

Encouraging Action

Welcome to our donor update, informing you of a variety of ways you can make impacts towards our community's current needs. If you're interested, you have three ways you can support these needs through Incourage. You may suggest grants through your donor advised fund, you may provide additional contributions to Incourage specifically to support the community needs listed below, or you may provide additional unrestricted contributions to



Incourage to support community needs as they are identified by Incourage. Giving through Incourage anonymously may reduce the number of organizations soliciting you directly.

We truly are stronger together and we appreciate your ongoing support for our work and for our community needs.

Please consider supporting the following opportunities:



Families Helping Families

This program supports the needs of students with parents or guardians that do not have the financial resources to do so. Families Helping Families (FHF) is intended to provide low income parents with one-time monetary support for unanticipated expenses such as eyeglasses, dental care or prescription medication for their children. This also provides financial assistance for temporary shelter and other basic necessities for students in need when all

other sources of funding have been exhausted. Student needs continue to rise and the schools continue to adapt; support has expanded to include birth certificates, course fees, athletic fees, shoes, jackets, transportation, etc. Often, requests occur when a student's family is in between eligibility for other programs. Based upon conversations with local school districts, FHF budget balances are 'currently okay'; however, donations are always appreciated as larger unanticipated expenses can occur at any time.



... that Incourage administers funds to support many of our local nonprofits? Donate through Incourage to help support other nonprofits in our community by donating to an existing endowed fund, or creating a new endowed fund, for their long term support.

Want to give anonymously or support multiple nonprofits through Incourage? It is simple to do; please contact us to learn more.



Mary's Place

Wood County's Health, Human Services and Sheriff's Departments are working with Mary's Place Boarding House, Inc. to provide new, local transitional housing to those in need. Mary's Place in Marshfield has been operating for more than 17 years providing housing and case management services. They offer two core programs: a 6-week *Genesis Program* and a 6-week *Transitional Living Program*.

The *Genesis Program* is for individuals who are homeless and unemployed. They can stay for free as long as they are actively seeking employment. Basic needs such as food and clothing are provided, as well as case management services such as life coaching, mentoring, and job seeking skills. After completing the *Genesis Program*, individuals can begin the *Transitional Living Program* where residents pay a weekly program fee of \$80 for a single occupancy room short-term, 6 months to 1 year, with the goal of increasing self-sufficiency and resiliency, and procuring long-term housing. Mary's Place served 160 people in 2020, 69 of whom were south Wood County (SWC) residents. Of the 160 people, 50 were Genesis participants and 110 were in the Transitional Living Program. SWC community members requested that Mary's Place expand their services to our community.

Currently, a building on the city's west side, at the intersection of 8th Avenue and Chase Street, is in the process of being purchased and renovated. The new transitional housing facility will include 11 units, for a total of 30 beds, a laundry room and large common space with a small, shared kitchenette. Each unit will include its own kitchen and bath. Seven one-bedroom units with two beds will house two people of the same sex each, and four two-bedroom units will be available for families.

In December 2021, the Legacy Foundation of Central Wisconsin awarded approximately \$2 million to purchase and remodel the building. Closing is expected early November 2022. Altman Construction is the local contractor awarded this project, and since it was quoted in November 2021, building material costs have escalated. Both Altman Construction and Ron's Refrigeration have provided in-kind donations, but the project is still facing a \$95,000 construction shortfall due to the rising costs. Additionally, \$50,000 is needed to purchase the kitchen appliances for the apartments with donations also being sought to fully furnish each apartment. This includes furniture, bedding, linens, kitchenware, etc. Mary's Place and Wood County staff are diligently applying for and seeking grants and funding from multiple sources.

The goal is for Mary's Place SWC to open a fully furnished and fully operational facility by the end of Spring 2023.

Learn more about Mary's Place in Marshfield at www.marysplacemarshfield.org.



Arts Council of South Wood County

The Art Council counts on their ticket sales to help support their operating budget. After the careful and safe reopening of events and coming out of a limited 2021/22 season, they are especially pleased to be able to hold performances again.

This season's programming also includes four outreach opportunities for our local students. Two workshops have already been funded. The "Artreach" session by Artrageous was held in September with students from Adams-Friendship, Port Edwards, Wisconsin Rapids, and the homeschool community in attendance, and the Master Class for LHS students which will meet prior to the February 2023 performance by the Wisconsin Brass Quintet from the Mead Witter School of Music.

