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18 Nonprofits Serving Wayne County Receive \$127,000 in Grants from Wayne County Community Endowment and Rochester Area Community Foundation

Grantmaking in Wayne County continues to grow with the combined efforts of the Wayne County Community Endowment and Rochester Area Community Foundation. Together in 2024, they awarded \$127,000 grants to 18 nonprofits serving Wayne County.

The [Wayne County Community Endowment](#) was created in 1984 with charitable gifts from the estate of Jeanette “Nettie” Bullis. This lifelong resident of Wayne County believed strongly in her community, education, and projects that improve quality of life. Her legacy continues today, with grantmaking from the Wayne County Community Endowment and several other related funds carried out by an all-volunteer advisory committee made up of Wayne County residents.

Residents on the advisory committee use their knowledge of Wayne County’s unique needs and challenges to review applications submitted by local nonprofits and make grant recommendations on behalf of the Wayne County Community Endowment. These grants typically range in size from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

Rochester Area Community Foundation’s focus on investment in Wayne and the surrounding counties has made more dollars available to fulfill these requests, and to award some grants that are significantly larger. “We’ve seen how a few thousand dollars can be put to incredible use in Wayne County, to boost a vital program or serve more residents,” says Community Foundation Senior Program Officer Sara Bukowiec. “But to address large-scale issues like food insecurity, transportation, or housing, we know sometimes larger dollar amounts are needed.”

This year, a \$25,000 grant was awarded to Sodus Central School District to support a county-wide food pantry expansion. The project represents a collaboration between Wayne County Community Schools, Foodlink, and individual school districts. Distance can be a significant barrier in rural areas, so this grant aims to put free food in reach of families right at schools. Kids can fill up their backpacks on the way home, or parents can take what they need from a location that’s already on their route. This grant is in addition to \$15,000 distributed to existing food pantries throughout the county during this same grant cycle.

Grantmaking like this requires community connections that are both broad and deep. Advisory committee members take pride in using their knowledge of local nonprofits and needs to make the best possible use of their grant dollars.

These grants are made possible through the Wayne County Community Endowment Fund and affiliate funds, which include the Arley Mae and Louis Delisio Youth Fund, Dr. Norman and Laura "Jinny" Loomis Fund and Dr. Norman and Laura "Jinny" Loomis Family Outdoor Fund, Wayne County GTF Corporate Fund, Wayne County Health and Quality Life Fund, and the Wayne County Youth and Seniors Fund.

This year, additional funding came from Rochester Area Community Foundation's Community Impact Fund, which pools contributions from more than 100 permanent funds established specifically to support changing community needs, along with the Mary Elizabeth Conlon Fund, Greater Rochester Women's Fund, the Plumb-Miller Fund, and the William P. and Abigail Roberts Van Wagenen Fund II.

The 2024 grantees are:

Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes: Provides operational support for Community Clothing Center for coordination and distribution of thousands of articles of clothing and related items to people living in poverty in Wayne County. **\$8,000**

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Wayne County: To expand a community garden, increasing the capacity to grow vegetables and provide free produce to more residents. **\$2,000**

Cracker Box Palace: Supports all-inclusive programming, including farm camp, 4H groups, Explorers Post, local FFAs, internship opportunities, partnering with STEADY Work, Wayne County Community Schools and Americorp, School Tours, Community Booths, Career Fairs, and visits with local Wayne County schools and library programs. **\$4,200**

Delphi Rise: To help combat the youth mental health crisis in rural Wayne County communities by providing a comprehensive approach that combines increased mental health support infrastructure, community outreach, and tailored programs to foster resilience. **\$5,000**

Expeditions of Empowerment: An intensive leadership development and career mentoring program for emerging women leaders in Wayne County High Schools. **\$5,000**

Galen Historical Society: Supports the purchase of a digital sign to promote the work and programming of the historical society. **\$2,000**

Glow Up Girl: The Girl \$mart! Girl \$ense! program for girls in grades 3 to 12 teaches life skills in areas like nutrition, budgeting, and finance. **\$5,000**

Literacy Volunteers of Wayne County: To support the Infant and Toddler Book Club, which helps equip parents and caregivers with tools to support the early learning development of children. Participants receive a free book each month for the parent meetings and discussions, with five or more groups expected to meet every month. **\$5,000**

Lyons Community Center: Supports senior meals and senior citizens' activity programming, as well as an expanded and improved youth sports program. **\$25,000**

National Audubon Society: Under the leadership of Montezuma Audubon Center staff, 200 Wayne County students and 50 adult mentors will gain skills and knowledge in social-environmental issues, bird conservation, advocacy, and ecosystem restoration science. **\$5,000**

Rural & Migrant Ministry, Inc.: Supports a two-week summer day program for 35 children from low-income households (particularly the children of farmworkers) at the center in Lyons. **\$5,000**

Scarlet Thread Ministries: To support an after-school, recreation-based program on Fridays at Christ Community Church in Clyde so that students can have a safe place for social opportunities and meaningful connections with adults who work and volunteer there. **\$5,000**

Sodus Bay Junior Sailing Association: Supports the Shaping Today's Sailors into Future Employees program by engaging youth in Wayne County through sailing, helping to develop problem-solving skills, teamwork, leadership skills, and other workforce-readiness skills. **\$7,000**

Sodus Central School District: To stock food pantries, conduct outreach, and develop a food security strategy for each of the 35 school buildings in Wayne County. **\$25,000**

Thrive to Survive: A bereavement support group offering community, validation, and education to families who have lost loved ones to cancer. **\$5,000**

Toys for Tots of Wayne County: To provide toys and materials to children who would otherwise not receive anything during the holidays and, throughout the year, backpacks with basic needs to children going into foster care. **\$5,000**

Wayne County Rural Ministry Come-Unity Center: To provide emergency financial assistance for the payment of heat or rent to Wayne County residents. **\$3,800**

Western New York Rural Area Health Education Center: Medical Academy of Science and Health (MASH) Camp offers rising 7th through 10th grade students hands-on experience and presentations that promote interest in health-related careers. **\$5,000**

