GOAL



Teaming up to build a Habitat For Humanity house, which will be located one block east of Dennis School on a plot donated by Millikin University, is the focus of a Project-Based Learning class taught by Ashley Keeling and Amanda Popovich. And although they’re eager to show up on the building

site this summer, students currently are teaming up to raise \$30,000 — their share of the estimated \$60,000 project cost.

“This is uncharted territory, but response has been overwhelming,” says Keeling of the outpouring of support from parents, community residents, and local businesses. “People can sense the students’ passion; it tugs on their heartstrings.” The Andreas Foundation contributed \$10,000 to the project, and a student-organized silent auction in March raised \$4,500. Money raised from a 5K run/walk, held April 23 at Fairview Park, also exceeded expectations.

Students take responsibility for a range of tasks — from writing thank you notes and designing event fliers to soliciting donations, both in person and by phone. “They’re so excited and invested,” says Keeling, “and they keep coming up with new ideas. They track all of the donations, and they even want to help design the house!”

Smith estimates that construction will start by late May or June, with home occupancy this fall. “Partnering with an outside entity, such as Dennis School, allows Habitat to have two houses under construction at once,” Smith explains. “We can be the ‘driver’ of one project, while the Dennis students are the ‘driver’ of the second house, in terms of raising money and recruiting volunteers.”

The Habitat For Humanity project is one of several student-inspired ventures encompassed by Dennis’ Project-Based Learning curriculum. Other projects have addressed bullying and how to deal with emotions.

“The common denominator is that all of these projects center on empathy for others, and getting outside of yourself,” Keeling says. “Across the board, students also are learning how to work with others — when to step up or back off.”

“I think this would make a great ‘rolling’ project, with Dennis students passing the baton and talking to other schools and classrooms about their experience,” Smith adds.

“It sends a wonderful message to our community — that we have kids here who believe they can do anything.”

*For more information, or to contribute to The Dennis Habitat Project Fund, contact The Community Foundation at 217.429.3000.*



*Dennis Lab School classmates teamed up to make a presentation to the Habitat For Humanity Board.*



# Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day Honors Service and Sacrifice



Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day Committee

For Decatur resident and veteran Bruce Stephens, the decades since the Vietnam War often felt like “a boulder on his shoulder.”

Working for aircraft mechanical egress systems in the United States Navy from 1970 to 1974, and stationed at China Lake Naval Weapons Development Station in California’s Mojave Desert, Stephens had hoped to serve in Vietnam, but was never deployed. He was disap-

pointed at the time, he says, and through the years his regret lingered.

But Stephens’ deep respect and admiration for fellow veterans who *did* serve in Vietnam remained too, culminating with the fourth annual Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day, celebrated Saturday, March 26, at the Decatur Civic Center.

“This is a solemn event, a happy event, an event of humility and one of

reunion,” says Stephens of a day marked by shared stories, guest speakers, and social time. “My goal is to make sure men and women who served in Vietnam get their due, and to let them know that people care and appreciate their sacrifice.”

Stephens, a grain systems designer/estimator for Koehl Brothers, was the driving force behind bringing this national event to Decatur in 2012, initially teaming up with retired Decatur police chief Mark Barthelemy and organizing a Recognition Day committee (see sidebar below). Since that time, sponsorships have snowballed and attendance has increased from about 150 the first year to nearly 400 this March.

“This event has surpassed any dream I could have had to honor our brothers and sisters of the Vietnam War,” Stephens says.



Vietnam Veterans at the 2016 Recognition Day Event

## A Date to Remember

On March 29, 1973, the last United States combat troops were pulled out of Vietnam and, decades later, the U.S. Congress enacted legislation to commemorate this milestone. Although the event is celebrated annually by cities nationwide, Decatur is distinguished by always hosting Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day on the last Saturday of March.

Members of the Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day volunteer committee are: Bruce Stephens, Mark Barthelemy, George Frank, Dave Freyling, John Starbody, Joe Kelly, and Carroll Moma.



The Vietnam Era Veterans Fund, administered by The Community Foundation, supports their efforts. To contribute, or for more information, contact The Community Foundation at: 217.429.3000.





Serving Donors. Leading Change.

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# MEMORIAL GIFTS

***Beginning October 28, 2015***

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|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Nancy Acks             | Dr. Robert H. Fischer | Judy Mason              | Ethel M. Sparr           | William J. Wattles |
| Irma R. Ahlberg        | Delores P. Fleming    | Mayme M. Matlock        | Theodore R. "Ted" Spence | James R. Wiles     |
| Pauline Batman         | Sandra Kay Gibson     | Clarence D. Matherly    | Sister Lucy Spinner      | Wanda Winings      |
| Wayne R. Berry         | James D. Gillum       | Mattie L. Mathews       | Michael R. Stephenson    | Wendell Winings    |
| Stephen L. Bickel      | Joseph Neil Goretzke  | Gerald J. McInerney     | Dwain L. Storm           | Joy Witt           |
| Phillip M. "Mike" Boaz | L. Mark Hanover       | Esther Mertz            | David E. Vincent         | Robert Witt        |
| Edith I. Bonds         | Helen P. Harris       | Sarah L. Metzger        | Doris Waterman           |                    |
| Kathryn S. Britton     | Dave Johnson          | Barbara J. Mitchell     |                          |                    |
| Lois M. Chervinko      | Linda Sue Johnson     | Debra Starlene Oary     |                          |                    |
| Glen A. Clark          | Larry Kiefer          | Harold Oyler            |                          |                    |
| Thomas L. Corman       | Robert L. Kissel      | Rose Romano Oyler       |                          |                    |
| Rita Cornille          | Delores Klein         | A. Marie Potrafka       |                          |                    |
| Rosemary Cox           | Jean K. Krouse        | Anne Ponderlick         |                          |                    |
| Marion Cruse           | Clyde Wayne Largent   | Leo Ponderlick          |                          |                    |
| Shawn G. Damery        | Dorothy Larson        | Vernon L. Powell        |                          |                    |
| Kay E. Dobler          | Norm Larson           | Bernard E. Proeschl     |                          |                    |
| William "Bill" Doty    | Margaret Leonard      | Zannie Rawls Jr.        |                          |                    |
| Rosalie M. Dugger      | Richard Lockwood      | Eugene "Bud" Scherer    |                          |                    |
| J. Donald Ferry, MD    | Pauline T. Lugten     | George H. Schlechte     |                          |                    |
| Oscar G. Fillip, Jr.   | Shelby Levitt         | Robert L. Shepherd, Jr. |                          |                    |
| Edna Mae Fischer       | Thomas J. Madell      | Lindsay Marie Sparks    |                          |                    |
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# HONOR GIFTS

***Beginning October 28, 2015***

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Missy Batman      | Annie Larcher     |
| Scott Blankenship | Joe Larcher       |
| Debbie Coziahr    | Marilyn Mertz     |
| Tim Coziahr       | Carroll Moma      |
| Dave Fleming      | Joan B. Smith     |
| Doug Fleming      | Gregory M. Sommer |
| Kathy Fleming     | Wegi Stewart      |
| CCSCI Physicians  |                   |