



About Us

incourage
community foundation

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Vision

An adaptive community that works well for all people

Values

Equity | Inclusion | Opportunity

History

Incourage Community Foundation began in 1994 as Community Foundation of South Wood County – an endowment created “for the community, by the community.”

Richard S. and Mary Virginia Brazeau had a dream to provide a lasting gift for the good of the south Wood County area. Richard did not live to see his dream realized; however, his wife Virginia, working with the Richard S. Brazeau Family Foundation was instrumental in establishing the Community Foundation through a \$1 million matching grant challenge in 1994. Further support paid for Community Foundation operating and administrative costs in its first eight years.



Today

We changed our name to In courage Community Foundation in 2012. We are proud of the investments made by local residents which enable us to be a leader in rural community development and resident engagement. In courage serves the south Wood County area with programs in workforce development, community information, civility, learning, and adaptive leadership.

The evolution of In courage into “rural community development” began in 2001 in response to a decline of local agricultural markets and globalization of paper manufacturing. Before understanding this role, it is helpful to have a little background...

The traditional role of community foundations is to serve as autonomous philanthropic nonprofits that manage permanent endowment funds for local and non-local donors who care about a specific geographic area. There are more than 700 community foundations in the U.S.

Here at In courage, we have more than 400 charitable funds created by individuals, businesses and organizations; these endowments enable donors and In courage to be catalysts for significant community change through philanthropy.

Community foundations use a portion of income from funds to help support:

- Donors who wish to contribute to charitable causes
- Resident-led projects that bring other people together to move a good idea to action
- Nonprofits and community groups working to achieve their missions



One of the earliest examples of our role as a community convener was in 2002; In courage held public forums to bring together elected officials, residents and organizations to help convert an empty Walmart building into a modern home for senior-based organizations and a community access TV studio. This grassroots effort turned a blighted portion of downtown into an aesthetic jewel called Centralia Center. In 2007, investors built a \$2 million community theatre to further enhance our area's cultural life.



A recent example of community engagement is the former Daily Tribune building. The Tribune Building Project began when In courage purchased a unique historic property, in late 2012, along the Wisconsin River with the intent that residents would decide its future use. To date, over 500 community members have been involved in resident-led decision-making. It is clear that the work completed has been about more than just the building; it has activated powerful energy driven by residents to decide their future. Learn more at TribuneBuilding.org.

The Whole Picture

Unlike a nonprofit that may focus exclusively on one issue, In courage works across many issues to connect, support, and align resources – looking at the ‘whole’ which is greater than the sum of its many parts.

Join us

Working with and contributing to In courage ensures that your investment will create greater impact and lasting positive change for a community that works well for all people. We can help you with your plan for charitable giving.

Contact

To get started, please contact Donor Services.

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