

# Philanthropy Matters

Give for Good, for Ever  
Summer 2020 Edition



News from the Parkersburg Area Community Foundation & Regional Affiliates

# Unprecedented *generosity*

**Quick action and partnership are key to ensuring area nonprofits can still thrive, meet needs in the midst of uncertainty**

Like everyone else, the PACF team was “business as usual” in early March, preparing for spring events like Give Local MOV and working with schools to arrange scholarship award ceremonies when the Coronavirus pandemic changed everything. Seemingly overnight, priorities changed and it was time to do what a community foundation does - respond quickly to meet current needs and swiftly deploy grants from existing charitable funds.

As Associate Director for Community Leadership, Marian Clowes knows the local nonprofit community and is in regular contact with them. She didn’t wait for local nonprofit leaders to call and ask for help - she called them.

“I just started calling those we expected to be most affected and asked them what they needed.

In times like this, many nonprofits don’t think to stop and ask for help - they just do what they do best - keep helping people.”

--Marian Clowes

As of late May, the PACF has awarded more than \$115,000 in COVID-19 emergency funds to help local nonprofits continue critically-needed services and programs. From funding to meet the increased demand for home meal delivery services for Doddridge County senior citizens, to helping Habitat for Humanity of the Mid-Ohio Valley purchase handwashing stations, and supporting nonprofits providing childcare services for the children of



## Wood County Senior Citizens Association

With senior citizens among the most vulnerable populations in a pandemic, safe and reliable food delivery is essential. PACF’s \$5,000 grant to the WCSA was a lifeline, bringing food and enabling it to expand its home meal delivery service. Local seniors hope to return to the Senior Center soon for lunch and special activities like this March 2020 visit with “Elvis.”

essential workers in Roane County, the PACF’s emergency funding spans every part of its service area. Many of the COVID-19 pandemic response grants were awarded in partnership with the Sisters Health Foundation (SHF). SHF Executive Director Renee Steffen said working with the PACF team has always been and continues to be a positive experience.

“Their heart for helping the communities in our region is top-notch and we are grateful for their partnership. The collaboration allows for an opportunity to maximize resources, streamline communication, and focus on the relational aspect of our work which we value. It’s a way for us to work smarter together when responding to community needs in a timely manner is of utmost importance.” --Renee Steffen

# Coronavirus Challenges

As the community anticipates a “new normal,” PACF offers relief to nonprofits and opportunities for donors who want to help

If you're searching for a way to support the growing challenges to our communities during this Coronavirus pandemic, please consider making a financial gift to one of our relief funds. The PACF is proactively deploying grants from these funds locally to meet priority needs as they arise and shift. Gifts can be made on our website at [pacfw.com](http://pacfw.com) or by mailing a check to our office.



## Hunger Fund

A fund for donors interested in addressing food insecurity



## Safety Net Fund

A fund for donors interested in supporting basic and emergency needs

## Give Local MOV highlights generous community, gives hope to nonprofits

If you were online at all on May 5th, you probably saw at least one (and probably several) nonprofits promoting their Give Local MOV fundraising campaigns. This year's campaign included 54 organizations that collectively raised more than \$475,000 from 1,539 donors.

From first-time participants like the Wood County 4-H to veterans like the Minnie Hamilton Health Systems who have taken advantage of the opportunity for now seven years, each nonprofit had its own unique take on how to rally their supporters in the midst of a national pandemic. Here are a few highlights from two participating organizations:

### Wood County Historical & Preservation Society (WCHPS)

The WCHPS group saw a 287% increase over their 2019 campaign! Their efforts began back in February with notices in their newsletters and ongoing communications with their 350+ members. Taking advantage of the toolkit provided, the group used every template and strategy suggested and it had incredible results. After almost a full day behind the computer helping members navigate how to give, WCHPS now has nearly \$4,000 to help them with their historic records retention and preservation projects.

### Parkersburg YMCA

Running their fifth Give Local MOV campaign meant the YMCA team had the chance to take lessons learned from previous years and make a few adjustments. Changes like getting their board more involved and using their website and social media platforms to guide donors to the Give Local MOV website worked as they raised more than \$30,000 from 100 donors this year. Those funds will be used to support youth programs and provide scholarships to those who cannot afford to participate in YMCA camps and programs.

