

## Big Impact. Local Change. Lasting Results.

The Cheboygan County Community Foundation is proud to announce that we've awarded \$87,041 in 2025 Community Grants!

These funds directly support local initiatives that align with our mission –to create jobs, improve educational opportunities, increase tourism, expand retail and commercial offerings, and enhance the economic health of Cheboygan County. Every grant we award helps strengthen the heartbeat of our community by empowering local leaders, supporting entrepreneurs, and investing in projects that make Cheboygan County a better place to live, work, and visit.

Here's a look at the impactful projects we've supported this year:

- ❖ **Cheboygan Area Chamber of Commerce (\$5,000)** – Leadership Cheboygan 2025  
Empowering the next generation of leaders to shape our community's future.
- ❖ **Cheboygan Cycle Works (\$2,500)** – Bike Rentals  
Promoting outdoor recreation, health, and tourism through accessible biking opportunities.
- ❖ **Cheboygan Area Chamber of Commerce (\$5,541)** – Cheboygan Bucks 2025  
Strengthening local businesses by encouraging residents to shop local.
- ❖ **Mackinaw City Chamber of Commerce (\$5,000)** – 2025 BOGO Program  
Boosting tourism and small business through creative local promotions.
- ❖ **North Central Michigan College (\$10,000)** – Fast Track Program  
Helping students and adult learners gain in-demand skills for workforce success.
- ❖ **Straits Area School of Cosmetology (\$5,000)** – Start-Up Grant  
Supporting career training and entrepreneurship for local students.
- ❖ **Cheboygan Area Visitors Bureau (\$3,000)** – Tap Into the Trails  
Expanding tourism and community wellness by enhancing local trail systems.
- ❖ **City of Cheboygan (\$50,000)** – Crib Project  
Preserving local history and revitalizing Cheboygan's waterfront for future generations.
- ❖ **Tristen Stead (\$1,000)** – Passeno Scholarship Recipient  
Investing in the next generation through educational opportunity.

At the Cheboygan County Community Foundation, we believe in investing where it matters most right here at home. Each grant represents a partnership with local organizations and individuals working together to build a stronger, more vibrant Cheboygan County.

If you'd like to contribute to our mission or learn more about our impact, please visit [www.cheboyganfoundation.org](http://www.cheboyganfoundation.org). Together, we're creating a brighter future for our community.



We would like to recognize this special group of donors who gifted \$500 or more to the Cheboygan County Community Foundation.

- David & Patricia Hubbard
- Philip & Mary Jo Welch
- James & Kathryn Nihls
- Tom & Annette Eustice
- Walstrom Marine
- Robert & Michele Andrews
- John C. "Jack" Myers
- Dave & Brenda Butts
- Ken & Barbara Bernstein
- Tom & Mary O'Hare

- John Bertsch
- Dirk Hoffius
- Wheeler Motors
- Stephen Hoffius
- Derrick Olzack
- Ryan Ealy
- Anthony Abbattista
- Boyd & Sandra Andrews
- Patricia Gildner
- W. Kent VanAllen Jr.
- Paul & Donna Myers
- Marty & Mary Lou Andrews
- Tromble Family Foundation
- Richard & Cherill Crager
- Douglass Bailey
- Fraternal Order of Eagles
- Matt & Lisa Keene
- Noyes & Elizabeth Avery



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## Economic Development Continues to Move Forward in Cheboygan County

December 2025

### A Message From Our Chairman

Greetings!

On behalf of the entire Cheboygan County Community Foundation Board, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude for your continued trust, investment, and passion for our shared home—Cheboygan County. Your support reflects the same deep love for this community that inspires our work every day.

Our mission is to strengthen the economic and community development of Cheboygan County. Guided by our vision, we work to create jobs, expand educational opportunities, grow tourism, support local businesses, and enhance the economic well-being of the county we all care so deeply about. Our values focus on developing sustainable funding sources and building a strong endowment program to ensure long-term success for generations to come.

This past year brought meaningful accomplishments—from supporting key community initiatives to investing in projects that fuel growth, learning, and opportunity. Each success reflects your commitment and our shared dedication to creating a stronger, more vibrant Cheboygan County.

