Holy moley! What a year it has been so far. The challenges have been tremendous; the hardships have been painful. But, through it all, your commYOUUnity foundation remains focused on the positive --- YOU! When faced with adversity and conflict, YOU, the constructive individuals and organizations of our commYOUUnity, have made a decisive difference in many lives. Thank YOU!

I have always believed that seeing the glass as half-full can be a lifesaver. A starting point of positivity lays the foundation for an inner confidence that helps see us through the most challenging times. Best of all, positivity inspires our ability to bestow joy, happiness, and uplifting energy to others.

By thinking positive and staying strong, here are just a few of the achievements YOU and your generosity have accomplished.

• CFKRV partnered with United Way to launch the Kankakee and Iroquois Counties COVID-19 Response Fund. Thanks to YOU, nearly $600,000 has been distributed to organizations throughout Kankakee and Iroquois Counties. That’s the power of commYOUUnity!

• Through our Communityworks Fund, CFKRV awarded $100,000 to local nonprofits and programs. Even in the midst of the pandemic, our nonprofit partners have not backed away from their missions to improve the quality of life for everyone in our commYOUUnity.

• As you’ll see on the following pages, our scholarship program exploded this year! We partnered with Herscher High School to take on the administrative duties of all of their scholarships. And, to manage the influx of new scholarships, we invested in software that provides students with one universal application – saving time for them, evaluators, and administrative staff. Everyone wins!

• Project SUN facilitated two community conversations with civic leaders and area residents to delve into systemic racism and its effect on mental health. It was eye opening for everyone. More conversations focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion will follow.

• In March, we welcomed Mia Parrilli to CFKRV as our new office manager. What a stroke of positive energy she has been!

All I can say is, that’s the power of positivity. YOU, your hard work, your open minds, your creativity, and your generosity accentuate the positive. And, that’s how we as a commYOUUnity stay strong – no matter what kinds of obstacles life throws in our way. Thank YOU!
COVID-19 Community Response Fund: An Incredible Impact

The ongoing partnership provides essential resources to area health and human service organizations as they respond to surging needs for basic services from individuals and households who are most affected by the pandemic. The support includes these essential components.

- Financial assistance for emergency food and supplies
- Interim housing and shelter
- Primary healthcare services
- Utility and financial assistance
- Support for children and vulnerable populations
- Nonprofit safety and operations assistance

In late March 2020, United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties and Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley launched the COVID-19 Community Response Fund.

“The local COVID-19 Response Fund offers one cohesive source for individuals, philanthropists, community leaders, corporations, and foundations to contribute,” said Nicole Smolkovich, executive director, CFKRV. “It is critical that our region’s health and human service organizations have the resources they need to operate at their highest capacities.”

Less than a month after the fund’s launch, the partnership raised more than $70,000 from local donors and grantee partners and received a $250,000 grant from the Illinois COVID-19 Response Fund.

The initial group of grant recipients includes agencies that provide services for children, the homeless, and the elderly. “In our communities, these are the most vulnerable populations of the crisis – families who cannot withstand the shock of missing a paycheck,” Smolkovich noted.

- Agape Community Outreach Mission, Inc.
- Bourbonnais Elementary School District 53
- The Bread Basket
- Catholic Charities Diocese of Joliet
- Compassionate Ministries Center of Hope
- Fortitude Community Outreach
- Harbor House
- Helen Wheeler Center
- Iroquois County Public Health Department
- Kankakee Area YMCA
- Kankakee County Community Services Inc.
- Kankakee School District 111
- Nexus Indian Oaks Family Healing
- Nexus Onarga Academy
- The Salvation Army
- Volunteer Services of Iroquois County

If you would like to donate to the local COVID-19 Response Fund with your credit or debit card, go to [www.myunitedway.org](http://www.myunitedway.org) or [www.cfkrv.org](http://www.cfkrv.org).

To donate by check, please mail your contribution to Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley, 701 S. Harrison Avenue, Kankakee, IL 60901.
With its grant, Easter Seals used its teletherapy program to help children like Mirelle Elsey. She learned how to turn her head, use her arms to play, and roll from side to side. She is the daughter of Kipp Elsey and April Brouillet.

Kankakee Community Services, Inc. provided delivery of nutritious hot meals to senior citizens throughout the area.

A grant provided to Fortitude Community Outreach enabled many local residents to be tested for COVID-19 at no charge.

Volunteers offered hoodies and T-shirts to those in need, thanks to Fortitude Community Outreach.

