



25 YEARS OF

NCF

NIAGARA COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

2025

ANNUAL REPORT

Turning Intent Into Impact

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the region that we call home is the shared traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee, Attiwonderonk (Neutral), and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit. We offer our sincere gratitude to them as the stewards of this land, covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum agreement.

This Wampum Agreement teaches us three principles: to take only what you need, leave enough for others, and always keep the dish clean. We acknowledge that these values call us to reflect on our philanthropic practices and continue on our journey towards Truth and Reconciliation.

Today, this area is home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples and acknowledging the land and its unique relationship with Indigenous People reminds us that our intention as a foundation is only turned into impact when we both acknowledge and join in friendship with Indigenous peoples.



Above: Niagara Regional Native Centre's Annual Pow Wow. Photo courtesy of fellow event sponsor, Meridian Credit Union.

Vision

Realizing community dreams through philanthropy.

Mission

The Niagara Community Foundation improves the quality of life in Niagara through philanthropy.



The Standards Program Trustmark is a mark of Imagine Canada used under licence by Niagara Community Foundation.

Guiding Principles

ENABLE, COLLABORATE AND TRANSFORM:

Enable community improvement by providing funding and community knowledge. Bring organizations together to form partnerships based on the respective strengths of each organization to focus on key community priorities.

DEMONSTRATE PHILANTHROPIC LEADERSHIP:

Demonstrate expertise & best practice in philanthropic leadership.

PUT NIAGARA FIRST:

Communicate and support the Niagara story. Build community leadership. Seek and develop individuals who will bring leadership to the community.

BE TRUSTWORTHY AND TRANSPARENT:

Engage in practices that are open, accessible, fair, objective, flexible, timely and built on a foundation of respect, trust, integrity & honesty.

ENSURE SOUND GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT:

Ensure that the Niagara Community Foundation governance and management is sound, relevant and realizes its full fiduciary responsibility.

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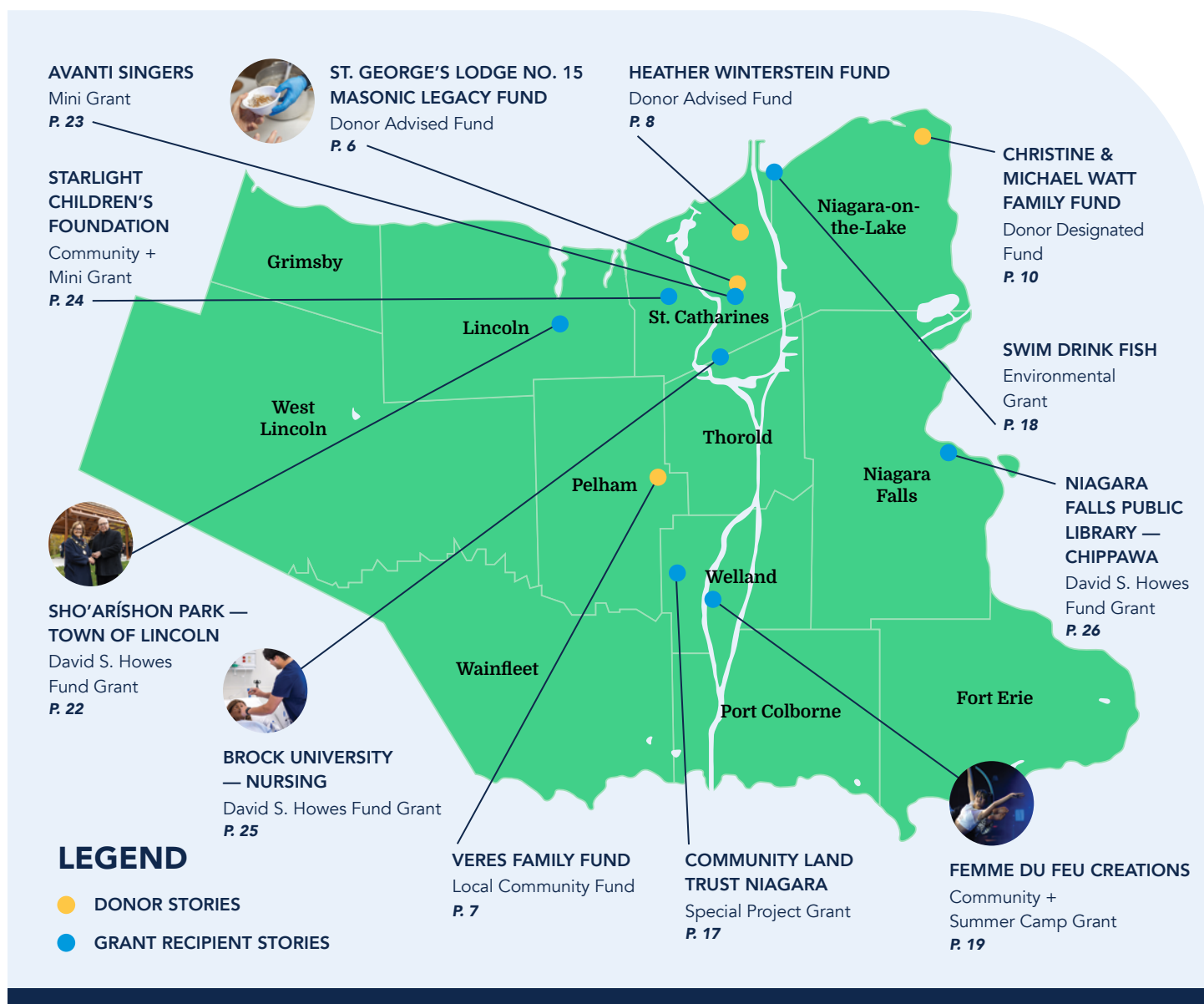
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Intent Into Impact

Impact Stories Map



Executive Message

What is the measure of a quarter century? What goes into 25 years and what comes out of it?

2025 was a year unlike any other for NCF; achieving milestones that we could barely have imagined even a few years ago. Our total assets **surpassed the \$100 million mark** (and growing...!) allowing us to make our largest annual grant dispersals of over \$5.2 million into the charitable sector. To achieve all of this — in our 25th year no less — was the proverbial icing on our birthday cake to say the least.

As an organization that proudly serves all 12 municipalities and is one of the largest funders in Niagara, our focus has been and will continue to prioritize our support of the charitable sector through our work with our partners and stakeholders. Here are some of the highlights of our impact in Niagara for 2025:

- Grants of **just under \$5 million** bringing our historical tally to **nearly \$37 million dollars** to Niagara's charitable sector since our inception in 2000;
- Another impactful deployment of significant dollars through our Environmental Grants thanks in large part to **Dorothea Thomas Foundation**. Grants to 14 organizations **just over \$246,000** in support of environmental projects focusing on protection, preservation & rehabilitation of our environment & natural habitat;
- The 8th annual dispersal from the **David S. Howes Fund** with eighteen (18) new projects approved representing over **\$1 million**. Since the creation of the Fund in 2017, nearly \$6 million dollars has been deployed throughout the region;
- **The Governance Coaching Program (GCP)** continues to provide consultant support to improve selected priorities areas including: board governance, oversight, policies & processes, financial accountability & transparency, fundraising strategy & donor relationships and staff & volunteer management. The organizations selected in 2025 included: ATTCH Niagara, Niagara Geopark, REACH Niagara, Volunteer Well & Westview Centre 4 Women;
- Proud recipient of the **2025 Outstanding Community Partners Award**, presented at AFP's National Philanthropy Day celebration;

- **In partnership with Imagine Canada**, NCF provided funding support to local charities & non-profits looking to achieve their Imagine Canada Accreditation. NCF is the second Community Foundation (Calgary CF) to partner with Imagine Canada on this initiative. The Niagara charities participating include: Second Story Community Homes & Services (formerly Bethlehem Housing & Support Services), Birchway Niagara, Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre, Links for Greener Learning, REGOHVA (Francophone Newcomer Support Services) & Village of Hope;
- NCF continued its partnership with the **Armstrong Strategy Group (ASG)** in delivering LOCAL fundraising professional development seminar sessions open to any local charity or non-profit. Local experts came in to share their knowledge on topics including: Board Governance and Developing Fundraising Plans;
- NCF was proud to sponsor several initiatives including, Future Black Female, TOES Niagara, Welland Heritage Council Black History Event, Links for Greener Learning, Niagara Regional Native Centre's Annual Pow Wow, Leadership Niagara & the GNCC's Women in Business Awards & Elevate Conference for Non-Profits;
- Finally, NCF celebrated **our 25th anniversary** with a number of gatherings throughout the region including flag raisings and a garden display. Our year was capped-off with our 25th Anniversary event as 250 fundholders, charity partners, Board Directors, Committee members, superstar volunteers filled the Art Gallery at 13th Street Winery. Our thanks to Doug & Karen Whitty for hosting us at 13th Street for a memorable crescendo to an incredible year.

When the Foundation's AGM is held in Spring 2026, Linda Boich (Grimsby) and Ann Godfrey (St. Catharines) will complete their terms as Board Directors. Both brought tremendous experience, wisdom, and expertise and made our organization stronger through their steadfast contributions. Losing such strong leaders and voices around our Board table is only lessened in the knowledge of the impressive new Directors who will take their seats and bring their own skillsets, knowledge and passion for the community we endeavor to serve.

2025 provided us with the privilege to look back at all that our organization has accomplished over 25 years. We quickly realized that there is much to be proud of, grateful for and much to look forward. We know that the best of what our first 25 years has produced is just the launching point to what our next 25 years — and beyond — in the impact we have here in Niagara.



Mike Lethby
Board Chair

Bryan J. Rose
Executive Director

Endowment Funds

NCF is Niagara’s philanthropic partner since 2000, connecting donors to causes, and communities to resources.

We do this by helping donors create permanent, yet flexible, income-earning endowment funds that benefit the people of Niagara and fulfill the philanthropic objectives of individual donors. We help donors give a charitable gift that will not only make an impact on the community today, but will leave a legacy in Niagara for generations to come.

TYPES OF FUNDS & GRANT STREAMS

NCF has a variety of funds available for our donors to consider, tailor made to meet their financial goals and philanthropic wishes. Many of them are open funds where gifts can be made by any interested contributor, at any time, allowing every gift to make a difference.

There are many triggers that prompt a donor to establish a fund—in memory of a loved one, leaving a gift in their Will, as an alternative to opening up a family foundation, and many more. No matter the scenario, we know that each and every donor comes to us with great intention, and it is our privilege to help turn that intent into impact.

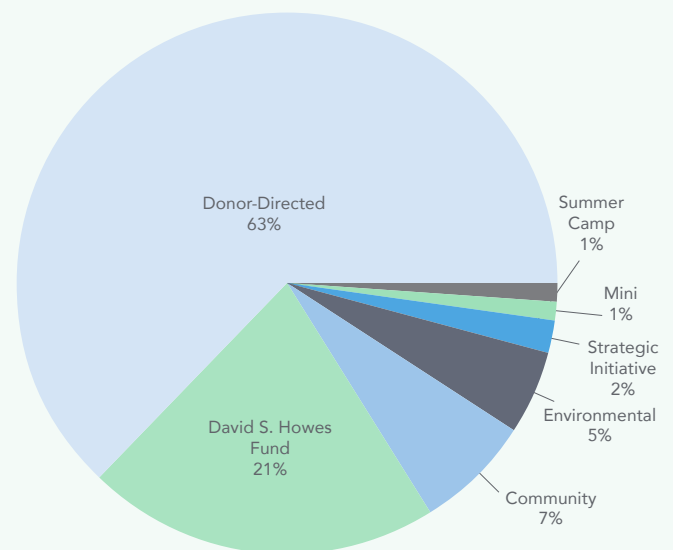
Below is a summary of the various types of funds available and how they contribute to NCF’s grant making capacity.

DISCRETIONARY GRANT STREAM	DONOR-DIRECTED GRANT STREAM
<p>NIAGARA FUND & COMMUNITY FUNDS <i>Minimum of \$10,000 donation</i></p> <p>Provides NCF with the flexibility to decide where the earnings can be used to most effectively meet the needs of Niagara, as they change year by year.</p>	<p>DONOR-ADVISED FUNDS <i>Minimum of \$25,000 donation</i></p> <p>Donors who establish a donor advised fund can select a charity of their choice to benefit from their fund each year.</p>
<p>FIELD OF INTEREST FUNDS <i>Minimum of \$25,000 donation</i></p> <p>Allows a donor to designate a preference for supporting a certain interest or cause in a general manner, without designating the actual recipient charity.</p>	<p>DONOR-DESIGNATED & CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION FUNDS <i>Minimum of \$10,000 donation per beneficiary</i></p> <p>Donors can choose a specific charity to be perpetual beneficiaries of the annual grant from their fund.</p>

2025 GRANTS

The earnings from these funds are re-invested into the community through grants. **In 2025, NCF granted a total of \$4,966,126!** Here are the types of grants that were dispersed into the community:

Donor-Directed	63%
David S. Howes Fund	21%
Community	7%
Environmental	5%
Strategic Initiative	2%
Mini	1%
Summer Camp	1%
Total	100%



Total \$4,966,126

Please see page 27 for a list of all grants dispersed in 2025.

ST. GEORGE'S LODGE NO. 15 MASONIC LEGACY FUND

Fund carries on 200-year legacy of community impact

Philanthropy has defined St. George's Masonic Lodge No. 15 for nearly 200 years.

From early members such as William Hamilton Merritt and Bill Burgoyne, whose names are etched into Niagara's landscape, to current members, that commitment to community has built an enduring legacy.

Guided by the values of brotherly love, charity and truth, lodge members are carrying that work forward with the launch of the **St. George's Lodge No. 15 Masonic Legacy Fund**. The donor-advised fund managed by the Niagara Community Foundation underscores their commitment to serving their community for generations to come.

"The Lodge has been here in St. Catharines for 200 years, so it's a nice piece for us and the community to put the money we have into a fund with NCF and put it to good use," says lodge member Andrew Harwood. "Then it builds that legacy piece for us, which pays respect to former members and the community we live in."

"The investment is secured long-term and can continue doing good work in the community for another 200 years."

The fund continues the charitable acts the Lodge already quietly performs in the community. Using money collected from membership fees, and donated by members or estates, St. George's has supported causes including the Rankin Cancer Run, MS Society and FEED Niagara. Members have also given time and skills to help charities with hands-on projects.

But because the Lodge isn't a registered charity, most of the money collected has sat unused. Establishing a fund with NCF means those dollars can now be invested for long-term impact while providing donors with a tax receipt, Harwood explains.

Grants from the fund will reflect the Lodge's existing charitable priorities with the option of supporting other causes identified by members or NCF. The fund can continue on, even without the Lodge.

"The investment is secured long-term and can continue doing good work in the community for another 200 years," Harwood says.

