

The Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines supported our local nonprofit sector in 2024 by investing strategic funding support to a variety of initiatives. Through the generosity of donors to the Better Together Fund, the Community Foundation can take a nimble approach to address pressing needs and promising opportunities, provide leadership on important community issues and support critical work that improves the quality of life for us all.

The summary below provides an overview of the grants awarded through the Better Together Fund. Thank you for your generosity and partnership. No matter what the future holds, we know we are simply better together.

Leadership Grants

The Leadership Grant program, funded by the Better Together Fund, provided four awards to make significant impacts in homelessness prevention and permanent supportive housing, health services for children with special healthcare needs, services and support for girls in the foster care system and supportive housing for women with a history of homelessness or incarceration.



Anawim Housing: This grant investment will support the construction of Monarch Apartments, which will provide 40 permanent supportive housing units in the form of one-bedroom and efficiency apartments to house individuals and couples experiencing homelessness in Greater Des Moines. The project will utilize the community-wide Centralized Intake system to prioritize the most vulnerable for housing.



Childserve: Funding supported a new ChildServe facility near the intersection of 48th and Franklin in Des Moines. The facility will expand the capacity from serving 60 children with specialized healthcare needs to 600, dramatically reduce waitlists for families and overall, expand services with the addition of 40 new specialized clinical staff roles.



Ellipsis: Grant funding will address identified critical service gaps including Supervised Apartment Living (SAL), group foster care and equitable access for girls. The project results in a continuum of care for system-involved youth that will close 100% of the gap on services for girls in SAL and provide appropriate spaces that support healing and increased opportunities for real-world skill-building to improve well-being and long-term self-sufficiency.



The Beacon: This investment supported the purchase of The Beacon Village facility. The Beacon is addressing the need for housing and support for women who have a history of homelessness and/or incarceration by expanding to The Beacon Village on Euclid Avenue. The new facility has 32 individual apartments and utilizes a community-centered approach where women involved support one another in a neighbor-centric environment.

For more information about the Better Together Fund, contact us at (515) 883-2626 or info@desmoinesfoundation.org.

Capacity Building Grants



To help nonprofits focus on strengthening overall governance and management and more effectively meet their mission, the Capacity Building Grant program provided 21 grant awards for strategic planning, succession planning, fund development planning and more. One example of a recent grant is to Community Support Advocates (CSA), which supports people impacted by disabilities, mental illness and traumatic brain injury. CSA undertook a strategic planning process focused on the sustainability of the award-winning Momentum Arts program, which provides workshops, art supplies, studio space at Mainframe and career development opportunities for clients. With shifts in available funding sources, they want to be sure they are strategic about how to continue to offer Momentum and reduce stigma and stereotypes while fostering empathy and appreciation for diverse forms of expression.

Strategic Alignment Grants



Strategic Alignment grants were awarded to eight initiatives seeking ways to leverage the strengths of colleague organizations to meet needs and create opportunities in Greater Des Moines. One example of a recent grant is to The Iowa Food Foundation, also known as Cultivate: Local Food Connections, to explore a merger with Eat Greater Des Moines. As Eat Greater Des Moines handed off their food rescue work to Supply Hive (a transition also supported by a Strategic Alignment Grant), these two organizations found their missions and work to be in strong alignment in their focus on building the Central Iowa local food system. Both organizations felt that a unified mission would lead to better clarity and more efficiency.

About the Better Together Fund

No one knows exactly what tomorrow may bring for our community. What needs and opportunities will arise? What critical work will we be called to do to improve quality of life for our community? What can we do now to help assure that future needs are met?

The Better Together Fund was created to address these questions. It presents an opportunity for all who love Greater Des Moines to invest in our community's most important issues, initiatives and needs for generations to come. Think of it as the savings account for the future of our community. The flexible dollars it provides enable the Community Foundation to respond to emerging needs as they arise – and invest significant funding in initiatives and opportunities that strengthen Greater Des Moines.

We can't predict the future. But today, through the Better Together Fund, we can play a role in positioning our community for continued success. We're simply better together.

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