why we give
Why do people give? Their reasons vary.

It feels good. Research has shown that the act of giving stimulates the reward areas of our brains, releasing dopamine and endorphins and making us feel good, even happy.

As an expression of values. Faith leaders tell us that we give because we care about others.

For deeper social connections. Giving strengthens our bonds with the community.

To make a difference. Taking action improves the world around us.

At the Westchester Community Foundation, we see the benefits of giving every day among our donors, our grantees, and across the county. We are sharing a few of the uplifting stories in this newsletter so you, too, will be inspired by the impact of our wonderful partnership.

This year’s report also includes updates on grants from the Westchester COVID-19 Response Fund, which was created to address community needs that were brought to light by the pandemic. We’re proud to have supported innovative approaches to addressing food insecurity and digital inequities. We’re also strengthening the technology capacity of nonprofits through a new IT support program.

Our donor-advisors tell us they are optimistic about the impact of their giving and the competitive grants made by our staff. Our grantmaking is a result of people who left legacy gifts and trusted us to use these resources wisely to make a difference in Westchester. The stories in this newsletter profile how these legacy gifts are meeting current needs.

Whatever your reason for giving, the Westchester Community Foundation is here to help you on your philanthropic journey. We connect donors to effective local nonprofits and provide expertise on community issues. And we support the nonprofit sector so that they can continue the great work they do. Thank you for your continued support.
the power of philanthropy

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our community shares its history
WESTCHESTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Westchester has 231 locations that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which means they are worthy of preservation for their historical significance. Nineteen of them are National Historic Landmarks. But few people are aware of this rich local history.

With our support, the Westchester County Historical Society worked with the developers of Clio, an educational website and mobile application, to research and upload Westchester’s historical and cultural sites as well as self-guided tours. The Clio app provides an opportunity to connect more people, including young scholars, to the history in their own backyards. In Westchester, the agency uploaded over 225 local sites and developed three tours: Westchester African American History Trail, Westchester Colonial History Tour, and the Westchester Arts Tour.

Luis Briseño: “This app is awesome. We have been coming to Walter’s for years. The fact that it is a historic landmark makes the hot dogs even tastier!”

our community guides
HER HONOR MENTORING

For girls from lower-income homes who are the first in their families to aspire to college and a career, the obstacles to success can be daunting. Mentors—often successful women who themselves have navigated the obstacles to a career—can provide feedback, affirmation, and guidance. With a grant from the Westchester Fund for Women and Girls, 77 high school girls participated in workplace learning experiences with professional women. Through one-on-one coaching and life-skills workshops, they learned about financial literacy, healthy relationships, business etiquette, networking, career planning, and social media savvy—a host of skills young women need to succeed.
our community supports the arts

JACOB BURNS FILM CENTER

The Creative Culture Fellowship Program at the Jacob Burns Film Center champions the diverse voices of emerging filmmakers. With a grant from the Emily and Harold E. Valentine and Evelyn Gable Clark Scholarship Fund, fellows have access to production equipment, post-production workspace, and the Center’s extensive film industry network. Past fellows have seen their work premiered at Sundance and other national and international film festivals.

Andrew Rodriguez, our Spring 2020 Fellow: “I want to tell stories of people of color that transcend their identity while also embracing it.”

our community believes in green power

SUSTAINABLE WESTCHESTER, INC.

Community solar programs provide guaranteed savings to homeowners and residents while helping to green the local electricity grid. But the complicated billing and steps to enroll in the program are barriers to participation by low- and moderate-income residents. New York State simplified community solar enrollment and billing by creating a program that automatically enrolls customers and eliminates banking and credit check requirements.

With grants from the H.P. Kraft Memorial Fund and Fund for Westchester’s Environment, Sustainable Westchester is enrolling families in community solar.

