

INCOURAGING ACTION

A semi-annual report of community programs & services needing support

Incourage Community Foundation

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BE A FRIEND, GIVE TO INCOURAGE

Incourage Community Foundation runs on the generosity of community members just like you. Because only 4% of our funds are unrestricted and can be used for operational expenses as well as unrestricted grant opportunities, your gift to the Friends of Incourage Fund is greatly needed and appreciated.

When you give to this fund, you support the work of our team - ensuring resources are managed responsibly, invested strategically, and connected to the causes you care about.

Your gifts also help us to promote, facilitate, and host local programs and events like summer zoo events and Speak Your Peace.

It's because of your generosity our work continues to thrive in our community. Thank you!

Visit incouragecf.org/givenow/ and choose 'Friends of Incourage Unrestricted' from the dropdown to support our work today.

FOR DONOR ADVISED FUND ADVISORS

1. Suggest grants through your donor advised fund for specific or unrestricted needs.
2. Provide additional contributions to support specific needs.
3. Provide additional unrestricted contributions for community needs as they arise.

*For privacy, you may choose to give anonymously to any of the programs or services on the following pages. By giving through Incourage, the number of organizations soliciting you directly may be reduced.

FOR ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

1. Give an unrestricted contribution to support needs such as these as they arise.
2. Give to an Incourage designated fund to support a specific organization or purpose.
3. Give to create a fund that aligns with your charitable goals.

What's a Donor Advised Fund?

Learn more by visiting our website incouragecf.org or give us a call at 715-423-3863.



Please consider supporting some of the community opportunities on the following pages.



OLIO ARTS & MUSIC CENTER

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Offset workshop instructor fees

The Olio Arts & Music Center offers workshops year-round, creating opportunities for individuals to learn and practice new skills. Mosaic Madness, recently held during spring break, is one such event that welcomed both beginners and experienced participants to create a mosaic piece of their choice. While students typically cover material costs for programs like this, support for instructor fees helps keep workshops accessible and affordable - both for this event and future programming.



SOUTH WOOD COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Video equipment to record residents' oral histories

Since 1972, our local museum has preserved the rich heritage of South Wood County by collecting, conserving, and exhibiting physical historical artifacts that tell our community's story. Now, they aim to capture living history. Video recording equipment will allow them to document residents' voices and experiences, preserving today's stories for current and future generations.



Photo Credit: John R. Hartman

RIVERFRONT JAZZ FESTIVAL

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Attract a professional jazz musician for free area-wide festival

Founded in 2003, the Riverfront Jazz Festival brings the community together through a free, family-friendly celebration of music, arts, and culture. Since 2007, the festival has also supported scholarships for the UW-Stevens Point Jazz Program. Funding professional musicians helps keep entry to the event free for all attendees and allows more proceeds from food, beverage and merchandise vendor sales to support UWSP's student jazz musicians. Visit riverfrontjazzfest.org to learn more about this event.



SUN UP, WISCONSIN PODCAST

Request: Contributions of any amount up to \$1,500

Purpose: Podcast start-up equipment

Sun Up, Wisconsin is a new local podcast and morning show produced in partnership with Wisconsin Rapids Community Media (WRCM), which provides studio space and broadcast support. Following WFHR's shift to music programming, Sun Up, Wisconsin fills a gap by highlighting local voices, stories, and events through in-studio and on-site interviews. Your contributions will support program start-up, specifically audio and video equipment needed to produce and sustain the program.



BUCKLEY-BALDWIN VFW POST #2534

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Replace flags & provide ongoing maintenance and support

Post #2534 has fifty American flags circled around their location in honor of all fifty states. These flags are showing major wear and will soon need to be replaced. In honor of our nation's 250th anniversary, VFW Post #2534 would like to replace all fifty flags by this summer's Independence Day. Support would cover all the flags and potential replacement hardware.



MISS WISCONSIN RAPIDS ORGANIZATION

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Program support

The Miss Wisconsin Rapids Organization is a local, non-profit program that is part of the Miss America Opportunity, relying entirely on volunteers to provide leadership workshops, personal growth

opportunities, and scholarships for young women in our community. Since 1985, the organization has awarded more than \$290,000 in scholarships through the Miss Wisconsin Rapids program.

Each year, the organization hosts a local preliminary competition, where it crowns two titleholders: a Teen (ages 13–17) and a Miss (ages 18–28). These young women serve as community ambassadors throughout the following year, dedicating their time to service initiatives and local engagement.

While donor-advised funds may not be used to support scholarships, funding may be used to help support theater rental fees (estimated at \$5,000-\$6,000), meals for the tech crew, community service initiatives, and more.

On October 24th, 2026, the organization will celebrate a major milestone by crowning its 50th Miss Wisconsin Rapids - marking five decades of impact.

