



## Community Priorities Grant Awards May 2024

### Arts & Music

#### Crooked Tree Arts Center

Grant Award: \$3,000

Each week, CTAC welcomes a wide range of community members, from preschoolers to senior citizens, including those with physical disabilities. CTAC is working to upgrade and improve our studio furniture and space to create an accessible and welcoming learning environment that meets the needs of our diverse community. **Grant funds will support the purchase of accessible tables and chairs to accommodate learners of different abilities, sizes, and physical needs.**

### Community

#### Challenge Mountain of Walloon Hills, Inc

Grant Award: \$5,000

Challenge Mountain provides adaptive biking programs for special needs students in the Char-Em ISD at various schools and paved biking trails throughout Emmet and Charlevoix counties. Currently, staff transport bikes using either an open trailer or a box truck with a very old and slow lift. Both of these options involve tremendous physical effort for staff and volunteers to load and unload the large, heavy adaptive bikes. **Grant funds will support purchasing an enclosed trailer, which is a more efficient option for transporting and storing adaptive bikes** because it will keep bikes clean during transport, can load more bikes to meet more participants' adaptive biking needs, and bikes can be stored in the trailer out of the weather, extending their longevity.

### Education

#### Char-Em ISD

Grant Award: \$10,000

Many local families find themselves forced to choose between providing their child a preschool experience or meeting basic living needs. Paying for vital things like housing, transportation & food often take precedence over preschool tuition. In addition, COVID has prevented many children from attending preschool over the last couple of years, leading to behavioral & socialization issues. Two government programs (Head Start and the Great Start Readiness Program) provide free preschool to children based on financial need & risk factors. These federal & state funded programs fill to capacity quickly, leaving 40+ children in our area waiting for a preschool opportunity each year. The Great Start Preschool Scholarship Project (GSPSP) fills the State & Federal preschool funding gap in Charlevoix and Emmet Counties. Upon capacity of government funded preschool programs, **GSPSP will use grant funds to provide preschool tuition for eligible children ages 3-5 in Charlevoix County.**

### **Miigwech, Inc**

Grant Award: \$2,500

Currently, Michigan is one of three states without dyslexia laws. However, legislative bills in the State House and Senate are expected to pass with bipartisan support in Fall 2024, requiring screening, intervention, and professional development for teachers to meet the needs of dyslexic students. Miigwech's mission is to promote a positive environment that encourages growth, critical thinking skills, reasoning, global conscience, respect for diversity, and education that is seated in the Anishinaabe Seven Grandfather Teachings. They are also a stakeholder in the pending Dyslexia Legislation. **Grant funds will support delivery & facilitation of community workshops to raise awareness about dyslexia at 7 organizations serving Charlevoix County.**

### **North Central Michigan College Foundation**

Grant Award: \$25,000

NCCM's Career And Technical Education Enhancement (CATEE) Project is more than a vision; it's a \$21 million investment to revolutionize education in healthcare, manufacturing, and skilled trades - three pivotal sectors shaping our regional, state, and national economies. This grant will focus on and support the workforce in technology, trades, and manufacturing, with the bulk of available jobs in these fields in Charlevoix County. **Grant funds will help with building renovations to create more efficient and effective learning environments to train future healthcare, technology, and manufacturing workers.**

## **Environment**

### **Little Traverse Conservancy**

Grant Award: \$7,415

Stewardship can be defined very simply as wise care of the land, and if wisdom requires considering all the facts gained from experience, inherent then in stewardship, is the need to have deep knowledge of the lands that are being cared for because we can only conserve what we know. Thus, the critical need for LTC at this time of caring for over 26,000 acres of land is a need for more knowledge and information about the lands they manage. So, they launched the Ecological Conditions and Response (ECAR) program in 2023. **Through a multi-year process with expert staff and partners, and with grant funds, LTC will identify, record, and develop a plan for the unique and special natural features they discover on their lands.**

## **Health**

### **Beaver Island Rural Health Center**

Grant Award: \$5,662

While there are a variety of options for caring for aging people, from nursing homes to assisted living facilities, one popular option is in-home care. This option is interesting to Island residents, since there are neither nursing homes nor assisted living facilities located on the Island. There also aren't any in-home care service providers on the Island, currently, but the BIRHC has a plan. **Grant funds will support the initiative to educate and train home health care aides who will live and work on Beaver Island to help address the growing need for in-home care.**

