Congratulations to our Award Winners!

Award in Philanthropy Honoree

The 2023 recipient of the BLACF’s Award in Philanthropy was Pequot Manufacturing. This award recognizes the efforts of an individual or group who has significantly contributed to the field of philanthropy. Pequot Manufacturing is transforming lives and changing our communities through their generosity of their time, talents, and treasures. Giving is the cornerstone of Pequot Manufacturing and it is clear it will remain an important value for future generations.

Global Humanitarian Honoree - Jim Kirzeder

Jim Kirzeder received the 2023 BLACF Global Humanitarian Award in recognition of his kindness, generosity, and passion for helping others around the world, especially for his work in Haiti over the past 25 years. Jim is a true giver and genuinely deserves this award.

Legacy Hero Honoree - Marilyn Covey*

The legacy of one local woman, Marilyn Covey, was honored posthumously with a Legacy Hero Award from BLACF for her compassion and generosity during, and even after, her lifetime. She had a deep need and calling to help others, especially women and children who might need a hand-up to try and transform their lives. Ms. Covey not only supported many nonprofit organizations and assisted numerous individuals, but she is credited in helping to build the Essentia Health, Marilyn Covey Heart & Vascular Center in Brainerd. This center has saved many lives, provides local, and immediate care. Marilyn passed away in 2015 but continues to leave a lasting legacy! Marilyn’s nephew, Wendell Topp (pictured above, center - right) accepted the award on her family’s behalf.

*Denotes deceased
Greetings Friends,

I have had the privilege of working with the Brainerd Lakes Area Community Foundation (BLACF) for six years now, and as the Executive Director for the past seven months. I have noticed that in life and through difficult times, one thing remains constant – we each have a desire to hope. We want to know that despite tough times or when society seems to cast shadows of doubt around our future, that we want to believe that we can overcome those obstacles and that everything will be okay.

I believe that generous people give so that they may see the impossible become possible. Just like the biblical story when only a few loaves and fishes were multiplied to feed over 5,000 mouths. This story offers hope and demonstrates that gifts given from the heart can be — and often are — multiplied to meet the demands of greater works.

When we’re alone and in dark times, it is hard to imagine the sun will shine again, but when we work together and each offer our gifts of time, treasure, and talents, we can accomplish anything. Our Community Foundation was founded 25 years ago on this same faith-based premise in that we should all strive to be kind and do what is right. In doing this, we lift-up our neighbors in need and strengthen our community, helping all of us step out of our own darkness to see a day where the sun shines and find that we are cared for and loved.

As I reflect on last month’s Award in Philanthropy dinner, I couldn’t shake the feeling that everyone left with a renewed sense of hope. I wondered why that was and why we left inspired and ready to continue working for change. I came to the conclusion that after hearing the award recipients’ thank you speeches, which were full of humility, faith, hope, love, and kindness, that we all were reminded of what is possible when we give from our hearts. I continue to see wonderful examples of many of our donors changing lives and communities, through their generosity to support causes they are passionate about. Giving what they have to offer hope to others.

Our community is wonderful, but there is still work to do, and each of us can help change lives and build community. We can each continue to strive to be the best versions of ourselves and share our light with our neighbors who aren’t able to find it alone. We have so many amazing nonprofits in our communities that could use our help to serve our neighbors and friends who maybe haven't been as fortunate. Please reach out to us and learn more about how you can help with the needs in our community, from volunteering, donating food/meals, to sharing your skills and abilities, or giving financially – there is something for everyone! Thank you for your consideration in sharing your light to others in need; it is such a worthy endeavor.

Gratefully,

Terri Foster

P.S. We have many funds that support important causes and if you feel a calling from your heart to help, please know that we have a fund for everyone – from our general unrestricted fund that allows us to use funds as we feel best, to a fund supporting animals, or our Spirit of Hope fund that supports local nonprofits that offers assistance for those in crisis in terms of financial, housing, or food, to a fund that is addressing some of our biggest community needs including housing/homelessness, childcare, workforce development and offering disadvantaged youth an opportunity to have experiences that they may not have been given otherwise. You may also start your own charitable fund or scholarship through BLACF. Whatever you decide, thank you for sharing your light of kindness and offering hope.

New Funds  Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

Consider starting a new fund, like those below who started one recently. We can work with you to create a fund that will benefit your areas of passion, perhaps you’d like to focus on youth or families in crisis, or workforce or housing, or many of the other charities that do so much good for those in need. We can meet with you to help you understand what fund or scholarship would be right for you.

