



LEAVE YOUR MARK...

## WESTERN COLORADO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Charitable Funds for Community Good

### By the Numbers

#### 2020 Community Foundation Highlights

While numbers alone do not tell the whole story, it's been a tremendous year for our organization, despite incredible challenges in the community, a complete pivot in programming to respond to the COVID crisis, and having a normally out-and-about staff team all working at home.

Highlights from our year include:

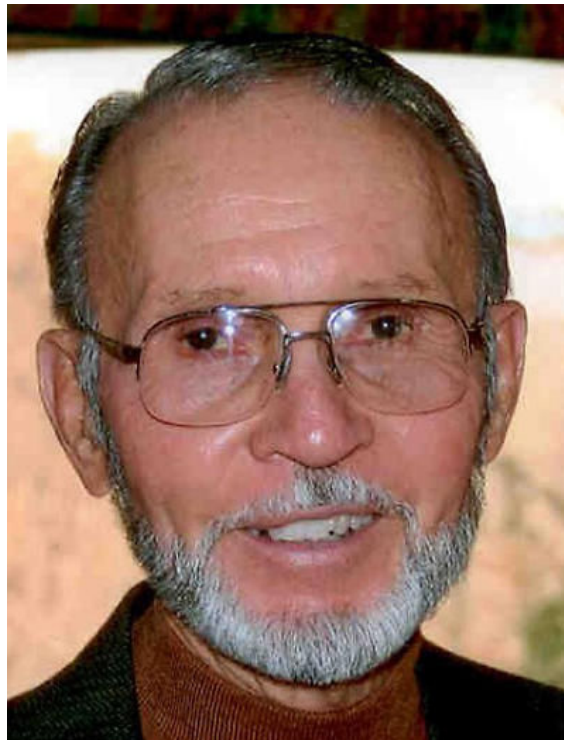
- ***\$4.8 million in grants and scholarships distributed, including \$1.4 million in COVID response funds***
- ***\$6 million in donations***
- ***22 new donor funds established***
- ***Growth in total assets from \$88.2 million to \$96.5 million through new donations and excellent investment performance\****

\* Highlight numbers are preliminary. 12/31/20 financial statements have not been audited.

A big thank you to our donors and friends for their

### A Shining Light in our Community

#### Remembering Herbert L. Bacon (1930 - 2021)



Lifelong community leader and generous philanthropist, Herbert Lee Bacon (who was known by all as simply Herb) passed away in early January.

Herb was one of a handful of community leaders who began conversations with Tim Schultz and the Boettcher Foundation in the mid 1990s about starting a Community Foundation "on this side of the Divide." The vision was to build a home-grown charitable foundation for western Colorado - our own foundation - directed by local leaders and providing funding to local nonprofits who historically had to look to Denver and the Front Range foundations for grant support.

Herb and his private family foundation were staunch supporters of our Community Foundation

involvement and confidence in our Community Foundation!

Together, we make a big difference in improving the communities we live in and call home.



### Round 2 of #GJStrong Grants

#### **City of Grand Junction Makes More Funding Available for Hunger Relief**

On January 20th, the City of Grand Junction allocated \$250,000 in funds for food assistance to be distributed through the #GJStrong Fund, managed by our Community Foundation. Last April, our Community Foundation worked with the City to administer emergency grants for food and housing assistance. The current funding will be directed only to hunger relief efforts. The City is also making available \$500,000 in funding through its Community Development Block Grants process for housing assistance.

Eleven months into the ongoing pandemic, our community continues to struggle with extended unemployment and other economic impacts of COVID. This funding provides important support for basic needs as we look towards getting people vaccinated, "slowing the curve" of the spread and getting back to some semblance of normal later in the year.

Eligible nonprofit organizations can find more information and apply at [wc-cf.org/#gjstrong](http://wc-cf.org/#gjstrong).

from the beginning. They helped launch a nonprofit training and support program (NSTAR) for our 10th anniversary. They provided generous funding for our 20th Anniversary Impact Fund several years ago. And they have funded a number of programs and project requests over the years related to our leadership work. Herb served on our Community Foundation board for six years and also got his daughter, Linda Bacon Reid, involved with the organization.

While the Bacon family, through the Bacon Family Foundation, has been tremendously generous for decades in funding many worthwhile nonprofit programs and capital campaigns in our community, Herb's generosity goes way beyond financial support. Herb was always a hands on philanthropist - serving on countless committees, heading up capital campaigns (always successful, because who could say "no" to Herb Bacon) and at the front of the line in terms of reflecting on community needs and solutions.

One of the characteristics that distinguishes a community foundation from a private foundation is that a community foundation involves many different people, from all walks of life, and has enormous opportunity to grow in assets and impact because everyone in the community can participate. Herb was always very interested in the success of this type of organization.

Our staff and board honor the memory of this special community leader and founder. Rest in peace, Herb Bacon.

Read the Daily Sentinel tribute [here](#).

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### Grantee Spotlight:

#### **Community Food Bank Expands into New Warehouse**

The deadline to apply is  
February 22nd.



Our annual on-line scholarship application process is now open! Students can apply for one or several of the 36 scholarship funds managed by our Community Foundation. Scholarship awards range from \$500 to \$5,000+, and many are renewable for up to four years. Criteria varies from scholarship to scholarship and includes guidelines related to financial need, GPA, and chosen field of study. Scholarships are available for vocational training programs as well as four-year college degree programs.

