2023 REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY

Now

ALL GENDEL RESTROOM

P.



Strategic Priorities

Charitable giving within our three counties and by marshalling resources from beyond our region.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion in workplaces and institutions, starting with our own.

A strong start for all children through high-quality early education and care.

Post-secondary education and training that is accessible and more affordable-and provides pathways to completion and employment.

A vibrant local arts and creativity ecosystem to support self-expression, economic vitality, and connection.

Our Vision

The Community Foundation is a catalyst for positive change in the region; engaging partners, raising flexible endowment, leveraging resources to solve problems, and contribute to the common good.

We envision a Western Massachusetts that is thriving, collaborative and generous, where there is opportunity for all.

We take an intentional, results-driven approach and see ourselves as a hub for civic engagement and as a permanent resource.

Our Mission

The Community Foundation seeks to enrich the quality of life of the people of our region by:

- Encouraging philanthropy
- Developing a perpetual, flexible endowment
- Assessing and responding to emerging and changing needs
- Serving as a resource, catalyst, and coordinator for charitable activities
- Promoting efficiency in the management of charitable funds

At the heart of the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts' mission lies its core commitment to increasing equity and opportunity for all people across Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties. As you delve into the pages ahead, you will learn that the Community Foundation has continued to take bold strides in prioritizing and integrating **diversity**, equity, and inclusion in all that it does, a true testament to the depth at which the Foundation has committed itself to helping neighbors access a more satisfying quality of life.

The Foundation's pledge to a strong start for all children resonates deeply, as does its endeavor to pave a way for accessible and more affordable **post**secondary education and training, through Western MA Completes. As your community foundation, it also nurtures a vibrant local arts and creativity ecosystem, fostering spaces through ValleyCreates in which the talent of our community members can sculpt a future brimming with opportunities and where our communities flourish.

As it is every year, none of the Foundation's work would be possible without the **charitable** giving and collective impact of our donors and supporters. The Community Foundation thanks you for being an integral part of this transformative journey and for propelling our region towards greater vitality.

As you navigate through the following pages, you'll discover how diversity, equity, and inclusion aren't just concepts-they're interwoven into every facet of the Foundation's work, reflecting our commitment to building a more just region. By fostering an environment where every voice is heard, every perspective is valued, and every opportunity is accessible, the Foundation strives to create a future that shines brighter for all, transcending boundaries, and inspiring generations to come.

Thank you for your commitment to partnering with us on this journey towards a more equitable and just community.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS



This past year has been remarkable, with \$13.5 million in charitable contributions received from our generous donors and supporters and over \$18.8 million invested to support nonprofit partners and the communities they serve.

The Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts remains strongly committed to advancing equity-both internally and in our work with the community. We continue to embed equity in all we do, whether that's inspiring donor gifts or deepening our relationships with nonprofits who are prioritizing equity within their organizations. We are doing this by opening our doors wider to partner with our entire community to advance our strategic priorities: advancing charitable giving, bolstering pathways to post-secondary education and training through greater accessibility and affordability, supporting a vibrant and local arts creativity ecosystem, and supporting a stronger start for all children.

Our work over the past year has been marked by significant changes within the Community Foundation and within the community itself. These changes have allowed us to build on our solid foundation while introducing new perspectives that have enriched our work. This year we honored the departure of Katie Allen Zobel, an inspiring leader at the Foundation for 17 years, while welcoming a new President and CEO, Megan Burke. Megan joined several other new staff who, together with our existing staff, bring energy and commitment to this work and who are truly reflective of the community we serve, with a diverse set of geographic, professional, and lived experiences. We also welcomed a diverse group of volunteers, including three new Trustees and many new grant reviewers, who themselves reflect the energy and spirit of what makes Western Massachusetts an amazing place to live. More than half of our Trustees and our grant reviewers identified as Black, Indigenous, or people of color and across our hundreds of volunteers, we gained perspectives on the lives of Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden County residents.

Finally, as the world has "re-opened" following the intense shutdown of the COVID pandemic, we have reopened our doors, welcoming the community in. We have also traveled up and down the Connecticut River Valley and into the hilltowns to listen, learn, and celebrate community, in person, once again. This has allowed us to see firsthand the ongoing financial impact of the COVID pandemic that has exacerbated the disparities that exist across both our urban and rural communities. And it has also allowed us to see the amazing creativity that exists throughout our region as residents, nonprofit leaders, students, artists, business leaders, donors, and elected officials leverage recovery initiatives to build back our communities so that they may be stronger, more inclusive, and more resilient.

