



**HIGHLIGHTS**

**FOUNDATION AWARDS \$432,000 IN GRANTS THIS CYCLE**

The Community Foundation's Board recently approved the Spring 2023 cycle of **Special Project Grants**, awarding \$432,000 to five wonderful local nonprofit organizations. You can read about the details of these grants on our website: [www.cfsjc.org/news](http://www.cfsjc.org/news).

**IMAGINATION LIBRARY CONTINUES TO GROW**

In the five years since the **Imagination Library** was established, the program has continued to grow. To date, we've mailed more than 530,000 beautiful new books to preschoolers in St. Joseph County. Recently, we hit a milestone of 10,000 children who are actively enrolled in the program—What a great way to develop a love of learning from the very start!

**GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK**

After 17 years, the Community Foundation's Vice President of Communication and Public Relations **Laura Moran Walton** will be leaving the Community Foundation in June for a new position with the University of Notre Dame. But don't worry—you'll still see her at this summer's Community Foundation Performing Art Series, which she'll continue to coordinate this year.



Laura Moran Walton



An architect's rendering of Oaklawn Psychiatric Center's new main reception area and waiting room

# \$250,000 Grant Supports Oaklawn's Capital Campaign

**With its new facility, the community mental health center will have better space to help those in need.**

Oaklawn Psychiatric Center is going through a period of transformational change.

“Ever since the community mental health system started in the ‘70s, it always operated in the same way,” says Kari Tarman, MPA, executive director of the Oaklawn Foundation. “You call us, and we’ll get you on the schedule.”

The problem with that model? It could take weeks to get in to see a therapist. Clients might book an appointment a month out, but by the time the date rolled around, only about half of them would show up. For some, the crisis had passed. For others, it might have gotten acute enough to send them to the emergency room.

Starting in May 2022, Oaklawn shifted to a new way of serving clients: the

Open Access Model. Now, Oaklawn is open five to six hours a day for walk-in traffic. You can come in without an appointment, and a Master’s level therapist will give you an intake assessment, which takes approximately two hours. From there, you’ll be directed to further support—which, depending on your needs, could be at Oaklawn or at a private practice elsewhere in the community.

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As of today, Oaklawn’s staff has completed 7,167 new assessments using this model, says Tarman. It took some ramping up—staff had to be cross-trained to be able to serve a broader variety of clients—but now, she says, “it feels manageable.”

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From left: MEPC members Tom Varga, Greta Roemer Lewis, and Adam Russell at the recent relaunch event

## Michiana Estate Planning Council Relaunches, Partners with Foundation

The last time the Michiana Estate Planning Council (MEPC) convened its members was March 3, 2020—and, as attorney Adam Russell noted in his remarks at the organization's recent re-launch, no one expected that more than three years would pass before another meeting.

As part of its rebuilding efforts, the MEPC has now joined forces with the Community Foundation. The Foundation will administer the Council, working with its member base of attorneys, trust officers, CPAs, and insurance and charitable professionals to provide educational and networking opportunities to strengthen its collaborative, team-based approach to estate planning.

"We can collaborate better when we know each other," says Russell, "and that's in the best interests of our clients and our community."

Learn more about the Michiana Estate Planning Council at its new website: [www.michianaepc.org](http://www.michianaepc.org).

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It's a paradigm shift that wouldn't have been possible without Oaklawn's new \$17.6-million facility, which is scheduled for completion in July. The Community Foundation helped provide support for the project with a \$250,000 Special Project Grant. Formerly, Oaklawn operated out of a 170-year-old relic of the Singer Sewing Machine Company. Because it wasn't designed for health care, the building's compartmentalized design created barriers for would-be clients.

Another way that Oaklawn is becoming more accessible is through its Mobile Crisis Response Team.

"Just imagine," Tarman says, "if, like many of our clients, you're depressed, or anxious, or experiencing paranoia, it could be very challenging to navigate the building to find help."

Oaklawn's treatment options called for more space, too. For example, the organization offers far more group therapy sessions than it once did. To accommodate them, the new building has seven group rooms, rather than the three in the old building.

"And it's such an attractive space," says Tarman, warmly. "It's on the river, with wonderful windows. You can see the water, it incorporates nature..."

That fits in with Oaklawn's focus on whole health. It's nothing like the sterile, stereotypical mental health center image that you might see on TV."

Another way that Oaklawn is becoming more accessible is through its Mobile Crisis Response Team. Because some people still perceive a stigma around seeking mental health treatment, the team exists to meet clients where they are—in their homes, in a pastor's office, or anywhere they feel comfortable.

Oaklawn is developing a collaborative relationship with the local police, working together to support the needs of people in our community who may be experiencing a mental health crisis. 911 dispatchers can transfer calls to the Mobile Crisis Response Team, and the Team can also ask for support from police officers when responding to calls. Later this year, Oaklawn will begin operating a 24-hour crisis center, further expanding services that are available to the community.

"We've really changed the way we operate," Tarman says. "Now we can get people the care they need more quickly—and that means they can start to get better more quickly, too."