We'd like to welcome the following to the Brainerd Lakes Area Community Foundation's family of funds!

- Hart Charitable Fund
- Kelvin and Lynn Zaffke Family Fund
- Nisswa Pretty Good Foundation
- Smiles for Jake
- Sue and Dan Meyer Do Good Fund
- Thomas Spicola Family Foundation
- Walters Family Fund
Thank You for joining us for our Annual Dinner

Thanks to our Sponsors!

RECEPTION SPONSORS
KEVIN & TERRI CLOSE, ROD & AVIS CONVERSE AND FAMILIES

LARGE TABLE SPONSORS
ANN & TIM BERGIN

TABLE SPONSORS
CRAUN’S RESORT ON GULL LAKE
JOHNSON ENTREPRISES, LLC
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Syvantis Technologies

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IN KIND SPONSORS
Tyler Glynn

Tyler has been the Executive Director for Brainerd Lakes Area Economic Development Corporation (BLAEDC), since 2020. He was hired as the Economic Development Officer in 2017 to lead BLAEDC’s Unified Fund, a new initiative for the organization. He led the daily economic development activities and their Business Retention and Expansion Program, which brought him face to face with the business leaders in Crow Wing County. Before moving to the Brainerd area in 2015, Tyler spent 20 plus years working in marketing, sales, and commercial banking. Tyler has a bachelor’s degree from Hamline University where he majored in Economics and participated in both football and baseball. Along with his new role as a board member of the Brainerd Lakes Area Community Foundation, Tyler also serves on the Board of Directors for the Lakes Area United Way and as President of the West Pines Homeowners Association at Grand View Lodge.

Quinn Swanson

Quinn Swanson classifies herself as a hometown gal having grown up and returned post college to live in the area. Swanson is Executive Director for Happy Dancing Turtle, a nonprofit dedicated to growing good stewards of the planet, home-based in Pine River. She has worked with the nonprofit for nearly two decades. Over the years, Swanson has served on 10 area service and nonprofit boards. She is invested in being a force for good and looks forward to continuing that work through her service to the BLACF. She and her husband live outside Backus where she enjoys time spent creating, being outdoors (especially in the summer months) and with loved ones.

Thank You to Our Outgoing Board Members

Tim Bergin & Tom Anderson

We’d like to thank them for their utmost commitment to the Brainerd Lakes Area Community Foundation. They have given their time, talents, and treasures to BLACF and have gone above and beyond through serving in a multitude of capacities to help the foundation grow. We are so honored for their commitment to BLACF and the communities we serve.

*Pictured (Left to Right): BLACF Executive Director, Terri Foster; Tim Bergin; Tom Anderson; and current BLACF Board Chair, Rene Milner
My Neighbor to Love Coalition (MNTLC) received Difference Maker funding in 2022 and 2023 for costs to develop housing and support services for our neighbors who have experienced homelessness. MNTLC is nearing the finish line in completing their first housing project for those in our community experiencing homelessness - a fourplex on Jackson Street, with selected residents expected to enter their homes in early September. These residents have approximately 34 years of combined homelessness experience. MNTLC is preparing for their next phase of the project - Creekside Center - a holistic health center and boarding house. This center will help address the issues that caused homelessness and where people can be empowered to get off the path of survival and onto a path toward possibilities. Life skills and employment readiness classes, support groups, mental and physical health services, etc. will be offered here – What a difference maker!

COMING SOON

Open House

AUGUST 29, 2023
310 JACKSON ST, BRAINERD
6:00-8:00 PM

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Go to MNTLC.org/events for information on their August 31st fundraiser to be held at the Gathering Event Center in Crosslake.
What We Offer (TYPES OF CHARITABLE FUNDS)
- Donor Advised
- Agency/Nonprofit
- Designated
- Field of Interest
- Corporate
- Scholarship

Make The Most of Your Charitable Giving!
- Make strategic investments in causes you care about.
- Simplify giving with a donor advised fund.
- Maximize the tax advantages of your giving.
- Leave your local charitable legacy.