The remaining two outreach opportunities are still in need of funding support.

- “The Science of Magic with Bill Blagg”, six outreach workshops are being offered November 8-10 to inspire and teach students through science. Public, parochial, and homeschool students in grades 1-8 from Wisconsin Rapids, Port Edwards, and Nekoosa will be attendance. This is an undertaking like the Arts Council has never done before. The total outreach cost is \$10,500, which does not yet include bussing costs that are still being determined. To date, a collective \$2,400 has been awarded through Incurage unrestricted grant funds and donor-advised funds. An additional \$2,600 is being supported by the Mead-Witter Foundation. Donations are appreciated to fund the balance of \$5,500.
- “TAKE 3”, a trio comprised of piano, cello, and violin performers who play classical music with a rock twist, are conducting a workshop for the LHS Orchestra in March 2023, which is the afternoon leading up to their performance. The workshop cost is \$500, and donations are being sought.

Learn more about the Arts Council at www.savorthearths.org



Community Thanksgiving Meal

As you may recall, in 2020, a committee within St. Paul’s Lutheran Church assumed the community Thanksgiving meal program from the St. Luke’s Lutheran Church committee who had served the community meal for about 20 years. Now in its third year and nearing the end of its “startup phase”, the St. Paul’s Committee has been working to secure business partners and individual donors to sustain the program long into the future, carrying on the legacy that St. Luke’s started.

Due to Covid in 2020, instead of providing an in-person meal as it was at St. Luke’s, meals were pre-packaged ‘to go’ for pick up or delivery. Given limited volunteer capacity, St. Paul’s will continue to offer pre-packaged meals for pick up or delivery. While the number of meals served average 500-550 the last two years and is anticipated to be the same this year, the cost of food and the ‘to go’ containers continue to rise. In 2021, Del Monte donated green beans and McCain Foods donated potatoes. Even with these donations, the cost of food and containers was more than \$3,000. This year, the estimate is closer to \$5,000.

To date in 2022, \$3,723 has been raised through Incurage donor-advised funds. Additional funding requests to area businesses are pending. Del Monte and McCain Foods are again donating vegetables and the Committee anticipates that some recipients may provide a contribution for their meal as they are able. The Committee’s goal is to maintain ~\$3,000-\$5,000 in a special account at the church to help offset any shortages in funding and sustain the program in order to continue serving a healthy and safe community Thanksgiving meal for our residents in need.

Local public school “Caring Closets”



Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools – Located near the WRPS administrative office, in a room off of the former East Junior High School cafeteria, public school staff in Wisconsin Rapids have access to clothing, shoes, coats, personal essentials, school supplies, etc. WRPS students in grades 4K-12 needing items simply reach out to the school counselors and/or social workers for assistance.

As winter nears, there is an increased need for appropriate outdoor wear, particularly snowpants and mittens. Donations are always welcome.

Port Edwards Public Schools – Each building in the district maintains its own Closet. The elementary school counselor oversees the K-5 Caring Closet, providing an inventory of essentials to school staff regularly. Currently, they are in need of socks, underwear, tennis shoes, and warmer weather clothing.



The middle/high school counselor oversees the 6-12 Closet in collaboration with the MS/HS health office. In addition to clothing, undergarments, shoes and coats, the Closet houses personal essentials and school supplies. Currently, they are in need of deodorant, bath towels, body wash and waterproof winter gloves.

Nekoosa Public Schools – The district social worker manages needs for the three schools within the district in conjunction with school staff. There are separate Closets for the elementary, middle, and high school buildings. Like Port Edwards, the elementary school keeps extra clothing and school supplies on hand for needs as they arise, and the middle school also stocks personal items.

Coordinated by one of the Student Council Co-Advisors with assistance from the Student Council, there are multiple Closets at the high school. For example, one is near the gym with t-shirts that may be needed for class; another may be accessed 24/7 so students can access it outside of school hours. In addition to age-appropriate clothing, for sizes 14/16 boys to 3x/4x, the 'main' high school Closet carries specialty items like dresses for Homecoming and Prom as donations allow. As a Special Education teacher, the Advisor utilizes the closet to teach her students life skills, such as washing, folding, and hanging donated clothing.