Bright Idea. A Sustainable Westchester staff member explains how solar panel technology helps residents save significantly on electricity bills.
More than 5,150 grandparents in Westchester are raising grandchildren. Many live below the poverty level, and a disproportionate number are women of color. But these caregivers are not awarded social service benefits comparable to those given to foster-care parents, even though studies have shown that children in kinship care often have better outcomes than those remaining in foster care. With a grant from the Dominican Sisters of Hope Empowerment Fund, the GrandPower Advocacy Project is working to secure changes in the benefits and services available to kinship caregivers.

They Delivered. GrandPower Advocates, including these grandmothers, secured an eight percent increase in Westchester County’s 2020 budget for services for kinship families.

Low-income immigrants in Mamaroneck have struggled financially as a result of the pandemic. With support from our Westchester COVID-19 Response Fund, and funds created by the Dominican Sisters of Hope and Katherine and David Moore, the Community Resource Center plays a critical role addressing family crises such as lost wages, food insecurity, and housing instability while continuing to help their clients develop the skills necessary to become self-sufficient. The agency has organized day laborers and domestic workers so they know their workplace-related rights, while ensuring that they participate in statewide advocacy on behalf of immigrant protections. Most recently, the agency played a pivotal role in disaster relief for residents affected by Hurricane Ida.

Staying Home. Eviction-prevention counselors work with clients to assess rental arrears so they can avoid losing their homes.
our community develops leaders

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF MOUNT VERNON

The Boys & Girls Club of Mount Vernon is a lifeline to many young people in the city. The pandemic disproportionately affected Mount Vernon families with the loss of loved ones, layoffs, lack of food, and the challenges of remote education, but the Club helped young leaders remain engaged in their schools and their community.

The teens participated in programs on entrepreneurship, healthy lifestyles, technology, dealing with stress, and the impact of current events. They began important discussions about racial equity in Mount Vernon and the world. Their resilience and commitment to their community fulfills the intent of the DeWitt Wallace Fund for Youth, the source of funding for this grant.

Picture Show. A teen leader works with young children on an art project.

our community teaches peace

YOUTH VOICES CENTER

Since 2011 the Youth Voices Center’s Power of Peace program has taught more than 8,000 students conflict management, teamwork, and respect for others and themselves. Students emerge from this unique training with a sense of being leaders who can make better decisions for their lives. With grants from the Wallace Westchester Fund and the Linville Fund, the Center has brought Power of Peace to 102 students and ten teachers in New Rochelle.

Expressions. Teens from the Boys & Girls Club of New Rochelle play “Faces,” an exercise in which each teen selects the face—or emotion—they’re feeling and tells why. How we feel, they learn, affects the decisions we make.
“As a trusts and estates attorney, I have found that people generally want to provide for their own family, but I tell my clients that there are reasons to consider charitable giving as a win for them and a win for charitable organizations they recommend. Sometimes people will say they want to give to their alumni association, and that’s all well and good. But when we discuss it further, they find that they will gain more—and get more back—by giving to the community where they live. Many haven’t heard of a community foundation, so I share with them that I opened a donor-advised fund at the Westchester Community Foundation. The staff can help clarify your thinking on focus areas and can identify where your giving will be most effective. There’s so much need in the world. I think of people who are hungry, people who don’t have a roof over their heads, and those impacted by social injustices. As for my own DAF, I’ve chosen to focus my giving on education, hoping that will help address some of these problems.”

Karen Walsh is a partner at Walsh & Amicucci LLP where she specializes in trusts and estates law. She is a former member of the Foundation’s Board of Advisors and continues to serve as a member of the Foundation’s Professional Advisory Council.

“As a financial planning and wealth management firm,” says Adam Rude, “we help people get from point A to point B so they can live the life they want to live. Yes, we manage money. But it’s also a people business, and I’ve always looked at money as the lubricant for what you want to do. Some of our clients come to us with specific philanthropic goals, and others haven’t thought about it. We started a program that Helene oversees to introduce our clients to the Westchester Community Foundation. Instead of sending a gift to celebrate their life events—a birthday, for instance—we make a donation to the Foundation’s Endowment for Westchester’s Future. This past year we’ve gotten a lot of emails from clients saying they think this is a really nice thing to do. I tell them, ‘You can give too!’ There is something really gratifying about seeing the work that gets done by a community foundation right where you live. I smile whenever I’m at the Jacob Burns Film Center and I see the Foundation’s logo on the screen. It’s proof that our community benefits directly from the Foundation’s work.”