Harwood suggested establishing a fund with NCF after his own experience with the Community Foundation of Waterloo Region, where his grandfather once served as a board president and established a family fund that Harwood now helps guide.

"I had such a good experience with the Waterloo Community Foundation, and that same experience has been here in Niagara," he says. "NCF is a small, nimble team that's super impact-motivated — just an amazing crew of people."



VERES FAMILY FUND

From front row seat to forever friend

Serving on the Niagara Community Foundation’s grants committee was an eye-opening experience for Louise Veres.

She had returned to Niagara in 2016 after living and working in the Burlington and Oakville area for many years and found herself with a front-row seat to the wonderful ways people were making Niagara a better place.

But it also showed her the extent of the need.

“The biggest thing that stood out for me was the need,” Veres recalls. “There was just so much need in so many different areas.”

In addition to her role on the Grants Committee, Veres also served two terms on the board of directors, and when her term was up “I was very sad to leave. I was not ready for my term to be up because I can honestly say that this has been the most, efficient, organized, fun and rewarding organization I’ve ever been involved with, and I’ve done a lot.”

The solution? Find a way to keep the connection — forever.

“That’s when David and I started to talk about how we could stay involved and how we could help,” Louise said. “And we had the ability to do something, so we decided we would create our own fund and hopefully, the legacy will live on.”

The Veres Family Fund is unrestricted, meaning the Foundation can decide where the need is greatest. “The Niagara Community Foundation does such an amazing job of supporting the community, that creating as much flexibility for the organization to utilize the funds seemed like the right thing to do,” David said. As an endowment, “it ensures that 20, 30, 40, 50 years from now we and NCF will be able to help support a strong Niagara community.”

And Louise and David also have the satisfaction of seeing the connection continue in other ways.

“Our daughter Emily serves on the Environmental Grants Committee,” Louise said, a result of Louise’s efforts to tap Niagara College environmental students to help review applications for their environmental merit.

“This is an important thing to us,” David said. “We believe in the commitment to community as a family.”



“I can honestly say that this has been the most, efficient, organized, fun and rewarding organization I’ve ever been involved with.”

HEATHER WINTERSTEIN FOUNDATION

A legacy for change

Heather Winterstein's family does not want her death to be in vain.

The young Indigenous woman collapsed and died in the emergency department at the Niagara Health System's St. Catharines site in December 2021, after initially being sent home with an undiagnosed infection and painkillers. She was not examined.

After her death, an apology was issued and an inquest was called, but her family says change must happen in order for the health care system to do better.

That's why they have established the **Heather Winterstein Foundation** with the Niagara Community Foundation, in the hope that health care providers can be trained and equipped to provide equity in Indigenous healthcare.

"All she needed was penicillin," said Jill Lunn, Heather's aunt. Instead, she was dismissed for having "social issues."

"If you are poor, if you are Indigenous, if you're a woman — it's not healthcare for us."

Especially tragic is the fact that Heather was raised in a family of health care professionals, said Lunn. Heather's mother, Francine Shimizu is a nurse. Her maternal grandfather, Dr. Arthur Shimizu, was a beloved and respected nephrology specialist and professor of clinical medicine at McMaster University who was instrumental in the establishment of a dialysis program in Niagara and who advocated for medical equality for Indigenous people. Lunn's career is in Indigenous healthcare advocacy.

THE INTENTIONS OF THE HEATHER WINTERSTEIN FOUNDATION

- Provides financial support to Indigenous Healing & Prevention programs
- Advocates for Indigenous Health Equity in Canada.
- Offers scholarships to support increase of Indigenous Nurses, Doctors and Pathologists.

"We know that this should not happen to our colleagues, our loved ones, our communities," Lunn said. "This is enough. She has to be the last one who dies this way."

"We are raising awareness. We intend to promote healthcare equity education and scholarships for Indigenous youth to enter the medical field."

Heather's fund was established with the help of a family friend and with the proceeds of a benefit concert held in St. Catharines in July 2024, by US rapper Jelly Roll.

"He heard Heather's story and what struck him is that this was not historical. This happened in this day and age, and he couldn't believe it," Lunn said.

Heather was a gentle soul, who was trusting, caring and kind, said Francine Shimizu, Heather's mother. She loved animals and children, and dreamed of carrying on the family tradition of a career in health care, planning to become a nurse like her mother.

"I told those around me to trust the healthcare system. I told my children 'if you are sick, see a doctor. They will help you,'" Francine said. "Yet my daughter suffered and she died unnecessarily."

"She deserved to live. I hope Heather's legacy will be the beginning of change."



Photo courtesy of the Winterstein Family.

Donor Designated Fund

CHRISTINE & MICHAEL WATT FAMILY FUND

Helping students reach their potential

The idea of helping young people pursue post-secondary education has always been more than a passing thought for Mike and Christine Watt.

When their own daughter was in high school, they saw first-hand the barriers students with talent and drive — but not always the financial means — could face to attend college or university. So the Niagara-on-the-Lake couple didn't hesitate when an opportunity arose to help someone take that next step, covering the cost of first-term tuition so she could pursue post-secondary studies and, eventually, her dream career.

"It wasn't a huge amount of money for us," Christine says. "But to support her for a term— to me, it made a huge impact on her life."

That experience left a lasting impression on the Watts, reinforcing the power of quiet acts of generosity.

"I said to Christine, 'We've got to do more of this,'" Mike says.

The couple turned to the Niagara Community Foundation (NCF) to create the **Christine and Michael Watt Family Fund** with an education focus.

Mike had known NCF's late founding Executive Director Liz Palmieri through his years of volunteering, and sees her leadership philosophy carried on by her successor, Bryan Rose. He also worked closely with the Foundation during his time at Walker Industries, helping guide the company's environmental fund, which NCF managed.

That history gave the Watts confidence that their philanthropy would be carefully stewarded.



"Christine and I felt that in the longer term, this was the best place to put our money," Mike says.

Through their fund, the couple hope to support local students pursuing professional and STEM-related programs at Brock University and Niagara College. These fields Mike, a retired engineer, and Christine believe can open doors to meaningful, stable careers.

"Those programs also tend to be more expensive," Christine says. "So we think that's somewhere we can really help."

Their intention is to start by helping one or two students each year, with plans to grow the fund's reach over time. They also want to see the difference they make along the way.

"You can't take it with you," Mike says. "It's much more fun to see people enjoying the fruits of your labour while you're still around."



Intent Into Impact

Endowment Fund List

DONOR DESIGNATED FUNDS

Donors have the opportunity to specify, at the time the fund is established, which particular charities to support in perpetuity. If an organization ceases to exist unexpectedly, NCF can redirect the fund to support a similar cause. The minimum donation to open a designated fund is \$10,000 per beneficiary.

- Agape Fund for Big Brothers Big Sisters North & West Niagara
- Agape Fund for Red Roof Retreat
- Agape Fund Supporting McNally House Hospice, Grimsby
- Agape Fund Supporting Youth Unlimited St. Catharines
- Alice Crawley Endowment for Women Artists Fund
- Alice Downie-Bacon Education Fund
- Ann Speedie Niagara Concerts Memorial Fund
- Anonymous Fund
- Art & Val Fleming Fund
- Aspiring Healthcare Leaders in Niagara Bursary Fund
- Audrey Shimizu Memorial Fund
- Billy Graham Evangelical Association of Canada Fund
- Bob Gale Recreation Fund
- Brend Butler Family Fund 2
- Brend Butler Family Fund 3
- Brend Butler Family Fund 4
- Caplan Family Anniversary Legacy Fund
- CARMI for Kids
- Carol Leppert Music Fund for Steele Street School
- Carol Leppert Music Fund for Marshville Public School
- Caughill Family Fund
- CFUW Welland & District Charitable Trust Scholarship Fund
- *Chance McSpadden Fund
- Children of Niagara's Migrant Workers Award Endowment Fund
- Chris Lackenbauer Memorial Fund
- Christine & Michael Watt Family Fund
- Chuck and Judy Smith Bursary Fund
- Church of the Transfiguration Education Fund
- *Colby Hudson Collins Foundation
- Colin & Linda Ruddell Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Colleen Kiers Memorial Fund
- Collins-Dingman Fund
- Come Over & Help Canada Fund
- Cornelius & Helen Vanden Top Charity Foundation
- Danna McDonough Fund
- Debi Pratt Fund
- Dr. Jaroslaus and Mrs. Edith Czerevko Family Fund
- Dr. John Hunter Fund
- Ferrara Kennedy Student Award Fund
- Frederika & Benjamin Van Hoffen Charitable Foundation
- Groch Family Fund
- Headway Homes Fund
- Hildebrand Lehn Family Fund
- Howard V. Staff Memorial Fund
- Hummel Family Fund
- Isabel & Wayne Gale Fund
- Joan E Marlow Salvation Army Endowment Fund
- Joan E. Marlow Memorial Fund
- Joan E. Marlow YWCA Endowment Fund
- John and Jan Potts Children at Risk Fund
- John and Lillian Clark Fund
- Jordan Engineering Jane Cunningham Fund
- Joseph Olascki Trust Fund
- Kate Ostryhon-Lumsden Fund
- Katey Marie Campbell Fund
- Kiers Family Fund
- Krista White Memorial Fund
- Lincoln County Fair Endowment Fund
- M&N Walker Foundation
- M&N Walker NSO Fund
- Margaret Combe Music Fund
- Marsh Family Fund
- Mary Urlocker Fund
- May Crane Fund
- McNally House Endowment Fund
- Medland and Green Inspiring Artists Bursary
- Molly and David Simpson Fund
- Monastery of Mount Carmel Fund
- Morabito Family Fund
- Necklaces of Hope Foundation
- Niagara Artillery Fund
- Niagara Artillery Museum Fund
- Niagara Children's Centre Fund
- Niagara Indigenous Advancement Fund
- NOTL Healthcare Foundation Palliative Care Fund
- P. Louis & Philamena A. Giagnorio Fiorentino Scholarship Fund
- Patrick & Nancy McNally Family Fund
- Peter & Ann Koppel Family Fund
- Peter & Gloria M. Giagnorio Savelli Scholarship Fund
- R&K Fund
- Rankin Cancer Run Foundation
- Regan Peacock-Fung Memorial Art Fund
- Rick Rose Music Foundation
- Robert A. Lavelle Memorial Fund
- Rowen Grace Treleaven Scholarship Fund
- Samaritan's Purse Canada Fund
- Semley-McKeown Family Fund
- *Sheila J. Walker Fund
- Smithville and District Lions Club Fund
- Souter Family Fund
- Tom & Annette Urlocker Family Fund — In Memory of our son Patrick
- Tom and Mary Cronin Fund
- Tomlinson Family Fund
- Troup Family Memorial Fund
- Urlocker-Dillon Family Fund
- Valentina McLeod Arts & Heritage Community Development Fund for the 'Old Town' of NOTL
- Vince and Margaret Pillitteri & Family Fund
- Welland Flatwater Fund
- Wellspring HOPE Fund
- William and Mary Lu Ellis Fund
- Wills Family Foundation
- Zonta Club of Niagara Falls Fund

* Represents funds created in 2025

DONOR ADVISED FUNDS

A donor advised fund appeals to donors interested in having ongoing participation in the selection of charities benefiting from their fund. The fund holder can also name successor advisors so that their legacy is continued by future generations. These funds can be established with a minimum donation of \$25,000.

- Agape Fund Series — J.L. Garrett & Family
- Andreeana Family Trust
- Auzins Family Endowment Fund
- Barbara Harris Endowment Fund
- Beatties Business Products Anniversary Fund
- Beth and Murton Seymour Family Fund
- Bluevalley Foundation
- Brian & Marilyn Power & Family Fund
- Brunatti-Dyment Fund
- Bush Family Fund
- Gene Luczkiw Spirit of Enterprise Endowment Fund
- Cohen Family Fund
- Cornelius & Helen Vanden Top Charity Fund
- Darte Family Youth Mental Health Fund
- Donald and Andrée McMaster Family Fund
- Donald & Barbara Fraser Family Endowment Fund
- DURK Family Fund
- FEED Niagara Community Fund
- Gary & Mall Accursi Family Fund
- George Darte Funeral Chapel Fund
- Gerald Kowalchuk Family Fund
- Grocholsky Family Fund
- Harber Family Fund
- *Heather Winterstein Foundation
- Ida & Bob Gale Sr. Community Fund
- Jason Lococo Foundation
- John-Micheal Martin Memorial Fund
- Jordan Engineering Shared Blessings Fund
- Kerry and Barbara Cornelius & Family Fund
- Kerry and Todd Shoalts Family Fund
- Kuska Family Memorial Student Awards Fund
- Larry and Olga Andrusiw Paramedic Award Fund
- LetPets Live Fund
- Lise & Gerry Needs Based Scholarship Fund
- Lynn and Kevan's Niagara Charities Fund
- M&N Walker Foundation
- *Maddy Ker Forever 16 Fund
- Martha Abra Fund
- Matthew Zimmerman Memorial Fund
- Morgan Funeral Home Community Fund
- Moses F. Rittenhouse Trusts Fund
- Murray-Surtees Fund
- Niagara Engineering Week Scholarship Fund
- Niagara Peninsula Energy Scholarship Fund
- Niagara Road Supervisors Association Fund
- Page Family Fund
- Peter Partridge & Poppy Gilliam Family Fund
- Philip & Karen Court Family Fund
- Pope Francis Scholarship Fund
In Memory of Paul Colton
- Poth-Sabo-McMillan Family Fund
- Rachel & Brian Delaney Fund
- *St. George's Lodge No. 15 Masonic Legacy Fund
- Salit Steel Charitable Fund
- Stack Family Fund
- Stewart Family Endowment Fund
- Sullivan Mahoney Endowment Fund
- Svatantra Foundation
- *Terry Lynn Adamson (Balicki) Fund
- Vintage Hotels Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Fund
- Young Children Priority First — Kiwanis Fund

FIELD OF INTEREST FUNDS

Donors are passionate about causes that matter most to them. A Field of Interest (FOI) Fund allows a donor to define their area of interest while empowering NCF's Grantmaking Committee to select worthwhile projects to support. FOI Funds can support causes such as Animal Welfare, Education, Health, Environment, and Children & Youth. The minimum donation to open a FOI fund is \$25,000.