This year also marks an important transition in leadership. We are pleased to welcome John Wheaton as our new Executive Director. John brings passion, experience, and a steadfast commitment to the betterment of our county, and we look forward to the energy and vision he will bring to the role.

We also extend our deepest appreciation to Annette Eustice, who has served as Executive Director for the past two years. Her leadership and guidance have benefited the Foundation immensely, and we are truly grateful for the dedication she has shown. We are delighted to welcome Annette to our Board of Directors and are thankful for her continued involvement and service.

As we enter the holiday season, I wish you and your families a safe, joyful, and peaceful celebration.

With optimism and shared purpose, we look forward to building on this year's achievements and celebrating even greater successes across Cheboygan County in 2026.

With gratitude,

Dawn Bodnar  
Chairman of the Board  
Cheboygan County Community Foundation

### Welcome New BOD Members

Please join us in warmly welcoming Meg Goslin, Brandy Mulak, and Jamie McClintic to the Cheboygan County Community Foundation Board! We are excited to have their energy, expertise, and dedication joining our team as we continue working to strengthen our community and support the growth of Cheboygan County.

If you are interested in serving on our Board and helping make a difference in our community, please reach out to Tom Eustice for more information.

### Leadership

The board and officers of the Cheboygan County Community Foundation, Inc. are all private sector, non-paid volunteers who bring their talent, energy, and knowledge to the mission of the organization.

**Dawn Bodnar, Chairperson**  
**Michele Andrews, Vice-Chairperson**  
**Brian Groff, Treasurer**  
**Meg Goslin, Secretary**

**Richard B. Sanford, President Emeritus**  
**James Conboy, Director Emeritus**

**Annette Eustice**  
**Tom Eustice**  
**Elizabeth Fairbanks**  
**Dwayne LaPointe**

**David Butts, CFP, CMFC, Past President**  
**Joanne Welihan, Past President**

**Jamie McClintic**  
**Brandy Mulak**  
**Marianne Ray**  
**John Wheaton, Executive Director**

**Susan Eno, Past President**  
**Noreen Keating, Past President**

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Cheboygan County Community Foundation • P.O. Box 494 • Cheboygan, MI 49721

## Walstrom Marine Partnership

### Anchored in Community — A Legacy That Lives On!

When local partnerships come together, remarkable things happen—history is honored, community is strengthened, and our future shines a little brighter.

We are honored to share that **Walstrom Marine** has gifted the historic Ottawa Tug Boat, built in 1914, to the Cheboygan County Community Foundation, along with a generous \$5,000 donation to help fuel our mission of building a thriving and connected Cheboygan County.

This remarkable gift—now purchased by the Singer family, owners of Kling's Auto Recycling—is far more than the transfer of an iconic vessel. It symbolizes shared purpose, community pride, and a collective commitment to Cheboygan's future. With support like this, the Foundation continues to champion local initiatives that uplift our region and honor its legacy.

The Cheboygan County Community Foundation exists to:

- ◆ Create Jobs
- ◆ Improve Educational Opportunities
- ◆ Increase Tourism
- ◆ Expand Retail and Commercial Offerings
- ◆ Enhance the Economic Health of Cheboygan County

To Walstrom Marine, the Singer family, and every partner who believes in this community—Thank You. Your investment helps ensure Cheboygan's history is preserved, its present is strengthened, and its future continues to rise with possibility.

Together, we're charting a powerful course forward—and keeping Cheboygan's spirit sailing strong.



### Investing in Cheboygan's Future

As the year draws to a close, we invite you to consider making a year-end, tax-deductible donation to the Foundation. Your generosity directly supports the programs, projects, and long-term investments that strengthen Cheboygan County and help ensure a bright future for the community we all love. We remain committed to bringing new opportunities, resources, and growth to our county—and we can only do it with your support.

### Inaugural Passeno Scholarship Awarded

The Passeno Scholarship Fund was formed in memory of Clinton Passeno, who attended Cheboygan Area High School and excelled in the automotive, welding and building trades programs, and Bob Passeno, Clinton's father. Each year a scholarship of \$1,000 will be provided to a grant applicant to be used to purchase tools and equipment required for the student's chosen career. Tools may include welding tools, construction tools, and tools needed for computer programs, dental or medical programs, etc. To be eligible, students must have earned at least a 2.0 GPA at Cheboygan Area High School.

