

Incouraging Action

Welcome to our donor update, informing you of ways you can make an impact in our community through your donor advised fund or with additional contributions. COVID-19 and the idling of the Verso mill continues to take its toll on our community and its residents, disrupting families, income, and the flow of resources.

A recent report from the Charities Aid Foundation of America¹ indicated that nearly all 550 entities surveyed reported negative impacts from the Covid-19 pandemic, including:

- Decreases in contributions (68%)
- Travel restrictions disrupting contact with clients, donors, and recipients (63%)
- Issues with client relations (56% percent)
- Disruptions to staffing (49%)
- Increased costs (34%)

In response to these challenges, the organizations surveyed are canceling major events, having all or some employees work remotely, implementing new safety procedures, and revising short-term goals. Our community is experiencing similar impacts.

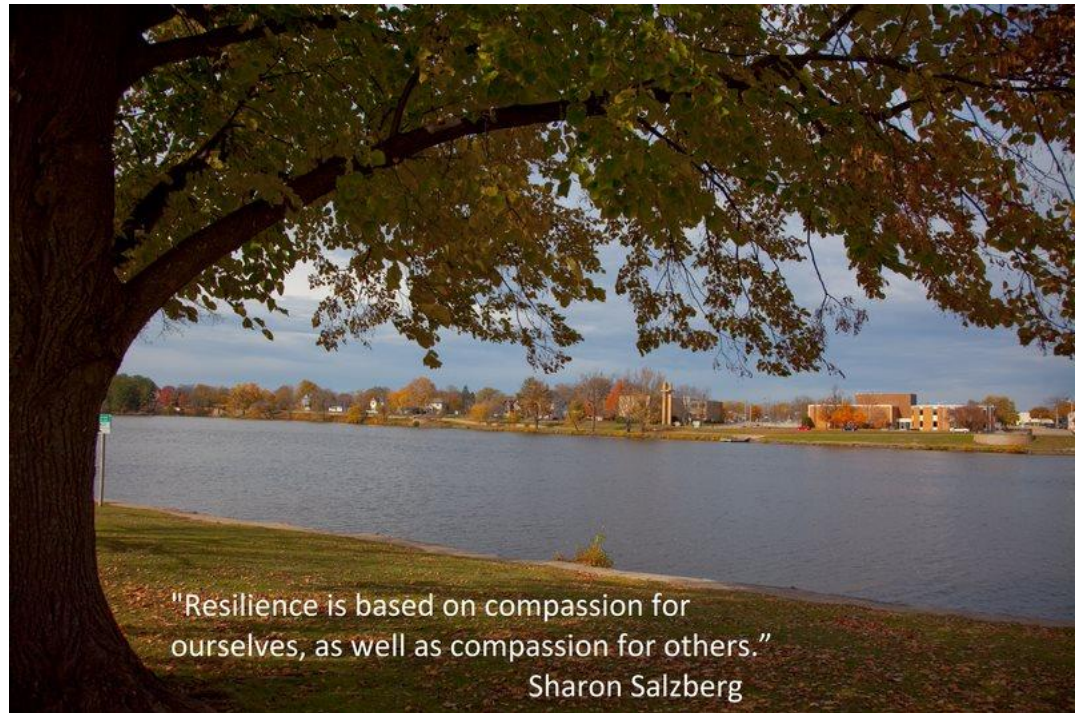
¹ https://www.cafamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/CV19_Report_CAF-America.pdf

Please consider the following opportunities for donor advised grant recommendations or additional contributions:



Family Center

As stress and worries escalate at home with these unprecedented times, so does domestic abuse. The Family Center continues to provide safe shelter, advocacy and counseling services, and a hotline, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Needs for shelter are greater than available beds, so the overflow families are placed temporarily in hotels. Fundraising events and food drives had to be cancelled; funds to pay for hotels or to meet individual client needs have been exhausted; and in-kind donations have slowed to a trickle. Because the resources they have previously relied on are not there this year, these critical services are at risk. Learn more at www.familyctr.org.





Friends of Incorporate

As a community based nonprofit organization also impacted by reduced contributions and impacts associated with Covid-19, we are requesting your support for our continued work as we support our community's changing needs. All gifts to the "Friends of Incorporate Fund" support the foundation's operating costs to do the work necessary to continue supporting our community through scholarships, grants and community connections. Through your support and by continuing to work and learn together, we are making a lasting impact on the future of south Wood County. If you appreciate the work that we are doing, contributions to the Friends of Incorporate Fund help us do more. Gifts of all size are appreciated, and all friends will be recognized on the Incorporate website, posted publicly at the Incorporate office, and may also be recognized through other media. Friends of Incorporate include any dollar amount, Founding Friends are partners who make contributions of \$5,000 or more; be a Friend and become a Founding Friend over time.