The mobile services of Fortitude Community Outreach assisted the homeless of Kankakee County with meals, supplies, and clothing.

With its grant, Easter Seals used its teletherapy program to help children like Mirelle Elsey. She learned how to turn her head, use her arms to play, and roll from side to side. She is the daughter of Kipp Elsey and April Brouillet.
2020 Grants Awarded:
Communityworks and Rosie Fund

Last spring, Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley was pleased to award grants to many Communityworks and Rosie Fund recipients. “We are thrilled to support the organizations and projects that benefit the health and future of so many individuals in our communities,” explains Nicole Smolkovich, executive director.

**Communityworks Fund Grants**
Communityworks focuses on early childhood education, land use and protection, and workforce development. “Thanks to YOU, we awarded $100,000 in Communityworks grants -- $80,000 to local area nonprofits and $20,000 to support CFKRV initiatives,” Smolkovich said.

**Rosie Fund Grants**
The Rosie Fund provides financial support to area social services agencies so that they can assist the unmet needs of women and children. “Through Rosie Fund grants, CFKRV awarded $5,000 to five organizations,” Smolkovich notes.

### Nonprofit Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBCHS IROCLAD Robotics</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop McNamara Catholic School</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blessings in a Backpack</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourbonnais Township Park District</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploration Station – a children’s museum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradley Public Library District</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Citizens’ Library District</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Network</td>
<td>2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harbor House/KCCADV</td>
<td>7,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Herscher CUSD2</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospice of Kankakee Valley</td>
<td>3,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois State Police Heritage Foundation</td>
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<td>Iroquois Mental Health Center</td>
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<td>Kankakee Area Career Center</td>
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<td>Kankakee Area YMCA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kankakee Community College Baby Talk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kankakee County Health Department</td>
<td>7,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kankakee County Historic Preservation Commission</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love-A-Latte Treats and Sweet Eats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepared by Special People</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pledge for Life Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Potawatomi Paddlers Association</td>
<td>3,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tyjuan Hagler Foundation</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$80,000</strong></td>
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</table>

### Communityworks Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Riverfront Trail</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success by 6 Iroquois</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success by 6 Kankakee</td>
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<tr>
<td>WorkKankakee.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wright in Kankakee</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$20,000</strong></td>
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</table>

### Rosie Fund Grants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harbor House</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>KC-CASA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Living Alternatives Pregnancy Resource Center</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Moms HOPE</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Facilitators for Community Conversations

Prior to the Black Lives Matter movement, Project SUN (Strong and Unified Network) had planned to host a conversation with young adults to address and discuss racial disparity in access to mental, emotional, and behavioral health services.

However, after the violent deaths of several African American men and women and the increased national awareness of systemic racism in our country, this initiative blossomed into two Community Conversations: one for the public at large on July 28 (39 attendees) and one for young adults, ages 16-21, on August 5 (10 attendees).

Both conversations highlighted the history and modern-day impact of racism, followed by discussions that challenged participants to share how race has affected their life stories.

A panel of representatives from various organizations offered ways for adults and youth to get involved with local efforts to end racism. Connect Kankakee, City of Kankakee/Kankakee United, Kankakee School District’s “STOP the Violence” project, the Kankakee County Hispanic Partnership, and the YWCA of Kankakee were discussed at the first Community Conversation. Black Lives Matter, Kankakee Anti-Racist Unity Movement (KARU), Connect Kankakee, Immigrant Justice, and the Momence Anti-Racist Coalition were shared at the second meeting.

Overall, both conversations yielded positive responses by attendees and requests to be included in Project SUN’s follow-up conversations. The next event will address local barriers faced by youth of color in accessing mental, emotional, and behavioral health services.

If you would like to become a part of Project SUN’s efforts to eliminate racial disparities in access to local mental health services, email projectsun@cfkrv.org.
Important scholarships entrusted to Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley help many students continue their education and advance to their careers. CFKRV wishes good luck to all of these students as they go back to school this fall.

**Erica Lynn Paulissen Memorial Scholarship**
This scholarship honors the life of Erica Lynn Paulissen, a graduate of Herscher High School and Kankakee Community College. Two scholarships are awarded annually to graduating high school seniors in Kankakee and Iroquois Counties. Erica dedicated her energy to a sense of pride and purpose that continues to inspire through her scholarship legacy.

**Do It Stevie’s Way Foundation Scholarship**
Established by Proven IT, this scholarship assists area graduating students with the costs of pursuing their educations.

