

The SCCF's 20th Anniversary Series

Volume 2 - August 1st 2016

The Starke County Community Foundation & the Lilly Endowment Inc.

This year is the Starke County Community Foundation's (SCCF) 20th anniversary, and while we're excited to celebrate two decades of philanthropy through the SCCF, the community foundation concept was born over one hundred years ago! Cleveland lawyer and banker Frederick H. Geoff established the very first community foundation in 1914, giving rise to a new philanthropy, a new way of participating in community, and a new vision for the future.



Founding SCCF members Cherry Gumz and Jim Hardesty

Today, there are more than 700 community foundations across the United States that invite everyday people with a vision and a passion for community to create something together: For good. Forever. Throughout the 50 states, one state encompasses 94 of those community foundations. About 13% of the nation's community foundations reside right here in Indiana! Each Indiana county has a community foundation, and two counties even each have two! We are at the forefront of the community foundation movement thanks in part to Lilly Endowment Inc. and generous donors and supporters throughout Indiana.

In 1993, Lilly Endowment wanted to help community foundations across Indiana by launching the Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) initiative. The initiative sought to inspire the development of more community foundations by offering foundations the chance to apply for matching grants. If foundations could raise dollars from local donors to support causes that were important to their local communities, Lilly Endowment would offer matching funds.

Since then, through six phases of GIFT, the initiative has inspired communities to do just that. In Indiana the number of community foundations has grown from fewer than 12 in 1990 to 94 in 2016.

Although Lilly Endowment helped many community foundations get started, eventually each community foundation has the goal of being sustainable on its own. The SCCF alone has \$8.21 million in assets and awarded \$203,607 in grants and scholarships in 2015. It has given approximately \$172,450 in grants and scholarships so far in 2016.

So many exciting things are able to happen in Indiana communities because each Indiana county has a community foundation! Stay tuned next week to hear about who our founders were and why they believed in this thing called a community foundation!