In addition to scholarships for graduating high school seniors, our Community Foundation manages several scholarship funds for non-traditional students. In 2020, we awarded nearly \$50,000 in scholarships to non-traditional students attending vocational schools and courses.

**The deadline to apply is March 1<sup>st</sup> for graduating high school seniors and March 15<sup>th</sup> for non-traditional scholarships.**

In 2020, our Community Foundation distributed a total of \$714,600 in scholarships to 406 students.



The Community Food Bank (CFB) has been serving our most vulnerable neighbors with emergency food boxes for over 40 years. As demand increased and the need for adequate storage grew, CFB started looking for a larger, permanent home in a central location with better access for their clients and partners. A larger facility for expanded needs is a top priority in our *Mesa County Blueprint to End Hunger*. The new facility has more cold and freezer storage and office and meeting spaces to allow CFB to provide onsite nutrition education classes, enrollment for SNAP and WIC benefits, and other value-added services.

In October 2020, CFB purchased their new warehouse on 28 1/2 Road and proceeded with substantial renovations before a grand opening in mid December.

Many of our donors have long supported CFB's mission to feed hungry families; several donor advisors contributed nearly \$100,000 to the capital campaign. CFB has seen a 3-fold increase in demand due to the economic impact of the ongoing pandemic, and have received funding from our Virtual Canned Food Drive and other donor funds in 2020.



For more information, or to apply, visit [the WCCF scholarship page](#).



Cassidy L (above) and Jaren R (below) are two of the 406 students who received a scholarship award from our Community Foundation in 2020 to help realize their dreams of higher education.



Executive Director Alisha Wenger worked tirelessly to renovate and open a larger warehouse for Community Food Bank. She conducts a donor tour of the new facility before the re-opening.

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### Grantee Spotlight: Habitat for Humanity Roaring Fork Valley

## Basalt Vista Project Builds Affordable Housing for Teachers



Affordable housing is an issue across western Colorado and the counties our Community Foundation serves. Habitat for Humanity of the Roaring Fork Valley has developed an innovative solution. Their Basalt Vista project is building 27 affordable, energy efficient homes to help critical workers (teachers, police, firefighters and others) be able to afford to live in the community they work in, where wages cannot keep pace with the high cost of housing.

One of our donors stepped up and made an anonymous donation of \$10,000 to help the project meet a late-in-the-year challenge match. That effort exceeded its goal and the project is well on it's way. Phase II of the project is nearly

complete, with 18 homes built. Not only is this housing affordable to Roaring Fork families, but ongoing maintenance and utility costs will be lower because of net-zero solar power and energy efficient construction.

Noted Governor Jared Polis, when he toured the project, "Today I got to see the future (and present!) of affordable housing at Basalt Vista. It was inspirational to see this amazing net-zero, energy affordable housing. It's a true model for Colorado and our country."

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## *Reflections from the Executive Director*

There is so much to say about Herb Bacon – the extraordinary person he was, the impact he has had on so many people and organizations in our community, both business and civic institutions. People in our nonprofit circles talk about Herb being “the last of a generation,” a group of civic leaders that include Herb, Joe Prinster, Peggy Foster, Pat Gormley, Bob Denning and others who everyone knew and looked up to and respected for their commitment to make their home community a better place. Indeed, these civic leaders were all involved in the founding of our Community Foundation.



And it was these same people who made up the search committee for a new Executive Director almost twenty years ago. I came to Grand Junction to interview for this job in 2001; it was the second time I had ever been to Grand Junction, and I knew I could handle the job but I didn't know the community. I was asked about what the relationship between me in a paid position and the board would be, the kind of partnership that was needed to make a nonprofit, and especially a Community Foundation, succeed. I had been told in advance of the interview, “Herb Bacon is the person you have to make a good impression on.” I didn't know at that time how important Herb was to the community, so I didn't know enough to be intimidated. Herb was as gracious and supportive and non-intimidating as they come, during the interview and always afterwards.

The rest is history. After a 3-hour interview with those leaders, I got a call that same day that I was hired. Herb served on our board of directors in the early years, and stayed involved as long as he could. I think he was pleased to see how far our Community Foundation has come since its founding days... and that it is fulfilling the vision Herb and other leaders of his generation held.

As for the next generation of leaders, much has been made about the Youth Poet Laureate, Amanda Gorman, and her Inauguration Day poem, *The Hill We Climb*. Confidence and power and grace swelled in her words and

demeanor. At 22, clearly she is a rising star and leader for the current generation, and older ones as well! Like the Founding Fathers, new generations of leaders committed to a country that sees all people as created equal, committed to improving lives and systems of opportunity for all. Amanda concludes her poem with these words:

The new dawn blooms as we free it  
For there is always light,  
If only we're brave enough to see it  
If only we're brave enough to be it.

From the New Testament (the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness shall not overcome it) to presidents of the United States (POTUS #41 designed the Thousand Points of Light initiative to encourage expanded volunteerism across the country), light in the world has always been a powerful symbol for hope. And a young poet of color reminds us in January 2020 to not just see the light but be the light.

While Herb Bacon has passed on, we can feel hopeful there are many others who will step up and step in, rest assured that younger generations will get involved and use their gifts to shape their communities with the same love and commitment as did Herb Bacon.

-- Anne Wenzel



Excellence. Accountability. Impact.™

The Western Colorado Community Foundation is confirmed in compliance with National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations by the Council on Foundations.

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