

BRIDGES



Building bridges to support the future of Montgomery County

Summer 2021

Celebrating MCCF Grant Awards!



The cheers were joyful and the smiles were wide as the confetti rained down on the first round of 2021 MCCF grant recipients! As we continue to enjoy 30 years of working for the good of Montgomery County, it seemed only fitting to throw some confetti in celebration of the \$178,414 we awarded to eight local nonprofits. *(Note: though the confetti is biodegradable, we made sure to pick up, sweep up or suck up every piece!)*

Though we've been awarding grants for 30 years, it never gets old to do so. It is encouraging and energizing to be that bridge between donors and their desire to help our community. Every donor that gives to an unrestricted fund helps make these grants a reality, and we are so grateful.

With the lingering effects of the pandemic on our nonprofits, we continued to offer COVID-19 Operating support applications in this grant cycle. During reviews, we learned that Montgomery County United Fund received Emergency Relief funds from Lilly Endowment and the Indiana United Way. As we did last fall, we were thrilled to partner with MCUF to meet these COVID-19 grant requests, and a total of \$60,000 was awarded to three nonprofits.

Early childhood education continues to be a major focus for the MCCF. In this grant cycle, we awarded \$60,279 to three local child care facilities.

Photo: Representatives from Rainbows and Rhymes Preschool.



Heather Shirk (left) for the MCUF presents a COVID-19 emergency relief grant to Michelle Yoder, Salvation Army of Montgomery County.

For the full list of grant awards, please visit our website at mccf-in.org/news.

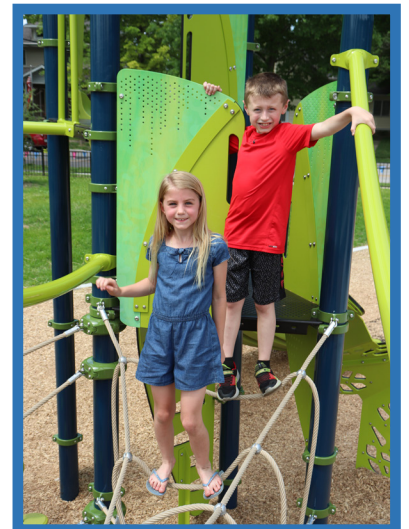
Kathy Steele Park Dedication



A crowd of any size is a remarkable sight these days, so it was with great joy that we gathered with over two-hundred people for the Kathy Steele Park Dedication. Children laughing and playing provided the perfect backdrop during the dedication ceremony. A year earlier, an anonymous donor with the MCCF generously offered to fund a complete renovation of the City owned park. With the City's cooperation, the work began and resulted in a beautiful and stunning transformation. The well-designed and thoughtful improvements have made the park a real gem in this west end neighborhood.



Kathy, and her late husband, John, have shown tremendous support to the MCCF over the years and we were absolutely thrilled to be a part of this project. The bright, new equipment, landscaping, gazebo, and more, are sources of delight and enjoyment for children of all ages. In Dr. Steele's own words, "As I walk past the park, I hear the squeals of laughter, the snap of footballs, and the pounding of basketballs as families and kids come together. It has been a real joy."



MCCF SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS OVER 30 YEARS



1999-2001 Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship recipients (back row, l-r) Matt Locker, Drew Twarek, Abraham Lucas (front row, l-r) Amber Mullendore, Caitlyn Bates, Rachel Skelton, Julie Rhoads.

Since 1998, we have been honored to award the Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship to 40 Montgomery County students!



Sidney Campbell, 2021 Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship recipient. She will be attending Indiana Wesleyan University.



Myron and Patsy Pattison established the first MCCF scholarship fund. It provides support to college sophomores.

Since 1994, over \$8 million in scholarships have been awarded to Montgomery County graduates!



One of our newest scholarship funds is the Ted Ratcliff Scholarship Fund benefitting North Montgomery high school graduates. Currently, we have 53 scholarship funds.

Introducing: Lisa Walter, MCCF Early Learning Director



We are excited to announce that Lisa Walter has joined the MCCF as Early Learning Director! Lisa comes to us with extensive experience in the field, most recently working as a Teach-Indiana Professional Development Advisor for the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children. She has years of direct experience in early education too, including the role of Center Director for the Purdue University Early Care and Education Center. She earned a Master of Elementary Education with a focus on Early Childhood Education from Ball State University in 2019.

Here are some other fun facts about Lisa - she loves to cook and is still trying to perfect her Dad's meatball recipe. She hopes to travel to Italy one day and maybe learn from the chefs there to become the master of the meatball! Lisa loves living in this community where neighbors are more like family. Walking to the Farmer's Market and the Library are sources of continual delight for her. And after many moves due to her husband's previous military experience, her heart is at rest knowing they have found a permanent home in our community.

Lisa is passionate about high-quality early childhood education and looks forward to getting to know local providers. She feels honored and grateful to do such important work on behalf of our early childhood providers and our youngest learners. Lisa and her husband, John, have three children Jack, Owen, and Libby, and three rescue dogs from the local shelter. They enjoy home projects, camping, traveling, gardening and patio living.

Chief Executive Officer Kelly S. Taylor

As we emerge from the pandemic, MCCF will continue its work in the area of early childhood education and has made this a top strategic initiative. This past month we have once again engaged in listening sessions with our nonprofit organizations to continue conversations to understand the greatest needs in our community. Early childhood education continues to rank as a top priority.

The listening sessions that we held in 2019 helped us develop our grant proposal for the Lilly Endowment GIFT VII Implementation Grant, which provided us funding to begin to put our five-year early childhood education strategic plan in motion. Our first major initiative was to hire an Early Learning Director to help lead a local Early Childhood Coalition. We're excited to have Lisa Walter join the MCCF team and help lead this important initiative for our community. Please make sure you read more about her on the inside of our newsletter.

As Lisa gets started in her work, we will be out making lots of introductions in the community so that she can meet our child care providers, employers, educators, local leaders and parents. Soon we will begin working on the five-year strategic plan that was developed by a community-led task force. For details about the plan, please go to our website and click on the Early Childhood Coalition area.

We know that high-quality early education from birth to five can have a meaningful impact on a child's success in school and beyond. MCCF's investment in this work will provide long-term benefits for our community.



Mission: Create a collaborative and high quality early childhood education system that supports the development and early education of Montgomery County children ages 0-5.

Vision: All Montgomery County children are ready to succeed in school and life.

Looking forward. Giving back.
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