

Community Connection

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As I write this, things are moving rapidly in regards to the coronavirus (COVID-19) response. Just one week ago, on March 12, we had our regularly scheduled board meeting and decided to postpone our casino night fundraiser, which was to be held just two days later. Anyone who has planned special events knows what a huge undertaking it is to coordinate with guests, vendors, and volunteers. Many of our auction items have redemption dates that expire in the next few months. But with the high risk of exchanging money and chips, we didn't want to gamble with anyone's health.

The very next day, our school districts announced that the following week would be e-learning. We joked at our Friday office lunch that it might be our last one at the restaurant, and just a few days later Governor Holcomb announced that restaurants would be closed except for carry-out or delivery.

Monday we started making preparations for how the Community Foundation would handle the pandemic. We closed our office doors to the public and canceled grant presentations. One nonprofit had to cancel a major fundraiser, which greatly impacted their operations and ability to keep people on payroll. We put out the call for help to a few of our donor-advised funds, and they answered immediately with the offer to use funds to assist. Another grantee contacted us and shared that the number of elderly and disabled clients in need of transportation and meal services greatly increased, and again, a donor-advised fund quickly responded with funding.

We re-opened our Disaster Relief Fund, which was created after the Henryville tornado as a way for the community to help those in need. One hundred percent of any donations made to this fund will help nonprofits in urgent need.

With the first coronavirus case just announced in Scott County today, no toilet paper or Clorox wipes to be found, food wiped off the shelves, and everyone practicing social distancing, it's hard to not feel anxious about what comes next. Schools are closed until May. High school seniors are dealing with emotions of potentially losing their last season of sports, missing

prom or whether they will have graduation parties. Parents are struggling with how to teach their children at home or find child care while they work. People are trying to figure out how to pay upcoming bills with a loss of income. As humans we are social beings and now we are being told to isolate ourselves. It all can seem overwhelming.

But in the midst of an unprecedented pandemic, our community is finding ways to come together, like we always do. And that's what we need to focus on and remember. People are making an extra effort to safely support and promote local businesses. Families are reconnecting at home with all this unexpected time together. People are checking in with others to make sure they are taken care of. We have time to enjoy the outdoors. We are all adapting and figuring out our new normal, for the time being.

Scott County's best assets are our people, and we prove that time and again whenever we are hit with any curveball that life throws at us. Whether it is a natural disaster, house fire, illness, or pandemic, you won't find a more caring, giving community. We are in this together and our small acts of caring will make a world of difference. What can you do to help? Our mental health is so important. Check in with others—send a text, call, email, write a note, especially to someone who is high risk and can't be exposed to anyone. Tell those who are working at restaurants, grocery stores, gas stations, delivering mail, etc. that you appreciate them. Donate to your favorite charity—their needs are going to be even greater in the coming months. Consider buying a gift certificate from a local business to help them with cash flow now. Be kind, patient, and understanding. Pledge to do at least one thing every day to make our community better.

Our Board of Directors will continue to have thoughtful discussions on how we can do our part to meet the community's critical needs, and we thank you for your trust and support. Please follow our Facebook page, email or call us for any updates to our procedures. We are in this together!

~ Jaime Toppe, *Executive Director*

Garten Family Establishes Unrestricted Fund

Chris and Beth Garten grew up in Scottsburg, both having graduated from Scottsburg High School. As small business owners of Signature Countertops, and parents to Hayden, Hudson, and Greyson, they lead busy lives. But giving back to the community has always been a part of who they are. Chris has a heart of service for his community and his country. In addition to being a Marine Corps Gunnery Sergeant, who has served two tours in Iraq, he also serves as an Indiana State Senator, representing Senate District 45. His senate district covers Switzerland, Jefferson, and Scott counties as well as portions of Jackson and Clark counties. Chris is the current vice president for the Scott County Chamber of Commerce and has served in that role for almost five years. Beth, a busy mom to three boys, is constantly volunteering for many community activities and is engaged in countless school organizations. Hayden and Hudson are members of the Community Foundation's Youth Grantmaking Council.

When they heard about the Lilly Endowment matching grant opportunity for unrestricted funds offered to the Scott County Community Foundation, it made sense to establish a permanent fund to benefit the community. Thus, The Garten Foundation was born. Now, each year grants will be awarded to carry on their family's spirit of giving back.

"Growing up in a broken home, I truly understand the value of non-profits within our community and investing in our children and our

people is the most valuable investment we can make; this fund allows us the opportunity to do just that," stated Chris.

Signature Countertops has

served as a beacon of light in Scott County contributing to over 30 different non-profits and community organizations within the county in 2019. Chris and Beth are passionate about this community and our friends and neighbors that call Scott County home.

"Beth and I believe in Scott County to our core and we couldn't be more excited about helping in this capacity," said Chris.

"We are grateful that the Garten family values the importance of investing in our community and has entrusted the Community Foundation to assist with their charitable goals," said Scott County Community Foundation Executive Director Jaime Toppe. "Each year when local nonprofits are assisted during our Community Grants Program, their family can be proud knowing that they helped make these grants possible."



Nonprofit Resources



Steven Shattuck with Bloomerang recently spoke to nonprofits on how social media can be used to engage donors. Our next nonprofit luncheon will be held June 16. "The Keys to Volunteer Management" will be presented by June Miller.

