

The Darke County Foundation is a community foundation dedicated to improving the lives of Darke County residents by receiving, managing and distributing charitable gifts.

Darke County Foundation Celebrates 35 Years of Scholarships

Since the Darke County Foundation began awarding scholarships in 1987 (known then as the HOPE Foundation), more than 1,500 Darke County students have received over \$2.5 million in scholarships. Many of those students have settled in Darke County to strengthen our community with their skills and involvement. The following 6 stories reflect the commitment of our scholarship alumni.



Scott Zumbrink

In 1989 **Scott Zumbrink** was newly graduated from Ansonia High School and headed to Wright State to pursue degrees in accounting and finance. Thanks to two years of scholarships from the Darke County Foundation, Zumbrink was able to afford extra classes towards his double major.

Zumbrink moved back to Darke County and has served as the Darke County treasurer for 28 years, as well as continuing the fourth generation on his family's farm near North Star. He serves as treasurer for the North Star Community Fire Dept., is a member of Greenville Kiwanis, and a board member for Greenville Boys and Girls Club.

To show his gratitude and to support today's deserving students, Zumbrink makes annual donations to the Darke County Foundation.

"With the investment from the Foundation so many years ago, I now get to pay it forward to the next generation," said Zumbrink. "I have realized how important it is to invest in my community."



Cole Miller

Cole Miller, Greenville Class of 2020, participated in the automotive technology program at GHS. The Darke County Foundation awarded Miller a 2-year vocational scholarship to attend the Univ. of Northwestern Ohio. He will graduate this spring with an associate's degree in automotive technology then move back to Greenville to start his career.

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The Darke County Foundation provides grants to the Cancer Association of Darke County so it can assist cancer patients. Pictured are Trudy Eastland and Christine Lynn of CADC.

Three Stories of How DCF Assists Local Residents

The Cancer Association of Darke County helps 250 to 300 local cancer patients every year by easing some of the burdens patients face. "How much we give to our patients depends on how much donors give us," said Christine Lynn, director of CADC.

The Darke County Foundation realizes the tremendous value of this organization, so it provides grants to CADC from its Friends of the Foundation Fund. Donors to this annual campaign trust the Foundation to use their contributions for the most meaningful and urgent needs in our community.

The Cancer Association's services are open to any Darke County resident with cancer, regardless of financial need. CADC can provide transportation to medical appointments, nutritional supplements, and reimbursement up to \$100/mo. for medication and \$75/mo. for medical supplies. The organization also provides wigs, hats and scarves. Benefits last up to 5 years.

CADC holds 3 fundraisers each year that raise about \$11,000, but it annually spends over \$130,000. The

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High School Scholarship Applications due April 1

Apply at www.darkecountyfoundation.org



(Scholarships continued from p.1)

“Since the scholarship helped pay for my classes,” said Miller, “I could dedicate my work income to rent, utilities, and other expenses to live in Lima.”

“I’m grateful that donors in our community give young people a chance to go to college and live out their dreams,” added Miller. “Not everyone gets to do that.”

“I’m looking forward to building good relationships in Greenville,” said Miller, “and repaying what others gave me.”



Amy VanSkyock

Amy Peters VanSkyock graduated from Ansonia in 1989 and received two scholarships from the Darke County Foundation. She studied physical therapy at Bowling Green State University and the Medical College of Ohio.

“It was incredibly helpful to receive those scholarships since my program was year-round and left little time for a job,” said VanSkyock. “It feels pretty special that I am now working in Darke County schools and helping to serve the same community that supported me.”

Raising a family in Darke County was a priority for VanSkyock. Her daughter Megan and son Connor graduated from Versailles and both received DCF scholarships.

“I am very appreciative to everyone who helps make these scholarships possible!” said VanSkyock.

Dr. Preston Deeter graduated from Mississinawa Valley in 2013 and double-majored in biology and animal science at the University of Findlay. He went on to Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, graduating in 2021 and joining Bruns Animal Clinic in Versailles.



Dr. Preston Deeter

“I am eternally grateful that people in our community were willing to donate to scholarships so I could focus on my education,” said Dr. Deeter. “I had jobs during college, but they weren’t such a burden so I could keep up my GPA.”

“I am excited to be back home and start giving back to the community that gave me so much,” said Dr. Deeter. “If it weren’t for the people of Darke County, and for all my 4-H and FFA experiences, I wouldn’t be where I am today.”



Sarah Rindler

Sarah VandenBosch Rindler, Greenville class of 1998 scholarship recipient, went to Bowling Green State University and the Medical College of Ohio. Because most scholarship funds at the Foundation are

established by residents of Darke County, recipients may be familiar with the donors, as Rindler was.

“Receiving support from a family that I knew meant a lot,” said Rindler. “It gave me more incentive to do my best and succeed since I knew that people in the community were contributing to the cost of my education.”

Rindler lives in Yorkshire and works at Wayne HealthCare as a physical therapist. She is a long-time donor to the Foundation as a way to show her appreciation for her scholarship.

