

SAGINAW COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

SCF

cornerstone

SPRING 2025



Heart of the City

Adult Day Support Program is the recipient of the 2024 Community Improvement Initiative \$40,000 Grant

► SEE PAGE 5 INSIDE

it takes
**EACH
OF US**

For good. For ever.

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President's Report

FROM RENEÉ S. JOHNSTON

What's next?

Wow, 2024 was quite the year! The Saginaw Community Foundation's 40th anniversary year was one of celebration and success. Here's a simple recap of our celebration highlights:

- **January 29:** Press conference announcing SCF's partnership with other community leaders to launch the Community Engagement and Inclusion initiative
- **January 29:** Trivia Night with SCF Board of Directors
- **February 15:** SCF 40th Anniversary Kick-Off Celebration at the Castle Museum of Saginaw County History
- **May 24:** SCF Community Bus Tour of Impact and Memorial Cup Event
- **June 5:** Excellence in Education Carnival Night where 665 scholarship awards were presented 389 students
- **July 24:** Breaking Bread Village/Saginaw Heartbeat conversation event
- **September 14:** SCF 40th Anniversary Gala Celebration
- **September 19:** SCF hosted the Great Lakes Bay Regional Community Foundation annual staff retreat
- **November 20:** 4th Annual Philanthropy Uncorked fundraiser
- **December 2:** Cornerstone Pillar Society Champagne Toast Reception

Truly, it was an amazing year, and we are grateful to have had so many of our donors, volunteers, community leaders and partners celebrating with us.

To top off our 40th anniversary, we had outstanding investment returns for the year. Our total composite one-year return was 12.6% compared to the balanced index which was

11.8% for assets totaling \$100,300,000 in assets. Thanks to our SCF Investment Committee, our local investment managers, and our investment consultant – Fund Evaluation Group (FEG) – for being diligent and fiscally responsible with the funds we manage on behalf of our donors who have entrusted the Saginaw Community Foundation as stewards of their contributions.

One might think, after such an eventful year, that we would have no wind left in our sails. It is just the opposite! We kicked-off 2025 by welcoming a new team member to the organization. On January 6, Eric Rutherford joined the team as our new Chief Operating Officer (COO) – a brand-new role at SCF. Before joining the team, Eric had been an SCF volunteer, grant recipient for an organization, fund representative for another organization, and a donor advisor. He's already been a wonderful addition. Welcome, Eric!

On January 29, in partnership with Saginaw Valley State University, we hosted a full-day Community Empowerment Symposium that brought 140 individuals together to learn how we can be a more inclusive community.

February 14 was our annual scholarship application deadline. We received 964 scholarship applications from students across the county and region.

On February 20, we hosted a Donor Appreciation Night to watch our Saginaw Spirit, the 2024 Memorial Cup Champions. Our SCF donors, Board Members and Staff mingled and cheered on the Spirit to victory.

The common mind-set amongst the SCF Team is that our work is never done. We are actively engaged in conversations on topics that are important to the community, such as mental health, infant mortality, post-secondary education attainment, housing, neighborhood associations, the new Medical Diamond downtown development, just to name a few. Through these conversations, we can connect our grant recipients, donors and other community supporters who can potentially assist with any of these opportunities.

We look forward to working with you for another amazing year of impact, because it truly takes each of us to build a flourishing community for all, for good, for ever.

Reneé S. Johnston
President & CEO



Donor appreciation night at the
Saginaw Spirit game Feb. 20, 2025.

SCF welcomes new Chief Operating Officer

Saginaw Community Foundation announces the addition of Eric R. Rutherford to the staff as its new Chief Operating Officer. In this role, Eric will provide strategic leadership and oversight of SCF's grants and scholarship program, financial operations and investments. He also will manage human resources activities for SCF and contribute to the general operations and strategic direction of the Foundation.

"Eric's leadership experience and commitment to our community align perfectly with our mission as we strive to bring people and resources together to build an equitable community for each of us in Saginaw County," said Reneé Johnston, president & CEO of Saginaw Community Foundation. "His expertise and passion for Saginaw County will be invaluable as we continue to build a flourishing community for all, forever."

Before to joining the staff at SCF, Eric was the director of Hartley Outdoor Education Center, operated by the Saginaw Intermediate School District, in St. Charles and served as the director of Parks and Recreation for Bridgeport Township.

In 2015, Eric was selected for the Gerstacker Fellowship at Saginaw Valley State University. He was named Saginawian of the Year by The Saginaw News in 2011.



