



# Strengthening & Growing Philanthropy in Iowa

The Iowa Council of Foundations (ICoF) is a statewide membership network of Iowa grantmakers committed to strengthening philanthropy and growing its impact throughout the state. We are a member-driven organization. We measure our success in many ways, including the feedback we get from our members. Here is what our members are saying this year:

**“The Iowa Council of Foundations has been instrumental in the success of our Community Foundation. Their team serves as a resource for learning; a guidepost of industry leading best practice; and fosters a network of expert and peer connections to strengthen our work at our board table, in our community, and collectively across our state. We are grateful for their support, advocacy, and responsiveness.”**



— Charla Schafer, Executive Director  
Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine

**“As so many things in our world shifted in 2020, the learning we did previously through the ICoF Foundation Openness Cohort gave us the skills and knowledge to use trust-based philanthropy when granting \$860,000 in COVID-19 relief funds. This meant our grantees had a short, simple application and budget form to complete and we could quickly support their work during such a critical time.”**



— Beth Jones, Director of Community Impact  
Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation

We work in service to our members by convening and educating partners around skill-building and issue-based topics. This report provides a look back at all that our network accomplished in FY20.

## WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!

Businessolver Foundation

Community Foundation of Marshall County

Genesis Philanthropy

Iowa Farm Bureau Foundation

United Way of East Central Iowa

Iowa Council of Foundations  
6919 Vista Drive  
West Des Moines, IA 50266  
(515) 989-1188

## FY20 Quarterly Membership Meetings & Programs:



### Unicorns Unite: Building Epic Partnerships for a Better Iowa\*

With Nonprofit AF blogger Vu Le, multiple breakout sessions, and networking opportunities



\*This program was made possible through a partnership with Iowa Campus Compact, the Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center, Cedar Valley Nonprofit Association, the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, the Des Moines Art Center, and the Des Moines Young Nonprofit Professionals Network.



### Participation, Power & Philanthropy: Putting Nonprofits & Communities in the Driver's Seat

With Nichole Hoeflich, Grantmakers for Effective Organizations



### Trust-Based Philanthropy Project

With Lisa Cowan, Robert Sterling Clark Foundation



### Being the Change: Systems & Social Change Webinar

With Joelle Cook and Abigail Ridgway, FSG

In addition, we hosted topical webinars on disaster philanthropy, the 2020 Census, and a variety of topics related to COVID-19 response and recovery. We also co-hosted a webinar with the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines and Bravo of Greater Des Moines to highlight Americans for the Arts' new Arts + Social Impact Accelerator.

# FY20 work was guided by our strategic priorities:

PRIORITY 1

## Increase philanthropic **AWARENESS** in Iowa:



**650+**  
CONTACTS WITH  
ELECTED OFFICIALS



**11**  
MEDIA  
OPPORTUNITIES



**40+**  
OUTREACH/PARTNER  
MEETINGS

The ICoF Public Policy Committee and Board of Directors continued to engage in several activities in FY20 to support our public policy priorities around philanthropy and charitable giving. This year, the ICoF:

- Signed on to two national, federal policy advocacy letters;
- Signed on to one statewide, Iowa policy advocacy letter;
- Submitted 15+ comments to Congressional offices regarding legislation;
- Submitted comment to the Department of Treasury; and
- Participated in *Foundations on the Hill*.

PRIORITY 2

## Increase philanthropic **IMPACT** through ICoF members:

### Iowa Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

The ICoF leveraged grant funding from an anonymous donor to continue supporting the Education Funders Network and Iowa Campaign community partners. This year's programs included a two-day regional convening with partners from four surrounding states and a network leadership workshop.



### Iowa Youth Philanthropy Conference

In partnership with several ICoF members, the ICoF planned and hosted the Annual Iowa Youth Philanthropy Conference in August 2019. The agenda included content for young people and the adults that support youth philanthropy including sessions on mental health, advocacy, public relations and effective grantmaking.



### The Philanthropic Preparedness, Resiliency, and Emergency Partnership

Our staff participated in The Funders Network's Philanthropic Preparedness, Resiliency, and Emergency Partnership cohort for a third year. We leveraged PPREP grant funding to produce the *Iowa Community Foundations Initiative Disaster Philanthropy Checklist* (available on the ICoF website) and updated our Continuity of Operations Plan.

