

POWER OF COMMUNITY- UNITY FOUNDATION MEETS \$1 MILLION GOAL

Unity Foundation of La Porte County declared success in raising \$1 million in matching funds! The community foundation serving La Porte County raised \$1 million in response to a challenge match from the Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment, Inc. These locally-generated funds attracted a \$1 million match totaling \$2 million.

More than 25 years ago, the Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment launched its GIFT initiative (Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow). Designed to help Indiana communities develop philanthropic capacity to address their own needs and challenges, GIFT challenges citizens to give to their local community foundations. Unity Foundation was one of 94 Indiana community foundations invited to apply for funding under GIFT Phase VI, an 18-month program that concluded March 31, 2016

Unity chose to focus on building its community funds, which are “unrestricted,” meaning they are most flexible now and forever. Since creating Unity’s Power for Good Fund in 1996, Unity has granted more than \$2.4 million, given challenge matches to help nonprofits build their endowment funds, and supported numerous projects and programs to strengthen La Porte County.

With the opportunity to double the value of their gifts through the Lilly Endowment match, donors created 11 new community funds: AAUW La Porte Community Fund; Backer Family Fund; Fred and Helen Brust Community Fund; Randy and Jane Dorman Foundation; Mark E. Essling Community Fund; Sanford Z. Friedman Community Fund; David C. Gardner Community Fund; Gleim & Young Community Fund; Kabelin Family Community Fund; Purdue Federal Credit Union Fund; and Tom and Judy Ringo Community Fund. In addition, dozens of donors contributed to Unity’s existing Power for Good community fund, and also gave to some of the new ones above.

“We are absolutely thrilled to have met the goal of \$1 million offered under Lilly Endowment’s GIFT VI match,” said Maggi Spartz, president of Unity Foundation. “It demonstrates the ‘power of community’ when people think about how they can impact tomorrow by taking action today. The income from these new funds will help Unity help so many others. It’s not too late. People can still give to a community fund or open a new fund, just like these folks did!”

Inspired by the match, The David C. Gardner Community Fund opened in 2014 to support charitable causes in La Porte County. Dave was a 1969 graduate of Chesterton High School, an aviation junkie, and a long-time employee of United Airlines, until his sudden passing in 2012. He loved this area and visited La Porte County often. His sister, Michigan City resident Marsha Markle, said, “With the availability of the Lilly Endowment matching funds, our family saw an opportunity to honor his memory and provide a real service to deserving people and organizations in the area. Wherever you are, Dave, we know you approve.”

To discuss donating to a community fund or opening your own named fund with Unity, please call 219-879-0327.

About Unity Foundation of La Porte County:

Since 1992, Unity Foundation of La Porte County has served donors, nonprofits and local communities. As La Porte County's community foundation, it manages \$25 million in assets, administers more than 325 charitable funds, and has distributed approximately \$14 million through direct grants and scholarships. The Council on Foundations has deemed Unity Foundation in compliance with all Indiana and national ethical and operating standards for community foundations.

Unity Foundation's mission is to strengthen La Porte County now and forever by: building permanent endowments; providing leadership; offering philanthropic vehicles for everyone; and, being a catalyst for social and economic vitality. For more information, please visit www.uflc.net or call 219-879-0327.