Anyone may start a fund, sort of like a charitable savings account, in which the assets are invested to create an even greater impact and fund holders may recommend grants to be given to their favorite charities at any time. It is sort of like having your own private foundation, but without the cost and stress; you simply make gifts (donations) to your fund which may be tax deductible and then make grant recommendations from your fund to your favorite charities, at any time. Funds may be treated as endowments and last into perpetuity or be flexible, allowing all or part of the money to be paid out at any time. Fundholders may elect to have children or successors to help create family legacies of giving. Together, the Community Foundation and fundholders plays a significant role in preserving and strengthening our community now and forever.

The following gifting strategies can help maximize charitable giving while potentially reducing taxes.

BUNCHING DONATIONS - DONOR ADVISED FUND
- One gift, one tax receipt
- Many grants from the original gift
- Itemize taxes the year the gift is made
- Take standard deduction in subsequent years

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES
- Draw lifetime of income
- Usually a higher payout than fixed
- Tax deduction when established
- Remainder goes to charity after passing

GIFT APPRECIATED ASSETS
- Stocks
- Public or private; real estate
- Avoid capital gains tax
- Deduct full market value

IRA ROLLOVER
- Avoid income tax on gift
- 70.5+ can gift up to $100K to charity
- Meet your required minimum distribution
- Gift remainder to charity after passing to avoid taxation

A Legacy Giving Story
Marilyn Covey left a legacy, through sharing her compassion and generosity during and even after her passing. Covey not only supported many nonprofit organizations from helping support women and children, providing affordable housing, and assisted numerous individuals opportunities to participate in sports, outdoor recreation, and education when they may not have been afforded similar opportunities. Covey is also credited in helping to build the Essentia Health, Marilyn Covey Heart & Vascular Center in Brainerd, MN. Because of Covey’s support, nonprofits were able to dream a little bigger, increase their reach, rather than worry about fundraising to meet immediate operating needs. Covey’s generosity has helped numerous individuals transform their lives.
LAKES AREA MUSIC FESTIVAL
BLACF SPONSORED CONCERT
SATURDAY, AUGUST 19TH @ 7:30PM
40 GUESTS (RECEPTION & CONCERT)
SPOTS ARE FIRST COME-FIRST SERVED
REGISTER EARLY BY EMAILING BLACF@COMMUNITYGIVING.ORG

14TH ANNUAL CLASSIC BOAT SHOW
SATURDAY, AUGUST 26TH
9AM - 4PM
BAR HARBOR, NISSWA, MN
BLACF PLANS TO PARTICIPATE

CRUISING FOR CHARITY
BLACF SPONSORED CHAR EVENT
MONDAY, AUGUST 28TH
EXCLUSIVE DINING EXPERIENCE
BENEFITTING THE CRMC FOUNDATION
6:00 - 8:00PM AT CRAGUN'S RESORT

FREE ESTATE PLANNING & TAX STRATEGIES WORKSHOP
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST
4:30 - 6:00PM
CHASE ON THE LAKE, WALKER, MN

FIND MORE EVENTS AT COMMUNITYGIVING.ORG/EVENTS
Scholarships

Recent awardees:

CECELIA E. GRANOS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT
QUINN TROTTIER

Dear Garrison Area Scholarship,

Thank you for selecting me to receive this scholarship. I am attending NDSU this fall for mechanical engineering and this will help out a lot. My ultimate goal is to graduate debt free and this will bring me one step closer to that. Sincerely,

Ryan (I’m pictured on the right)

GARRISON BAY LAKE AREA LIONS 2023-2024 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS
ABBY BINIEK, ONAMIA, MN
MALINA SCHILLER, BRAINERD, MN
HANNAH SLETTE, AITKIN, MN

GARRISON BAY LAKE AREA LIONS 2022-2023 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS
MELANA RYAN; CRAIG VISNOVEC; RYAN MCCORMICK

Scholarship applications open December 1st: communitygiving.org/scholarships

Want to change a person’s life?

Talk with us about setting up a fund, scholarship, and how the foundation can assist you in your philanthropic goals (218) 824-5633.

Please consider sharing with us "why you give" of your time, talents, and/or treasures. Those that share with us their story will receive Community Foundation swag.

Send your "why" to: blacf@communitygiving.org

Share with us

Contact Us!

Terri Foster
BLACF Executive Director
tfoster@communitygiving.org

Kim Rollins
Donor Services & Communications Coordinator
krollins@communitygiving.org

Brainerd Lakes Area Community Foundation (BLACF) 321 South 7th St. - Downstairs of Bremer Bank in the Nonprofit Center
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