- Ann Fast Children & Youth Fund
- Anna Angelone Endowment Fund
- Anonymous Fund
- Arthur Dalfen Fund
- Arts & Heritage Community Development Fund — Old Town NOTL
- Barbara Gale Seniors & Youth Fund
- Bowman Family Fund
- Bruce and Bonnie Wallace Family Trust
- Children & Youth Fund for Niagara
- Christopher John Slater Fund
- Cooper Family Fund
- Credit Counselling of Regional Niagara Fund
- Cultural Endowment Fund for Niagara
- David and Susanne DiLalla Howes Family Fund
- David S. Howes Fund
- Dorothea Thomas Foundation
- Dritsacos Family Fund
- Earl & Ida Clarke Animal Welfare Fund
- Ed and Rosalie Vasso Fund
- Education & Leadership Fund for Niagara
- Enbridge Awaire Fund
- Environment Legacy Fund
- Fallsview Casino Resort Fund
- Fengate Realty Group Env. Fund
- Gark Family Fund
- Gordon Hurst Fund
- Hammond Family Fund
- Harry Deline Fund
- Investing in St. Catharines Youth Fund
- Jessica Potts Fund
- Jessie and Oscar Thompson Memorial Fund
- Joan Tovenati Fund
- Kathleen Summers and John Picken Fund
- Lisa J. Badger-Gram Memorial Fund
- Luigi & Amelia Setacci Health Niagara Fund
- Lycett Family Fund
- Mayflowers Fund
- Michael & Paula Mann Family Fund
- Nelson Aggregate Environmental Fund
- Newman Rigby Family Fund
- Niagara CAER Group Fund
- Norman and Lisa Wills Fund
- NOTL Healthcare Foundation Community Fund
- Ontario Endowment for Children & Youth in Recreation
- Palmieri Family Fund
- Regional Chair's Environmental Legacy Fund for Niagara
- Roll Surface Technologies Inc Fund
- R.V. Anderson Associates Fund
- RWDI Air Inc. Fund
- Samuel L. Rudolph Memorial Fund
- Secord-Reid Family Fund
- Smylski-Attenborough Fund
- Stayzer Family Fund
- Summer Camp Fund
- Sunday in the Parks Fund
- Suzanne Curtin Fund
- Touch a Truck Niagara Early Childhood Literacy Fund
- Urban & Environmental Management Fund
- Verna and Maurice Walker Fund
- W. S. Tyler Canada Environmental Fund
- Walker Industries Earth 1st Fund
- Walter & Sons Excavating Environmental Fund
- Welland Mayor's Children & Youth Fund

LOCAL COMMUNITY FUNDS

Local Community Funds provide an opportunity for donors to ensure their gift stays local. Gifts to these funds are endowed and the earnings on these funds enable NCF to respond to current needs at the local level through the provision of grants. Below is a list of funds established under one of the local community funds. Please note, this list does not include all fundholders who reside in the specific municipality. Donors can establish a named fund under a local community funder with a \$5,000 gift.

NIAGARA COMMUNITY FUNDS

- Niagara Fund
- Alice Downie-Bacon Com. Fund
- Andrea Douglas Fund
- Branscombe Families Fund
- Canada GOATS Endowment Fund
- Charron Family Fund
- Crawford Smith & Swallow Fund
- D. and M. Slade Family Fund
- Dr. T. W. & Muriel O'Mulvenny Fund
- Elvi Vicary Fund
- Fallsview Casino Resort Fund
- George & Doris Shepherd Family Fund
- Jack and Nora Walker Fund
- Janet St. Amand & Doug Herod Fund
- Jo & Norm Opperman Fund
- John & Jan Potts Fund
- JP Fund
- Judith Barker Fund
- June Munro Fund
- Marchand Kruczynski Family Fund
- Marv Kriluck Fund
- Meridian Credit Union Fund
- Regional Chair's Smart and Caring Community Fund
- Rose Family Fund
- *Veres Family Fund
- Waters & Meredith Fund
- Woodhead Family Fund

FORT ERIE COMMUNITY FUNDS

- Fort Erie Fund
- Facca-Mindorff Family Fund
- Little-Green Family Fund

GRIMSBY COMMUNITY FUNDS

- Grimsby Community Fund
- Grimsby Benevolent Fund
- Happening at the Forty Fund
- Howard & Alice Clausen Fund
- Jim Howden & Ruth Moffatt Fund
- Pettigrew Family Fund
- Todd Family Fund

LINCOLN COMMUNITY FUNDS

- Lincoln Community Fund
- Holmes Barrett Family Fund
- Hopkins Hill Family Fund
- Lincoln Chamber of Commerce Fund
- Mark & Jean Brohman Family Fund
- Paul & Leslie MacPherson Family Fund
- Prudhomme-Beatty Family Fund

NIAGARA FALLS COMMUNITY FUNDS

- Niagara Falls Community Fund
- Americana-DiBellonia Family Fund
- Courtyard Marriott Hotel Fund
- DiCienzo Family Fund
- Ed & Jessica Friesen Fund
- Embassy Suites Hotel Niagara Falls Fallsview Fund
- Hay Family Fund
- Hilton Niagara Falls Fallsview Fund
- Ripley's Great Wolf Lodge Fund

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE COMMUNITY FUNDS

- Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Fund
- Joan & Larry Bourk Fund
- Michael Berlis & Ellen Cheslock Fund
- Vanessa & Evan Brazeau Fund
- Tansey-Fitzsimmons Fund

NIAGARA WEST COMMUNITY FUNDS

- Niagara West Community Fund
- Ericway Tire Community Fund
- Ken and Jennifer Southward Family Fund
- M. K. Rittenhouse Family Fund

PELHAM COMMUNITY FUNDS

- Pelham Community Fund
- Adamson Family Fund
- Augustyn Berkhout Family Fund

PORT COLBORNE COMMUNITY FUNDS

- Port Colborne Community Fund
- Brend Butler Family Fund
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- Welland Mayor's Children & Youth Fund

* Represents funds created in 2025

**It's not about deep pockets.
Anyone can make their mark on this world.**

Even 1% to charity in your will can make a world of difference down the road.

That's what prompted Rashmi and Rick to become fundholders with NCF. They wanted to "make decisions now that would stand the test of time," shares Rashmi.

Establishing a field-of-interest fund, with general charitable goals, means their estate will be able to support the causes that are important to them, without having to monitor individual charities. They trust that when the time comes, NCF will turn their intent into impact.

Planned Legacy Gifts are an important piece of the philanthropic landscape and have incredible potential to make lasting impact across Niagara.

What will your legacy in Niagara be?

NCF is a proud partner with Will Power: a national movement showing Canadians how to use their wills for good.



Above: Rashmi Biswas & Rick Besteman
Planned Legacy Gift Fundholders



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Charitable Organization funds are created and administered by NCF to benefit a registered charity. This allows the organization freedom from investment responsibility and gives donors the confidence of knowing that a permanent foundation is in place to professionally administer the charity's endowment. Once established, the charity can encourage their donors to contribute to their endowment fund. The minimum donation to open this type of fund is \$10,000.

- 2022 Canada Games Legacy Fund
- Adrie's House of Hope Fund
- Adult Literacy Council of Greater Fort Erie Fund
- Bert Miller Nature Club Endowment Fund
- Bethlehem Housing and Support Services Endowment Fund
- Big Brothers Big Sisters Endowment Fund
- Billes Family Future Housing Fund
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- CFUW St. Catharines 100th Anniversary Scholarship Fund
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- CFUW St. Catharines Endowment Fund
- *CFUW St Catharines Niagara College Indigenous to Canada Award
- Community Care - St Catharines Thorold Fund
- Community Care of West Niagara Endowment Fund
- Community Living St. Catharines Endowment Fund
- Conservation Niagara Fund
- Education Foundation of Niagara Bursary Fund for DSBN Academy Students
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- *Emerson Fund for Community Living Welland Pelham
- Fort Erie Conservation Club Fund
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- Friends of Fort Erie's Creeks Fund
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- Niagara Pumphouse Arts Scholarship
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- NOTL Palliative Care Service Fund
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- Rotary Club of St. Catharines Fund
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- St. Giles Presbyterian Church CEVO Fund
- The RAFT Endowment Fund
- The Table Fund — Downtown Thorold
- Upper Canada Lodge Auxiliary — Constable Family Fund
- Welland Hospital Foundation Endowment Fund
- Women's Place of South Niagara Endowment Fund

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During 2025, gifts were received by the Foundation in honour or in memory of the following individuals:

- Frank Alfieri
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- Colby Hudson Collins
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PLANNED LEGACY GIFTS

Donors have included the Foundation in their estate plan making a real difference in our community's future. We would like to thank the following people who have named the Niagara Community Foundation in their Will, donated a life insurance policy or will be donating the proceeds from their RRSPs:

- Debra Attenborough
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Special Project Grant

COMMUNITY LAND TRUST OF NIAGARA

Building legacy — and homes — in Niagara

The Niagara Community Foundation and the Community Land Trust of Niagara (CLTN) share a similar vision: build something lasting that will serve Niagara for generations.

For NCF, that means growing charitable funds to support local needs over time. For CLTN, it's about securing land to be held in perpetuity and ensure affordable housing.

That shared philosophy sparked a partnership that's laying the groundwork for dozens of new homes in the region.

In August of 2025, the NCF Board of Directors approved a \$50,000 Special Projects Grant that will be used to hire a CLTN staff member who can focus on the land trust's operations.

Beyond this initial grant, NCF will be looking to assist CLTN move forward with its first project, an affordable housing development in Welland with a Social Impact Investment loan. The funding will cover early costs, like planning work, application fees for government programs like Build Canada Homes, architectural drawings, permits, etc. and will be repaid once the project begins generating income.

For CLTN Chair Caleb Ratzlaff, NCF's investment has turned planning into progress.

"It was really a turning point for me because this is something that I've been working on for a number of years and to hear the community foundation say they were willing to put up that kind of support, I thought, 'Thank you. I think we can make something happen here,'" Ratzlaff says.

The Welland project will see the construction of about 84 units of affordable housing through a partnership with Second Story Community Homes & Services (formerly, Bethlehem Housing) and the City of Welland, which provided land.



It will feature a mix of supportive and affordable units, enabling residents to move along the housing continuum as their needs change. It's a model that offers both stability and opportunity, Ratzlaff says.

For NCF Board Chair Mike Lethby, the collaboration reflects how both organizations have the same goal of strengthening Niagara through lasting community assets.

"The land trust, in a way, is almost a comparable organization to what the community foundation is," he says. "We're creating legacy through charitable funds, and the land trust is doing something similar, but with land."

The project is already gaining momentum. Potential partners across the region have expressed interest in working with CLTN on other developments.

In the meantime, "When those units go up [in Welland], the community foundation can take as much ownership as anyone for making that happen," Ratzlaff says.

SWIM, DRINK, FISH

Go to the beach!

As water temperatures rise and masses of algae bloom each summer in the two Great Lakes that cradle Niagara, a \$20,000 grant from the Niagara Community Foundation’s Environmental Fund is encouraging community members to become scientists and waterkeepers — and to go to the beach!

Swim, Drink, Fish — a national organization that strives to create swimmable, drinkable, fishable water — regularly collected and tested samples from five Niagara beaches, helping to create an invaluable record that can be used by policy makers to protect shorelines and water.

But in addition to shaping decision-making to protect water and shoreline health, the project had a more immediate goal: to encourage people to visit, walk, play and swim at Niagara beaches.

“We have a motto, ‘connection is protection’,” said Megan Coad, manager of technology and innovation. “Our goal is to get the community to care about their water and to foster a love and relationship with it, so they’re invested in restoring it.”

Beach visitors are also being encouraged to join Swim, Drink, Fish and its partnership with Niagara Coastal Community Collective to document what they observe through the VAST initiative. Changes in algae levels are an important tool in evaluating water quality and in restoring our relationship with the water.

JOIN THE NIAGARA BEACH MONITORING PROJECT

- Jones Beach — St. Catharines
- Sunset Beach — St. Catharines
- Lorraine Bay — Port Colborne
- Reebes Bay — Port Colborne



Scan to learn more about the Swim Drink Fish VAST initiative.

Swim, Drink, Fish is asking “at what point does algae start to inhibit people from enjoying the shoreline and from recreating in the water?” Coad said. “Eliminating algae entirely is not an option, because it’s supposed to be there. But when does it become a problem? That’s what we’re trying to identify.”

Niagara Region deems some beaches unsafe for swimming because of the presence of algae, but algae on its own does not necessarily make water unsafe, Coad said. So, volunteer beach visitors are being trained to spend 15 minutes weekly, taking pictures at predetermined locations and recording coastal conditions, including whether there is enough algae in the water or on shore to fill a backpack, a wheelbarrow, a pickup truck or a dumpster, and whether they would still swim or play there. Is it rotting? Does it smell? Is the beach being cleaned and raked?

“It’s a low-barrier way for anyone to contribute to coastline observations,” said Kyle Chuckry, an environmental technician with Swim, Drink Fish, who did the testing. It gives people a way to care about ecosystem health.

Swim, Drink, Fish is sharing the data with other researchers and hopes to combine community-based research with scientific drone footage that can measure the volume and type of algae in the water and on land.

And they hope to do it for as long as possible and in as many places as possible, Coad said. “The power in environmental data comes with long-term monitoring.

“Our big goal is to get more people out,” she said. “We care deeply about community science. And anybody can do this. Everyone has a part to play, in caring about the water and changing our ecosystem for the better.”



“Anyone can contribute to coastline observations.”

FEMMES DU FEU

Circus program lifts youth and community in Welland

Circus arts check all the rings for Holly Benedetti.

For the aerial artist and founder of the Welland-based non-profit Femmes du Feu Creations, circus has pushed her body and creativity, and built community since she discovered it in 2001.

"I really like the physical challenge of circus. I like to work hard in my body and really challenge my body," Benedetti says.

When Benedetti and her family moved from Toronto to Welland in 2019, they brought a vision of an arts hub where people could connect and youth programming rooted in circus.

Today, Femmes du Feu offers after-school classes and camps for youth aged five to 17, introducing participants to the five circus disciplines: aerial arts, juggling, acrobatics, games and clowning, and balance activities such as stilting.

Programs, run out of a former bank building downtown, focus on building physical literacy, creative self-expression, leadership skills and — most importantly — a sense of belonging.

"That's really important because there's space for everybody and every body," Benedetti says.

Support from Niagara Community Foundation has checked all the boxes in helping Femmes du Feu grow its programs.

A Summer Camp Grant worth \$1,600 will allow the organization to expand to four weeks of camps this year while removing financial barriers for participants. **A \$9,100 Community Grant** is also supporting a youth troupe that will perform at festivals and community events across the region.

This follows a **Mini Grant** and another **Summer Camp Grant** from NCF in 2024 to support Femmes du Feu's mission.

"We want to have our neighbours with us and have a space that's hyper-local and build community right where we are. NCF has been a big part of that," Benedetti says. "We really appreciate that trust as a new organization and that support of our growth to become part of the larger community."

The goal goes far beyond the spectacle of circus, however.

"Circus is very magical, very whimsical and it sometimes can feel very surreal and take us out of our regular life," Benedetti says. "It brings us into this other realm of magic and dreams and hopefulness."