Adam Rude, CPF, is the principal at Lob Planning Group and a member of WCF’s Professional Advisory Council.

Helene Rude is the marketing and operations manager at Lob Planning Group.
Open space preservation helps protect our environment. It helps trees and native plants grow, protects wildlife, keeps waterways clean, and can mitigate the negative effects of over-development. The Foundation has supported the Westchester Land Trust since 1998 in its efforts to work with public and private partners to preserve land in perpetuity and to protect and enhance natural resources in Westchester and eastern Putnam County. Grants from our Kraft Fund for the environment have supported education, biodiversity research, and land conservation to protect the New York City watershed. More recently, the Foundation has supported the agency’s focus on protecting smaller parcels in denser areas, such as Mamaroneck’s Otter Creek Preserve, a three-mile stretch of coastline on the Long Island Sound.

In 2020, with a grant from the William and Henriette Granville Suhr Fund for the Environment and the Rita and Stanley Wecker Fund, the Land Trust will restore the last undeveloped land parcels near Glenwood Lake Park in New Rochelle, increasing its conservation value and enhancing access for passive recreation.

Protect and Preserve. Westchester Land Trust staff and volunteers repair the osprey platform at Otter Creek Preserve, an important site for migratory birds and marine life. Funding supported neighborhood outreach efforts.

The Foundation has supported the MVP Basketball Camp for several years through the Linville Fund and the W. Lee Tuller Memorial Fund. The following story, from the executive director, illustrates how there’s something special going on at the camp.

“For years, we have described our mission as blending ZIP codes from throughout Westchester County. We bring together children from different towns and schools who would not have an opportunity to play with each other and learn from each other. The socio-economic divide of these ZIP codes can build walls between children if stereotypes are all they have to go by.

“On a Wednesday morning, the fourth week of camp, during parent drop-off, one of our seven-year-olds was hesitant to leave his father’s side. This might be usual on a Monday, the first day of camp, but it rarely happens on a Wednesday. Campers are more comfortable after two days of camp. As I watched this dad try to encourage his son to enter the courts, another younger camper walked over to the timid boy and greeted him by name. He grabbed this reluctant camper by the hand and led him on the court, reassuring the father that his son would be okay. It’s a nice story.

“It’s a better story when you know that the reluctant camper emerged from a new luxury car and hailed from a 10583 ZIP code, while the encouraging camper is a two-week scholarship camper whose mother stretched her budget to add two additional weeks at camp with a partial scholarship. The fact that one boy was white and one was black should not make a difference, but it does when we are talking about bringing together children from different neighborhoods. It’s a story about kids being kids before society has a chance to instill its own biases. It’s a story that lets me know we are doing something special each summer.”
Established in 2007 by the Westchester Artificial Kidney Foundation, the Renal Clinical Fund supports cutting-edge nephrology research at the Westchester Medical Center and New York Medical College. Over the past five years, Dr. Marta Christov has been exploring why some patients with kidney disease have higher levels of the hormone Fibroblast Growth Factor 23 (FGF-23). Elevated levels of FGF-23 are associated with increased risks of worsening kidney function, infection, bone disease, premature aging, and death.

With the help of the Renal Clinical Fund, Dr. Christov has investigated the connection between FGF-23 and erythropoietin, a hormone that is also produced by the kidney and helps regulate red blood cells. Her research is providing guidance to help patients with chronic kidney disease who develop anemia. Dr. Christov and her collaborators have also been focusing on what factors influence Covid-19-related patient mortality.

Unlocking Hormonal Mysteries. Can hormones that affect patients with kidney disease also reduce the risk of premature aging and patient mortality? Dr. Marta Christov is working on that.

permanent fund
RITA AND STANLEY WECKER FUND

Rita and Stanley Wecker met on a blind date in the early 1960s. She was a woman ahead of her time, working on some of the world’s first computers. He was a tenured professor who loved to observe nature—especially birds. They made their home in Chappaqua, where their love of the environment took root and grew like the garden they tended.