The first scholarship was awarded to Tristan Stead and was used for tools to be used in the welding program at Ferris State University. Students may apply for this scholarship through the Cheboygan High School guidance office who then provides the applications to the Cheboygan County Community Foundation for review.

The next scholarship cycle will begin in January 2026. The scholarship will be presented at the Cheboygan Area High School graduation in May 2026.

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11401 N. Straits Highway • Cheboygan MI 49721

**Mission:** To strengthen the economic and community development of Cheboygan County.

**Vision:** Cheboygan County Community Foundation is founded to create jobs, improve educational opportunities, increase tourism, expand the retail and commercial offerings and enhance the economic health of Cheboygan County

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Executive Director: John Wheaton



### Hollywood Nights Gala Raises \$30,000 to Strengthen Cheboygan County's Future

The Cheboygan County Community Foundation rolled out the red carpet for its biannual Hollywood Nights Gala, held in October, at the K of C Hall. The event brought together community members, business leaders, and supporters for an evening of elegance, entertainment, and generosity raising approximately \$30,000 to further the Foundation's mission of creating jobs, improving educational opportunities, increasing tourism, expanding retail and commercial offerings, and enhancing the overall economic health of Cheboygan County.

Guests enjoyed a full-course dinner, live music, entertainment, and a dynamic mix of live and silent auctions that kept the energy high all evening. The event captured the spirit of community collaboration, with every detail from the décor to the program reflecting the heart and pride of Cheboygan County.

The Foundation extends heartfelt thanks to all volunteers and board members whose leadership and teamwork made the evening a resounding success, as well as to the organization's new Executive Director John Wheaton, who served as Master of Ceremonies and helped lead the event to new heights.

Special appreciation goes to the event's generous sponsors who helped make the night possible.

Proceeds from Hollywood Nights will directly support local scholarships, classroom innovation grants, workforce development programs, and community improvement projects each aligned with the Foundation's mission to strengthen the social and economic fabric of Cheboygan County.

"These funds represent more than a dollar amount," said Executive Director John Wheaton. "They represent opportunity for students, small businesses, and community initiatives that move Cheboygan forward. Every sponsor, volunteer, and guest played a part in building a stronger future for our county."



Alice Fernelius



Patty Gildner

### Alice Fernelius & Patricia Gildner Step Down from CCCF Board of Directors

The Cheboygan County Community Foundation sincerely thanks Alice Fernelius and Patricia Gildner for their many years of dedicated service on our Board. After fulfilling their board commitment, we honor both Alice and Patricia's unwavering support, thoughtful guidance, and steadfast commitment to our community. Their contributions have made a lasting impact on the work of the Foundation and the lives of those in Cheboygan County. We are truly grateful for their leadership and tireless dedication.

### Become a "Shipmate" and Help Steer Cheboygan County Forward!

The Cheboygan County Community Foundation has a great volunteer initiative—and we'd love for you to be part of it! By becoming a "Shipmate," you can play an active role in supporting the continued economic and community growth of Cheboygan County.

What does a Shipmate do?

- ◆ Volunteer at CCCF fundraisers
- ◆ Attend Business After Hours events that feature the Foundation
- ◆ Help share our mission throughout the community
- ◆ Contribute less than 20 hours per year

It's a fun, meaningful, and flexible way to get involved—perfect for anyone who wants to make a positive impact without a major time commitment.

Your involvement helps fuel opportunities, strengthen local initiatives, and support the long-term success of the county we all care deeply about.

Ready to climb aboard? Join us as a CCCF Shipmate and help us continue shaping a stronger, brighter Cheboygan County!

### Create a Lasting Legacy for Cheboygan County



Your support can help secure the economic future and growth of Cheboygan County for generations to come.

By contributing to the Cheboygan County Community Foundation Endowment Fund, you're investing in long-term community development, creating jobs, expanding educational opportunities, and strengthening local businesses.

Leave a legacy that will continue to make a difference—support the Endowment Fund today.