



2018 Competitive Grants

The Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area is pleased to announce the awarding of 12 grants totaling \$550,200 from the Community's Endowment in 2018.

Arts and Culture

Holland Symphony Orchestra – Link Up

Amount Awarded: \$45,200 over 3 years

Purpose: In partnership with Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute, this program unites the classroom with the concert hall and will annually provide over 1,400 local fourth grade students with the opportunity to explore music through a yearlong curriculum of classroom activities and a culminating concert in which students perform with the Holland Symphony Orchestra.

Why this matters: Many schools have reduced arts and music opportunities for students in recent years due to budget cuts. This program will increase access and aims to inspire a lifelong interest in music for participating students.

Holland Historical Trust – Spark!Lab

Amount Awarded: \$40,000

Purpose: To establish a Smithsonian Institution innovation and invention activity based program at the Holland Museum.

Why this matters: Building on West Michigan's leadership in design, innovation and entrepreneurship, Spark!Lab will offer museum visitors the opportunity to become inventors themselves. Spark!Lab activities are designed around common themes that connect Museum collections and exhibitions to science, technology, engineering, and math. These themes will change on a regular basis, ensuring that children and families have something new to explore each time they return to the Museum.

Community and Economic Development

City of Holland – Civic Center Place Improvement Project

Amount Awarded: \$20,000

Purpose: To renew and renovate this sixty year old building to make it a more desirable and multi-functional space for the community.

Why this matters: The Civic Center is a pivotal part of the City's vision for making Holland a great place to live, work and play. The renovated space will have a lasting impact on residents, visitors, and their experience of downtown Holland for years to come.

Holland Community Aquatic Center – Expansion Evaluation

Amount Awarded: \$25,000

Purpose: To provide an economic impact study and architectural conceptual design services that will allow Holland Community Aquatic Center to better understand the effects of its programs and services on the local economy and conceptualize facility designs that better serve the community.

Why this matters: The information generated by this project will inform pivotal decisions about HCAC's future and will help develop a plan that maximizes capacity to deliver on all three of its core competencies simultaneously: community activities, instruction, and competition.

Ottawa County – Diversity Equity and Inclusion Office

Amount Awarded: \$25,000

Purpose: To create a county diversity, equity, and inclusion office, consisting of a Director and Senior Secretary, to identify and eliminate implicit bias in internal policy, procedures and practices and external service provision.



Why this matters: Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. While we all have these implicit biases, research shows that we can recognize and overcome them with the right tools. This new office will support Ottawa County and other local government partners in this work in alignment with the county's goal of promoting a culturally diverse environment where all employees, residents, and visitors are valued and welcomed.

Talent 2025 – Evidence Based Selection Process

Amount Awarded: \$5,000

Purpose: To provide technical assistance and peer learning support to employers in developing their own customized Evidence Based Selection Process (EBSP) for hiring new employees.

Why this matters: EBSP has been proven to benefit both employers and employees and contribute to a stronger, more inclusive local economy by improving quality of hire, reducing first year turnover, and increasing workforce diversity. This initiative will test the model in a variety of different industries and organizational sizes to see if it can produce similar results for a wide range of employers and their employees.

Human Services

Center for Women in Transition– Prevention Pays: Domestic & Sexual Violence Prevention Initiative

Amount Awarded: \$75,000 over 3 years

Purpose: To enhance the community's capacity to recognize, respond to, and prevent domestic and sexual violence by equipping the local community - specifically focused on faith communities and local businesses - with the knowledge and tools they need to understand domestic and sexual violence and what to do when it shows up within their community.

Why this matters: Ottawa County continues to see an increase in incidents of domestic and sexual violence. This program will have a lasting impact on employers and faith communities' capacity to respond to these situations and increase their ability to keep victims themselves and others in these places of work and worship safe from harm.

Youth

Bridge Youth Center – Refresh Capital Campaign

Amount Awarded: \$40,000

Purpose: To refurbish the Bridge's 17 year old building with revisions that will help better serve the organization's core mission of providing a place where all kids are safe, loved and valued.

Why this matters: The Bridge is the only youth serving organization offering daily programming physically located in Zeeland and serves over 150 middle and high school students a week. The capital improvements will have a lasting impact on the Bridge's ability to provide a positive, safe, and welcoming environment to students that is well equipped for the size and scope of programs the organization offers.

Ottawa Area Intermediate School District– Reading Now Network Developmental Evaluation

Amount Awarded: \$50,000 over 2 years

Purpose: To accelerate and expand the impact of the Reading Now Network in West Michigan through real-time learning and evaluation so that more children can reach their third grade reading milestones, setting them up for continued success in the rest of their schooling.

Why this matters: Third grade reading is a critical individual milestone and a key community indicator that many people have watched closely for years. The Reading Now Network has brought new insight and understanding to how schools can best support students' learning to reach their third grade reading goals. Given the strength of the initial results and the momentum the initiative has with local schools, the Developmental Evaluation model is uniquely well suited to help RNN maximize the impact of its work for schools and students.



Out on the Lakeshore – Youth Programming

Amount Awarded: \$75,000 over 3 years

Purpose: In response to community demand, OOTL is launching programming for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning (LGBTQ) youth, their families and allies including weekly support group meetings, a mentoring program, an anti-bullying campaign and daily drop-in hours. OOTL youth programming will build a caring network of support by providing a safe space to gather and grow in self-understanding.

Why this matters: Local LGBTQ youth and their families have expressed a need for opportunities to meet and talk in person with others who share their experiences. Bullying and harassment are frequent themes in these students' day to day experiences which leads to increased mental health concerns. While many valuable resources are available online and through social media, students and parents specifically want help connecting in person in the community where they live, work, and go to school. Having access to safe space, resources and a supportive community could be life changing and even life-saving for these students.

Ready for School – Start School Ready

Amount Awarded: \$75,000 over 3 years

Purpose: To pioneer a transformative early learning experience for children and caregivers. Once implemented and scaled across multiple school districts, up to 500 more children a year will reach the threshold of kindergarten prepared to succeed in school and in life.

Why this matters: Entering kindergarten prepared to learn has significant lasting impact for children themselves, their families, schools, and the community at large. Ready for School has made tremendous progress in helping our community move the needle on kindergarten readiness from less than half to 63% and believes that Start School Ready is the most effective strategy to build on this success and reach beyond the 63% readiness level.

West Ottawa Public Schools in partnership with TCM Counseling – In-School Counseling

Amount Awarded: \$75,000 over 3 years

Purpose: To provide counseling services to students in West Ottawa Public Schools who are currently going without professional mental health services.

Why this matters: Data from the Ottawa County Youth Assessment Survey (YAS) confirms what many of us have experienced first hand – that the numbers of local students experiencing depression and thinking about or attempting suicide continue to increase. The in-school counseling program will provide an important resource to students facing these difficulties and removes the barriers of cost and transportation that often prevent students from accessing these kinds of support services. Receiving needed mental health counseling services as a child or teenager has a lasting impact on those students' lives in supporting them with current challenges and equipping them to navigate these issues in healthy ways as they enter adulthood. In a moment of crisis, rapid access to mental health services can have a life-saving impact.