We are proud of what we've been able to accomplish together and recognize that our achievements will improve the future for western MA residents for years to come. It is with that pride and pure gratitude that we present to you our annual report for 2023. Thank you for your partnership, for thinking creatively along with us, for sharing your insights and experiences, and for your unyielding motivation and commitment to our mission.

Warmly,







Trustee Chair



Karin Lee George Trustee Vice Chair

OUR IMPACT



Gross Contributions Received \$13.5 Million

GRANTMAKING



Total Grant Distribution \$16.6 Million





Grants Awarded

\$16.6 Million

Total Distribution





A Strong Start for All Children

The Little Red Schoolhouse Revisited

There's no arguing with the numbers: Access to preschool has a profound impact on children throughout their lives, improving their chances of graduating from high school, increasing the likelihood they'll attend college, and promising higher salaries as working adults. However, many families either lack access to early-childhood education or can't afford it—including in Western Massachusetts. A dearth of early childcare options is particularly noticeable in Franklin County, leaving parents to choose from a handful of schools with highly competitive admissions.

One Franklin County preschool has held the line. Since 1984, the **Ashfield Community Preschool** has offered a nurturing, individually paced approach to earlychildhood education. Each morning, children between 15 months and five years of age arrive at a renovated house in the center of Ashfield to hone their social-emotional growth, engage in hands-on play, and learn about the natural world from the school's five acres of woods, garden, and fenced-in play space. "There's no screen time here at all," says School Director Christine Barry. "Children need to make friends and not share stare at screens while they're here. They get enough screen time elsewhere." In addition to teaching interpersonal skills, the school also models inclusion because of a diversity of both culture and abilities in the group.

If this all sounds like an education from another time, consider that the Ashfield Community Preschool has just two classrooms: one for toddlers, and another for



children between 2.9 and five years of age. While their small class sizes allow students to build deep personal bonds and work closely with dedicated teachers, it also poses a business challenge. The legally mandated student-to-teacher ratio of 2:9 gives many preschools two paths to financial viability: pay teachers lower salaries, or charge parents prohibitive tuition. Ashfield Community Preschool and Toddler Program was unwilling to do either.

Determined to find a third way, the school earned a state certification that allows families with financial need to obtain tuition subsidies. So families with limited incomes are not priced out. With the benefit of subsidies, the school can set tuition rates closer to where they need them to be, without pricing out families with limited incomes. However, this step alone would not keep the schoolhouse doors open.

In 2022, the school applied for—and received—a \$30,000 Flexible Funding grant from the Community Foundation. Because the grant's funds are unrestricted, Barry and her colleagues could apply the money where they knew it was most needed: hiring a new teacher at a fair salary, retaining longtime staff with a competitive raise, and defraying the costs of building maintenance. According to Barry, this lifeline was instrumental in keeping the school viable post-COVID. "We want to be here for the children and the community," she said. "This helps us do that."

Each dollar invested in preschool programs brings a 7 to 10% return on investment through increased earning potential and decreased public spending.

Source: https://heckmanequation.org/resource/invest-in-early-childhood-development-reduce-deficits-strengthen-the-economy/

Post-Secondary Education and Training An Investment in Hope

As a recent alumni of Wesleyan University's economics program, Gabriela Harris's future in finance couldn't be brighter—but her path to becoming a college graduate was far from easeful. "Barriers, barriers, barriers," she recalls. Gabriela's high school years were marked by dire financial need and limited career options modeled in her community. In fact, she learned of her acceptance to Wesleyan at a time when she and her mother were briefly unhoused, creating a barrier even in celebrating her success.

Not one to be defeated, Gabriela used the institutional obstacles she experienced as a first-generation, low-income student of color to fuel her interest in a field that seemed entirely closed to her at the time. "My mom and I didn't discuss interest rates or monetary policy at the dinner table; these concepts were completely intangible to us," says Gabriela. "Honestly, economics is a space where people like me don't really exist, and I very much want to assert myself in those conversations."