Learn more at misswisconsinrapids.org.



NEKOOSA MID-WEST FEST: COMMUNITY PICNIC

Request: Contributions of any amount toward a \$3,200 goal

Purpose: Provide free entertainment

The Nekoosa Mid-West Fest is a free, family-friendly community picnic that brings Nekoosa and surrounding communities together for an afternoon and evening of fun. Now in its third year, the picnic will be held during the Cranberry Blossom Festival. Your support helps provide free activities like bounce houses, games, batting cages, and more - ensuring an enjoyable experience for all ages.



LESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY OF VESPER

Request: Contributions of any amount toward a \$2,000 matching grant

Purpose: Enhance and expand the history room

Many years ago, the Vesper library had its own newspaper, which has since been sent in its entirety to the Wisconsin Historical Society to be converted into microfiche. Funding will help create a dedicated history room at the Vesper library featuring digital access to archived local newspapers and historical records. The project also includes scanning and preserving local photos and documents to create community scrapbooks. This effort will keep Vesper's history accessible and engaging for current and future generations. The dollar-for-dollar match runs April 1 - July 31, 2026.



CHARLES & JOANN LESTER LIBRARY - NEKOOSA

Request: Contributions of any amount toward a \$1,500 matching grant

Purpose: Provide new learning kits and expand access to interactive learning tools

Funding will support new hands-on and audio learning resources for children and families. This includes themed learning kits (e.g., pond life, telescopes) for in-library use or checkout, reminisce kits that connect generations, and audio-supported tools like Yoto players and Vox Books. These resources make learning more engaging while building literacy, vocabulary, and listening skills. The dollar-for-dollar match runs March 1 - May 31, 2026.



WOOD COUNTY 4-H

Request: Contributions of any amount to raise \$1,000

Purpose: Camp Transportation

Funds will provide transportation from Wood County to the Northern Lakes Impact Center in Rhinelander for a three-day 4-H summer camp (grades 3-7). The camp helps youth unplug from digital spaces, connect with nature, and build leadership, resilience, and other life skills. Free transportation reduces financial barriers and increases access for participating families.



WISCONSIN RAPIDS SCHOOL SAFETY PATROL

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Provide training materials & equipment for local cadets

The Wisconsin Rapids Safety Patrol, in partnership with the Wisconsin Rapids Police Department, builds leadership, character, and a strong understanding of pedestrian and traffic safety, empowering students to serve as role models and help create safer school environments for all. Support will provide essential training materials and equipment to sustain the program across Grove, Howe, Mead, Washington, and Woodside Elementary Schools, as well as THINK Academy, Immanuel Lutheran School, and St. Vincent de Paul School.



PORT EDWARDS AGRICULTURE CLUB

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Club start-up costs & transportation fees

The purpose of this new club is to provide students with hands-on learning experiences, career exploration opportunities, and leadership development connected to agriculture and related industries. The goal is to expose students to the wide range of careers and skills within agriculture, from production and animal science to agribusiness, mechanics, natural resources, and beyond.

Start-up costs include supplies related to indoor growing stations, window gardens, raised beds, and materials related to making those stations successful (seeds, soil, tools, etc.). Support would also help cover transportation fees for educational trips and experiences.



DISCOVERY EDUCATION STATION

Request: Contributions of any amount up to \$4,875

Purpose: Replace storefront entry door

The Discovery Education Station is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing inclusive, hands-on STEAM programming for children, families, and individuals with disabilities. Their mission is to create a safe and engaging environment for individuals of all abilities throughout Wood County to learn, grow, and build confidence through interactive education, daily living skill development, and community-based experiences.

Their main door, which was specially installed with safety and accessibility in mind, shattered from structural stress and ice buildup. Support would help with both materials and installation of a new, safe, and code-compliant door for individuals with disabilities.



MILLTOWN TO MY OWN ENTREPRENEURIAL ACADEMY

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Reduce barriers to participation

Milltown to My Own Entrepreneurial Academy is a program focused on helping underserved individuals build sustainable small business income while developing strong professional networks. The program teaches core entrepreneurial concepts and mindset training and provides mentorship and consulting programs, to ensure student success. The program cost is \$350, which is very affordable compared to typical higher education programs, but is still beyond reach for many in underserved communities. To ease the financial burden, it is a mission of Milltown to My Own to provide free childcare for all participants. Your support will help make the program more accessible by offsetting those costs, allowing underserved individuals access to education that could change the course of their lives.



SAFE HAVEN BABY BOX (SHBB)

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Funds for annual maintenance and inspection fees

The Safe Haven Baby Box is a secure, temperature-controlled, ventilated, alarm-equipped device located at the West Side Fire Department. It provides a safe, legal, and anonymous option for parents to surrender newborns up to 30 days old, with immediate 911 notification ensuring rapid care. Your support helps cover annual inspection and maintenance costs to keep this life-saving resource safe, reliable, and always available when needed. Learn more about our local baby box by searching Safe Haven Baby Box Wisconsin Rapids on Facebook.