Eric R. Rutherford, Chief Operating Officer

"I'm excited to join Saginaw Community Foundation and be part of an organization that makes such a positive difference in Saginaw County," said Eric. "I look forward to bringing my experiences to support SCF in achieving its strategic goals of equity, diversity, inclusiveness, collaboration, sustainability and community engagement in philanthropy."

A lifelong resident of Saginaw County, Eric obtained a bachelor's degree from Saginaw Valley State University and a master's degree from Seton Hall University. He and his wife, Stacey, have two children, Graysen and Finley.

New online donor portal

Update your contact info to gain access

Saginaw Community Foundation is excited to announce the launch of our new online Donor/Fund Representative Portal. In order to invite you to join our new portal, we are asking for updated contact information from all fund representatives. Scan the QR code below or visit saginawfoundation.org/portal to access an online form.

After SCF receives your updated contact information, we will send an invitation to donors/fund representatives via email. The email will contain a secure link to complete your registration. Once your registration is complete in the new portal, you will be able to:

- See the current balance of your fund
- View recent grants from your fund
- Generate and download a PDF fund statement
- View recent donations to your fund

We hope you will take advantage of the features and benefits our new Donor/Fund Representative Portal has to offer. If you have any questions, please contact Lori TenEyck, director of finance, at (989) 755-0545 or lori@saginawfoundation.org.



NEW electronic payment option now available

Improving security and adding convenience for payment recipients

Saginaw Community Foundation is excited to announce a new more efficient and cost-effective way for organizations to receive grant and other payments. We now offer Automated Clearing House (ACH) transfers from our bank to an account chosen by the recipient.

Here are a few ways ACH can help you:

- It saves trips to your financial institution
- It provides faster access to funds
- It eliminates the possibility of lost, stolen or forged checks

ACH is the Saginaw Community Foundation's preferred method of payment as it is an efficient and faster way to receive monies that are due to your organization. Visit saginawfoundation.org/ach to sign-up now and take advantage of this payment method by submitting your preferred banking information via our secure online form.

Issuing payments via ACH saves costs and improves security for both SCF and recipients. If you have any questions regarding ACH payments, please contact Lori TenEyck, director of finance, by calling (989) 755-0545 or email lori@saginawfoundation.org.



Visit saginawfoundation.org/portal and update your contact information today!

Grant program continues to impact grass-roots community improvement

A single project will be awarded up to \$40,000 this summer

Tracing its roots back to 2012, the Saginaw Community Foundation's Board of Directors' Community Improvement Initiative (CII) Grant has helped support 13 community projects with a total financial impact of \$365,000.

Every year, Saginaw Community Foundation awards its CII Grant to a single project. The project, as selected by the Foundation's Board of Directors, will receive a grant of \$40,000 and the project must be completed by July 2026.

The goal of this initiative for Saginaw Community Foundation is to create a funding vehicle that enables organizations to be more proactive in addressing community improvement needs. A desired outcome is to encourage the community to create and implement community improvement initiatives on its own.

What exactly is "community improvement"?

"We have defined a community improvement initiative as a project that will create indelible, measurable impacts in the immediate and broader community," said René Johnston, SCF president and CEO.

This initiative extends beyond existing charitable organizations, churches, schools and county/city officials. Individuals, community groups, neighborhoods, businesses and youth groups can apply if they utilize the Foundation as a fiscal sponsor. New and existing community projects are eligible.

Who can apply for the grant?

Any 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization is eligible to apply. The Saginaw Community Foundation, another nonprofit, a local unit of government, or a religious institution can be used as the fiscal sponsor for individuals, community groups, neighborhoods, businesses and youth groups if not a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

What types of projects are eligible?

The projects submitted must create indelible, measurable impacts in the immediate and broader community; be supported and planned by a broad range of users; and have a clear, well laid-out plan for success and sustainability.

While this program is open to all applications that address community needs, a priority will be given to projects with a focus on one or more of the following: diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging and/or justice (*see definitions below*).

- **Diversity:** A community that appreciates and celebrates the unique differences that make us who we are.
- **Equity:** A community that provides equitable access to opportunities and elimination of barriers to participation.
- **Inclusion:** A community in which everyone is invited, has a sense of belonging,

is heard and understood, is valued for their authentic self, and feels safe and secure.

- **Belonging:** A community where everyone feels connected with people and accepted for their true selves and inspires a sense of empowerment.
- **Justice:** A community that identifies, challenges and eliminates systems and structures that limit fairness and equity.

