

# Who We Are

We are the Northern Indiana Community Foundation (NICF), consisting of Starke, Fulton, and Miami County Community Foundations—three of ninety-four throughout Indiana. This incredible network is inspiring the formation of other community foundations across the country. Indiana is at the forefront of the community foundation world and is setting the stage by exemplifying the incredible work that these organizations do.

**So how does the Community Foundation work?** Many nonprofit organizations have the task of fundraising year-to-year in order to raise the required dollars for their activities and operations. It's like a checking account. These nonprofits have important missions to fulfill, and as the money comes in, it is spent to work toward these goals.

*All of these individuals are part of our Community Foundation family...*

Community foundations, in contrast, are like savings accounts. Instead, the donations given to the Community Foundation are endowed—invested by professionals—and never spent. They generate income; a percentage is awarded in grants and scholarships, a small percentage is paid in fees that support the operations of the Community Foundation, and the rest is put back into the fund. This last portion grows the fund so that during bad years when the income is not as high as we'd like, we can still give grants and scholarships without ever touching the principal (the original donation).

**So if you give \$100 to the Community Foundation, that \$100 dollars will be there next year and in 100 years, except it will have become an even larger gift that has granted money to the community every year for those 100 years, even if you've never given another penny!**

Some choose to give smaller gifts to the Community Foundation (Every single one makes an impact!), some choose to give monthly, and some choose to establish their own named funds. So if the Jane Doe family wants to establish the Jane Doe Family Fund, they can do so. It takes \$5,000 to establish a fund and \$10,000 for a scholarship fund. The Jane Doe family has many options for their fund: It can support one or more organizations the family cares about, it can support the greatest needs in the family's community as those needs evolve, it can support the operations of the Community Foundation, etc.

**So who benefits from the Community Foundation?** The impact of the Community Foundation stretches to every corner of each of the counties we serve. Our donors are doing amazing work. They're sending children to preschool, feeding the elderly, supporting students in furthering their education, providing needed dollars for cancer patients, taking care of homeless animals, enabling the elderly to receive transportation services, helping with the maintenance of churches, supporting the activities of 4-H and other youth organizations, sending individuals with disabilities to summer camp, and the list goes on and on.

So who are we? We are our donors, our volunteers, our supporters, our staff members. We are our grantees, the individuals who put our dollars to use in our communities. We are the individuals who our grantees serve—community members of all ages, from infants to the elderly. We are all of the members of our communities who will reap the long-term benefits of our work, the benefit of having a better place to call home. All of these individuals are a part of our Community Foundation family, and together, we can make an incredible difference.

