REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2020

Mid-Shore Community Foundation
FROM THE
CHAIRMAN

It is hard to look back on the past fiscal year in its entirety as the last quarter of the year really changed the story. I am so proud of our Foundation and our community for coming together so quickly and so generously to establish a Covid-19 Response Fund. In March, the Board unanimously voted to channel $100,000 to this effort, and we were quickly followed by local businesses, our donor-advised funds and individuals in the community who contributed another $700,000. By the end of the fiscal year, over $500,000 had already been distributed primarily to organizations providing basic human needs, and this has continued into the new year. I send a very special thank you to the 20 volunteers who have spent the last six months reviewing requests and making these grants in a very timely fashion.

Although the pandemic dominated the headlines, it was not the entire story. Contributions totaled $9.4 million and we distributed $5.9 million in grants, scholarships, and charitable program support. More than $1.2 million of that was scholarship awards for students headed to college, trades and vocational programs and dual enrollment.

We welcomed new funds like the Choptank Transport Community Foundation, the Dorchester Retired Educators Association, Destined to Rise Coalition, Eastern Shore Horizon Fund, the John and Barbara Murphy Memorial Scholarship Fund, the Shaw Family Opportunity Scholarship Fund, and many more. We welcomed back the United Fund of Talbot County and the Echo Hill Outdoor School. These partnerships help us carry out the mission of enhancing the quality of life for residents of Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s and Talbot Counties.

Moorhead Vermilye, Board Chairman

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GRANTS AND
CHARITABLE PROGRAMS

The Foundation has matured to become one of the most significant in the State of Maryland, holding $94.6 million in total assets for the Mid-Shore Region. In 2020, we processed over $9.4 million in contributions and distributed over $5.9 million in grants, scholarships, and charitable program support.

We publicized this statement about the philosophy that guides our grant and scholarship programs:

“We are proud to support community institutions that are directly tackling racism, equal opportunity, and social justice and reaffirm our commitment to listen and learn, and to deepen our support of those programs in order to accelerate positive change in our community. Now is the time for us to come together in solidarity and redouble our efforts to create a strong and just community that provides equal opportunity for all citizens in the Mid-Shore Region.”

Support for scholarships, education, and youth development -- investments in our future leaders -- totaled $2,727,221. Aside from scholarships, which are featured separately, grants were made to Critchlow Adkins Children’s Centers, Freedom Rowers, New Beginnings Youth and Family Services, Tilghman Area Youth Association, YMCA of the Chesapeake, and many more organizations throughout the Mid-Shore.

We partnered with our Fryling and Rhodes Funds to distribute $114,766 in environmental grants, including a $62,760 grant to Camp Wright in Steevensville in support of their efforts to combat shoreline erosion on their waterfront campus. Another $10,000 went to the Phillips Wharf Environmental Center’s “Sustainable Oyster” project.

Thanks in large part to our Artistic Insights Fund, we distributed $467,092 in support of arts and culture programs including the Academy Art Museum, Chesapeake Film Festival, Chestertown RiverArts and the Church Hill Theatre.

On behalf of our Lockhart, Lindemuth/Schofield, Partners for Paws, Sherertz, Inini Zar and Sarah Willis Funds, we distributed $58,862 to the Mid-Shore Humane Societies as well as Really Great Cats Rescue in Chestertown, Hill Hounds Rescue and Animal Sanctuary in Denton, and Baywater Animal Rescue in Cambridge.

Of the $654,727 in grants categorized as health/disability, $472,000 is for services to disabled residents of the Mid-Shore provided by organizations like The Benedictine School, Channel Marker, Chesterwye Center, Pleasant Day Medical Adult Day Care, and Courageous Hearts Horsemanship.
COVID-19
RESPONSE

One of the benefits of a community foundation is that we are built to be flexible to meet the changing needs in the community. When COVID-19 arrived in mid-March, we stepped up to address the myriad needs facing non-profit organizations in the five counties on the Mid-Shore.

We immediately established a COVID-19 Response Fund and developed a streamlined online application process for grants of up to $5,000 for emergency and other COVID-19 efforts to address the health and welfare of those most affected by the pandemic. We started with $100,000 of our own money and were not shy about asking others to help. The pandemic has affected everyone in our community; people are eager to help their friends and neighbors by donating to the fund.

We awarded the first $121,500 in grants to 27 local nonprofits on April 15, 2020. Our 20-member volunteer Grants Committee reviews requests and makes grant recommendations (electronically) weekly. Most COVID-19 Response Fund grants have supported organizations providing basic human needs.

Other individuals and organizations stepped up to meet specific needs and partnered with MSCF in their efforts. The TCPS Education Foundation initiated the Digital Divide Campaign to provide internet connectivity for local families whose children have been unable to access digital learning platforms. Advisors to our Corr, Ferree, Kudner, and Reynolds/Cristiano Funds made COVID-19 response grants to local independent schools that offer education alternatives for local families.