### **McLaren Northern Michigan Foundation**

Grant Award: \$3,858

The national nursing shortage experienced throughout the country has become a disruptive and significant issue at McLaren Northern Michigan (MNM) as well. Starting a Nurse Intern Program is one of multiple strategies being implemented to increase their nursing staff. It addresses the immediate need for additional bedside support for current nurses while simultaneously preparing student nurses to enter the workforce upon completing their degrees. **Grant funds will support Charlevoix County nursing students who want to enroll in the Nurse Intern Program.**

## Housing

### Housing North

Grant Award: \$50,000

A key ingredient missing in most rural communities is community development staff that can work with developers to coordinate partners, incentives, funding, and development opportunities. Communities themselves recognize this gap as well and have been working with Housing North to find solutions. The Housing Ready Program, piloted in Charlevoix and Emmet Counties, is a step towards this goal. A "housing ready" community is one in which there are opportunities for development that can create a variety of options for all people in the community. **With grant funding support, the Housing Ready Program Coordinator will be helping the county fill this gap by guiding projects into the pipeline that address this need.**

### Northern Homes Community Development Corporation

Grant Award: \$65,000

Northern Homes CDC is working to build a 6-unit apartment community in Charlevoix. This project is a "missing middle" project; meaning that all units will be income and rent restricted to 120% of the area median income (AMI). The apartments are one-story townhouse style apartments. There will be two buildings with 3 units in each building. Each unit will have 2 bedrooms and two full bathrooms. The main bathroom will be barrier free for handicap accessibility and there will be a zero-step entry at the back door. The floorplan works well for families, senior citizens, people with disabilities, and roommates. **Grant funds will help support this project, which will bring more affordable housing to our community**

### Northern Homes Community Development Corporation

Grant Award: \$7,000

It's time for Northern Homes CDC to create the next iteration of their organization's strategic plan. A lot has changed since the last strategic plan was created, in 2020. Northern Homes has also grown and become more complex. They have started new programs and undertaken new projects and partnerships. For this strategic plan, they have chosen to engage two consultants with extensive background and experience in the affordable housing field in Michigan. **Grant funds will support the organization's development of a 2024-2028 strategic plan.**

## Human Services

### Boyne Eta Nu Charities

Grant Award: \$5,000

Many local families struggle to provide all essential needs for their family. Boyne Eta Nu Charities' "Dress For Chill" (DFC) program provides warm outerwear for pre-school and elementary school children in the Boyne City Public Schools. **Grant funds will help to purchase winter jackets, snow pants, boots, hats and gloves for Boyne City children.**

### Child and Family Services of Northwestern Michigan

Grant Award: \$5,000

Kids grow best in families. Foster care can be a temporary safe haven for children whose parents are unable, for a variety of reasons, to care for them. Charlevoix County children in need of a foster home may have to be placed in a different county if there aren't foster families available in Charlevoix County. This causes additional trauma for a child, as they may lose all their familiar surroundings and community supports, including their school, friends and proximity to relatives. To reduce trauma while keeping children safe, CFS needs more licensed foster homes within the county. **Grant funds will support marketing and recruitment efforts in Charlevoix County.**

### **Good Samaritan Family Services**

Grant Award: \$7,000

Good Samaritan Family Services is working to increase awareness and support of the organization. First, **they need new signage** at both the Family Center and the Food Pantry. The current signs are old, wooden, and have fallen into disrepair, making them difficult to read. New signs will improve visibility and make it easier for people to find the services they need. Second, **they plan to host an open house event to showcase the organization's resources and services, while also working to recruit new donors and volunteers.** Success in both of these areas will allow the organization to serve more people in need.

### **Kiersten's Ride**

Grant Award: \$7,500

Kiersten's Ride is dedicated to bringing help, hope, and healing through suicide prevention programs in Northern Lower Michigan. It is important to allow for and create learning opportunities here in Northern Michigan to reduce geographical and financial barriers for life saving education. By providing professional caregivers with training opportunities, our most vulnerable community members will benefit. **Grant funds will support conference expenses with a focus on speaker cost, continued education, and venue.**

### **Northern Michigan Equine Therapy**

Grant Award: \$8,000

The Farm Hand position at Northern MI Equine Therapy (NMET) provides daily care for therapy horses, (including feeding, grooming, cleaning stalls, and maintaining health,) maintains facilities and equipment, and assists during therapy sessions as needed. Without the Farm Hand's dedication and expertise, NMET's ability to deliver life-changing equine therapy services would be significantly compromised, negatively impacting the number of clients they could serve, many of whom depend on these programs for improved mobility, reduced anxiety, and enhanced social interactions. By growing direct therapy services, NMET will eventually be able to increase earned revenue with the long-term goal of sustaining this position. Until that goal can be achieved, **grant funds will support the Farm Hand position, which will help the organization to build capacity for the future while continuing to meet needs in Charlevoix County today.**