Youth For Christ

Youth For Christ (YFC) is a national organization that often works together with local churches and other like-minded partners, such as Love INC, to reach young people where they're at, to truly listen and hear their story, and walk beside them as they grow through the system. There are several components to the

program.

The first step is to be there for the youth in the Juvenile Detention Centers. YFC has one local staff member who is the juvenile justice director and has been with YFC for 10 years. She works weekly with the detention center youth listening to their story, guiding them on life skills, and helps them to think about and answer the question: Why Try? There are 13 juvenile detention centers in Wisconsin, serving youth, ages 11-16/17, from 72 counties. The local YFC chapter serves Wood and Portage County youth who are sent to juvenile detention centers in either Portage or Marathon County. The average number of juveniles detained at any given time in the local facility is eight, with a stay of three days to three months. Detention center program costs often center around small rewards for completing weekly journaling activities at an estimated cost of \$50-\$60 a month.

Once juveniles are released from the detention centers, local YFC's programming continues with an aftercare and mentoring program. Volunteer adult mentors complete training on trauma informed care, the juvenile justice system, and how to identify and address culture shock. They are matched with a mentee, age 11-19, who may not have stable housing. They may be homeless, live in transitional housing, or live in foster care, and some of these young people may be a teen parent. The mentor/mentee have 48 points of contact within one year, with the option to continue to meet and stay in each other's lives long term. Time spent together includes understanding basic humanity, discussing the mentee's backstory and trauma that led up to an event, identifying untapped talents and skills the mentee has and what they can offer others from their personal experience in the system. If the mentee asks, the mentor at that time can share their own story with them. Donations are used to purchase gift cards for the volunteer mentor/mentee. Finally, group meetings occur

which always include food and allow the youth to meet together, make friends and support each other with the guidance of YFC supervision. The minimal cost is estimated at \$30/week. Aftercare may also include one-on-one meetings, similar to the mentor program, but with YFC staff. Sharing a meal, building relationships, and learning skills are important to the success in helping to keep the youth out of the juvenile system.

Learn more at www.yfc.net.



United Way

Just wrapping up their annual campaign, the United Way of South Wood & Adams Counties is seeking support to help fund 29 programs. 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, Income, Health and Safety Net Services. Learn more at www.uwsvac.org.



Friends of Incourage

Incourage is seeking donations to continue to support our work in meeting community needs as they arise. The "Friends of Incourage Fund" supports

Incourage's ongoing community-building work and are the most flexible funds to support community needs as they are identified. When donors give gifts of any size to this fund, it is an investment in the future of our work and our community. With the economies of scale made possible by pooling donations, Incourage professionally manages and invests these assets to make a lasting impact on the future of our home, south Wood County. Gifts of all sizes are recognized on the Incourage website, posted publicly at the Incourage office, and may also be recognized through other media. "Friends of Incourage" include any dollar amount. "Founding Friends" are partners who make contributions of \$5,000 or more, or make contributions over time totaling \$5,000 or more. Thank you so much for your support!! Learn more at www.incouragecf.org.



Hmong American Center

The Hmong American Center (HAC) offers a weekly Cultural Dining Site for Southeast Asian residents age 60 years and older at their Wausau location. HAC has been providing transportation to a group of individuals from Wood County to the Cultural Dining Site every two weeks. There are currently 10-15 individuals participating in this program from Wood County. They'd like to be able to serve more local residents but are currently limited by a lack of vehicles and drivers.

The Hmong American Center engages in economic, social and multi-cultural development, serving as an educational and resource center for its members and surrounding communities through leadership, cooperation and collaboration. Programs and services include: preserving their heritage through cultural advocacy, building relationships between law enforcement and the Southeast Asian community, providing educational support to help prepare future generations for career opportunities including public service careers, assisting aging adults with tax preparation, helping to bridge the gap for residents facing food insecurity, and providing translation services. Financial support helps HAC provide outreach, programs and services, and supports the organization's operating needs, including maintaining a local branch office at 2831 8th Street South in Wisconsin Rapids. Learn more at www.hmongamericancenter.org.



The Family Center

The Family Center is currently requesting support to provide emergency shelter.