Chris Agharabi, a local restauranteur, partnered with the Dorchester Chamber of Commerce and the Talbot County Department of Economic Development to establish Feed the Frontline Funds to support frontline workers in those two counties. By June 30, grateful residents and businesses had donated over $32,500 which was used to purchase meals for frontline workers. This was truly a win-win in not only thanking essential personnel but also supporting local restaurants.

Many children depend on free or subsidized school meals to meet their food needs. When Duane Hilghman learned the extent of childhood hunger when schools were closed in Caroline County, he donated all of the Bonnie Hilghman Cancer Fund to support Caroline County Public Schools Food Services’ herculean efforts to feed their students. The fund was established to honor Duane’s wife Bonnie, and Duane knew that Bonnie would go ‘all in’ to address the level of food insecurity Caroline County students were facing.

Dock Street Foundation’s “Hopeful” campaign is utilizing public art to spread hope and raise awareness of the needs related to hunger, homelessness, and health on the Mid-Shore while also soliciting donations for the MSCF COVID-19 Response Fund.
SCHOLARSHIPS

More than $1.2 million in scholarships were awarded to local students for two- and four-year degree programs, trade certifications, graduate degree programs, and dual enrollment. Scholarships varied in size as well, from one-time awards of $500 to $34,000 paid over four years. It takes nearly 100 volunteers to screen applications and choose the recipients. The pandemic altered the process in several ways. The selection committees met by conference call, rather than in person, throughout the month of March. In addition, our annual Awards Breakfasts were canceled so we hung banners outside the Bullitt House and ran ads in the local and e-newspapers to congratulate our scholars. We mailed award letters early this year to share the good news with students and their families as soon as possible.

“Thank you all for your work that has helped so many in our community including myself! Without the help of the Foundation I would not be able to pursue higher education.”

$1.2 MILLION
in scholarships awarded
to local students

“It is an honor to receive this gift and I am forever thankful.”
Another important role that MSCF plays in the community is offering nonprofit training programs. In October we hosted nationally acclaimed board governance expert Chuck Loring at Chesapeake College. He spoke to nonprofit executive directors and board members on the subject of Purposeful Boards, Powerful Fundraising: Strengthening Nonprofits.

In the spring, we provided valuable training as nonprofits grappled with how to deliver programs and services virtually. Rob Levit, a licensed consultant from The Standards for Excellence Institute and authoritative thought leader on nonprofit governance, leadership and best practices, presented three well-attended sessions of a four-part Leadership Training program delivered via video teleconferencing.

The educational component of our mission has always been important to us. The healthier our nonprofits are, the more we can all do for others.

2020

SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

Mary Lynch established the Mary B. Lynch Scholarship for Caroline County public school students who exhibit academic excellence, outstanding character, proven work ethic, history of community involvement, and the promise of useful citizenship. Caroline County Public Schools personnel who participated in the selection process said the $34,000 scholarships awarded to Sydnie Bisesi and Jody Griepe were “game-changers” for these students.

Sylvia Gannon was a founder and long-time director of the Talbot County Paramedic Foundation. The Foundation established the Talbot County Paramedic Foundation/Sylvia Gannon Scholarship for Talbot County residents interested in becoming certified Emergency Medical Technicians or upgrading their certification. The 2020 scholarships were awarded in Sylvia’s honor to Josh Cherry and Kathleen Kriete-Midthun.

The Shaw Family Opportunity Scholarship is designed to support Caroline County nontraditional (adult) students returning to college. The first award will support Mitchell Downes in his pursuit of a master’s degree in Library Science. Mitchell is the second Caroline County Public Library staff member to receive a MSCF scholarship for graduate school.

John and Barbara Murphy were teachers. After they died, their son Scott established the John and Barbara Murphy Memorial Scholarship to honor his parents by supporting students from Dorchester County, where he grew up. Olivia Gisriel of Cambridge South Dorchester High School is the first recipient of the Murphy scholarship.

When Dale Kevin Brown became principal at Kent County High School, one of his goals was to encourage graduating seniors to apply for MSCF scholarships. Mr. Brown served as a member of our Roberta B. Holt Scholarship Selection Committee for several years and knew that there were life-changing opportunities available to local students through MSCF. This year’s selection committee reviewed a record number of applications from Kent County High School seniors and partnered with our Reade and Mary Corr Workforce Scholarship Fund to award a record $58,985 to seven Kent County High School students.
NEW FUNDS

When the board of the Mental Health Association of the Eastern Shore voted to close its office in late 2019, they established a fund at MSCF to accept and manage their remaining assets. The Mental Health Association of the Eastern Shore Fund will remain true to the organization’s mission by supporting nonprofit organizations and charitable efforts that promote mental wellness and behavioral health through education and advocacy.