In 1970, they organized Chappaqua’s first Earth Day Fair, which attracted thousands of people and became an annual event. It was their work for the Audubon Society, however, that was most important to them. Stan served as president of the local chapter, while Rita served as finance chair and treasurer, overseeing the chapter’s endowment. Together, the couple provided 75 years of volunteer service and were honored by the Society in 2006.

In 2015 the Rita and Stanley Wecker Fund was established by bequest. Through The New York Community Trust’s Westchester Community Foundation, the Fund is used to improve environmental quality, conservation and preservation of natural areas, environmental education, and addressing environmental issues relevant to Westchester County.

Rita’s niece, Mindy Stern, said that Rita “thoroughly researched The Trust as well as individual not-for-profits with a focus on environmental issues and concluded that the best approach was not to leave their wealth to any specific organizations, but to leave it to The Trust to invest the money wisely and vet recipient organizations that would best serve Stan and Rita’s mission.”
## organizations supported in 2020

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<td>Boys and Girls Club of Mount Vernon</td>
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<td>Family Service Society of Yonkers</td>
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<td>Friends of Hilltop Hanover Farm Generation Citizen</td>
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<td>Make the Road New York</td>
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<td>Mount Kisco Child Care Center</td>
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<td>Ossining Children’s Center</td>
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<td>Scarsdale &amp; Edgemont Family Counseling Service</td>
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<td>The Bridge Fund of New York, Inc.</td>
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<td>Westchester County Department of Planning</td>
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<td>Women’s Enterprise Development Center</td>
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**managed IT support program**

During New York State’s lockdown in 2020, Westchester’s nonprofits struggled to provide programs and services remotely. Many had insufficient hardware, outdated software, and inadequate cybersecurity.

In response, the Foundation created a unique technical assistance program that provided assessments and one year of support by vetted local managed-service providers. With adequate technology nonprofits are able to better handle sensitive data and operate smoothly, saving staff time and allowing organizations to better deliver on their missions.

**Play Time.** As a participant in the Foundation’s Managed IT Support Program, Songcatchers, which teaches music to young people in New Rochelle, has upgraded its systems. Now, they can make beautiful music again.
2020-2021 Westchester Community Foundation Funds