PRIORITY 3

## Increase philanthropic **RESOURCES** connected to ICoF:



**\$7 K** Grants received



**\$22.5 K** In-Kind contributions received



**\$26.5 K** Sponsorships received



**\$92 K** Match contributions

**\$148 K**  
LEVERAGED IN FY20

PRIORITY 4

## Advance racial **EQUITY** in Iowa:

This year, ICoF board and staff members participated in racial equity programs through the United Philanthropy Forum. ICoF President Kari McCann Boutell began her participation in the Forum's Racial Equity Cohort, which will help inform programming for ICoF members. ICoF also received mini-grant funding from the Forum and secured sponsorship dollars to bring Race Forward's Race In Philanthropy training to Iowa in FY21. We will continue to build on this work by supporting racial equity programs and conversations for our members in the next fiscal year.

Since 2004, the ICoF has served as the state's **Lead Philanthropic Entity (LPE)**, helping market and administer the County Endowment Fund Program and the Endow Iowa Tax Credit program in partnership with the Iowa Economic Development Authority.

Both state-legislated programs were designed to capture a percentage of the state's transfer of wealth.

In FY20, Iowa community foundations reported **4.53%** growth in endowed funds and **4.11%** growth in overall assets.

In addition, Iowa community foundations granted **\$108 million** into their communities in FY20.

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)

## A MESSAGE TO OUR MEMBERS

We know the critical role philanthropy plays in Iowa. This year has challenged each of us to reimagine how, and where, we do our work. Strengthening relationships and building partnerships are hallmarks of the Iowa Council of Foundations. The need for us to be apart, physically, has brought our network together in new and meaningful ways throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the ICoF, we decided to pivot our in-person events to virtual, where possible, and we urgently acted to support our network as we came together to support relief, response and recovery efforts. The ICoF has been focusing on these response strategies, which will continue into FY21:

### Convening and Connecting Funders

- Connecting statewide and corporate funders to local, community-based funds and statewide priority needs;
- Hosting check-in calls/webinars, connecting members with each other and with content experts; and
- Convening affinity groups including the Community Foundations CEO Network, Community Foundations Affiliate Liaisons Network and statewide funders.

### Sharing Resources and Information

- Providing consultative support on distributing recovery grants and launching response funds;
- Maintaining a resource list of Iowa-based recovery funds on our website; and
- Distributing resources such as our Disaster Philanthropy Toolkit.

### Advocating and Educating

- Coordinating with partners to collect 375+ signatures for a statewide nonprofit advocacy letter to the Governor and state legislature;
- Facilitating an ask to the Governor's office to establish the Iowa Nonprofit Recovery Fund;
- Working to understand and advocate for nonprofit needs through statewide data collection and public policy partnerships; and
- Monitoring state and federal bills, regulations and relief/assistance programs.

As we adapted during the pandemic, we were simultaneously gripped by the loss of Black lives in America, resulting from disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on people of color and the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many before them. In communities all across Iowa, the demands for racial justice have never been stronger. This is a pivotal moment for our country and our field. No doubt, the complexities of these issues are daunting. But, as we have repeatedly done, our network moved to action. This has taken many shapes and forms including:

- Collectively, philanthropy in Iowa has raised/committed over \$17 million to support COVID-19 relief and recovery;
- New, more equitable grantmaking strategies that simplify processes, provide general operating support, and deploy resources rapidly; and
- Multiple ICoF members have established, or contributed to, racial equity funds that will resource organizations led by, and serving, people of color.

There are countless examples of how philanthropy has responded and adapted. We ask that you take a moment to reflect on and celebrate what your organization has achieved this year and to consider what changes in practice and strategies will continue to best serve your communities in the year ahead.

As we move into FY21, persistent, systemic problems will continue to test how we operate and achieve our goals. Our hope is that this moment will lead us to positive, lasting change in how we as a philanthropic field do business and in the outcomes we achieve – together.

In solidarity and continued partnership,



*Kari McCann Boutell*  
Kari McCann Boutell  
President



*Beth Knipp*  
Beth Knipp  
ICoF Board Chair

## FY20 ICoF BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

**Beth Knipp, Chair**  
Executive Director,  
Black Hawk County  
Gaming Association

**Karla Twedt-Ball, Vice Chair**  
SVP, Greater Cedar Rapids  
Community Foundation

**Jaimie Miller, Secretary**  
Executive Director,  
Iowa Credit Union  
Foundation

**Suzanne Mineck, Treasurer**  
President,  
Mid-Iowa Health Foundation

**Monica Chavez-Silva, At-Large**  
AVP, Grinnell College  
Office of Community  
Enhancement & Engagement

**Kaye Englin, At-Large**  
President & CEO, Community  
Foundation of Northeast Iowa

**Dave Geenen, At-Large**  
Executive Director,  
Doris & Victor Day Foundation

**Randy Kuhlman, At-Large**  
CEO, Fort Dodge Community  
Foundation & United Way

**Gina Rooney, At-Large**  
Foundation Manager,  
The Wellmark Foundation

## ICoF STAFF:

**Kari McCann Boutell**  
President

