

Over the Years: 1994 to Now

PROJECTS

Projects like the Performing Arts and the Centralia Centers, Helen's Zoo House, the ACT Playground, Wisconsin Rapids fireworks, the WI Fire & EMS Memorial, the Nekoosa Community Center, the Dick Trickle Memorial, and more, all became a reality with Incourage's collaboration and community building work.

NON-PROFITS

Many non-profit community organizations were assisted with their start-up, expansions, and/or pushed through challenges they faced, such as the Community Theater, Boys & Girls Club, Family Center, YMCA, Alex C Dove Foundation, Central WI Symphony Orchestra, and the Lester Public Library of Rome, to name just a few.

DONORS

We have partnered with many incredibly generous donors who have given of their time, talents, and treasure for the benefit of our community.

"If it were not for Incourage, I am afraid we might live in Potterville. It would not be such a 'Wonderful Life.'"

-Anonymous Donor

What Does Incourage Do?

We believe people are the greatest community asset we have and want to help make our community a place we're all proud to call home. So, through conversations with community members who want to make a difference, we help people find a way to make their philanthropic dreams come true.

We support innovative, resident-led, community-building ideas; encourage connections and collaboration among residents and organizations; and administer charitable funds created through the generosity and vision of many donors like you.

Just like Virginia, who founded our community foundation back in 1994, you can make a difference too!

Why Incourage?

We have thirty years of experience helping people like you find their next step, so they could move forward. We truly are the people's foundation, bringing people together to move ideas into action and connecting ideas and resources to create a community that works well for all.

Incourage currently manages 112 scholarship and 278 additional funds for a variety of charitable purposes.

In 2023, 175 Scholarships were awarded in the amount of \$196,500 to further local students continuing education.

In 2023, 229 grants amounting to \$749,034 were awarded to 91 non-profit organizations.

Examples include: Adams County Historical Society, ADRC, American Legion Post 9, American Red Cross, Arts Council of SWC, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boy and Girl Scouts, Boys & Girls Club, Building Blocks, Caring Closet, Central WI Cultural Center, Central WI Symphony Orchestra, CREATE Portage County, Drug Court, Families Helping Families, Family Center, FOCUS, Friends of Rapids Music, Hannah Center WR, Hmong American Center, HOW, Junior Achievement, Love INC of SWC, Mary's Place WR, Opportunity Development Center (ODC), Park Place, Positive Alternatives, Rapids Area Soccer, Rudolph Fire Dept, SWC Historical Museum, SWC Humane Society, United Way, Wood County 4-H, Wood County Veterans Memorial, WR Area Senior Center, WR City Band, WR Community Theatre, YMCA, area Churches, Libraries, Schools, and so many more!

How Can I Help?

Give An Unrestricted Gift

An unrestricted contribution is one of the best ways to help! Rather than being designated for a specific purpose, unrestricted gifts can be used at the discretion of Incourage for whatever is needed most. Whether that means covering every-day expenses like keeping the lights on or partnering with a community member to make something wonderful happen, gifts of any size to our Friends of Incourage Fund make it possible for us to do more for our community.

More Ways to Give

Contributions can also be made to existing funds, to establish new funds, and can even be done so anonymously. Designations toward specified purposes like scholarships, building endowments to support named organizations, or a field of interest like the arts, are all possible. Unrestricted contributions are the most flexible and help to support Incourage's ongoing community-building work.

30 Years of Highlights

Community Foundation of South Wood County opens! 1994

Initial office established in the downtown drive through building of US Bank

Community Progress Initiative (CPI) launched to revitalize our community. Began receiving funding from national funders such as the Ford Foundation and others

Established funds for grant-making by and for seven local communities

Office building, now known as the Barker Mead Building, was generously donated by Ruth and Hartley Barker and Gilbert and Jaylee Mead as an “...investment in the future of greater South Wood County - ‘our heart home.’”

Speak Your Peace civility training program began and continues today

Began connecting local lenders, economic development organizations, government officials and current/future entrepreneurs to resources and entrepreneurial support

2008 – 2011: EITC free tax service program provided by a collaboration of Incourage, Bulls Eye Credit Union, AARP Tax Aide program and the Wisconsin Rapids Education Association

2008-2018: Created and led Workforce Central program to address workforce and economic challenges

Incourage offers Community Networking Training for 1:1 community conversations, networking and building relationships

2015 – 2018 Incourage® created and delivered Blueprints for Tomorrow, a 25-month professional development program for local government, non-profit professionals and Incourage, focused on a holistic approach to community change

Speak Your Peace civility training program is reignited as a result of community requests

Celebration of 30 years! 2024

2004

2007

2008

2013

2015

2022

2002

2005

2006

2012

2017

2018

2020

2023

Senior Center (Centralia) realized through public-private collaboration

The first Public Arts Group historical mural happens, facilitated by CPI’s Arts & Heritage Cluster
2005 – 2012: Board Governance training strengthened local non-profit organizations

2006 – 2019: Received grants from national funders to support programs, community surveys and much more
2006 – 2009: Led the Adaptive Leadership (ALI) training program, with Ford Foundation support
2006 – 2017: Led Teen Leadership program for area high school sophomores
2006 – 2017: Teen Fireworks Committee raised all funds for the City of WR annual fireworks

Community Foundation of Greater South Wood County name changed to Incourage (Community Foundation, Inc.)

2012 – 2018: The Community Picnic was funded and facilitated by Incourage, which became a reality with the help of many organizations, vendors, and volunteers

Incourage acquired the Tribune Building for the benefit of the community, followed by community convenings to provide resident input for future community and economic development

International Scholarship and Tuition Services (ISTS) is engaged to facilitate Scholarships in a more sustainable and equitable manner

Incourage Board and staff aspire to align 100% of assets to our mission resulting in investments in local CDFI’s and creation of the Wisconsin Shared Stewardship Equity Fund in support of place-based investing in our community

Began updating foundational tools and applications to support Incourage’s work well into the future

Tribune Feasibility Study completed to include a Public Market

ASSETS THEN & NOW

June 30, 1994
\$140,809

June 30, 2023
\$31 Million

CHARITABLE FOCUS OF ASSETS

95% - Designated Purposes
5% - Unrestricted Purposes

OVER THE 30 YEARS

Programs & Services \$26 Million

Grants Awarded \$36.8 Million

4,223 Scholarships Awarded \$3.2 Million