How to apply

Applications are due by May 1. Before beginning an application, please contact Brian Jackson, director of community partnerships and special initiatives, at (989) 755-0545 or brian@saginawfoundation.org to discuss a project. Additional information can be found at saginawfoundation.org/cii.



Heart of the City

2024 Community Improvement Initiative \$40,000 Grant aims to expand adult day support programming

"I have an adult daughter named Ilexis. When she was born, I didn't know she had a development delay," said Cherie Long, founder/president, Heart of the City Development Center. "It wasn't until she was about three years old that I started to notice that she wasn't reaching certain milestones like holding her bottle or keeping her head up. I went to the doctor, and they told me she was 'spoiled' and that I should try holding her less."

Cherie wasn't satisfied with the opinion provided by her doctor. She sought a second opinion and had her daughter examined at the Children's Hospital of Michigan.

"The tests revealed the Ilexis was born missing a portion of her brain that was causing a delay in her development," said Cherie.

Cherie has spent her daughter's lifetime advocating for her. There are programs in place to assist persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities from birth through age 26, however after reaching age 26, there are scarce services available. In 2022, Cherie founded the Heart of the City Development Center to address this shortfall in services.

Mission-Driven to Help Families

Saginaw Community Foundation awarded the 2024 Board of Directors' Community Improvement Initiative \$40,000 grant at our 40th Anniversary Gala event in September 2024. The grant will be used to enhance

Heart of the City's Adult Day Support Program.

The Heart of the City Development Center was created to empower individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and promote inclusion for those ages 17-55 in Saginaw County. Through its comprehensive programs and services, the organization works to enhance participants lives while positively impacting the community through job creation, supporting families, and focusing on inclusion and diversity within their community safely.

"We offer a range of programs tailored to the needs of our participants," said Cherie. "Things like Career and Technical Education training, cognitive rehabilitation, adaptive physical education, all-inclusive social events, recreational activities, and STEAM courses."

The grant award will be used to enhance and provide specialized equipment for members of the community with intellectual and developmental disabilities; offer training for staff, families, and community members; and develop inclusive activities.

Filling a Need

Through Cherie's investigating, she found there is a great need for programs that support families with a person with intellectual and developmental disabilities between the ages of 26-55.

"Individuals in this age group do not qualify for any childcare services in the state of Michigan," said Cherie.

Heart of the City Development Center provides a safe space where families are

welcome to participate in activities with their child. Since receiving the 2024 SCF Community Improvement Initiative Grant, Cherie was able to expand her services from serving four to seven individuals to now serving over 25.

"Helping so many families warms my heart," remarked Cherie.

Cherie found working with Saginaw Community Foundation to be a welcoming and straight-forward experience.

"I wasn't sure how to begin writing and applying for a grant," said Cherie. "The staff at the community foundation is extremely knowledgeable about the entire community and really helped guide me through the process."



*"Close your eyes and look with your heart.
We all deserve to be treated the same."*

Cherie Long
Founder/President
Heart of the City Development Center





Thank you!

Below is a listing of 2024* Cornerstone Club members who have generously supported the greater Saginaw community with a gift to an endowed fund at Saginaw Community Foundation during our annual Cornerstone Campaign.

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Below is a listing of our Pillar Society members – generous supporters of SCF's operating endowment, the Lucy R. Allen Cornerstone Fund during 2024*.

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There are various levels of public and printed recognition available depending upon your membership level. For more information, call (989) 755-0545.



Notable Dates

MAY
01

Application deadline for
Community Improvement
Initiative (CII) Grant

JUN
01

Application deadline for general
SCF Grants and Nexteer Steering
the Future Grants

JUN
04

Excellence in Education Event

SEP
08

2025 SCF Annual Celebration
(location/time TBA)

SEP
30

Application deadline for HSC
CARES Grants

OCT
01

Application deadline for general
SCF Grants and Nexteer Steering
the Future Grants



it takes
**EACH
OF US**
For good. For ever.



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and please pass one on to a friend.*

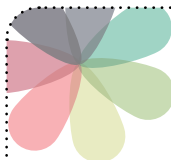
*"The greatness of a
COMMUNITY
is most accurately
MEASURED
BY THE COMPASSIONATE
actions of its **MEMBERS."***

— Coretta Scott King —

*Creating community takes all of us pitching in. It
takes each of us, doing our part no matter how big
or small, to build a stronger, more connected, and
flourishing community for good, for all, forever.*



it takes
**EACH
OF US**
For good. For ever.



For Good. For Ever.

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in Saginaw County

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