Determined to succeed in a field she found predominantly white, Gabriela excelled in school and won two prestigious internships. Her first internship was with Commonfund, a nonprofit assetmanagement firm where she served on the diverse investment team. Her second internship led to a permanent position in mergers and acquisition for an investment banking firm, which she started following her graduation in May, 2023.

Gabriela is quick to note that, though she has learned to be confident in corporate settings her younger self couldn't imagine, she is determined to honor her lived experience as she enters the workforce. "I'm proud to be in the room, giving advice to Fortune 500 companies—but I also carry my past experiences with me," she says. "They're evident in my work and critical-thinking ability, and I'm proud of that, too."

Gabriela's academic success was supported, in part, by scholarships from three Community Foundation funds: the James Z. Naurison Scholarship, the Latino Scholarship, and the Urban League of Springfield Scholarship. She describes the impact of these gifts as both financially and emotionally powerful. "When I received those scholarships, I felt invested in for the first time," she says. "Like someone was taking a chance on me as an early-stage start-up—and I'm determined to show a return on that investment."

Western MA Completes



Gabriela Harris Photo Credit: Erin Long

> THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S COMMITMENT: 150 Unique Scholarship Funds 1,000 Annual Scholarships \$1.5 Million in Scholarships Awarded

Western MA Completes



Apelila Joseph

Charitable Giving: Volunteering Time & Talent

In Search of **Their Story**

WESTERN MA COMPLETES

For too many residents of Western MA who face a range of seemingly small barriers every day, getting into college is just the first challenge in their path to economic opportunity. Through Western MA Completes, we support multiple strategies to reach the students who face these barriers-first-generation, low-income, and BIPOC students-to support their success, and to help them reach the finish line.

When Apelila Joseph reads through a stack of high-school scholarship essays, it's not grammatical mastery she's looking for-at least not at first. "I'm looking for the story they're trying to tell me," she says of the many Western Massachusetts students who submit scholarship applications to the Community Foundation each year. "Students get very personal in sharing their struggles, and I approach the reading process through the lens of their stories."

As a past recipient of a Community Foundation scholarship, Apelila knows how impactful financial aid can be-particularly for low-income, first-generation college students. However, she is more than just a past recipient; since graduating from Smith College in 2015, Apelila has worked at the frontlines of college affordability, once serving as a financial-aid advisor for Springfield Public School students and now as a program manager for Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority's (MEFA) college-planning program. What began as a stop-gap job fresh out of college has become her life's passion, guiding high-school students, especially those in need, through the byzantine process of college financing.

Apelila's professional path led her to the Community Foundation, where she has volunteered as a scholarship reviewer since 2016 and recently joined the Education Committee—an oversight board for the many scholarships and loans the foundation facilitates, including the Western Mass Completes initiative for returning students. During that time, Apelila has brought the practical knowledge she's acquired in working one-on-one with students and their families to the Community Foundation's work in making college accessible to all. "Because of my past work in Springfield Public Schools, I see the scholarship process in a different light," she says. "I've personally worked with students who check their email every day to see if they got [one of our scholarships]. In fact, they're often waiting to make a college decision based on that email."

Whether Apelila is reviewing next year's scholarship essay prompts or deciding how to manage emergency scholarship funds, equitable access is foremost in her mind, as it is for each of her fellow committee members. "Because we're coming from all walks of life-not just racially and ethnically, but also in terms of careers-each of us brings our own lived experience to the discussions we have," she explains. "A lot of organizations say they're equity focused, but I've seen it actually shine through in the work we do."

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS



Unaudited financial information: more detailed financial information available on our website

WHO GAVE?







Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Justice Reimagined



What can happen when a small group of people dares to meet racial and social injustice with the question, "How can we do this differently?" Pa'lante Transformative Justice, a youth-led organization in Holyoke, offers an answer.

As graduation rates plummeted and suspensions soared in the Holyoke Public School system, several educators came together in 2012 to discuss alternatives to a punitive-and often ineffective-disciplinary approach. By the summer of 2015, that small group had gained buy-in from school and district leaders to pilot Pa'lante, a youth-led restorative justice program. Students facing discipline were diverted to the program, and many soon became peer leaders within the group. Pa'lante's focus on restorative justice allowed students to find their way back into the school community, rather than get pushed out by exclusionary discipline practices.

