

## **Organized Philanthropy Helps Shape Indiana**

Governor Mitch Daniels recently recognized the important work of Indiana community foundations by proclaiming Sunday, July 11, Community Foundation Day. Our state's incredible community foundation infrastructure is part of a larger philanthropic sector. Together, Indiana's 1,400 private, corporate and community foundations make a significant impact on our state's economy, education, environment and people in need.

Indiana's formal philanthropies exist for the benefit of the common good. In short, they are incorporated charitable entities that function to distribute funds strategically, in order to address short-term needs and long-term challenges.

Though foundations often play a role in times of crisis, they are more than emergency ATMs. Foundations actively strategize and work together to create a better future for Indiana communities. Where foundations provide added benefit is their strategic approach to giving. It takes planning to be prepared to respond well to grim circumstances as they arise. Significantly, it takes even more effort to prepare for the future. Foundation leaders take it upon themselves to know the geographic regions in which they fund and often focus their grantmaking on a particular need.

## **Foundations as Innovators**

Organized philanthropy often takes on the role of innovator. Foundations have the leeway to take risks where others cannot, strategically funding research or incubating pilot projects that lead to breakthrough solutions. The organizations represented by Indiana Grantmakers Alliance have been leaders and partners in initiatives with local, state and national impact.

Every resident in each of Indiana's 92 counties has access to a community foundation or affiliate fund in their home county—an asset no other state enjoys. In 1990, Lilly Endowment Inc. created the Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT) initiative to seed the development of community foundations across the state. These organizations both raise funds and give funds back to the communities they represent. They provide the structure that helps people come together to plan and give wisely.

Take time to learn about and support your county's community foundation. A community foundation locator can be found at [www.incommunityfoundations.org](http://www.incommunityfoundations.org). Explore the many ways philanthropy is serving your community and its needs. Members of the Indiana Grantmakers Alliance, a nonprofit organization based in Indianapolis, are listed on our website at [www.indianagrntmakers.org](http://www.indianagrntmakers.org).

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