### **PoWer! Book Bags**

Grant Award: \$5,000

During early childhood, especially ages 0-5, children need constant exposure to love, language, and literacy. Through interactions with parents & caregivers, children's brains become wired for all future endeavors. Providing children and families with tools at home to promote interactions in the first five years of life improves the outcomes for all children. While adding just one book into a home increases the possibility for a child to do better, feeding children a steady diet of books, writing materials, & language play opportunities invites children to learn, grow, and thrive. There is a strong correlation between the number of books in the home and children's life success academically, socially, emotionally, and as future contributing members of society. **Grant funds will help to purchase books and language materials for children in programs like the Maternal Infant Health Program, the Women, Infant, and Children's Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC) & at the Immunization Clinics through the Health Department of NW MI.**

## Women's Resource Center of Northern Michigan

Grant Award: \$35,000

In 2023, the Women's Resource Center of Northern Michigan (WRCNM) launched the Empowering Bright Futures campaign to secure funds for a new, renovated facility in Emmet County. A building purchase was approved by the Board of Directors in 2022 following an assessment of current facilities and projected needs and an exhaustive search for properties to rent or purchase. The site requires extensive renovations to meet building codes, and to best meet the needs of WRCNM's clients and programs. The total project cost is \$5M and includes all interior components, security features, technology, privacy measures, children's outdoor play area, and all mechanical, plumbing, and electrical needs. The building exterior and footprint will remain, but the interior will be completely rebuilt to meet codes, create energy efficiency, and enhance WRCNM programs through the customized design, which includes thoughtful safety, privacy, and trauma reduction features for all WRCNM clients and families. **Grant funds will specifically support the office of one Advocate serving Charlevoix and Emmet Counties at the new facility, approximately 1.02% of the total building square footage.**

## Recreation

### Charlevoix Area Community Pool

Grant Award: \$10,000

The Charlevoix Area Community Pool is now 26 years old. As the pool ages, so do the mechanical systems that control functions like pH, temperature, chlorine levels, alkalinity, volume, pump pressure, and much more. These and other important mechanical controllers are what ensures the safety and functionality of the pool for the public. The Charlevoix Pool has a plan to replace the aging mechanical equipment with new controllers that can also be accessed remotely by staff so they can be notified of and even fix issues remotely, day or night, as needed. **Grant funds will help to purchase the new controller system.**

## Youth

### Charlevoix Kiwanis Youth Foundation

Grant Award: \$5,000

The Dolly Parton Imagination Library (DPIL) was previously championed by Char-Em United Way, but was discontinued. During the pandemic, children experienced learning loss in reading and literacy. The Charlevoix Kiwanis Youth Foundation is working to re-establish the DPIL in Charlevoix County, which sends age-appropriate books to children (one per month) from birth to age 5, at no cost to the family. **Grant funds will support the costs to bring the DPIL back for Charlevoix County families and children.**

### President Ford Division DBA Michigan Crossroads Council

Grant Award: \$2,500

The Michigan Crossroads Council, Boy Scouts of America, has been a steady partner for families facing the emotional and mental toll that has resulted from their children spending more time indoors, more time in front of screens, and less time spent with their peers. The organization's goal is to teach timeless values, strengthen leadership skills, and guide youth into becoming educated, enlightened, and responsible citizens. **To help ensure that all youth can join the Scouting program and participate in the essential experiences of summer camp, a special assistance fund will be created with grant funds, to support families in the area who are unable to afford the full cost of Scouting.**

## Raven Hill Discovery Center

Grant Award: \$10,000

Raven Hill Discovery Center is where children and adults link science, history, & the arts through hands-on activities and explorations throughout its museum and outdoor exhibits. With years of success in offering programming for all ages, Raven Hill is taking steps toward transitioning from a primarily founder-led organization to one that will require a refined staffing model, engaged board of directors, and strategic fund development efforts to effectively support the Co-Founder and current CEO's transition in five years. **Grant funds will support staff and board members in implementing strategies that will establish RHDC as a high-functioning non-profit organization that will continue to serve our community for years to come.**