In addition to preventing incidents of school push out, Pa'lante also sought to transform school policy and

practices more broadly. For example, students organized to prevent a proposed random-search policy from going into effect, advocated for an ethnic studies graduation requirement, and helped transform the school's in-house suspension room into a Student Support Room. However, students and their adult allies hoped to have impact beyond any one building. Kayla, an eleventh-grade peer leader, explained, "One of the main ideas Pa'lante focuses on is dismantling structures of institutional oppression-to dismantle the whole system rather than just solve the problems of individuals."

"We're in a dynamic period of transition and unrestricted funds help us meet the moment"

Last year, Pa'lante relocated to a community space outside Holyoke Public Schools and is working to expand their reach to all the city's young people -including those no longer enrolled at school. This year, youth leaders developed a social justiceinformed program designed to be an alternative to existing anger-management courses for youth assigned through the criminal legal system. Pa'lante is also in the final steps of purchasing their own building in Holyoke, paving the way for an open-door Youth Leadership Hub.

In 2022, the Community Foundation supported Pa'lante's efforts with a \$30,000 Flexible Funding grant. According to the organization's executive director, Luke Midnight-Woodward, unrestricted funding is critical at this point in the program's development. "We're in a dynamic period of transition and unrestricted funds help us meet the moment," he says. "We don't just want to keep young people out of prison; we want to help them build leadership skills and become powerful agents of change and transformation. This support helps us be nimble in achieving that."

ValleyCreates

A Vibrant Arts and Creativity Ecosystem

Transforming Transformative Art



As a poet, composer, singer-songwriter, and scholar, **Diana Alvarez** doesn't view creativity as the spice of life, so much as critical to life itself. "If we want young people to transform our world, we have to allow them, and ourselves, to access creativity," says Diana.

Diana's own journey as an artist led her/them to a doctoral program and many cherished mentors, all leading to the development of "Quiero Volver: A Xingonx Ritual Opera." Diana describes the work as a "living performance altar for queer, trans, and gender-expansive BIPOC artists." The performance invites the audience to explore themes of gender and cultural identity through a stunning multimedia experience that includes original music, poetry, video, and documentary portraits. And though the ensemble performance was first staged at Holyoke Community College in 2017, it has experienced dramatic reimaginings in the years since, reflecting Diana's own evolution as a person and artist. A year after its debut, Diana and their collaborators staged "Quiero Volver" at Northampton's Academy of Music. The benefit performance raised more than \$10,000 for immigrant justice initiatives, while showcasing a multicultural heritage often absent in Eurocentric art. "[Audience members] told me they felt more inclined to learn about other cultures and races, and think about indigeneity and their own family history," they recall.

Despite the transformative effect "Quiero Volver" had on audiences and performers alike, Diana felt it had not yet matched their artistic vision. They recall continuously tweaking the script and refining the work's musical compositions-but it wasn't until an improv-based performance at UMass Amherst that Diana realized, just as the work decentered whiteness, it could also shift the focus from trained artists as the creative force, to the natural creativity within each audience member. "I realized that my work was a community gathering," they explain. "If I focused on improvisational pieces, I could guide the audience and our group of performers into creating something together." They had discovered that inclusivity was more than just their subject matter-it also provided the best way to express it.

Fittingly, Diana was able to move their work forward in 2022 with the help of a Community Foundation Project Evolution Grant, a program that provides artists with a projectplanning workshop and one-on-one coaching sessions, as well as \$4,000 in funding.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Creating Hope from Hate



On a cool fall day in 1979, members of the Ku Klux Klan and American Nazi Party opened fire on a group of anti-racism protesters in Greensboro, North Carolina. In a matter of seconds, five protesters lay dead, including Dr. Michael Nathan, a local pediatrician and activist. A jury acquitted all nine defendants

Michael Nathan and his daughter, Leah, in 1979

daughter, Leah, in 1979 pediatrician and activist. A jury acquitted all nine defendants in a criminal trial. However, in a civil trial that soon followed, the defendants were found liable for Michael's death and Michael's widow, Dr. Marty Nathan, was awarded compensatory damages. Marty used a portion of funds to launch the Greensboro Justice Fund, a seed fund for Southern organizations fighting for social justice.