"We want to have our neighbours with us and have a space that's hyper-local and build community right where we are. NCF has been a big part of that."

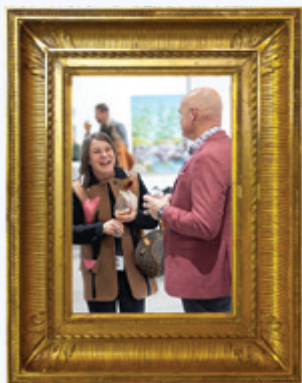
We wouldn't be where we are today without you!

Together we are Niagara Community Foundation, turning intent into impact.

2025 marked NCF's 25th Anniversary and together we celebrated 25 years of philanthropy in Niagara. With flag raisings in all twelve municipalities, a commemorative garden at Lester B. Pearson Park in St. Catharines, awards and recognitions, and a celebration event at 13th Street Winery with our fundholders and volunteers, this year was one to remember.

This gallery is a snapshot of the celebrations throughout the year and the moments to remember.

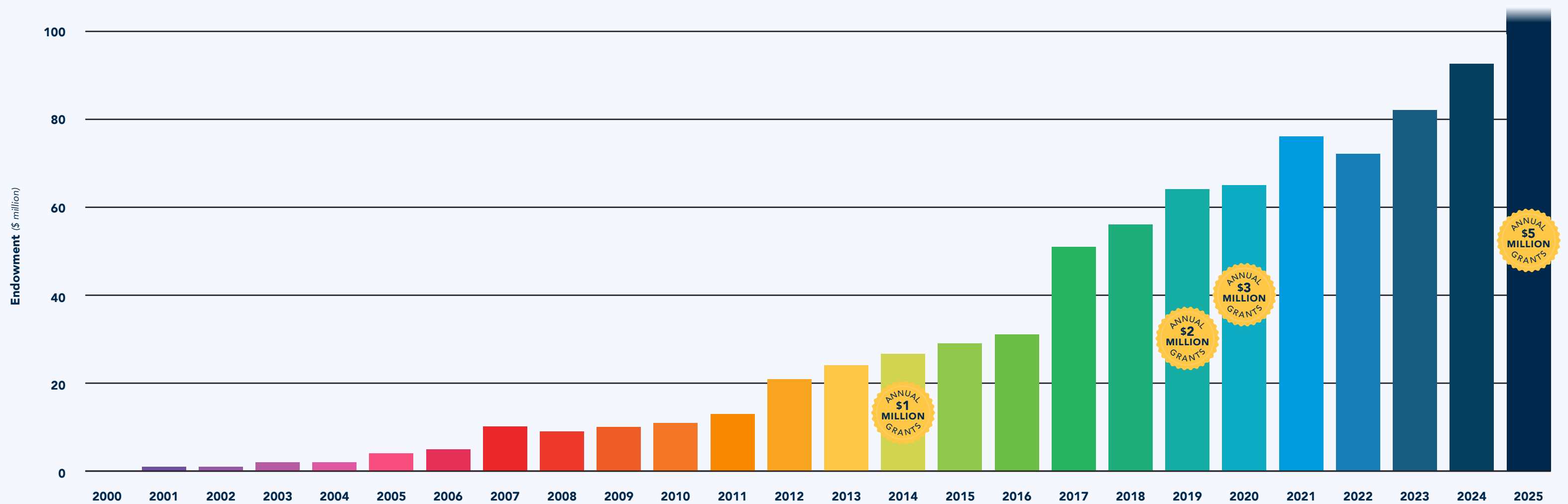
It is thanks to the 400+ fundholders, countless volunteers, ambassadors and charity partners that together we can celebrate 25 years of Niagara Community Foundation.







25 Years of Niagara Community Foundation

A QUARTER CENTURY OF MILESTONES & GROWTH






2000 NCF is founded under the leadership of Jon Potts and Liz Palmieri




2001 NCF distributes its first round of grants to six charities in Niagara.



2002 Casino Niagara opens the "Cares Foundation"



2002 NCF establishes the Summer Camp Grants program




2003 Sunday in the Parks event in NOTL to raise funds for the Sunday in the Parks Fund



2004 NCF takes over the planning and production of Cuvée




2004 Walker Industries opens Earth 1st Fund to help create an Environmental Legacy fund at NCF




2005 The Walker Family makes largest donation to NCF to date of half a million, creating the Jack and Nora Walker Fund




2006 Sleep Cheap Charities Reap partners with NCF to support Niagara Falls Community Fund




2007 NCF's 1st Strategic Initiatives Grant in partnership with the Council of Business and the Arts- Artsvest




2008 NCF established the Mini Grant Program of \$500




2009 Liz Palmieri is invited to Rideau Hall for State Dinner, Nov.11 2009




2010 NCF launches Random Acts of Kindness Day in Niagara



2011 NCF becomes accredited with Imagine Canada Standards Program




2011 GOATS golf tournament surpasses \$1M over 10 years



2012 NCF partners with FirstOntario Credit Union to provide Niagara's first Micro-loan program



2013 NCF's 1st Social Impact Investment Project- Community Forward Fund




2014 NCF launches "Legacy Partners Program" to help charities with bequests and legacy gifts




2015 NCF initiates Smart & Caring True Sport Matching Grants Program to fund grants from sports and recreation groups in Niagara




2016 Founding Executive Director Liz Palmieri Retires



2016 Bryan Rose named NCF's new Executive Director



2017 NCF celebrates Canada's 150th with Make Your Mark Campaign



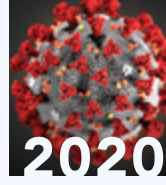
2017 David S. Howes Foundation established with largest donation in Niagara's history. \$19M



2018 Au Marche marks its Finale after 15 years of support for NCF



2019 NCF joins the Great Lakes One Water Partnership to help develop the Uniflood Ontario initiative



2020 A David S. Howes Fund Strategic Grant used to support Niagara Health during Covid-19 Pandemic




2020 NCF partners with Will Power, a national campaign to raise awareness about gifts in Wills.



2021 The Dorothea Thomas Foundation is established under NCF with a \$5M gift in support of Environmental Grants




2022 Largest grant in NCF history, \$655K, given to Niagara 2022 Canada Summer Games to establish the David S. Howes Sport Performance Centre




2022 NCF adopts a new visual identity



2023 NCF Hosts Community Foundations Canada Annual Conference outing in Niagara




2023 NCF Invests \$250K in Windmill Microlending Program



2024 NCF recognized in Top 50 Equitable Funders in Canada



2025 NCF receives Outstanding Community Partner Award from AFP Golden Horseshoe Chapter



2025 NCF Celebrates 25 Years of philanthropy in Niagara

All financial figures are rounded to whole numbers for visual simplicity.

David S. Howes Fund Grant

SHO'ARISHON PARK — TOWN OF LINCOLN

Stroll through thousands of years in time

A new park in Jordan Hollow in Lincoln is an invitation to travel hundreds of thousands of years, exploring Niagara geology, First Nations, and settler history, in a single afternoon.

Sho'arishon Park, opened by the Town of Lincoln in November 2025, is a beautiful park in a lovely location, but it's also a place of "cross-cultural understanding, community gathering, and ceremony," said Oliva Rozema, Senior Curator, Museum Operations and Events at the Lincoln Museum and Cultural Centre. "It strengthens our identity as a culturally inclusive and welcoming destination."

Translated to "He is Shaking a Net" the park was supported by a **\$43,000 grant** from Niagara Community Foundation's **David S. Howes Fund** and is dedicated to the Neutral Nation, a people group that vanished from Niagara after 1651 due to the introduction of European illness and conflict with Haudenosaunee people. Very little attention has been paid to the Neutrals, but there are at least 40 archeologically documented Neutral villages in Niagara.

It's also a place where Indigenous voices will be "centered and honoured for generations to come," Rozema said, which is why decision-making for the project was Indigenous-led, with guidance from Tim Johnson, senior advisor for Plenty Canada. Indigenous language specialists, artists and advisors will continue to be involved in the ongoing operation and stewardship of the park. Elements in the park include a depiction of a Two Row Wampum Belt, a longhouse, a sacred fire, and a palisade, along with interpretative signage explaining the structures, people, plants, animals, and activities that are represented. You can hear the names of eight native species of animals spoken in English, Anishinaabemowin, Kanien'kéha and French.

"The location of the park is very important," said Courtney Corbeil, curator of education, visitor engagement and partnerships at the Lincoln Museum and Cultural Centre. "In Jordan Hollow, it's between the Lincoln Museum, which has two historic buildings about settler history. And then our modern museum building, which tells the

"It's not just a park, it's a living, breathing space. People are going to learn, and see, and do, and smell, and touch, and taste."

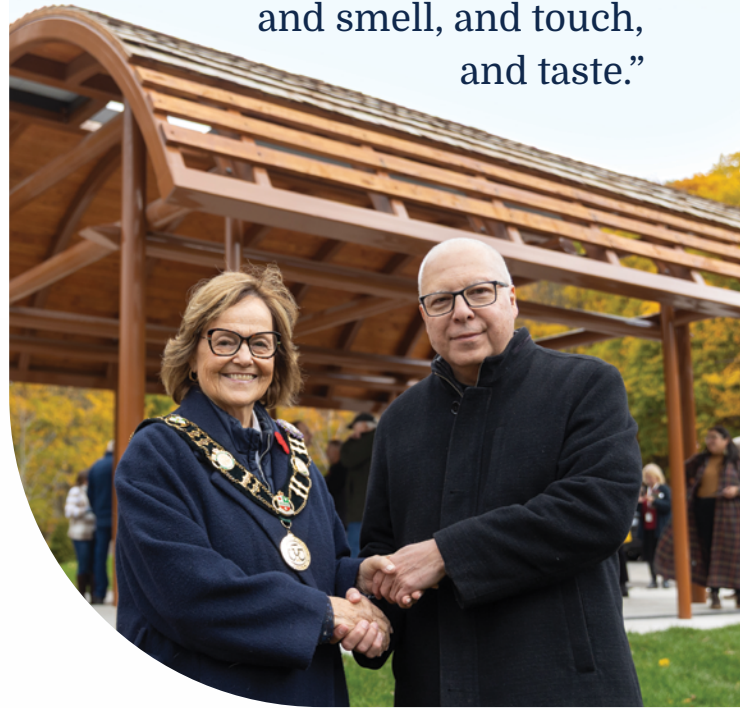


Photo courtesy of Alex Heidbuechel.

broader story of Lincoln and Balls Falls Conservation Area, which tells the story of hundreds of thousands of years of geologic history, but is also a settler site."

A trail connects the three sites and allows school groups and other visitors to travel through time to explore the three sites and their cultural, geological, and historical connections. The shaken net in the name refers to the fishing of salmon in Twenty Mile Creek, which connects all three locations, and which are depicted through stainless steel sculptures along the trail, created by Indigenous artist Ryan Woodruff in the Woodland art style to honour the deep connection between the land, the water, and Indigenous peoples of the region (as watermarked on this page).

"It's a cultural corridor," said Rozema. "People will be able to start their day at the museum, learn about settler history and the history of Lincoln, make their way through hundreds of thousands of years of geological history to learn about the Neutral Nation and 10,000 years of human history (at Sho'arishon Park) before making their way up to Balls Falls.

"It's not just a park, it's a living, breathing space," said Rozema. "People are going to learn, and see, and do, and smell, and touch, and taste when they are here. And the funding we received was instrumental in that."

AVANTI SINGERS

Music as a path to curiosity and empathy

“It can sound beautiful but if audiences don’t feel something, then I haven’t done my job,” says Dr. Rachel Rensink-Hoff, professor of choral music at Brock University and director of Avanti Singers. “If they don’t feel something, then who cares?”

And what does she want them to feel? “Empathy.”

“I really spend a lot of time trying to create an experience for people,” says Rensink-Hoff. “I want them to have the experience of being immersed in sound, and it’s in such a beautiful acoustic that they can’t stop thinking about it and feeling it.” Thanks to a **\$2,500 Mini Grant** from the Niagara Community Foundation, Avanti audiences have recently experienced more of what Canadian, female, Indigenous and BIPOC composers have to say.

The grant allowed the choir to expand its music library with a greater diversity of pieces: new music from living composers.

“I want the audience to feel empathy, I want them to question,” Rensink-Hoff said. “It sets you on a path of questioning and thinking ‘that was interesting.’ And if it provokes thought (about the artist or the idea or the music) that’s part of my quest.”

Buying or renting an individual copy of the sheet music for each of the 45 voices in a choir and performing dozens of pieces over the course of a choral season adds up to thousands of dollars a year. That’s why the grant was so important, allowing the choir to diversify its library and its audiences.

Sing thanks to those who’ve come before to teach us harmony.

A world of peace where differences can shape our unity.

True friendship grows a Circle strong, for generations yet to come!

“Ilesous ahatonnia,”
Music arranged by Sarah Quartel,
words by Andrée Levesque Sioui.

The traditional choral canon features works published in previous centuries by mostly white, male composers. For classically trained musicians and traditional audiences “the composers you hear again and again, what’s in your sensibility and what comes to mind, is still, predominantly, white composers,” Rensink-Hoff said.

The NCF grant allowed the choir to purchase several new pieces to add to its library, including “Mother Earth,” by Canadian composer Sherryl Sewepegaham, “The Lost Birds: An Extinction Elegy” by Christopher Tin (both performed at the First Ontario PAC’s Art in Action: Climate Festival) and “Ilesous ahatonnia,” a new arrangement of the Huron Carol by Canadian composer Sarah Quartel, with a new text by Wendat poet Andrée Levesque Sioui.

The tune of the traditional Huron Carol is beautiful and beloved but the lyrics are problematic. The new text “which acknowledges the harm that has been done,” was powerful and dramatic. The impact on the audience and the singers was the same, which was Rensink-Hoff’s goal. They were moved by the music and they were prompted to think.



STARLIGHT CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

Turning wait times into play time for young patients

A hospital stay is never fun but it can feel especially hard for children who are away from school, friends and familiar routines.

At Niagara Health's Marotta Family Hospital in St. Catharines, new gaming technology from the Starlight Children's Foundation is proving to be the cure for hospital-stay doldrums.

With the help of grants from the Niagara Community Foundation (NCF), pediatric patients now have access to a Nintendo Switch handheld gaming device and a Starlight Fun Centre — a gaming station on a rolling cart complete with TV, controllers and a library of 25 preloaded games.

NCF provided a **\$2,500 Mini Grant** for the handheld system, purchased last fall, and a **Community Grant worth \$7,500** to sponsor the fun centre, installed in January.

Without that support, children who are hospitalized would have to pass their time another way.

Ninety-eight percent of hospital partners say Starlight Gaming Systems positively impact patients' mental health and make interactions with staff easier. In some cases, patients even required less sedation thanks to the calming diversion provided by the video games.