Applications for our 2020 Community Grants Program are due April 30. Please visit our website for the link to the online application. Ten hard copies are required, and we will contact applying organizations to make arrangements for any copies that are not mailed.

Proposals will be accepted from charitable organizations which have their tax-exempt 501(c)(3) status, schools, and government entities. Proposals from non-profit organizations not classified as a 501(c)(3) public charity may be considered provided the project is charitable and supports a community need.

We have \$91,700 available thanks to these funds: Borden Family Community Granting Fund, Laurence and Myrtle Bridge Memorial Fund, Donald R. Collins Sr. Family Fund, Community Enrichment Fund, Terry Fewell Memorial Fund, Addie Mae Graham Memorial Fund, the Lauren Graham Memorial Fund, Dale and Rosemarie Hobbs Fund, Hazel and Lowell Lowry Sr. Memorial Fund, L.L. and Juanita Lowry Unrestricted Fund, John and Janice Martin Unrestricted Endowment Fund, Neighbors Helping Neighbors Fund, Dr. William and Diann Scott Memorial Fund, Dan and Mary Lou Slattery Fund, Scott County Memorial Fund, Scott County Immediate Response Fund and Wesbanco Fund.

You may contact Jaime Toppe with questions at info@scottcountyfoundation.org.

SCCF Partners with Leadership Southern Indiana

We are excited to announce our partnership with Leadership Southern Indiana, which will expand their service area to Scott County. Scott County had its own Leadership Academy, but over the last few years struggled to find a home for the program. Mark Eddy, President/CEO of LeadershipSI said, “We found out about the need for Scott County through a joint relationship Jaime Toppe, Executive Director of Scott County Community Foundation, and I had with Align Southern Indiana and from there we began to talk about the partnership.”

LeadershipSI and Scott County Community Foundation have agreed to a three-year partnership that will allow local community members in Scott County to participate in the programs that Leadership SI offers. This will help increase regionalism between Scott, Floyd and Clark County leaders.

“The Community Foundation is a big believer in regionalism, so why re-invent the wheel when partnering with LeadershipSI only makes sense,” said Toppe. “They have the programs and capacity and are doing a great job.”

Leadership Southern Indiana offers four programs – DISCOVER (the flagship community

based program), FOCUS (one-day immersion program), ELEVATE (coaching and skills based program) and NEXGEN (Youth leadership program for 11th graders). All programs will be offered to Scott County except for the NEXGEN program since the Community Foundation already has a strong youth program available with the YGC.

“A benefit to the partnership will be the addition of agriculture to our community based program, and the learnings from other Scott County community assets along with the more regional outreach,” said Eddy. “Agriculture has been a missing piece of our program for years. Now, we can give our leaders the opportunity to experience a key industry in our region.”

Leadership Southern Indiana is a non-profit organization whose mission is simple: Engage, develop and mobilize regional leaders who will serve and transform our community. To transform our community, we need strong leaders. That’s where Leadership Southern Indiana comes in. Leadership SI offers four different programs, each designed



to shape the person to become a more effective leader in their school, workplace, peers, and community. Alumni range from high school students to elected government officials. Along with the programs, Leadership SI offers events throughout the year such as workshops, networking events, and a breakfast series so members can continue learning and stay involved. To find out more, visit leadershipsi.org.

Community Needs Assessment Update

In January, we launched our Community Needs Assessment. The survey asked anyone with ties to Scott County to share what they felt are the community’s strengths and needs. This community-wide effort also included community conversations and interviews with residents throughout Scott County. The results of the survey will help community leaders prioritize what matters to residents, and will be used to inform strategic planning for the community. The data will also help to attract state funding, private grants, and business investment.

This work is made possible through a community leadership planning grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. We are working in partnership with the IU Southeast Applied Research and Education Center to collect and analyze the data and then prepare reports to the community. The gathering of data was finished around the beginning of March, and want to thank those of you

who completed the survey. We appreciate you sharing your vision for the community.

We want to keep you updated on our next steps with this assessment. IU Southeast is continuing to work remotely on the plan. While the final report and presentation may be delayed due to the quarantine, we hope to present to the community by late summer. Using the results of the Community Needs Assessment, this will give us a roadmap for community development. We have applied for a community leadership implementation grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., which would fund a Scott County Vision Plan. We will continue to seek input from the community throughout this process. We are excited about the conversations that are happening in the community, and we look forward to a completed plan for progress.



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Looking Forward, Giving Back.

YGC Adapts to Quarantine; Beautifies Community

Scott County Youth Grantmaking Council members typically complete at least one community service project each month. These are almost always a large group effort, but with the restrictions placed on large group gatherings and the mandate to stay at home, members adapted by taking the “Clean Earth Challenge.” Originated by community member Lori Croasdell, the community was challenged to pick a nearby street, yard, or field, clean up the litter, post the picture and challenge others to do the same. Within a few days of issuing the challenge to YGC members, over one-third of the 96 YGC members have helped clean up our county, and we are certain many more will continue the challenge through May! To view all the photos, please visit the YGC’s Facebook page. We are proud of them for continuing their service to the community and for making Scott County a cleaner place!