Almost 30 years later, Marty had relocated to Western Massachusetts with her second husband, Elliot Fratkin. She befriended Rose "Arky" Markham, a social worker and activist who had recently lost her like-minded husband, George. Together, Marty and Arky wondered how they might honor their husbands' past work, keeping alive their shared passion for social justice. **The Markham-Nathan Fund for Social Justice** was soon born, and in 2009, it offered its first grants to grassroots organizations in Western Massachusetts dedicated to social justice.

"There were a lot of groups in the area looking to do good work, but with no money," explains Elliot, a founding member of the fund. "In that first year, we focused on a dozen of these organizations and started disbursing funds."

Today, the Markham-Nathan Fund for Social Justice continues to provide grants up to \$4,000 to small groups in Western Massachusetts working for social justice. Though the fund's commitment to social justice has not changed, how it defines that work has broadened. "We seek out grassroots movements

The Markham-Nathan Fund has given out 240 grants for a total of \$551,842.

looking to make change," says Sabine Merz, the fund's coordinator. "In recent years, we've funded groups focused on trans health, the arts, housing, environmental issues, and many organizations doing work with people who are incarcerated."

From the outset, the Markham-Nathan Fund partnered with the Community Foundation as a donor-advised fund, which provides infrastructure and human resources that would otherwise prove challenging. This partnership allows donations to be used where donors intend—with organizations looking to get off the ground and make positive change in Western Massachusetts.

"This is how we continue in the spirit of [Michael, Marty, Arky, and George's] work," says Sabine. "By taking a tragedy rooted in systemic structural racism and turning it into a fund that enriches our community."

Rose "Arky" Markham and Marty Nathan



Charitable Giving

A Legacy of Conservation

Susan and Larry Flaccus at Kenburn Orchards



Each day, development in Massachusetts impacts 78 acres of open space.

Source: http://www.landscope.org/massachusetts/overview/

When **Susan and Larry Flaccus** inherited her family's century-old farm in the hills of Shelburne, Massachusetts, two things seemed clear. First, the couple was committed to breathing new life into a property that had served as a working farm since the Great Depression. Secondly, they were not so much owners of the rolling fields, grasslands, and forests, as they were stewards—shepherding the land from its agrarian past to a future of conservation.

After taking over the 150-acre farm in 1998, Susan and Larry wasted no time in uprooting abandoned orchards and reimagining the property as a blueberry and Christmas tree farm. Even as they worked to make Kenburn Orchards financially viable once again, they held a long-term goal of preserving their land for future generations. Easier said than done, as the couple soon learned.

From land surveying to appraisals, the cost of applying for conservation restrictions proved daunting. And as they made their way through the often byzantine and expensive process, they couldn't help but wonder about the many other families in Western Massachusetts for whom the financial burden would make land conservation impossible. How could they help in bringing land conservation within reach for others?

"We were looking for a fund [in Western Massachusetts] that would help us meet the goal of helping farmers with the costs of preserving land. We really couldn't find the right match," recalls Larry. "So, we decided to make one." Their search for a partner to help create such a fund led them to the Community Foundation. From day one, the couple made clear that they wanted their fund to serve future generations in perpetuity, rather than just make a one-time impact.

With the help of the Community Foundation, Larry and Susan established a legacy endowment fund that would benefit the community for years to come—without affecting their day-to-day finances. "We don't have enough money to give away a lot in our lifetime, but we do have enough to be generous once we're gone," noted Susan.

Once the structure of the fund was established, the couple decided how they wanted it to do good in the world. They settled on three objectives for their fund: helping families conserve forests and farmlands in Western Massachusetts; promoting Quaker-based education; and supporting peace and social-justice initiatives. "Even if we're not here to see the results, this is a wish that will come true," said Susan.

Create Your Legacy, Support Your Community

We want to help you put your passion into action. To establish a new charitable fund to support the causes you care most about and to invest in our community, contact us. You can choose from several flexible giving options that help you to create a lasting impact in our region. Whether you care most about arts and culture, community health and well-being, the environment, supporting college students with scholarships, creating more inclusive community, or making a difference in the world, we can help you meet your charitable goals.

Give now or after your lifetime.