## SUD Collaborative Director John Leite forges ahead, despite COVID-19 challenges, looks toward a better community for all

On a quiet morning in early May, John Leite's Market Street office in downtown Parkersburg sits empty. In fact, he has barely used the office since he started his role as the SUD Collaborative Director this past March. But that doesn't mean he hasn't been working. His new normal looks like what many others are experiencing -- a work from home schedule that varies based on the number of calls to be made and the number of virtual meetings on the calendar.

Hired in March, John's position was created as a collaboration between several area funders with the goal to improve access to prevention, treatment, and recovery resources by identifying gaps and improving efficiency. While the Mid-Ohio Valley was new to John, this type of work was not.

*"My whole career has been focused on healthcare improvement and most recently, I was working with a healthcare collaborative in Columbus, Ohio. All of the positions I've held have had a common component -- to bring people together around a common goal." --John Leite*



John's early vision in the job was to facilitate conversations around the growing problem of substance use in the Mid-Ohio Valley. To him, that looked like sitting down face-to-face with healthcare providers, counselors, nonprofits, and government entities to talk through the problems and potential solutions. When the Coronavirus pandemic hit, those plans all changed.

"This COVID-19 crisis has changed life for everyone," John said. "For me, it's meant moving these efforts online, participating in webinars, and trying to make forward progress despite the challenges. For those suffering, it's certainly had negative impacts but there have been positives, too."

John shared that the shift to telehealth support has been good for many in the recovery community. "It removed the barrier of transportation for many, though it's too early to tell if telehealth is going to be an effective strategy long-term," he said.

John's work is likely to lead him into new conversations around telehealth services, the impact of social isolation and stress on addiction and relapse, and the challenges of protecting patient data and continuity of care in this rapidly changing situation.

The one thing that's not changing, however, is the goal of the SUD Collaborative. John is determined to bring new knowledge to our community, to create conversations around the real needs of the community, and to coordinate the efforts that bring solutions. As John talks about ideas like working with area employers to explore how they can best help their employees in recovery and how they can create incentive programs to decrease relapse rates, his passion is glaringly obvious. It's clear that no pandemic will hold John back from working toward what he knows is possible to achieve.

"This collaborative is only as good as the folks that are involved in it," he says. "I'll find a way to meet with anyone so we can devise a plan to improve the resources and the system. Everyone deserves that."

To support the Fund for Recovery and help the PACF support the work of organizations fighting to help those suffering from substance use disorders, please give online at [pacfwv.com](http://pacfwv.com) or contact us to direct your gift toward a specific organization or program.



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# PACF gets creative to meet basic needs

## The PACF Vision

...to hold a vital role in our region, supporting people who work together to build resources and apply leadership, creating a better place for citizens today and tomorrow.

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Although the word unprecedented has been used countless times since this pandemic began, the PACF is no stranger to tough times. From the events of September 11th to the “tech bubble” and later, the great global financial crisis that spanned 2008-2010, the lessons learned from each previous challenge have equipped the Foundation to lead with resiliency and generosity.

Nearly 30 nonprofits have already received more than \$115,000 in COVID-19 emergency funds. Much of the funding is made possible by generous donations from individuals and businesses to the PACF’s Hunger Fund and Safety Net Fund. Some grants have also been made from existing unrestricted funds, established years ago that are flexible and able to be applied to meet the changing needs of our community.

Situations like the present one also mandate ingenuity in how funds are distributed and used. Working with local business owners Jim and Becky Oppe, owners of the Piggly Wiggly, the PACF got creative to support the families of the Boys & Girls Club of Parkersburg members and participants of the Circles Campaign programming by offering food vouchers to Piggly Wiggly to meet families’ basic needs. The voucher allows families to purchase food and basic necessities based on their family size during a two-week time limit.

Cyndi Auth, Director of Programs at the Boys & Girls Club is grateful for the PACF efforts to coordinate support for their families. “I want to say it was a real lifeline for some families who were caught in the unemployment limbo,” Cyndi said. She also added that when she reached out to a second family and offered more assistance, they graciously declined and said, “We are good now, our stimulus check came in so bills all got paid, rent is paid and we can afford groceries! Please give it to someone who is in more need than us.”

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