Learn how about Community Foundation grant programs at [www.cfsjc.org/grants](http://www.cfsjc.org/grants).



An architectural rendering of one of the community spaces in Oaklawn's new facility

## A Golden Opportunity to Improve Public Health in St. Joseph County

Did you know Indiana ranks in the bottom five for state government funding of public health?

Not surprisingly, we have the poor health outcomes to go with it. Average life expectancy for working-age Hoosiers has been declining in recent years, falling significantly below the national average. Many of our community members struggle with chronic diseases like cancer and heart disease, obesity, smoking-related illnesses, and substance-use disorders.

This drags on the happiness and well-being of our citizens. It also drags on our collective prosperity. Indiana's impressive progress on the economic development front is slowed by poor health outcomes that employers literally cannot afford to ignore.

But all that is about to change.

Governor Holcomb established the Governor's Public Health Commission to develop a smart set of recommendations that, when

enacted, will transform the quality of public health services across Indiana. The Community Foundation is delighted that our state legislature overwhelmingly passed legislation designed to guide and fund this much-needed public health transformation.

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The St. Joseph County Council must vote by Sept. 1, 2023, to "opt-in" to receive the new funding. Most of the new funding will focus on expanding core services that address our most serious health challenges, such as maternal/child health, student health screenings, chronic disease prevention, child and adult immunizations, and emergency preparedness.

Assuming our County Council opts



Foundation President Rose Meissner

in, St. Joseph County Public Health Department will receive \$3–\$4 million in new state funding next year and double that amount the year after. What an amazing opportunity to turn the tide and achieve health outcomes that St. Joseph County, and Indiana, can be proud of.

*Rose*

To learn more about the Community Foundation's proactive work on behalf of our community, visit [www.cfsjc.org/initiatives](http://www.cfsjc.org/initiatives).

## As Rates Increase, Charitable Gift Annuities Get Even More Attractive

Annuity rates are the highest they've been in decades. Have you considered a CGA?

A charitable gift annuity (CGA) is a way to support the causes that you care about while also providing you with a predictable life income. To establish a CGA, you make a gift to the Community Foundation. In return, you receive an immediate, fixed stream of income, guaranteed

### Sample one-life annuity rates, effective Jan. 1, 2023

AGE	70	75	80	85	90
RATE	5.9%	6.6%	7.6%	8.7%	9.7%

*Rates are subject to change.*

for your life (and your spouse's, if applicable). This means that your payments will never change, even if interest rates or the stock market changes.

Upon death, the assets remaining in your CGA go into a permanent fund to support your favorite charity or cause. Depending upon your gift, you may also receive tax benefits, including a charitable deduction in

the year that you set up the CGA.

Because annuity rates increase with age, people 70 and older often find them attractive—and recent increases in rates make the benefit even greater.

For a free, personalized illustration of how a CGA could work for you, contact Rose Meissner at (574) 232-0041 or [rose@cfsjc.org](mailto:rose@cfsjc.org).



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## Community Foundation Performing Arts Series

All events in this FREE Saturday evening series begin at 7 p.m. at the Chris Wilson Pavilion in South Bend's Potawatomi Park. Bring a lawn chair or a blanket and come enjoy our community's arts talent!

- Jul. 22** Art 4 presents musical theater favorites
- Jul. 29** An Evening of Shakespeare, featuring South Bend Civic Theatre
- Aug. 5** Southold Dance Theater
- Aug. 12** Lifting Our Voices, Celebrating Our Legacy, featuring UZIMA! Drum & Dance
- Aug. 19** South Bend Symphony Orchestra
- Aug. 26** South Bend Symphonic Choir and the Elkhart Community Chorus

For full details, you can find event descriptions online at [www.cfsjc.org/series](http://www.cfsjc.org/series).



From left: Christian Jackson, Josephine Lawrence, Elliana Lemberis, Olivia Leonhard, Aurora Nunez

## Foundation Names Laidig Community Service Scholarship Winners

At the Community Foundation, we help talented students achieve their dreams. Our robust scholarship program includes more than 65 scholarship funds, providing close to \$1,000,000 in support to some 300 students each year. One of our most popular scholarship programs is the Jon and Sonja Laidig Community Service Scholarship.

This scholarship supports students on two levels. First, it provides each recipient with \$5,000 of annual tuition support. In addition, scholars have an opportunity to give back to their community through a \$3,750 paid summer internship, served with some of our best local nonprofit organizations.

This year's Laidig Scholars came from a pool of nearly 40 students from ten different areas high schools. The

recipients are Christian Jackson, Riley High School, who will study business administration and marketing at Indiana University Bloomington; Josephine Lawrence, Adams High School, who will study art education at Indiana University South Bend; Elliana Lemberis, LaVille High School, who will study engineering at Purdue University; Olivia Leonhard, LaVille High School, who will study biology at Trine University; and Aurora Nunez, St. Joseph High School, who will study biology and marketing at Holy Cross. Congratulations, Laidig Scholars!

You can help support local students through the Foundation's scholarship funds. Learn more at [www.cfsjc.org/scholarships](http://www.cfsjc.org/scholarships).