The Franklin P. and Arthur W. Perdue Foundation was interested in supporting Neck District Volunteer Fire Company’s efforts to build and host a cell tower on its property in Dorchester County but is not allowed to issue grants to non-501(c)(3) organizations. The fire company partnered with MSCF to establish the Neck District Volunteer Fire Company Project Fund to accept the grant. We accepted the grant which allowed the Neck District VFC to purchase land and create a viable site for a cell tower.

In late 2019, the board of the United Fund of Talbot County (UFTC) voted to simplify its accounting and reporting processes by operating through our United Fund of Talbot County Fund. MSCF staff support allows UFTC’s staff and volunteers to focus their time and energy on their annual campaign and grantmaking. United Fund and MSCF have been partners from the start -- a $236,000.00 contribution from UFTC established our first fund, the Col. Edgar & Catherine Linthicum Fund, in 1992. Under MSCF’s management, the Linthicum fund has distributed over $260,836.47 in grants, has grown to $254,674.00, and since 2016, contributes approximately $12,000.00 each year to UFTC’s campaign.

Like UFTC, Wesleyan Home Care, Inc. voted to simplify its accounting and reporting processes by converting its foundation into the Wesleyan Heritage Community Fund of MSCF. Their mission to assist the elderly and disabled through projects of the Wesleyan Churches of the Chesapeake District and Chesapeake Camp and Conference Center in Denton is unchanged; their tax reporting requirements are now met through MSCF’s reporting.

Echo Hill Outdoor School established a new agency endowment fund to support their scholarship program. The fund is invested in our long-term pool, overseen by our volunteer investment committee, and monitored by their board which retains the right to withdraw the funds to support the fund’s purpose.

2019 AWARDS

TOWN WATCH SOCIETY
Kathy Bosin
Andrew Meehan

J. MCKENNY WILLIS, JR.
Frederick Douglass Honor Society
Eric and Harriette Lowery
Imagination Library of Talbot County
Cristy Morrell

SPECIAL RECOGNITION
Gail Benjamin
Talbot Interfaith Shelter
Hugh Grunden
Easton Utilities
Nancy Shockley
Dorchester County Local Management Board
FROM THE PRESIDENT

Never before has the community aspect of the Mid-Shore Community Foundation been more evident than during the last few months of fiscal year 2020. Although we had to lock the front door of the Bullitt House for the health and safety of our staff, donors, and volunteers, all of those constituents have been working together to face the challenges the pandemic has created. I am so proud of our Covid-19 Response Fund which was made possible by our board, our donor-advised funds and the community’s generosity, and whose mission is being carried out by our all-volunteer Grants Committee.

Volunteers are the bedrock of our Foundation and I cannot thank them enough. The Grants Committee is made up of 20 volunteers who met virtually every week from April to June to quickly respond to the emergency needs in our community. While that was going on, another 100 volunteers were carrying on the annual spring task of reading the hundreds of applications for over $1.2 million in scholarships that were awarded to students continuing their studies or learning and honing specific skills in preparation for the future.

I would also like to acknowledge the experience and skills that our Finance and Investment Committee volunteer members bring to the table. Under their leadership, operating expenses as a percentage of assets remains below 1%, and our investment performance has weathered this year’s storm and remains strong.

I miss being out in the community and having the important dialogues about the issues and concerns on your minds and the creative ideas that come from those discussions and lead to meaningful action to enhance the quality of life on the Mid-shore. I look forward to seeing you in person at some point, but in the meantime I am just a phone or video call away.

W.W. “Buck” Duncan, President

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

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<th>Assets</th>
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<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
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<td>Receivables from Estates</td>
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<td>Investments</td>
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<td>Charitable Gift Annuities Payable</td>
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<td>Total Liabilities and Fund Balances</td>
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STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES SUPPORT AND REVENUE

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GRANTS AND EXPENSES

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<th>2020</th>
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<td>Grants and Scholarships</td>
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<td>Fiscal Sponsor Expenses</td>
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<td>MSCF Operating Expenses</td>
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<td>Bullitt House Expenses</td>
<td>79,529</td>
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<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>6,902,601</td>
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IN MEMORIAM FY2020

YOUR LEADERSHIP, COMMITMENT, AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO MSCF WILL BE MISSED

JOHN FORD
Chesapeake Forum

PETE HOWELL
Shore Shakespeare

DEBBYE JACKSON
Channel Marker

ROBERTA LEWIN
Lewin Theatre Fund

ERIC LOWERY
Frederick Douglass Honor Society Funds

CARMEN MEAD
The Caroline Foundation

ROSALIEE ROBERTS
Feed the Kids of Talbot County

CHRIS ROGERS
Shore Shakespeare

SCOTTY
Operation Christmas Spirit

FRED SPENCE
Food for Learning