Navigating life through a pandemic has created many challenges for our community and its residents. Victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse find themselves even more isolated, more at risk for abuse, less financially stable and feeling more trapped than ever. Unfortunately, as stress and worries escalate at home, so do incidents of domestic abuse. Family Center staff continue to work on behalf of the victims, providing safe shelter, advocacy and counseling services, and a hotline that is available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. They forge ahead in a challenging fundraising environment, one in which funding gaps are still seen today. High demand continues for the services they provide as domestic violence incidents and even deaths are at an all-time high. Many grants that previously supported their work have become highly competitive; this will likely create increased gaps between needs and funding. Throughout the challenges, The Family Center continues to offer all services to victims at no cost. Donations to the Family Center help to provide a safe environment where healing can begin.

Learn more about The Family Center at www.familyctr.org.



Special Olympics Wisconsin

Transforming the lives of children and adults with intellectual disabilities, Special Olympics Wisconsin (SOWI) provides year-round sports training and athletic competitions in a variety of Olympic-type sports. SOWI helps build a community of unity and inclusion. The activities provide an opportunity for the athletes to be courageous, to develop their personal physical fitness while building relationships and having fun. The events help them create long-lasting memories with their family, friends, fellow athletes, and the community at large.

As with all other nonprofit organizations affected by the pandemic, SOWI is looking for assistance to help Special Olympics attendees participate. With inflation, and rising transportation and lodging costs, many athletes are not able to attend events this season. SOWI is seeking to support travel and lodging for local athletes to participate in their competition events.

There are 860 athletes in the North Central Region 2 area, of which 169 are from Wood County. It costs about \$757 to support one athlete for one year. Learn more at www.specialolympicswisconsin.org.



Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes

As a result of a national organizational realignment in 2008, local Girl Scouts of the Woodland Council joined with other Councils to create Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes (GSNWGL). GSNWGL serves approximately 10,000 girls from 58 counties across northern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Locally, there are 226 girls and 128 adult volunteers in 8 troops.

Each troop is responsible for raising funds to support their own troop's activities and events, purchase badge earning supplies, buy patches, and support annual troop startup costs. The 'new' fundraiser held in the fall, along with a portion of the spring (cookie) fundraiser and unused funds from the previous year, generate funds

for the current school year. The number of troops in our area continue to grow. Two new troops, a Daisy/Brownie (1st-3rd grade) troop from Nekoosa and a Brownie (2nd-3rd grade) troop from Pittsville have started this year. Since these new troops haven't been involved in either the fall or spring fundraisers, they don't have any funding available for activities. Start-up funding is requested to provide the new troops some seed money so they can provide activities, helping the girls to gain skills and confidence to accept challenges, overcome obstacles, and become future leaders.

Local community service projects include creating a recipe book to be distributed to FOCUS clients, participating in Day of Caring, collecting donations for a Thanksgiving canned food drive, and making baskets for new baby girls that are distributed during Girl Scout Week (March 6-12, 2023).

Learn more at www.gsnwgl.org.



Handicap Ramps for Disabled Residents

Working with local churches, volunteers and community organizations, Love INC is a referral source in our community that coordinates services for those needing assistance. One of their current needs is funding to build handicap ramps for low-income residents who are not Veterans and therefore, do not meet eligibility criteria for handicap ramp assistance programs. Skilled and knowledgeable volunteers are ready and able to build the ramps as funding

becomes available. The organization maintains separate ledgers for designated purposes like this. Learn more at loveincswc.org.



Unrestricted Funds

Incourage's vision is a community that works well for all. As we work with you toward this vision, we strive to meet the ever-changing needs of the south Wood County area one day at a time, and always with a desire to create a better community for generations to come. We do this in part by funding creative resident-led community-building ideas, encouraging connections and

collaboration among residents and organizations along the way. When donors make contributions that can be used at the discretion of Incourage, often called unrestricted, we are then able to support community-building suggestions brought to our attention by people like you. Gifts to our unrestricted "Community Impact Fund" are used to nimbly and flexibly support these community ideas and needs as they arise or are identified. If you are interested in supporting grant-making and other activities in our community, your contribution, no matter the amount, helps Incourage to do more. Learn more at www.incouragecf.org.



We value and appreciate your partnership and support.

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