"These units have to be sponsored before we can send them to a hospital," says Kaitlin Kiraly of the Starlight Children's Foundation. "Kids in St. Catharines wouldn't have had the opportunity to play with the fun centre or handheld device without the Niagara Community Foundation."

Starlight is a national charity that partners with about 150 Canadian pediatric hospitals to provide programs and technology designed to make hospital stays more comfortable for young patients.

With games like Mario Kart or Just Dance within reach, pediatric patients can distract themselves while hospital staff change bandages, draw blood or perform other procedures. Duels with siblings, parents and hospital staff also offer an easy way to connect during visits and check-ins.

But these devices provide more than entertainment.

Ninety-eight percent of hospital partners say Starlight Gaming Systems positively impact patients' mental health and make interactions with staff easier. In some cases, patients even required less sedation thanks to the calming diversion provided by the video games, Kiraly says.

Each device can reach more than 2,100 children every year and last about eight years, meaning NCF's investment will bring them long-lasting comfort, Kiraly says.

"Both of these devices provide distraction from pain and anxiety in kids of all ages," she says. "They support emotional well-being while in hospital and they provide that sense of normalcy."



Training tomorrow's nurses, today

In a simulated hospital room at Brock University, a nursing student wraps a blood pressure cuff around a patient's arm and listens carefully through a stethoscope pressed into the bend of their elbow.

The patient isn't real but the skills students learn are.

Thanks to support from the Niagara Community Foundation, Brock's three nursing simulation labs have new equipment that helps students practise critical clinical skills before they join the healthcare workforce.

A grant of **\$110,000** from the **David S. Howes Fund** allowed the university to purchase blood pressure trainer arms and hospital bed headwalls — the same tools nurses rely on every day in healthcare settings.

For Shelley Oakes, Brock's manager of nursing lab operations, the new equipment helps meet the needs of a program that's grown from approximately 75 students seven years ago to 250 per cohort today.

"Because of that growth, we realized we need a lot more equipment and supplies," Oakes says.

Brock's nursing simulation labs are home to equipment that students use to practise everything from taking vital signs to responding to emergency situations.

The new headwalls installed above each bedspace allow students to practice oxygen therapy, suctioning, and airway management. The blood pressure trainers, which are simulated human arms, help instructors evaluate one of the profession's most essential skills.

"You can't be a nurse if you don't know how to take somebody's blood pressure," Oakes says. "This equipment allows us to really diversify how we teach and evaluate the students. It makes it efficient and more objective."

The NCF grant comes at a critical time. Healthcare systems across Canada face serious nursing shortages, with Ontario needing about 26,000 additional registered nurses to match the national nurse-to-population ratio.

Many of the students training with the new equipment will care for patients throughout Niagara after graduation.

Nursing student Faith Bassey came from New Brunswick to study at Brock because of the program's reputation. The practical training she's getting to bridge classroom learning and patient care has only gotten better with the NCF's help.

"Brock has one of the best nursing programs," Bassey says. "Compared to first year when we just came into the program... we're getting more hands-on. It's really important to our education."

"You can't be a nurse if you don't know how to take somebody's blood pressure."



NIAGARA FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY— CHIPPAWA

A new way to ‘check out’ what’s on the shelves at the Chippawa Branch

Small-town libraries can’t rival their big-city counterparts for the size of their collections, the variety of their programming, or their hours of access.

But a **\$60,000 grant** from Niagara Community Foundation’s **David S. Howes Fund** is giving one small town more library access than they’ve ever had before.

The Chippawa location of the Niagara Falls Public Library is now open even when there’s no librarian on site, thanks to new technology that is a cross between your bank’s ATM and the self-checkout at a grocery store.

Called open+, the system gives Chippawa residents an extra 30 hours of library access a week.

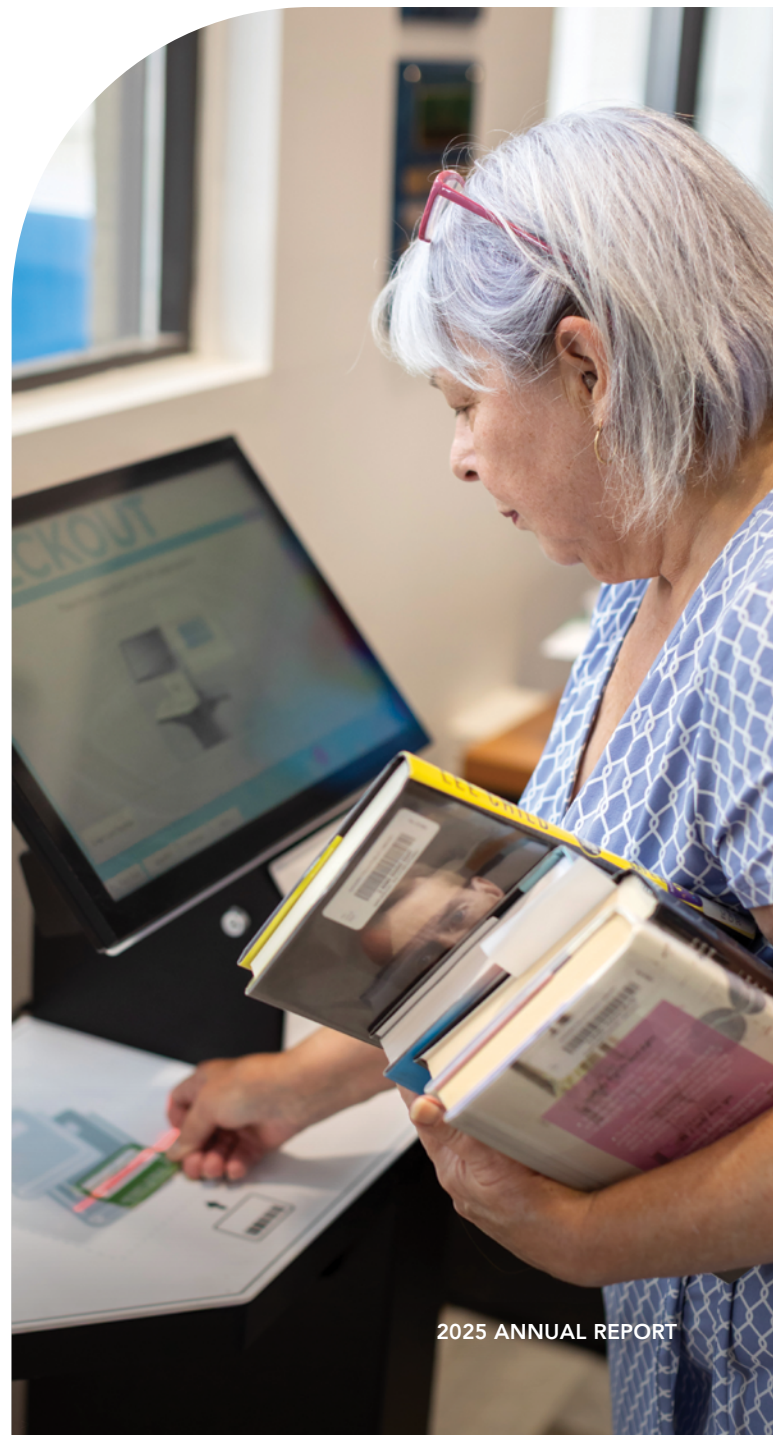
Customers with a valid, registered library card use the keypad at the door to enter. Once inside, there are security cameras keeping watch, and a dedicated phone line to the circulation desk at the main Niagara Falls location, where a librarian is ready to answer any questions patrons might have. Cardholders can pick up books they have on hold, browse the stacks, connect to wifi, print, use the library’s public spaces for reading or chatting, or they can check out books.

“You tap your card and enter your PIN, and the door unlocks,” said Cathie Lee, deputy CEO and Director of Customer Experience. “It’s open to all, as long as your library membership is in good standing. There’s no limitations.”

The new access promotes “community and belonging,” said Lee. It is not designed to reduce staffing, but rather to provide equity of access – no matter where you live. The three other Niagara Falls Public Library locations all offered patrons 60 hours of library access a week, but Chippawa only had 30. open + gave Chippawa residents the same service enjoyed by their neighbours elsewhere.

And they love it. Some residents were so excited, they helped deliver launch flyers to every home in the town, Lee said.

“With open+, the library is now open when the community needs it,” said library board chair, Anne Andres-Jones, “providing a dependable space for learning, collaboration, and engagement.”



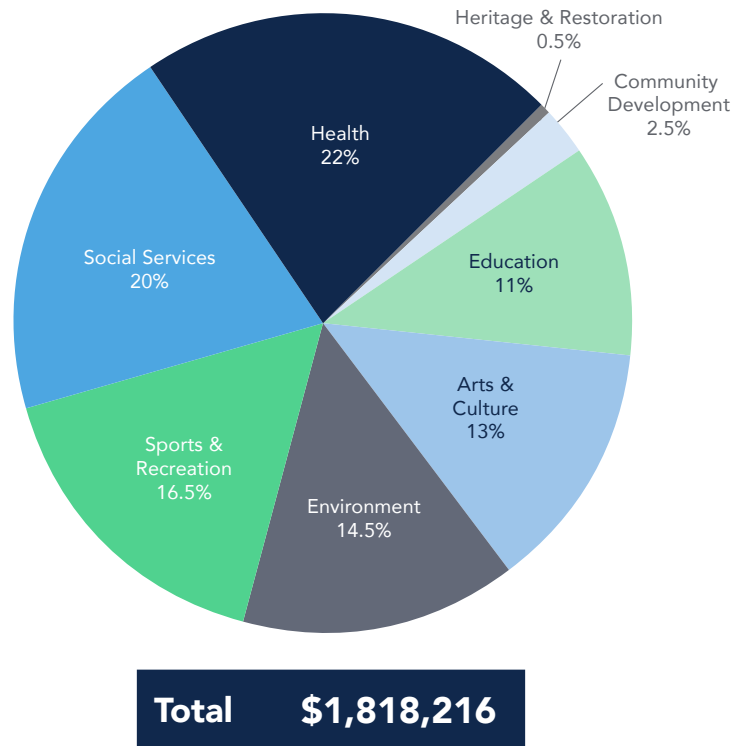
Discretionary Grants

NCF’s granting programs are the wheels that turn our intention into impact.

NCF has six Discretionary Grant Programs: **Community, David S. Howes Fund, Mini, Environmental, Summer Camp & Strategic Initiatives.** Each application for our Discretionary Grant programs is evaluated by our volunteer Grant Review Committee, ensuring our grants are, meeting the greatest needs in Niagara, are making a visible and sustained impact and are being dispersed in an equitable way.

These Grants are funded by the earnings of our undesignated, discretionary endowment funds – **Niagara Fund, Community Funds** and **Field of Interest Funds.** Undesignated funds provide NCF with ultimate flexibility to meet the pressing needs of Niagara.

DISCRETIONARY GRANT ALLOCATION 2025



2025 DISCRETIONARY GRANTS

Attachment and Trauma Treatment Centre for Healing (ATTCH) Niagara	\$16,590	Purchase software that help offer more mental health services to vulnerable community members while consistently and transparently tracking all trauma therapy outcomes.
Avanti Chamber Singers	\$2,500	Purchase works of living composers, to diversify music library and performances to include more music by Canadian, women and BIPOC composers.
Boys and Girls Club of Niagara	\$17,000	Support immediate and planned capital needs at the St. Catharines facility, may include kitchen and exterior door replacements, and updates to internal doors and the exterior fence to maintain safety, functionality, and compliance.
Brain Injury Association of Fort Erie	\$1,948	Provide staff with tools & techniques to effectively manage & de-escalate challenging behaviors ensuring the safety & dignity of individuals with brain injuries.
Brock University	\$110,000	Purchase equipment to support simulated learning that is needed to transition from student to nurse, ultimately helping address health-care sector labour shortages.
Brock University	\$2,350	Support mental health of students by providing personal counsellors with specialized training in obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and its common co-occurring conditions.
Cairn Christian School	\$20,000	Support restoration of the school yard that will enhance biodiversity on the property and to increase curiosity and a passion for environmental stewardship among the students and community.
Canadian Chamber Academy (Music Niagara)	\$5,000	Support Symphony for Seniors – A Musical Experience, that will bring world-class, intergenerational performances into senior residences and the Indigenous community, reducing isolation, celebrating diversity, and fostering connection through music.
Carousel Players	\$20,000	Support Niagara Children’s Festival, a multi-day event offering live theatre, performances, and free cultural activities for children and their families.

Casa El Norte Refugee Assistance Program	\$20,000	Support Fort Cares Community Hub Model that will create a continuum of services through a new framework for agency collaboration, to address housing, reduce poverty, strengthen partnerships, and enhance the quality of life for residents.
City of Niagara Falls	\$6,554	Support the Garner Neighbourhood Trail tree canopy along a well utilized commuter trail that leads in between neighbourhoods and local high school.
City of St. Catharines (Haig Neighbours)	\$3,900	ArborSTC will canvass residences in the Facer neighbourhood of St. Catharines to offer native species trees and/or tree planting services to property owners and tenants at no cost.
City of St. Catharines (Niagara Olympic T&F Club)	\$200,000	The NOC track requires a surface upgrade as the current surface is at end of serviceable life. The surface replacement will allow the facility to continue to play a major role in healthy active living and athletic development in the community.
City of Welland	\$14,300	Support tree canopy replacement project along the Kingsway/Canal Lands is a proactive step toward environmental responsibility and community improvement, representing phase 2 of a multiphase project.
Community Care of St. Catharines and Thorold (Niagara Nutrition Partners)	\$2,500	Purchase of two staff laptops to enable enhanced productivity through faster, reliable devices, and supported staff to ensure uninterrupted services and response to our community needs.
Community Care St. Catharines and Thorold	\$9,000	Strengthening Prevention: Equipping Staff with Landlord/Tenant Expertise Program to train housing staff in landlord/tenant law, improving their ability to resolve disputes, prevent evictions, and support long-term housing stability.
Community Crew	\$2,500	Purchase Better Impact, volunteer management software.
Community Living Welland Pelham	\$24,000	Support program that works in combination with community partners to provide inclusive literacy and mathematics support for children and youth in our local community.
Femmes du Feu Creations	\$9,100	Support Youth Circus Creation Program, that brings together young people, ages 7 to 17, to learn aerial dance, gymnastics, and acrobatic performance and devise a circus arts show that will be shared at a community performance.
FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre	\$20,000	Support Art in Action: Climate, a 10-day initiative using art to spark climate dialogue featuring Ed Burtynsky's work, performances, exhibits, a climate symposium with wide community, youth, and educational engagement to inspire practical action.
Grimsby Auxiliary Marine Rescue Unit o/a South Shore Search And Rescue	\$20,000	Support acquisition, installation, testing and crew training of wireless digital voice communication system for use on single-purpose rescue vessel, for accurate communication while protecting volunteers from long-term hearing loss.
Habitat for Humanity Niagara	\$110,000	Support First Steps at Plymouth, a six-townhome project in Welland, creating affordable homeownership opportunities for families in need that promotes stability, independence, and economic growth, generating \$1.2 million in community benefits.
Hamilton Naturalists' Club	\$13,600	Enhance one of the six ponds found at the Grimsby Wetlands by increasing the depth of half of the pond to improve biodiversity.
Heart Niagara	\$24,000	Support the start up of The Crowded Table Café Social Enterprise that will reduce reliance on donor dollars and advance mission of healthy living, social inclusion, and education.
Heartland Forest Nature Experience	\$12,250	Support Wood Shop Skill Sharing Program that connects youth with older adults to improve safety and accessibility through hands-on projects, participants learn woodworking, teamwork, and environmental stewardship.
Heartland Forest Nature Experience	\$32,000	Enhance play environment with a new sidewalk ensuring easy access to park side washrooms and three new shade stations providing all children, regardless of their abilities, safe access to play.
Heartland Forest Nature Experience	\$33,000	Monitor and restore slough forest habitat for species at risk including three endangered bat species and create programming that will include nature exploration opportunities, citizen science workshops and interactive indoor/outdoor exhibits.
Horse Cents for Kids	\$14,860	Pilot horsemanship program that gives Indigenous youth accessible, culturally respectful opportunities to build confidence, resilience, and well-being through connection with horses.
Horse Cents for Kids	\$30,000	Support update of the barn to become resilient against weather impacts to allow for continued riding and skill building programming for at-risk-youth and those with disabilities.