Joseph Accocella, Jr. Memorial Fund • Agris-Pine Charitable Fund • Akinla Family Fund • Alemany Family Fund • Anonymous • Anonymous Land Preservation Fund • The Apoyo Fund • The Arfa-Bernstein Family Fund • Aronian Family Fund • Artpreneur Fund • Arts and Creative Expression Fund • The Ascher Family Fund • Linda Ashar Fund • Gianna Marie Bagol Memorial Fund • Barringer-Saputh Fund for Change • Joan Bartels Memorial Fund • Bell-Jacoby Family Fund • Beverly Bender Fund • Howard and Grace Benedikt Fund • Richard A. Berman Fund • K. M. Biaio Family Fund • Bianco Family Fund • Michael Blank Memorial Fund • Blecher Family Fund • Samuel and Beatrice Marks Bloom Memorial Fund • Blumber Family Fund • Jack Brennan Fund • Buerger Fund • Elizabeth G. Butler Angel’s Fund • Camp Edith Macy Fund • Jesse L. Carroll, Jr. and Judith B. Carroll Fund • Barbara and Walter Ceconi Charitable Fund • H. M. & T. Cohn Fund • Larry Cole Memorial Fund • Colson Fund • Michael A. 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Gelband Fund in Memory of Joseph F. Gelband, Jr. • Rita & Bruce Gilbert Fund • Lloyd & Sonya Gilbert Fund • Glassberg Family Fund • Neva and Howard Goldstein Family Fund • Rachel Greenstein Memorial Fund • Handelman Memorial Education Fund • Edward Handelman Fund • Helen & Nancy Handelman Fund • Carol and Frank Headley Family Fund • John and Marilyn Heimerdinger Fund • Henriette Granville Suhr Fund • Andrew and Phyllis Herz Fund • Russell Hexter Filmmaker Fund • Rhoda Holzer Memorial Fine Arts Fund • HVCS Legacy Fund • Alice and Warren Ichlan Fund • Karen Cromer Isaac Fund • Ivy Family Fund • Jade Fund • JBLS Hon. Steven I. Milligram Memorial Fund • Paul and Barbara Jenkel Fund • Shanna Joseph Memorial Fund • Margaret Jourdan Fund • JWHands Charitable Legacy Fund • Kadajey Fund • Kern Charitable Fund • Kidney Transplant Fund • Kilman Family Fund • Kimerling Career Development Fund • Henry J. and Ellen Korb Fund • The Kotval Shroff Family Fund • Judith Lavenberg Fund • Stephen S. Lavenberg Memorial Fund • Learning Center Fund • Dorothy and John Lebor Fund • James L. Leinwand Fund • LePage Family Fund • David F. & Dorothy W. Linowes Fund • The Linville Fund • William J. and Helen Z. Lippincott Fund • Karin Lopp Fund • Elizabeth Lorentz Fund • Lester and Helen Levinthal Lyons Fund • John F. Maloney Memorial Fund • Marwell Family Fund • May Seton Bayley Large Memorial Fund • McCrosson Family Fund • Dapper McDonald Memorial Fund • The Menzies Fund • Merrill Lynch Fund for Children with Disabilities in Memory of Christopher Herndon • Michel Family Fund • Middleton Family Fund • Robert Minzesheimer Memorial Fund • Asa Uyeda Mitsudo and Sumi Lynn Koide Memorial Fund • Mobility Rehabilitation Fund • Model/Falkowski Fund • Natalie C. Moore Fund • Katherine C. & David E. Moore Fund for Community Development • David and Katherine Moore Family Foundation Fund • Mortimer Fund for Native American Children • Nathan Moscov Fund • Munson Family Fund • Neubart/Rosenthal Family Fund • Eda and Stanley Newhouse Fund • James L. Newhouse Fund • Olmever Westchester Fund • Orr Pilts Family Fund • Orville-Nammour Family Fund • The Pammy Fund • The Passionist Fund • Dorothy Patterson Fund • Lawrence R. Jr. & Thelma Dale Perkins Fund • Perry Family Fund • Roger Perry Memorial Fund • Pisacano Family Fund • Raymond M. and Alice M. Planell Fund • Pottinger Fund • Sal J. Prezioso Fund for Westchester’s Future • Wendy Price & Julie Maner Fund • Muriel L. and Stephen B. 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Sutton Fund • Syzgy Fund • Martin Tackel & Abbe Raven Family Fund • Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow Children and Youth Fund • Tarrytown/Sleepy Hollow Fund for Kids • The Family Fund Endowment • Threerandomwords Fund • Trabou Fund • Triantafillu Fund • The W. Lee Tuller Memorial Fund • Arno and Peppi Ucko Family Fund • Waizer Walsh Family Fund • Bernice and Irwin Warshaw Fund • Rita and Stanley Wecker Fund • Westchester Annual Fund • Westchester Cultural Research Fund • Westchester Community Foundation • Westchester COVID-19 Response Fund • Westchester Cumulus Fund • Westchester Fund for Women and Girls • Westchester Health Fund • Westchester Opportunity Fund • Westchester Poetry Fund • Westchester Wilderness Walk Fund • Westchester Workforce Fund • Dharmawolf Wild/Amelia Miller Memorial Fund • Who’s On First Fund • The Frank E. Wigg Charitable Fund • Wiltstock Fund • Evelyn G. Zamboni Fund • Madeline and Sanford S. Zevon Fund • Corinne & Neil Zola Fund
EXPERIENCE
THE BENEFITS OF GIVING
THE POWER OF GIVING
THE JOY OF GIVING

Support the nonprofits that make this region a great place to live, work, and play. When you give, you make a difference.

JOIN US.