

**ARTS  
CHALLENGE**

TEN Organizations **ONE** Challenge



**BCF Issues Arts Challenge**

Nonprofit arts organizations of Berrien County have joined forces for one matching grant that will benefit them all. The Berrien Community Foundation (BCF) has a long history of supporting the arts and wanted to ensure the arts remain a vibrant part of the community as we emerge from this Coronavirus pandemic. Seeing the difficulties arts organizations now face, BCF secured an anonymous donor who pledged **\$75,000 as a challenge grant** to support the organizations noted below. If the organizations work together to raise \$75,000, the donor will match that amount.

These organizations serve all over Berrien County, providing experiences in various arts disciplines to all ages. From glass-blowing to early childhood music, from highly attended concerts to engaging workshops and classes, from cutting edge theatre to breathtaking galleries, these organizations are the beating heart of cultural engagement in Berrien County.

Each organization's leadership along with their respective boards of directors have made contributions already! These collective contributions **have achieved \$29,160 of the \$75,000 goal!** The involved organizations are now seeking the support of the community to raise the remaining \$45,840 in a campaign that will run from July 8 to August 15. Donors may also participate in an online auction of items donated by the organizations involved that will run July 15 to July 31. Items can be viewed through the link at [www.berriencommunity.org/artschallenge](http://www.berriencommunity.org/artschallenge).

Contributions may be sent Berrien Community Foundation at 2900 S. State Street, Ste. 2E, St. Joseph, MI 49085 or donate on our website [www.berriencommunity.org/artschallenge](http://www.berriencommunity.org/artschallenge). Please contact Lisa Cripps-Downey with any further questions at [Lisa@BerrienCommunity.org](mailto:Lisa@BerrienCommunity.org) or (269) 983-3486.



**BCF Upcoming Grant Due Dates**

- September 16** - BCF "For Good" Grants
- September 30** - Golden Acorn Classroom Mini Grants
- October 15** - Frederick S. Upton Foundation Grants



To learn more go to: [www.berriencommunity.org/grants](http://www.berriencommunity.org/grants)

FREDERICK S. UPTON  
Foundation

# BCF Awards \$249,000 in Scholarships - *with a twist*

With yard signs, virtual meetings, phone calls and videos, the BCF scholarship season looked a bit different this year. Despite challenges due to social distancing mandates, BCF announced 62 scholarships, amounting to just over \$249,000 awarded to Berrien County's outstanding students for the 2020-2021 school year.

"Berrien Community Foundation scholarships are established by donors to support students who excelled in academics, or community service, or the arts, or are pursuing a particular career path," said BCF President Lisa Cripps-Downey, "To celebrate this generosity we have always held a celebration for the scholars, donors and volunteers, but this year that was not possible." To replace the celebration, video conference meetings were set up so that donors could surprise the students with their awards. Yard signs were planted in the students' yards to announce their achievement.



Claire Lundy celebrates winning a Heart of Cook Scholarship

More than 300 scholarship applications were reviewed in the process. This year, the Foundation welcomed 10 new scholarships to the BCF scholarship offerings. They are: **Arcadia Gardens Scholarship, Sondra J. Kaminski Soccer Scholarship, Lehmann-Peapples Trades Scholarship, Howard D. Merchant Memorial Scholarship, Michigan Grape Society Scholarship, Passaro Family Volunteer Scholarship,**

**Pasquale Santaniello Family Scholarship, St. Joseph Class of 1970 Scholarship, Ken & Jeanne Thomas Memorial Scholarship, and the Alton & Millie Wendzel Scholarship.**

"We have seen the resiliency of this community through this process," said BCF Program Manager Susan Matheny. "Volunteers meeting remotely, signs instead of banquets. It was different but we still were able to support students and celebrate their achievements."



Daiden Shaw was the winner of the Welch Family Scholarship

## BE COUNTED BERRIEN2020

Paris' Purse, a local nonprofit, hosted a **Be Counted Berrien** event at the Harbor of Hope food bank on July 12. Paris' Purse is a nonprofit that seeks to empower homeless women by providing them with purses filled with health and beauty products.

Volunteers went car-to-car with tablets and Wi-Fi so an additional 60 households could be counted. As a thank you for participating in the census event, residents received a goody bag of food treats and a gift card.

"Participants were glad to do their part to help their community get federal funding for roads, schools, and other programs," said Dawn Moore, Paris' Purse project coordinator.

Berrien Community Foundation is funding organizations like Paris' Purse to get a complete census count in Berrien County. Events delayed by the pandemic are being re-scheduled as outdoor events in July and August. If you didn't receive a census mailing or misplaced it, you can still complete the census for your household at [www.2020census.gov](http://www.2020census.gov) or call 844.330.2020.



## FOR EVER grants

It couldn't be business as usual this year. With nonprofit organizations struggling in light of the COVID-19 crisis, BCF moved quickly to focus on general operations and sustainability.

The **For Ever Sustainability Grants were created and recently awarded \$200,000 to local nonprofit organizations** to help keep the lights on as they navigate the fallout from the COVID-19 shutdown.

"Berrien Community Foundation is For Good. For Ever." said BCF President Lisa Cripps-Downey. "We needed to focus on For Ever and make sure our nonprofits had the support they needed to survive."

With requests totaling more than \$500,000, the decision-making process was not an easy one.

"It was important to the process that we were considering all fields of nonprofits and our full service area," said BCF Board Chair Bob Harrison, "We need arts and culture as much as we need human services in order to not just survive but to thrive."