Hospice Niagara	\$18,500	In partnership with Positive Living Niagara, pilot a six-month grief/loss support program for people experiencing homelessness, addictions and HIV, providing a safe space that validates experiences, empowers choice & reduces re-traumatization.
Hotel Dieu Shaver Health & Rehabilitation Foundation	\$44,000	Purchase Bioness L300 that will improve rehabilitation for inpatients and outpatients as it aids in recovery from MS, stroke, and injuries, boosting mobility and overall quality of life.
I Can Therapeutic Equestrian Riding Association of Niagara Inc. — I CAN-T.E.R.	\$1,500	Provide professional development and educational tool kits for participant use in Equine Assisted Learning Program.
Junior Achievement South Western Ontario	\$5,000	Deliver five programs to 125 students in grades 4–12, providing engaging, hands-on learning in financial literacy, career exploration, and entrepreneurship to help youth build confidence and essential life skills.
Kids Care Oncology Central West Ontario	\$75,000	Support RMHC Family Room at St. Catharines Hospital that will provide respite areas, laundry, and food services directly inside the hospital to ensure families can rest and recharge while remaining close to their hospitalized children.
Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara	\$12,500	Fund Court Support Centre, steps from the St. Catharines courthouse, providing one-on-one support and trauma-informed care, helping young victims navigate court safely while promoting resilience and well-being.
Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara	\$22,000	Support Kids First Project that delivers engaging, preventative content to students that is designed to teach how to stay safe on and offline and empowered them to think critically and make choices to reduce their risk of harm.
Lincoln Pelham Public Library — Fonthill	\$2,373	Enhance accessibility & build capacity by purchasing spine label printers for both Lincoln & Pelham to produce durable labels & minimize the time materials are unavailable to customers while being relabeled.
Lincoln Pelham Public Library — Fonthill	\$2,500	Purchase English as a Second Language collection that will provide resources to support learning English, including grammar, vocabulary, and writing skills, as well as career-specific materials for fields like healthcare and business.
Links for Greener Learning	\$8,944	Empower newcomer youth in Niagara to transform local urban spaces into thriving, sustainable green areas, fostering a deeper connection to nature, by focusing on environmental education, protecting & restoring environmental integrity.
Links for Greener Learning	\$1,800	Purchase computer and utility card to support operations of the Good Food Box Program.
Literacy Link Niagara Inc.	\$900	Fund the Niagara Navigator guide that will share easy-to-use tools and resources that help educators, employment staff, and community organizations work together to support people in finding the learning, jobs, and services they need.
McNally House Hospice	\$84,000	Purchase of three cuddle beds for Hospice that will enhance end-of-life care, offering space for loved ones to share meaningful moments & improve accessibility & comfort for bariatric patients, ensuring equitable care.
Mishka Social Services	\$15,000	Support Digital Bridges for Newcomers, that equips newcomer and refugee families with digital literacy and online safety skills to access housing, health, and education services while building confidence and independence in a digital world.
Mountainview CRC	\$2,000	Purchase freezers to support Tuesday Evening Food Program, addressing the food security needs of those living on the street and provide them with an opportunity to enjoy a warm, nutritious meal.
Mountainview CRC	\$1,500	Purchase needed equipment to support Tuesday Evening Food Program, addressing the food security needs of those living on the street and provide them with an opportunity to enjoy a warm meal, that is nutritiously balanced for healthier living.
Niagara Children's Centre	\$20,434	Replace Gait equipment that uses video & motion capture technology to provide individual treatment for kids with physical disabilities.
Niagara Children's Centre	\$59,000	Support a Recreation Therapy Assistant will expand Recreation Therapy programs to more youth and children with physical, developmental or communicative delays and disabilities in Niagara.
Niagara College	\$2,500	Understand underground habitat of Eastern Red-Backed Salamanders that are essential species: as they support a biodiversity of other creatures and facilitate carbon sequestration in our forests.

Niagara Falls Art Gallery	\$2,200	Support production of an 18 month Calendar focused on artwork by children throughout the Niagara Region to celebrate the 50 year anniversary of the Art Gallery.
Niagara Falls Public Library	\$60,000	Support open+ technology that gives Chippawa residents access to their library outside of staffed hours, where members can browse and borrow from the collection, use computers, access wi-fi and enjoy the community space.
Niagara Health Foundation — St. Catharines Site	\$18,621	Replace outdated centrifuge equipment with a modern, high-performance unit that will enhance diagnostic accuracy, improve staff safety, and reduce test turnaround times.
Niagara Health Foundation — St. Catharines Site	\$42,500	Purchase five new Stryker Prime Stretchers and IsoFlex SE Mattresses as part of a larger upgrade of patient beds throughout the Niagara Health System to enhance patient safety and reduce healthcare costs from pressure injuries.
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation	\$50,000	Restore 1 ha of wetland habitat & enhance 0.9 ha of associated upland habitat within St. George Park in Welland which will include wetland excavation, managing invasive species, & planting of native trees/plants.
Niagara Region Sexual Assault Centre	\$2,500	Support skill-based psychoeducational group aimed at symptom improvement and preparing participants for effective engagement in individual psychotherapy.
Niagara Regional Native Centre	\$30,000	Create a fenced, shaded outdoor space with a gazebo and picnic tables providing a safe area for Indigenous children to engage in land-based learning, outdoor play, and cultural programming.
Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library	\$2,500	Support project that empowers kids in Niagara to explore STEM through hands-on learning and access to new tech tools at the library, supporting digital literacy and community connection.
Ontario Nature	\$9,706	Support work to combat the infestation of hemlock woolly adelgid at Harold Mitchell Nature Reserve, expanding protection of the locally rare mature hemlock forest.
Positive Living Niagara	\$20,000	Support project that builds community capacity by centering lived/living experience to foster a collective response to the needs of sex workers with a platform that will strengthen safety, wellbeing, and advocacy.
Project SHARE	\$7,000	Hire temporary holiday season worker to increase our capacity to better support the more than 17,622 people (2024) seeking emergency food supports this holiday season.
Project SHARE	\$2,000	Install a 2-way intercom system in their reception window to better support the more than 71,741 seeking emergency food & housing support as well as our valued donors and service providers with accuracy, dignity and respect.
RiverBrink Art Museum Inc.	\$2,500	Assist development of an artist residency with funding for fire safety upgrades, legal review of artist contract, upgrades to building security and bedroom furniture.
Shaw Festival Theatre, Canada	\$20,000	Transform Centre for Lifelong Creativity, based on belief that the arts play a significant role in staying happy, healthy, and more connected as we age, we will add three pilot activities to our Positive Aging programs.
St Vincent de Paul Society	\$2,500	Purchase freezer for increased donations.
Starlight Children's Foundation Canada	\$7,500	Purchase portable gaming device with tv (Starlight Fun Center) that encourages play, reduces stress, and empowers kids for children while in Niagara Health - Marotta Family Hospital.
Starlight Children's Foundation Canada	\$2,500	Purchase portable gaming devices that encourages play, reduces stress, and empowers kids for children while in St. Catharines hospital.
Start Me Up Niagara	\$16,500	Support Mini Closet that offers 24-hour access to clothing, footwear and hygiene, making these essentials more accessible to those in need as it provides a lifeline that fosters compassion, dignity, and hope—the foundation of human connection.
Summer Camp Grants	\$39,500	Provide grants to 22 organizations to support nearly 300 children in financial need attend summer camp programs.
Swim Drink Fish	\$20,000	Monitor water quality and nuisance algae at underserved beaches and shorelines in the Niagara region and promote water literacy and restoration through community engagement and advocacy work.
The Brown Homestead	\$1,988	Purchase portable A/V equipment, to enhance off-site programs and outreach to reach more diverse audiences—ensuring Niagara's Homestead is shared and experienced by all.

The Essential Collective Theatre	\$1,500	Create website that will be a community meeting space for artists to share, learn, discuss and showcase their new works.
The Niagara Foundation	\$20,000	Support rehabilitation of The Wilderness lands and building with Phase 1 (Natural Environment) which focuses on health of, and public access to, One Mile Creek and the extensive Carolinian forest/significant horticultural plantings on the grounds.
The Niagara Parks Foundation	\$20,000	Restore up to one hectare of habitat along the Niagara Falls Moraine through the removal of invasive species and the planting of over 7,500 native plants.
The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre	\$2,500	Purchase and install a commercial high temperature dishwasher that meets health and safety requirements and benefit from increased capacity by improving operational efficiencies.
The Norm Foster Theatre Festival	\$10,000	Support A Niagara Christmas Carol, a new adaptation of Dickens' A Christmas Carol, set in the Niagara region prior to the second build of the Welland Canal circa 1840, & presented as an annual/biannual tradition.
The Willow Community Support Services (Willow Arts Community)	\$2,500	Support "Songs for Healing," that will foster creative collaboration and cultural healing by uniting artists and Indigenous community members to share stories and create original music together.
The Willow Community Support Services (Willow Arts Community)	\$1,500	Support Exhibition Catalogue that creates a lasting record of art works in the form of a professionally photographed, designed, & printed booklet that celebrates artists living with mental illness/substance use.
Tomorrow's Voices Foundation	\$2,500	Partner with students from Niagara College to launch and implement the volunteer management and attendance tracking app specially developed by students for the organization.
Town of Grimsby — Grimsby Public Art Gallery (GPAG)	\$2,500	Support free monthly art-hang series inviting local queer and trans youth to explore different artmaking practices in a safe, peer-supported space intended for developing creative expression & fostering community.
Town of Pelham	\$20,000	In partnership with Land Care Niagara, undertake a feasibility study to restore Niagara's unique population of Native Brook Trout in the Upper Twelve Mile Creek watershed.
Town of Pelham	\$6,800	Establish a connected trail network between Marlene Stewart Streit Park (MSSP) and the Nature Conservancy of Canada property and include educational opportunities on the benefits of conserving Carolinian forests and outdoor recreation.
Trinity United Church (Grimsby)	\$6,001	Upgrade stage flooring in historic Memory Hall for public use and in particular for community theatre group which is the major repeated user of the facility.
Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre	\$40,000	Replace aging appliances and address critical repairs, including installing new windows, fixing a leaking skylight, and adding sliding bathroom doors, ensuring a safe and dignified environment for individuals facing homelessness.
Wellspring Niagara Cancer Support Foundation	\$11,788	Replace 8 Windows 11-incompatible computers and discontinued Office 365 licenses (Feb 2026) with Business Premium securing member records and Basic licenses for daily operations serving 10,000+ visits.
Wellspring Niagara Cancer Support Foundation	\$2,336	Enhancing private program spaces to ensure confidentiality & comfort for cancer support groups & counselling sessions, respecting vulnerable community members' dignity while delivering more effective support services.
West Niagara Agricultural Society	\$2,500	Provide permanent refillable bottle filling station and cooler in the Community Hall of the grounds.
YMCA of Niagara	\$2,500	Provide key day camp staff with enhanced pre-camp training (NVCII) to support the needs and well being of individuals who are in distress and may demonstrate inappropriate or risk behaviours while in the camp environment.
Young Caregivers Association	\$1,728	Fund staff professional development to best serve our community which would result in fewer waitlists, stronger care and better support for young caregivers.
YPI Canada	\$15,000	Support Youth & Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) that supported 6 Niagara Schools to participate in the program.
YWCA Niagara Region	\$34,000	Provide a service protocol to respond to pre and post natal women who enter the shelter system and provide a service map and rapid response for community organizations to better support women.

Donor Directed Grants

Donor Directed Grants speak to the philanthropic wishes of our donors.

Both Donor Advised and Donor Designated funds provide fundholders with an opportunity to select the beneficiary from their fund. These are considered “Donor Directed Grants” and make up 65% of NCF’s annual grants.

These grants are based on the terms of the fund agreements between the donor and the Foundation with respect to beneficiary organization.

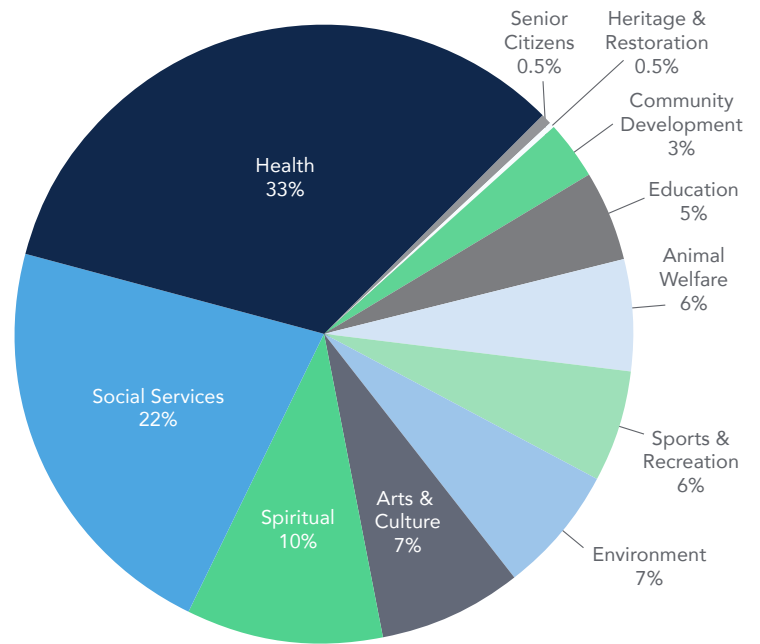
Below is a list of the organizations supported by Donor Directed Grants.