United Way

The United Way of South Wood & Adams Counties is seeking support to help fund 28 programs, 10 initiatives and 6 coalitions. United Way partner organizations include: Aspirus Riverview Dental Clinic, Boys & Girls Club, Boy Scouts, Career Closet, Childcaring, The Family Center, FOCUS, Girl Scouts, John E Alexander South Wood County YMCA,

Nekoosa Backpacks for Kids, North Central Community Action Program and Park Place Adult Day Services. Priority areas are: Education (Early Years & Youth Success), Financial Stability, Health and Safety Net Services of Emergency Shelter & Food. Collectively these efforts impact nearly 20,000 people in the local communities served. Learn more at www.uwswac.org.



FOCUS

Mobile Food Pantry – FOCUS (The Neighborhood Table, South Wood Emerging Food Pantry, and Rapids Family Backpacks) continues to combat food insecurity in the south Wood County area. Through a partnership with Feeding America of Eastern Wisconsin and Valley Bakers, free boxes of food were distributed to local residents July – October. They have been distributing approximately 32,000 pounds of food at each pantry. FOCUS will continue to host the mobile pantry November – December, and beyond if Feeding America is able to continue to provide additional resources.

Pantry – The pandemic has required that SWEPS become a no-contact pantry where individuals stay in their vehicles and items are delivered to them in the parking lot. They have been serving over 600 households each month and are particularly in need of personal hygiene items and canned goods, such as soups and vegetables. Learn more at www.swepsantry.org.

Community Meals – The Neighborhood Table hasn't been able to offer in house meals during the pandemic, but remain committed to serving those in need. While to-go meals were offered in the past, TNT moved to a to-go only meal distribution at the end of March. Reservations are made online or via phone and then distributed following the mobile food pantry process. Learn more at www.theneighborhoodtable.org.



Emergency Assistance

Designed to expand local capacity to address challenges individuals and families face, the Emergency Assistance Fund through Incorporate provides flexible funding for local non-profit and community-based organizations, targeting emerging needs that may not be covered through other resources. Contributions to this Fund increases the amount of flexible funding available to support local organizations, and thereby community members, that may receive emergency assistance through this Fund.



Childcare

Childcare Programs - It is increasingly difficult for families to find regulated childcare options in the South Wood County area. In 2010, families could choose from 96 regulated childcare options and today, in 2020, only 34 regulated childcare programs remain. In the past decade, our community has lost nearly 30% of the certified or licensed childcare slots.

Funding is needed to provide start-up grants and technical assistance to support opening more childcare businesses.



Childcare Scholarships - With childcare costs continuing to rise, some families pay more for childcare on a monthly basis than they pay for food or rent. In south Wood County, a family could expect to pay anywhere from \$145 - \$200 per week for full-time childcare or \$7,250 - \$10,000 per year per child. Many families fall behind on their childcare payments or just miss the eligibility requirements for the state childcare subsidies program (WI Shares). Learn more at www.childcaring.org to help close the funding gap for high quality child care.



Families Helping Families

This program helps support the needs of students with parents or guardians that do not have the financial resources to do so. Families Helping Families was initially designed by Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools to provide low income parents with one-time monetary support for unanticipated expenses such as eyeglasses, dental care and prescription medication for their children, as well as provide financial assistance for temporary shelter and other basic necessities for students in need when all other sources of funding had been exhausted. Both Nekoosa and Port Edwards Public School districts had similar

programs to assist their students in need as well.

Incourage has provided grant funding to expand and implement the Families Helping Families program at all of our local school districts: Wisconsin Rapids, public and parochial, Nekoosa, Pittsville, Port Edwards, as well as Immanuel and St. Paul's. The needs of students continue to rise and the individual schools continue to adapt; support may now also include course fees, athletic fees, shoes, jackets, transportation, etc. Often, requests occur when a student's family is in between eligibility for other programs. Please consider recommending a grant to support this vital program at one of our local school districts.



Special Olympics

Using sports as the catalyst as well as programming around health and education, Special Olympics works to end inactivity, injustice and intolerance. Special Olympics Wisconsin (SOWI)-Region 2, which serves athletes from our community, is adapting and virtualizing

many of their health initiatives and sporting events to help the athletes stay connected and healthy during the pandemic. Operating expenses are needed to run programs, whether held in person or virtually. Virtual programs created to date include: Fitness at Home via Facebook, SOWI Live via Zoom, SOfit 'under development', and Fitness Challenge videos and games. There are 860 athletes in the North Central Region 2 area; 169 are from Wood County. It costs about \$757 to support one athlete for one year. Learn more at www.specialolympicswisconsin.org.