**African American Civic Leaders Scholarship**
Several African American graduates from Kankakee High School received this scholarship to continue their education at accredited colleges, universities, trade schools, and apprentice programs.
Herscher High School Scholarships

Established by Herscher School District #2, these scholarships provide financial support for the educational pursuits of graduating seniors from Herscher High School.

Kaylyn Bauer
Albert A. and Elizabeth Wheeler Mau Scholarship
Herscher High School Senior of the Month, November 2019; Herscher FFA Alumni Foundation; and Randy Lehnus Vocational Scholarship

Kyler Masching
Herscher FFA Alumni Foundation Scholarship

Madyson Rogers
Herscher Athletic Boosters Club Award and U2CT - Unit 2 Classroom Teachers & Staff Scholarships

Zach Hall
Bonfield Lions Award

KeMia Smith
Curtis Smith Jr.
De’Asia Love
Janae Fleming

Lydia Huizenga
Caitlin Poppie Memorial Scholarship

Jack Holohan
Herscher Athletic Boosters Club Award

Bianca Berns
Herscher High School Alumni Association Scholarship

Makayla Perry
Herscher High School Alumni Association Scholarship
More Herscher Scholarship Recipients...

Lillian Nelson
Herscher High School Music Boosters Scholarship

Benjamin Koranda
Herscher Sports Fan Scholarship

Zoie Hastings
Herscher Sports Fan Scholarship

Joshua Kersten
Rich Jenson Award

Audrey Hopper
Herscher High School Music Boosters Scholarship

Mason Robinson
Herscher Sports Fan Scholarship

Jacob Schultz
Kent Weakley Creative Scholarship

Cynthia Perez
Stacy and Chris Skarstad Memorial Scholarship and U2CT - Unit 2 Classroom Teachers & Staff Scholarships

Grace Keller
Herscher High School Music Boosters Scholarship

Emily Hubert
Herscher Sports Fan Scholarship and U2CT - Unit 2 Classroom Teachers & Staff Scholarships

Morgan Schnurr
Marlow Zehr Memorial Scholarship

Caleb Fleischauer
Tim Orwig Scholarship
Anna Cotter
Tim Orwig Scholarship

Sarah Warren
U2CT - Unit 2 Classroom Teachers & Staff Scholarships

Ethan Egerton
Randy Lehnus Vocational Scholarship

Emma Koerner
Herscher High School Senior of the Month, September 2019

Luke Whalen
Herscher High School Senior of the Month, October 2019; Herscher Lions Club Award; U2CT - Unit 2 Classroom Teachers & Staff Scholarships; and Dr. Lawrence T. Jacobson Leadership Memorial Scholarship

Olivia Ruder
Herscher High School Senior of the Month, December 2019; Diane and Dr. Jeff Long Health Related Scholarship; and Herscher Lions Club Award

LeighAnn McCasland
Herscher High School Senior of the Month, January 2020

Paiton Cordes
Herscher High School Senior of the Month, February 2020

Olivia DeLong
Herscher High School Senior of the Month, March 2020 and U2CT - Unit 2 Teachers Memorial Scholarship

Grant Goytia
Herscher High School Senior of the Month, April 2020 and Robert and Thelma Webber Scholarship

Delanie Fay
Herscher High School Senior of the Month, May 2020 and U2CT - Unit 2 Classroom Teachers & Staff Scholarships

Online and in Your Emailbox
Our newsletters are now available at www.cfkrv.org. If you would like to receive it via email, please sign up at www.cfkrv.org.
Meet Mia!

Please join us in welcoming Mia Parrilli to Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley. She brings a strong educational and professional background to her new position as our office manager.

Mia graduated from Purdue University Northwest with a bachelor’s degree in hospitality and tourism management. While there, she gained invaluable experience as a supplemental student instructor, community tutor for elementary students, and captain of their cheer team.

Mia lives in Manteno with her husband, Wayne, and their two children. Her personal passions are early childhood education, animal rights, mental health, and health and nutrition for all.

Thank you!

Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley thanks these outgoing board and committee members for their service and support.

Elizabeth Kubal
Larry Mahoney
Kari Nugent
Lindsay Parkhurst

Welcome!

We are pleased to welcome Kersten Rust to our board of directors and committees.

FOR GOOD. FOREVER.

Please consider including CFKRV in your will and estate planning. It is a wonderful way to continue your legacy in our communities. For information, call Nicole at 815-939-1611.

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