Learn more about Safe Haven Baby Boxes and the national organization at <https://www.shbb.org/>.



THREE BRIDGES RECOVERY

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Programming

Established in 2018 by the Wood County Drug Task Force, Three Bridges

Recovery is a dedicated non-profit organization that addresses urgent needs of individuals facing substance use disorders. SMART Recovery meetings, which is a science-based peer-led support group program founded in 1994, are facilitated by Three Bridges to serve individuals in Wood County and beyond. This supportive environment fosters empathy, understanding, and empowerment for individuals to learn self-management techniques and recovery tools. Your support helps sustain these meetings, offering a safe, supportive space where participants build self-management skills, resilience, and community on their path to recovery.



HOPE HEALING & LASTING RECOVERY

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Leader training and participant materials

Hope Healing & Lasting Recovery is a non-denominational, biblically based program combining 12-step principles with the Beatitudes, offering support for individuals facing addiction, grief, trauma, and emotional challenges. After significant success in Marshfield and Wausau, the program was expanded to serve our local community. Weekly meetings provide fellowship, support, snacks, beverages, and sometimes a full meal while alternating between teachings and testimonials. This local group networks with Wausau and the state to ensure their teachings remain consistent, and leaders receive annual training to maintain program integrity. Leaders are responsible for all costs associated with these trainings, including workbooks and travel. Funding will support annual training for eight local volunteer leaders and provide materials for participants and sessions, helping sustain this vital community-based recovery support network.

**Because this program has not yet connected with a tax exempt fiscal organizational partner, donor-advised (DA) funds may not be used for support; however, personal donations are accepted.*

BASIC NEEDS & STUDENT SUPPORT



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB: CARE CLUB SERVICES

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Basic need supplies & support for low-income youth

Many low-income families cannot afford to provide their children with proper care and support, preventing

access to basic needs like clean clothing, hygiene and feminine products, and access to a shower. CARE Club Services provide for those basic needs, including access to showers through their YMCA partnership, and offer health and wellness support and one-on-one mentoring so youth can feel safe and well supported. This program helps youth build self-esteem and confidence, self-worth, and the stability needed to succeed in school and beyond.



STUDENT FOOD SERVICE FUNDS

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Provide anonymous financial aid for low-income students' meals

The following funds are designated accounts that provide emergency funds so every student can receive breakfast and lunch at school, regardless of a family's ability to pay. As students receive meals, their accounts are charged. For some low-income families, this often results in accruing significant negative balances. For high school seniors, a negative balance can prevent a student from graduating. These funds provide relief for those who need help paying down their account debt, easing financial stress for local families, ensuring students are nourished and ready to learn, and allowing students facing financial difficulty to graduate on time.

Assumption Catholic Schools: Feed My Sheep

Nekoosa Public Schools: Lunch Account Fund

Pittsville Public Schools: Lunch Account Fund

Port Edwards Public Schools: Families Help Families Fund

Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools: WRPS Food Service Angel Fund



MID-STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE FOUNDATION

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Sustain campus shuttle services

Since launching in 2022, this shuttle has provided over 6,000 rides to more than 375 students - many of whom

are economically or academically disadvantaged, have disabilities, or are single parents - helping them access education across campuses and communities.

Your support will sustain essential costs including fuel, maintenance, insurance, and driver wages. With 82% of Mid-State graduates staying in the region, this program is a direct investment in our local workforce and community strength.



BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Provide ongoing support to our local BBBS program

Big Brothers Big Sisters provides mentoring to children ages 6-16. A volunteer (Big) and a child (Little) meet weekly to work on academic skills; work through peer relationships or decision-making skills; or provide them with opportunities they otherwise wouldn't have. During meetings, a 'Big' and 'Little' may go to the playground, play board games, do a craft, work on homework together, or share a snack. This valuable time can increase a child's confidence, improve school performance, and increase their ability to make wise choices.



LHS CLASS REUNION ZERO

Request: Contributions of any amount

Purpose: Support event for Lincoln High School graduating seniors

Class Reunion Zero, now in its 35th year, is a safe, substance-free, and well-chaperoned celebration where seniors come together to make lasting memories before graduation.

Donations help provide food, entertainment, and prizes for students throughout the evening, helping make this milestone event both memorable and meaningful.



For questions, email hello@incouragecf.org or call us at 715-423-3863

Thank you for giving today!

Visit incouragecf.org/givenow to give online today or mail a check to Incurage Community Foundation at 478 East Grand Ave, Ste 200; Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494.

incourage
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