Carl J Hilke Memorial Scholarship – “Voice of Wisconsin Rapids”

Born and raised in Wisconsin Rapids, Carl graduated from Lincoln High School in 1974 and later graduated from UW-Oshkosh with a degree in journalism. He began his radio career in the former Tribune building as a news reporter for WFHR and WWRW and was later promoted to News Director. Carl was the "voice" of news and talk radio in Wisconsin Rapids since the fall of 1981. Most recently, he hosted WFHR's "Morning Magazine" and "Over the Back Fence" programs. Carl lost his battle with cancer on November 8, 2019. He lives on in the hearts of many, including his beautiful wife, Pam. A memorial scholarship is being established in his name. Please consider a contribution in memory of Carl and his

legacy as the “voice of Wisconsin Rapids” in our community to support future scholarships.



McMillan Memorial Library

Our library continues to seek support for their Learning Futures 2020 Capital Campaign. The estimated cost for the 15,000 square foot project is \$2M. The Legacy Foundation's \$1M matching grant to renovate the library was met. Over \$116,000 of the \$400,000 public fundraising goal has been raised; fundraising continues through December 31, 2020.



Arts & Culture

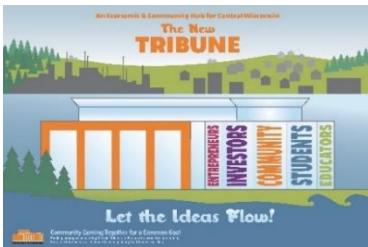
Wisconsin currently ranks 50th in the nation in public funding for arts organizations. Given the pandemic, most performances have been cancelled while others have been modified to offer virtually. The result for performances alone is reduced or eliminated ticket sales necessary for operating support. Investment in the arts helps stimulate business and economic growth in community, our community. Local nonprofit arts and culture organizations need support to recoup lost revenue.

Arts Council – The Arts Council's 2020-2021 performance season was scheduled with additional safety precautions, but the pandemic is creating challenges. "The Hit Men," scheduled for November, has been postponed to the 2021-2022 season, and the future of other scheduled performances is unknown at this time. Overhead and operating expenses remain without the ticket sales to help offset these costs.

CWCC – Through the generosity of donors, including many donor advisors through Incourage, the Cultural Center opened their new location October 27 with limited occupancy. Art lessons and exhibits were hosted online throughout the spring and summer, and in person music lessons and practices resumed this fall. The Cultural Center currently has a unique matching opportunity: a donor has offered a \$30,000 match if \$30,000 is raised by November 25.

CWSO – Although all of the full orchestra concerts that were scheduled at Sentry Theater have been cancelled, the organization is still forging ahead and looking towards the future. In October, CWSO announced the appointment of Dr. Andres Moran as the new Music Director. He succeeds Dr. Patrick Miles, who led the orchestra for seventeen years. Dr. Moran is the Assistant Professor of Horn and Orchestral Director at UW-Stevens Point.

WRCT – The Community Theatre is finding creative ways to keep acting and entertainment alive in our community during the pandemic. WRCT's Silver Foxes, other actors age 50+, and crew members put together "Laugh In" in three weeks time, without a single rehearsal, in order to keep everyone as safe as possible. Through a partnership with Solarus, "Laugh In" was recorded and aired on Solarus Channel 3 and Spectrum Channel 985 in early October; the program is also available on the WRCM and WRCT YouTube channels. "Ax of Murder", a virtual youth play reading, and "Deranged Ghosts", a modified haunted house, were held in October; the actors weren't the only ones wearing masks this year.



Tribune Building Project

Conversations with our partner UW-Stevens Point are ongoing. As part of the partnership, graphic design students learned about the Tribune project and the impact it will have as an economic and community hub. Angie Hall, a student from our local community, created concept posters (see graphic) in her UWSP spring 2020 graphic design class.

Given the indefinite idling of the Verso paper mill in Wisconsin Rapids, and the resulting loss of over 900 jobs at the mill alone, the project is more important than ever to inspire innovation and entrepreneurial possibilities.

Our community originated with determined people who created opportunities with the resources surrounding them. We believe that kind of determination and innovative spirit still exists today in this community. Working together, we have the ability to forge successful paths forward, just as we have for generations. Your partnership with us in supporting our community, particularly in this moment, is greatly appreciated.

Contact Incourage to discuss these opportunities or make additional contributions: 715.423.3863 or hello@incouragecf.org.