You can reach **Joanna S. Ballantine**, Vice-President for Philanthropic Services or **Nigel Greaves**, Director of Development, at 413-732-2858 or Giving@communityfoundation.org.

COMPARISON OF RETURNS FOR GLOBAL GROWTH PORTFOLIO

AS OF MARCH 31, 2023



INVESTMENT COMMENTARY

The Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts had an investment portfolio valued at over \$200 million at the end of fiscal year 2023. Returns of the largest investment pool are noted in the table above. The overall investment objective of the Investment Committee and the Trustees is to manage the portfolio to maximize return while managing a prudent level of risk over a long-term investment horizon. Donors have established funds with CFWM to make grants into perpetuity and so, in managing the pool of assets, the Investment Committee is focused on (1) preservation of principal, (2) growth

to keep pace with inflation, and (3) the generation of income for grantmaking and to cover expenses. By design the portfolio is highly diversified with broad exposure to the capital markets-with roughly a 30% allocation to bonds for income needs and to provide ballast or stability in the portfolio and roughly 70% allocated to equities for long term growth. This asset allocation strategy is executed utilizing an expansive group of low-cost, passive index funds. The portfolio is monitored by an investment advisor as well as a dedicated group of volunteers with extensive investment experience.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

AS OF MARCH 31, 2023

	2023	2022
Total Assets	\$239,194,168	\$263,677,089
Operating Expenses	\$4,245,976	\$3,429,244
Operating Expenses as a Percentage of Total Assets	1.80%	1.30%
Contributions & Government Contracts	\$13,526,853	\$38,420,763
Grants (including scholarships & agency fund grants)	\$18,044,887	\$16,190,495
Loans	\$729,000	\$384,000
Total Distributions	\$18,773,887	\$16,574,495

Unaudited financial information; more detailed financial information available on our website

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

MARCH 31, 2023 AND 2022

ASSETS	2023	2022
Cash and money market funds	\$11,104,423	\$14,139,067
Investments	\$219,733,637	\$240,737,421
Assets held under charitable trusts	\$2,178,313	\$3,118,738
Notes receivable	\$387,158	-
Loans receivable, net	\$3,126,068	\$2,838,520
Contributions receivable	\$2,500,000	\$2,650,000
Prepaid expenses	\$76,888	\$66,841
Property and equipment, net	\$87,681	\$126,502
TOTAL ASSETS	\$239,194,168	\$263,677,089

LIABILITIES	2023	2022
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$236,622	\$239,394
Grants payable	\$87,900	\$1,012,413
Liabilities under unitrust agreements	\$1,040,234	\$1,364,953
Agency funds	\$22,360,256	\$23,351,155
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$23,725,012	\$25,967,913

NET ASSETS	2023	2022
Without donor restrictions - undesignated	\$61,833,642	\$71,129,913
Without donor restrictions - Board designated	\$1,813,412	\$1,657,994
With donor restrictions	\$151,822,102	\$164,921,267
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$215,469,156	\$237,709,174

	2023	2022
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$239,194,168	\$263,677,089

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AS OF AUGUST 2023



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Our Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:

We will advance equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout the region's three counties, including our workplaces and institutions, by prioritizing racial equity in all facets of our work.

We have chosen racial equity specifically because of the pervasiveness of racism in interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships and interactions, institutions, and systems in our region and in our country throughout our history. We believe that working toward dismantling systems of racial inequality provides a framework for dismantling all other forms of oppression.

JOIN US TODAY in supporting CFWM's Annual Fund campaign, **TEA—Trust, Equity, and Abundance.** Your contribution fuels our mission and allows us to foster trust, promote equity, and ensure an abundant future for all people in our region. Donate now and be a part of the change our community envisions.





413-732-2858 communityfoundation.org Covers:

Images are from a new mural in downtown Springfield created by muralist Mimi Ditkoff in collaboration with Out Now, Springfield's oldest queer youth advocacy organization. The project was made possible through a grant from the Markham-Nathan Fund for Social Justice, profiled inside on page 11.

SPEAK

ANGELA Y DAVIS FELSOMIS A CONSUL STRUGGLE AUDRE LORDE YOUR SILENCE WILL NOT PROTECT YO

BELOVED Toni Marrison

pedagogy of the oppressed

Understanding Mental Health