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Unity Foundation Releases 2019-2020 Annual Report

MICHIGAN CITY, IN —Unity Foundation of La Porte County is pleased to release its 2019-2020 Report to the Community. The report provides a look back at the accomplishments during this period.

Highlights for 2019 included kicking off the Vibrant Communities of La Porte County process, which hadn't been done in nearly 30 years. Unity took pride in 2019 in making \$1.4 million in grants and scholarships that nourished the community. Unity responded to opportunities from the Lilly Endowment to plan and implement strategies to strengthen the county and region – working closely with the Crown Point Community Foundation, Legacy Foundation and others to accomplish what no one could do alone.

“While 2020 seemed unfathomable, our staff, board, partners and donors reacted quickly toward the goal of ensuring our community’s needs were being met. Together, we are a power for good,” said Maggi Spartz, Unity Foundation President.

In 2020, Unity pivoted quickly to remote working and virtual meetings and office visits, accomplishing the following:

- The Vibrant Communities community engagement process was completed, but stalled by COVID when it was time to unveil the Action Agenda to the community. Despite this, Unity began implementing the more urgent items such as the virtual tool to support entrepreneurs of all kinds: NWIBIZhub.com. Unity worked with its partners to take first steps toward a county wide housing study and action agenda. Further implementation of Vibrant is ongoing in 2021—with everyone’s help. Visit vibrantLPCounty.com to learn more.
- Unity activated the La Porte County Disaster Relief and Recovery Fund and made proactive grants to frontline organizations to get ‘early’ money to them for food and supplies, while other funding sources were gearing up. Non-profits received expedited annual fund payments, and 2019 grant recipients were given flexibility to divert unused grant funds to crisis response.
- Weekly, Unity convened the county’s three homeless shelters and many support organizations working to prevent the spread of COVID-19 amongst the homeless. Unity also convened local funders weekly to avoid duplication and to coordinate grant making and solutions.
- Unity also convened bi-weekly meetings with key groups to try to prevent mass homelessness of people facing the ‘eviction cliff.’ A pilot program with Township Trustees is seeing results.

- Unity granted over \$1.44 million and distributed scholarships of \$280,000 to benefit local residents and non-profits.

To view the report or to sign up for Unity's newsletter, visit uflc.net.

Since 1992, Unity Foundation of La Porte County has served donors, nonprofits and local communities. As La Porte County's community foundation, it manages approximately \$35 million in assets, administers more than 325 charitable funds, and has distributed more than \$21 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.

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