The VandenBosch family generated subsequent scholarship winners, including Sarah’s niece Elizabeth Shields, GHS ’12, and nephew Jason Shields, GHS ’17.



Andrea Raterman

Andrea Swank Raterman was a standout athlete at Franklin-Monroe and continued playing volleyball at Capital University, graduating with a degree in K-3 Education. She received a Foundation scholarship in 2000.

“I was the first in my family to go to college,” said Raterman. “I knew the financial drain that comes with the opportunity.” Raterman teaches first grade in Russia and lives in Versailles with her family.

“It’s truly amazing to have such community support,” Raterman added. “Their generosity is allowing future generations to pursue their aspirations and make their dreams a reality.”

35 Years of Giving

\$4.5 million
awarded in scholarships
and community grants

1,700
scholarship awards

750
community grant
awards



(Three Stories continued from p.1)

importance of donations cannot be overstated, said Lynn.

"We want to get our name out there," said Lynn, not only to benefit patients, but to make the public more aware of how it can lend a hand to suffering members of our community.

The most-requested service is transportation, said Lynn, and volunteer drivers receive \$.50/mile reimbursement. CADC is in serious need of more drivers, said Lynn, especially those willing to drive outside Darke County.

"If a patient doesn't have a family member to take them to chemotherapy, then they can't get their chemo," said Lynn. "Often when a driver connects with a patient, they become friends," she added, making the experience more significant.

"A driver just started with us who said, 'I've been wanting to do this because my dad had cancer,'" said Lynn. "So many families have been touched by what we do."

For more information, call CADC at (937) 548-9960.

Shelter from Violence

Domestic violence is a devastating reality in Darke County, a community often perceived as safe and peaceful. Last year, advocates for Darke County Shelter from Violence interacted with about 400 individuals involved in a domestic violence incident.

The Greenville shelter housed 23 women and 18 children last year, protecting them from abusive relationships, but the group's services extend beyond the home. Victims receive help with legal fees, groceries, and personal items.

The Darke County Foundation has helped Shelter from Violence by providing grants from its Friends of the Foundation Fund.

"If someone is having trouble, they can call me any time, and I'll

help them," said Annie Sonner, director of the shelter for 31 years. "I meet one-on-one with women, provide safety, help with legal steps, help file police reports, transportation. I accompany victims to court to help them file for a protection order."

The shelter is one of the least-funded shelters in Ohio, said Sonner. It operates on \$60,000 a year, and that includes maintaining the home, buying household items, and stipends for Sonner and 2 advocates. Two additional advocates volunteer.



Annie Sonner

"One of our advocates once received help from Shelter from Violence," said Sonner. "She had several children and an abusive husband. She went on to get a college degree, then a master's degree in social work. She is an amazing counselor for victims."

Sonner said much of her work is in response to about 25 police and sheriff reports she gets each month. She or an advocate reaches out to victims on the phone or at their home. Victims receive printed information about the shelter and other resources and are encouraged to call Sonner's personal phone. Sonner said she receives about 200 calls per year.

Overcoming the stigma of domestic violence is another aspect of Sonner's job. She speaks at local schools about teen dating violence, bullying, and abuse that occurs through cellphones and social media.

Convincing victims to seek help is a challenge, said Sonner. "People sometimes feel ashamed, they feel like there is no way out of their relationship. Sometimes they don't want to leave because they love their abuser. Every case is unique."

Victims (or advocates for victims) may call Shelter from Violence at (937) 548-4679.

*Zak Morgan performs for
Mississinawa Valley students.*



Photo by Becky Maurer.

Darke County Center for the Arts

For students in rural areas, watching professional theater is usually a rare and privileged experience. For Darke County youth, however, extraordinary musicians, actors and dancers are as close as their school gymnasium -- or a short ride to Greenville's majestic and historic Memorial Hall.

Darke County Center for the Arts brings the arts to life—at no charge—for all local K-12 students, thanks in part to regular grants from the Darke County Foundation.

"Many kids would never get to see live performances," said Andrea Jordan, director of DCCA. "Our shows overflow with energy that makes the arts meaningful and memorable." DCF is proud to help inspire creativity, educate, and encourage cultural diversity through the arts.



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Scholarships Awarded for Edison State Police Academy



Marissa Stump

The Darke County Foundation is helping make our community a safe place to live. The Foundation awarded \$2,500 scholarships to 2 students attending the Basic Peace Officer Academy at Edison State Community College.



Greg Fourman

Marissa Stump and Gregory Fourman, both of Greenville, will complete 750 hours of training and graduate in June. After passing the state exam, Stump and Fourman will be equipped to protect the citizens of their community.

A lifelong resident of Darke County, Fourman said, "I will utilize my training to keep my family, friends and colleagues safe. I hope to assist the public in a calm and confident manner to seek positive resolutions."



The Darke County Foundation awarded two \$2,500 scholarships to attend the Edison State Peace Officer Academy. Shown (left to right): Greenville Police Dept. members Lt. Ryan Bengel, Lt. Scot Ross and Chief Eric Roberts; Christy Praker, director of the Darke County Foundation; Bettye and Ray Laughlin of Greenville, scholarship donors.

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