- 2022 Canada Games Sport Legacy Inc.
- Alzheimer Society of Niagara Region
- Amici Camping Charity
- Angels Rest Dog Rescue
- Animal Assistance Society of the Niagara Region
- Arthritis Society Ontario Division — Niagara Peninsula Office
- Ass Menagerie Sanctuary
- Attachment and Trauma Treatment Centre for Healing (ATTCH) Niagara
- Autism Ontario — South Region
- Beamsville Church of Christ
- Benevolent Society of Grimsby and District
- Bert Miller Nature Club of Fort Erie
- Bethlehem Housing and Support Services
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara — West Niagara
- Birchway Niagara (Women’s Place of South Niagara Inc.)
- Boys and Girls Club of Niagara — Niagara Falls
- Brock University — Office of Development and Alumni Relations
- Brock University — Student Awards and Financial Aid
- Bruce Trail Conservancy
- Burlington Rotary Community Hospice Inc. (Carpenter Hospice)
- Canadian Cancer Society
- Canadian Chamber Academy (Music Niagara)
- Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) St. Catharines
- Canadian Red Cross
- Canadian Red Cross, Niagara Area Branch

- Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities
- Canadian Veteran Service Dog Unit (CVSDU)
- Carleton University — Awards and Financial Aid
- Cave Springs Camp Inc.
- Central United Church of Port Colborne
- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
- Chinmaya Mission
- Chorus Niagara
- Church of the Transfiguration
- CityKidz Ministry — Hamilton Branch
- City of St. Catharines (Friends of Malcolmson Eco-Park)
- Civil Air Recue Emergency Service Niagara (CARES NIAGARA)
- CNIB
- Community Animal Allies of Niagara
- Community Care of St. Catharines and Thorold (Niagara Nutrition Partners)
- Community Care of West Niagara
- Community Care St. Catharines and Thorold
- Community Crew
- Community Living St. Catharines
- Community Living Welland Pelham
- Community Support Services of Niagara
- Conestoga College — Financial Aid
- Cultural Communications Group Inc. / Niagara Regional Native Centre
- Cystic Fibrosis Canada — Niagara Chapter
- Doctors Without Borders Canada

- Dr. Bob Kemp Hospice Foundation Inc.
- Durham College — Financial Aid and Awards Office
- Dying With Dignity Canada Inc.
- Early Childhood Community Development Centre
- Education Foundation of Niagara
- Family and Children’s Services Niagara
- Feed the Children
- FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre
- Fleming College — Financial Aid
- Fort Erie Conservation Club
- Fort Erie Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- Foundation of Resources for Teens (The FORT)
- Friends of Lincoln’s History
- Georgian College
- Gillian’s Place
- Golf Canada Foundation
- Grace Community Church
- Grimsby Life Centre Ministries
- Grimsby Museum (Town of Grimsby)
- Habitat for Humanity Halton-Mississauga
- Habitat for Humanity Niagara
- Hamilton Health Sciences
- Happy Days Sanctuary
- Heart and Stroke Foundation
- Heart Niagara
- Hobbitstee Wildlife Refuge
- Hospice Niagara

DONOR-DIRECTED GRANT ALLOCATION 2025



Total \$3,147,911

- Hotel Dieu Shaver Health & Rehabilitation Foundation
- Humane Society of Greater Niagara
- Humber College — Financial Aid — Scholarships and Awards
- I Can Therapeutic Equestrian Riding Association of Niagara Inc. — I CAN-T.E.R.
- IEEE Canadian Foundation
- Inclusion West Niagara (Community Living — Grimsby Lincoln & West Lincoln)
- Jack.org
- Joseph Brant Hospital Foundation
- Kidney Foundation of Canada
- Kids Up Front Foundation — Toronto Chapter
- Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara
- La corporation de l'école polytechnique de Montreal
- Lambton College — Financial Aid
- Last Chance Horse and Pony Rescue
- Latvian Canadian Cultural Centre
- Latvian Relief Society of Canada
- Lincoln Memorial Cultural Centre: Home of the Jordan Historical Museum of the Twenty
- Lincoln Pelham Public Library — Fleming Branch
- Lincoln Pelham Public Library — Fonthill
- Lincoln Pelham Public Library — Rittenhouse Branch
- Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides
- Literacy Council of Niagara West
- Little RES Q
- Lung Health Foundation
- March of Dimes Canada
- May Court Club of St. Catharines
- Mayholme Foundation
- McMaster University
- McMaster University — Faculty of Science
- McNally House Hospice
- Meals on Wheels Port Colborne
- Mission Services of Hamilton Inc.
- Mohawk College
- Momentum Choir
- Monastery of Mount Carmel
- MS Canada
- Muscular Dystrophy Canada
- Museum of Health Care at Kingston
- Nativity of the Holy Mother of God
- NCDSB — Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Elementary School
- NCDSB — Saint Paul Catholic High School
- NCDSB — St. Mary Catholic Elementary School
- NCDSB — St. Michael Catholic High School
- NCDSB — St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Elementary School
- Newark Neighbours Food & Thrift Shops
- Niagara Action for Animals
- Niagara Artists Company (Niagara Artists Centre)
- Niagara Chapter — Native Women Inc.
- Niagara Children's Centre
- Niagara College — Athletics
- Niagara College — Financial Aid
- Niagara College Foundation & Alumni Relations
- Niagara Dog Rescue
- Niagara Foundation for Catholic Education
- Niagara Foundation for Family & Children's Services
- Niagara Health Foundation
- Niagara Health Foundation — Port Colborne Site
- Niagara Health Foundation — South Niagara Site
- Niagara Health Foundation — St. Catharines Site
- Niagara Health Foundation — Welland Site
- Niagara Historical Society/ NOTL Museum
- Niagara Land Trust
- Niagara Life Welland Centre o/a Elisha House Pregnancy & Family Support Centre
- Niagara Military Museum
- Niagara North Family Health Team (NNFHT)
- Niagara-on-the-Lake Community Palliative Care Service
- Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library
- Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation
- Niagara Region — Senior Services
- Niagara Region Sexual Assault Centre
- Niagara Resource Service for Youth (RAFT)
- Niagara SPCA & Humane Society — Niagara Falls Site
- Niagara SPCA & Humane Society — Welland Site
- Niagara Symphony Association
- Niagara Ukrainian Fund
- Niagara Youth Orchestra
- No Paw Left Behind
- Ontario Brain Injury Association
- Ontario Rett Syndrome Association
- Ontario Veterinary College Pet Trust — University of Guelph
- Ontario Wildlife Rescue Centre
- Open Arms Mission of Welland Inc.
- Osteoporosis Canada
- Owl Foundation
- Pathstone Foundation
- Pelham Cares Inc.
- Pets Alive Niagara
- Pflag Canada — Niagara Chapter
- Plan International Canada
- Port Cares
- Port Nelson United Church
- Project SHARE
- Pumpkin's Acres Rabbit Rescue
- Queen's University
- REACH Niagara
- Red Roof Retreat
- Ridley College Foundation
- River's Edge Haven of Hope
- Rotary Club of Lincoln Foundation
- Rotary Club of St. Catharines, Charitable Trust
- Royal Canadian Artillery
- RRPC Innovation Foundation
- Salvation Army Community and Family Services — Hamilton/Wentworth
- Shaw Festival Theatre, Canada
- SickKids Foundation
- Silver Spire United Church
- Sleeping Children Around the World
- Southridge Shelter / Brock University Dept. Rec and Leisure
- Southwestern Ontario Youth for Christ / Youth Unlimited
- Stamford Lane United Church
- Start Me Up Niagara
- St. Clement's School
- St. George's Anglican Church
- St. Giles Presbyterian Church
- St. John the Theologian Ukrainian Catholic Church
- St. Lawrence College
- St. Mark's Church
- Strive Niagara (AFSSN)
- Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church
- St. Therese of Lisieux Church
- Syrian Kids Foundation
- Terry Fox Foundation
- The Bridge Church
- The Niagara Foundation
- The Niagara Parks Foundation
- The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre
- The Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation
- The Rotary Foundation — Canada
- The Salvation Army Community & Family Services
- The Salvation Army Niagara Orchard Community Church
- The Salvation Army St. Catharines Community & Family Services
- The School of Restoration Arts at Willowbank
- The Village Church
- The War Amps of Canada
- Toronto Metropolitan University
- Town of Lincoln
- Town of Lincoln — Jordan Historical Museum
- Town of Pelham
- Ukrainian Canadian Social Services (St. Catharines) Inc.
- United Way Halton & Hamilton
- United Way Niagara
- University of Alberta
- University of Guelph
- University of Ottawa
- University of Toronto
- University of Waterloo
- University of Western Ontario
- Urban Wildlife Care
- Village of Hope
- VON Canada — Ontario Branch — Niagara Site
- Wellspring Niagara Cancer Support Foundation
- West Lincoln Community Care
- West Lincoln Memorial Hospital Foundation
- West Niagara Agricultural Society
- West Niagara Palliative Care Services o/a Rose Cottage Visiting Volunteers
- Whispering Hearts Horse Rescue Centre
- World Vision Canada
- YMCA of Niagara
- York University
- Youth Resources Niagara
- YWCA Niagara Region

2025 Financial Snapshot

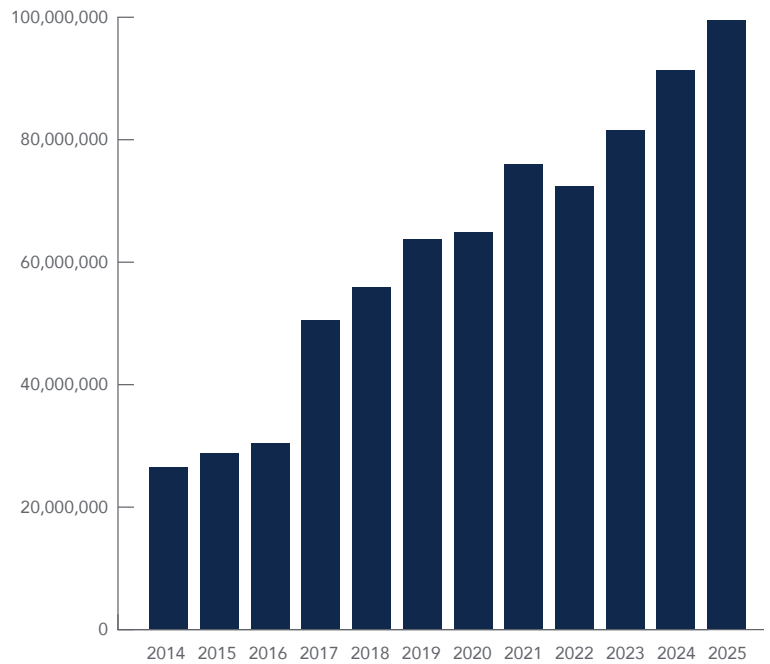
DONATIONS RECEIVED
\$5,254,394

GROWTH IN ASSETS
10%

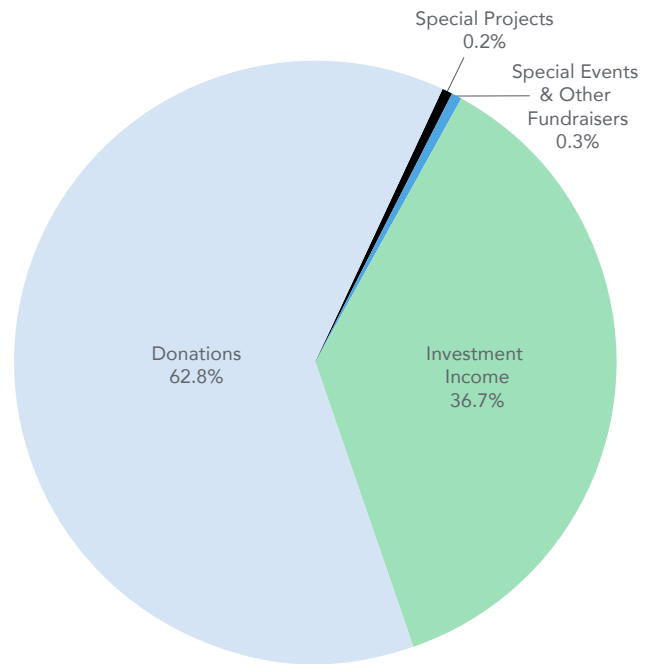
GRANTS AWARDED
\$4,966,126

OPERATING EXPENSES
1.2%

GROWTH OF ENDOWMENT FUNDS 2014 – 2025



SOURCE OF REVENUE \$8,363,687



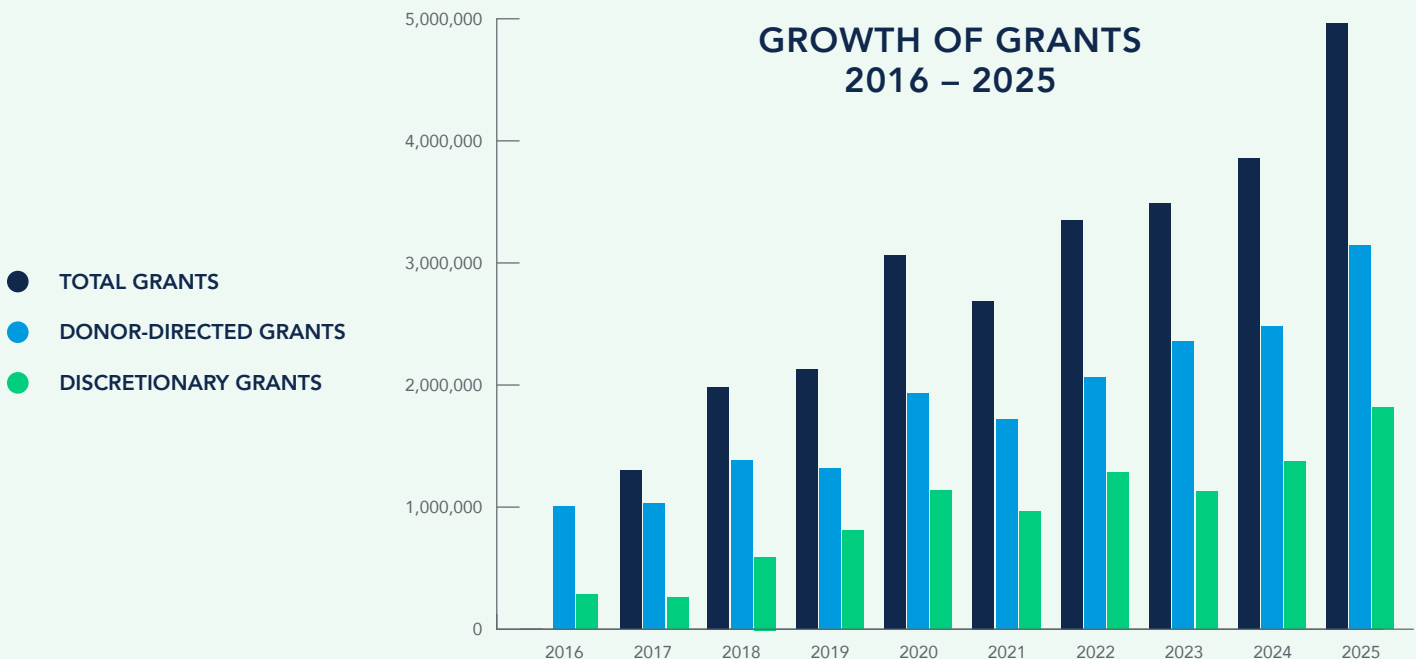
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

	2025	2024	2023	2022
Total Assets	\$101,984,687	\$92,520,137	\$82,317,851	\$73,221,792
Gross Fundraising & Event Revenue	\$80,214	\$58,030	\$57,732	\$51,415
Total Donations	\$5,254,394	\$2,790,985	\$5,562,938	\$4,955,648
Total Revenue	\$15,997,826	\$15,060,945	\$13,406,831	\$1,055,146
Total Grants	\$4,966,126	\$3,857,707	\$3,513,557	\$3,344,438
Total Charitable Programs	\$166,272	\$179,766	\$256,143	\$209,047
Total Fundraising Expenses	\$387,248	\$283,895	\$170,304	\$173,922
Total Administrative & Governance Expenses	\$1,214,271	\$1,070,188	\$927,820	\$858,309
Total Endowments	\$99,601,923	\$91,252,715	\$79,641,364	\$71,151,159
% of Admin/Governance to Total Endowment	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
% of Fundraising Expenses to Total Endowment	0.39%	0.31%	0.21%	0.24%

To view the audited financial statements, please visit niagaracommunityfoundation.org/about-us

Over the past 10 years, the assets of the Niagara Community Foundation have grown from \$28 million to over \$100 million!

Since inception in 2000, NCF has given **over \$36.5 million in grants** to the community.



2025 Financial and Governance Highlights

GOVERNANCE

The Board’s role is to set policy and to question, scrutinize and monitor the management of the Foundation’s activities. It is a role of governance as opposed to operational management and ensures that the affairs of the Foundation are being conducted in a manner that achieves its goals consistent with NCF’s mission. The Role of Board and Executive and the Scope of Authority policies are in place to delineate responsibility between board and staff. The Board has also adopted a Code of Ethics and Confidentiality policy for all staff and volunteers.

OPERATIONS

The Foundation’s staff is led by the Executive Director, who reports to an independent Board of Directors. Operating costs include asset development, charitable activities, special projects, administration and governance. Expenses for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2025 totaled **\$1,214,271**. Consistent with the community foundation sector, operating costs are evaluated by a ratio of total core operating expenses to total assets. For 2025, that percentage was **1.2%** (1.2% in 2024), which continues to be below the range of community foundations of similar size and stage of development.

INVESTMENT FEES AND RETURNS

NCF’s investments are pooled with a number of other public foundations and charities in an investment pool with the Toronto Foundation (TF). This relationship has been in place since 2001 and is re-evaluated on a regular basis by the Investment Committee. The endowments are invested in accordance with the investment policy established by TF’s Board and are part of the NCF’s Investment Management Agreement with TF.

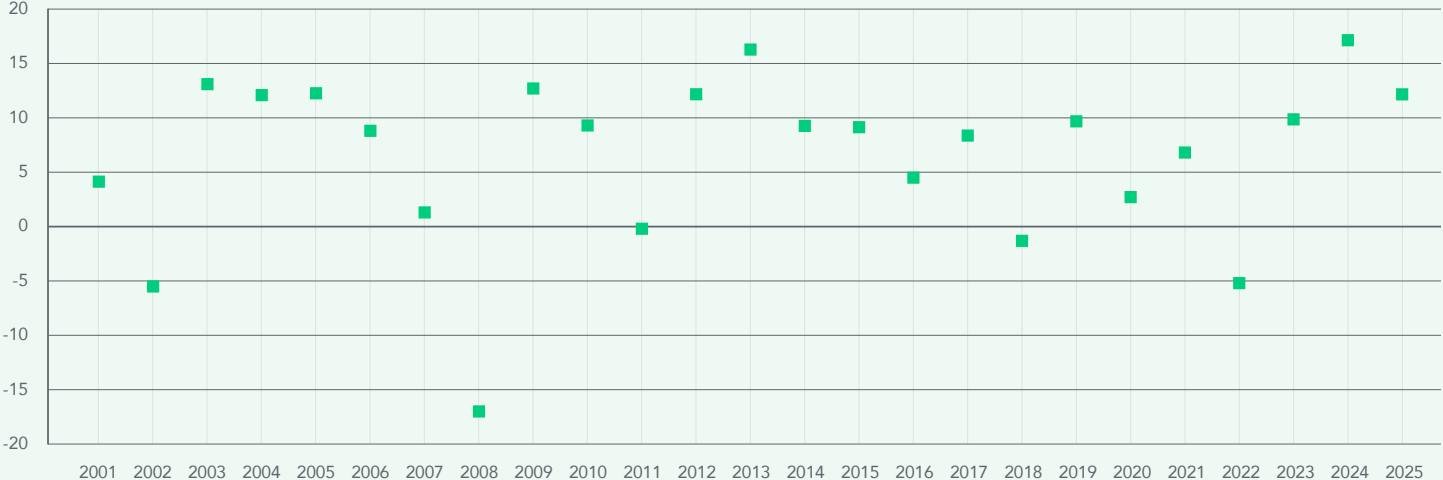
LONG TERM STRATEGIC ASSET ALLOCATION

The average investment fee paid for 2025 was 0.84% for funds in the Toronto Foundation investment pool. The investment fee is charged monthly to each fund on a pro-rated basis. NCF’s annualized five-year (2021 to 2025) rate of return is 8.15% and 6.77% since inception (both net of fees). For more information on Asset Allocation, visit our website to find our Investment Policy.

EXTERNAL INVESTMENT MANAGERS PROGRAM

In 2012 the Foundation created the External Investment Managers Program which allows assets gifted to a newly created Fund to be invested outside of Foundation’s Consolidated Investment Fund in a portfolio managed by the donor’s recommended investment firm. This program is available for advisors who have been licensed as a portfolio manager actively involved in discretionary investment management of segregated portfolios for a minimum of three years. The minimum donation required to participate in this program is \$1,000,000. There are currently six funds under the management in this program.

ANNUAL INVESTMENT RETURNS 2001—2025 (NET)



SOCIAL IMPACT INVESTING

As with all Social Impact Investment opportunities, NCF recognizes that although there may be a lower financial return compared to traditional investments, there is an equally important social and environmental impact alongside of the financial return. Since 2012, NCF has made four (4) commitments in several Social Impact Investment opportunities including: Community Forward Fund (2012), a social finance investment fund; Fair Finance Fund (2018) which lends to social enterprises that provide demonstrable social, environmental and economic benefits from across the food & farm sector supporting the future of local food in Ontario from seed to supper; Windmill Microlending (2023) providing loan support to skilled immigrants to assist with higher education, Canadian accreditation and access to career coaching and professional mentorship; Rally Reader (2024) an online literacy platform dedicated to fostering literacy equity by nurturing a genuine love for reading through choice, support and motivation ensuring every student, regardless of their background or learning differences, has access to the resources they need to succeed.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board has a comprehensive Risk Management Policy covering legislative & legal, fiscal performance, financial reporting, management of volunteers, effective management & governance, economic risk and donor & volunteer stewardship. The Finance Committee reviews NCF's exposure to risk & mitigants to address perceived or actual risks annually. NCF is exposed to the effects of market fluctuations due to changes in market prices caused by factors specific to the individual security or its issuer or factors affecting all securities traded in the market. While market risk cannot be eliminated, the Foundation's Investment Policy addresses this risk with parameters for both asset quality & diversification.

OPERATING RESERVE FUND

In 2018 an Operating Reserve Fund was established with the accrued surplus revenue from our Operating Fund year-over-year. Operating Reserves are liquid, unrestricted assets the Foundation can use to support our operations in the event of an unanticipated loss of revenue or increase in expenses. The reality of market fluctuations have an impact on NCF's source of income and an Operating Reserve Fund provides comfort to stakeholders that NCF has the ability to respond to a rapidly evolving financial landscape. The Foundation's goal for our Operating Reserve Fund is six months of our annual Operating Budget to cover major expenses.

ACCREDITATION

In 2012 NCF received accreditation through Imagine Canada's Standards Program. NCF was one of the first Community Foundations accredited in Canada. The program offers a Canada-wide set of shared standards for charities and nonprofits wishing to enhance their effectiveness in the fundamentals of governance, paid-staff management, financial accountability, fundraising and volunteer management.

EVALUATION

The Board has adopted a comprehensive annual process to evaluate its performance. The results of the evaluation are reviewed and actions to improve board performance are implemented. This process is done on a biennial basis with Foundation committees. NCF staff team participate in annual performance appraisals, which includes check-ins throughout the year. The Executive Director's review is presented to the Board by the Board Chair.

COMPENSATION

The Board has established salary ranges for each of the Foundation employees. The ranges are determined based on reviewing similar positions within the community foundation sector across Canada as well as similar positions within Niagara. Ranges are adjusted regularly to reflect cost of living changes.

BOARD RECRUITMENT, ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

The Bylaws of the Foundation set out the Board recruitment process. Nominees from across Niagara are identified based on current board attributes and future strategic needs. The Board is comprised of 17 members who are elected for a three-year term, which can be renewed once. The term can be extended if a Director is serving as the Vice Chair, Chair or Past Chair. New Directors take part in a formal orientation program. Board training takes place at each meeting and additional opportunities are provided throughout the year for members to participate in professional development provided by Community Foundations of Canada.





Gratitude

Thank You to Our Supporters!

The contribution of time and talents of our volunteers, donors and staff is the 'intangible wealth' of the Foundation.

Starting in 2012 we began tracking the number of hours our volunteers contributed. In 2025 they contributed **1,400 hours**, and based on \$17.60/hr hour, this gift works out to **\$24,631** in support! Thank you so much for this amazing contribution of time and talent.

AMBASSADORS:

Sandy Annunziata, John Armstrong, Brian Babcock, Rashmi Biswas, Ann-Louise Branscombe, Pat Darte, Dino DiCienzo, Andrea Douglas, Denise Elliott, Mario Ferrara, John Fisher, Jessica Friesen, Eric Gilbert, Alan Goddard, Damian Goulbourne, Mel Groom, Jim Howden, Brad Hutchings, Paul Jones, Paul Leon, Jodi Lycett, Rena McDonald, Rosanne Marsh, Shirley Martin, Scott Maskell, Maria Menechella, Victor Muratori, Rob Neill, Eugene Oatley, John Palumbo, John Potts, Carrie Prudhomme, Kelly Robson, David Shaw, Janet St. Amand, Betty-Lou Souter, Wade Stayzer, Sharon Svob, Mary Turner, Louise Veres, Rob Welch, Doug Whitty, Chris Wilson, Brian Wilkie & Madeline Woodhead

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

OFFICERS

Michael Lethby (Chair)
Executive Director – The RAFT

Natasha DiCienzo (Vice-Chair)
Wealth Advisor – Scotia Wealth Management

Michael Mann (Past-Chair)
Partner – Lancaster, Chown & Welch LLP

Bill Crumm (Treasurer)
Director, Indirect Tax (Public Sector) – Deloitte LLP

DIRECTORS

Natalie Apparicio-Farrell
Consultant, Investors Group Securities Inc. – IG Wealth Management

Linda Boich
Executive Vice President, Quality, Mental Health, Addictions – Niagara Health System

Marisa Brown
Manager, Career Development and Planning – Mohawk College

Chris DiLalla
Owner – DiLalla Systems Ltd.

Jennifer Feren
School Board Lawyer – District School Board of Niagara

Ann Godfrey
Director, Development & Public Relations – FACS Niagara (Retired)

Brian Kon
Indigenous Relations Advisor – Region of Niagara

April Mitchell-Boudreau
CEO – Lofttan Jewelry

Kithio Mwanzia
Housing Manager – Community Care of St. Catharines & Thorold

Maggie Penca
Director of Quality and Strategy – Canadian Mental Health Association Niagara

Don Stewart
Senior Associate, Philanthropy – Armstrong Strategy Group

Joanna Stubbs
Manager, PlaySmart Centres – Responsible Gambling Council

Denise Tulk
Agent Owner & Operator – Desjardin Insurance

VOLUNTEERS AND SPONSORS:

COMMUNITY FUND COMMITTEE:

Mike Berlis (NOTL Chair), Patrick Brabant (Grimsby), Ann-Louise Branscombe (NOTL), Claudia Brema (Port Colborne Chair), Pat Darte (NOTL), Mario Ferrara (NOTL), Alan Goddard (Grimsby), Rosanne Marsh (Port Colborne), Sharon McMillan (Wainfleet), Monika Patterson (Grimsby), Debi Pratt (NOTL), Amanda Pyper (Grimsby), Kelly Robson (Wainfleet Chair), David Semley (Port Colborne), Don Stewart (Grimsby Chair), Sharon Svob (Wainfleet), Denise Tulk (Grimsby), Christopher Wilson (Port Colborne)

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE:

Damian Goulbourne, Mike Lethby, Michael Harris, Rick Merritt, April Mitchell-Boudreau (Chair), Sarah Pritula, Jessica Potts, Carrie Prudhomme, Louise Veres, Madeline Woodhead

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Nancy Ammari, Bill Crumm (Chair), Amanda Galley (DJB Accountant), Scott Maskell, Tracy Rienzo, Carrie Sportel, Ruth Todd, Josh Tonos, Suzanne Wilson

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE:

Linda Boich, Bill Crumm, Natasha DiCienzo, Jennifer Feren, Damian Goulbourne, Mike Lethby, Mike Mann (Chair), Kithio Mwanzia

STAFF TEAM:

Bryan J. Rose (Executive Director), Orla Fitzpatrick Newhouse (Manager, Philanthropic Services), JoAnne Krick (Director, Grants & Community Initiatives), Suzanne Veenstra (Coordinator, Marketing & Communications), Victoria Duru (Director, Financial Services – External), Amanda Galley, Ryan O’Neill & Johnson Hu (DJB Accounting Services)

CONTENT CONTRIBUTORS:

ANNUAL REPORT WRITERS:

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