

How Does WCCF Conduct Grant Making?

The ability to award grants drives WCCF. Grants that positively impact the community are one of the true measures of a successful community foundation.

A successful grant process begins with clear communication. Brochures, web-based information, printed guidelines, newsletters, and annual reports all help tell the WCCF story.

Grant guidelines detail the kinds of grants WCCF makes, as well as those it doesn't. It clearly describes WCCF's applications process and requirements.

WCCF directs board and staff to work directly with potential grantees to complete grant applications. They may rely on interim reports and staff project reviews to monitor the progress of a grant. They conduct site visits and gather in-depth information about each potential organization and may also recommend applicants to the board or committees for approval.

Defining parameters and strategies is an essential part of the WCCF board. They may also help to develop a clear vision of how the foundation's grants fulfill its purpose and whether or not they align with the intent of donors and our mission.

In some cases WCCF may support external evaluation of their grants in an effort to track community impact and the value of grants they make.

WCCF may also evaluate a project or a series of similar projects in depth or might request an outside evaluation of a project. This provides an independent and objective look at the project and its accomplishments.

Another method of WCCF evaluating grantees is the cluster evaluations. Cluster evaluation may include projects with the same strategies focusing on different outcomes or different strategies focusing on the same outcomes that eventually illuminate separate pieces of a larger picture.

Usually the projects in cluster evaluations use common definitions to make it possible to compare the procedure and outcomes from each project.

Once the board reviews the proposals and approves those believed to fit with WCCF's mission, the grantee is notified. The staff then monitors and evaluates the progress of the grants, and oversees the closing out of projects, including submission of final reports to WCCF.

“A successful grant process begins with clear communication. Brochures, web-based information, printed guidelines, newsletters, and annual reports all help tell the WCCF story.”

The kinds of Grants WCCF may honor:

- Project support: These support a prescribed set of activities to achieve a defined project outcome.
- Seed grants: These support new organizations or programs. The grantee can use the funds for feasibility studies, or initial staff and operation costs.
- Research or planning grants: These give the grantee time, support, and leverage to plan and gather information on a specific project.
- Matching or challenge grants: With these, WCCF matches the amount an organization or individual raises from other sources.
- Unrestricted or operating support: These grants can be used for the full range of activities, including operating expenses and overhead.
- Capital grants: These support finances land purchases, facilities construction or renovations, and similar activities.

What WCCF looks for in grant proposals:

- Credibility: Does the applicant organization know what it wants to accomplish? Is there evidence that it is currently achieving its goals? What kind of reputation does the organization enjoy within its community and beyond?
- Capability: What skills do the organization's staff and board have? Has the organization succeeded in similar endeavors of equal scale?
- Feasibility: Can the project get done? Has the organization allotted enough time and money?
- Importance: Should this project be done? Is it significant? Is there evidence that the project will trigger action or work that the community wants? Given WCCF's other funding opportunities, is this one worthy of support at this time?

For information on submitting a grant or whether your organization could be a candidate for a WCCF grant, contact Sandor Brattstrom at 815-740-6301.

THE Will County
Community FOUNDATION

An affiliate of The Chicago Community Trust

54 N. Ottawa St., Suite B20 Joliet, IL 60432-4347



WCCF Board Chairman Ed Dollinger and Executive Director Sandor Brattstrom made a presentation at a recent Joliet Region Chamber meeting. From left to right: Sandor Brattstrom, Russ Slinkard, Jim Glasgow and Ed Dollinger.

“It is the mission of the Will County Community Foundation to engage donors in the charitable endeavors that matter to them for the good of our community.”

For information on how you can be a part of the Will County Community Foundation, please contact Executive Director Sandor Brattstrom by phone at 815-740-6301 or by e-mail at sandor@willcountycf.org.



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54 N. Ottawa St., Suite B20
Joliet, IL 60432-4347

Tel: 815.740.6301
Fax: 815.740.6315

www.WillCountyCF.org

Mohra Gavankar
Newsletter Editor

Ryan Sather
*Lewis University
Designer/Graphics*

Tonelli Fund Provides Scholarships to Local Students

Dennis Tonelli is a man of few words. But his actions speak volumes of his deep commitment to the future of the Will County community.

“I’ve always wanted life to be better for those who follow us,” he said of his dedication to the many organizations he serves.

“Making a difference is my motto,” he states. He is humbled to often be chosen as a leader in those organizations. He is comfortable in that role, knowing he can achieve significant milestones, partnering with the community.

Behind glasses, Tonelli’s eyes twinkle with a keen sense of humor and intelligence. They complement an all-inclusive smile that reveals his sensitivity.

“We must do everything to the best of our ability or not at all,” pointing to a plaque on his office wall that reads, “Always Finish.”

“If a task is once begun...Never leave it till it’s done...Be the labor great or small...Do it well or not at all.”

Born and raised in Joliet, Dennis attended Joliet Catholic High School and Joliet Junior College. A past resident of Lockport for 35 years he currently resides in Plainfield.

Dennis met his wife, the late Geraldine (Geri), when she was sixteen and he eighteen. They married two years later and started a family. Going away to college became a financial challenge, so he received an education at night and summer school.

Responding to the need to fund higher education, he suggested, “If I can make it possible for others to overcome financial challenges, it makes me feel better.”

In 1979, Dennis settled into a new business with partner Terrence Ruettinger, whom he had known since third-grade at St. Mary Magdalene School. Together, these two dynamic partners co-founded Ruettinger, Tonelli & Associates, Inc.



Dennis and Geraldine Tonelli

“His honesty is his best quality,” Ruettinger said of his forty-year business partner. “I’ve always had complete trust in his handling of business. He is persistently fair and considerate when dealing with employees and clients.”

Dennis lives by a code of ethics where integrity and professionalism stand supreme.

“Ethics is the practice of morality,” he recited. “Overall integrity and fiduciary responsibility are the most important.”

He said being strong-willed makes it easy for him to be dedicated to his principles.

“I’m not uncompromising and I don’t make up my mind quickly. I like to assess the situation before I decide.”

Although once he decides, he is steadfast, charging, “If you rely on things you know and trust, you can be confident in your decisions.”

In the community, Dennis can be counted on to be diplomatic but there is a line he will never cross.

“I will negotiate until we get the message across. I can be counted on to get the job done. I never give up!”

Dennis said he is unwavering in his support of the community because it’s his way of giving back.

“Anything I can do to promote goodwill that benefits the residents of Will County, is my goal.”

“His sensitivity to others is evident in his connectedness and generosity to the community,” Ruettiger said.

Dennis is more introspective and admits it wasn’t until the 1990s, after their children were young adults that he and Geri could enjoy the satisfaction in philanthropy.

“Geri, who always found the good in people, joined me in every decision to share our resources to give deserving students a fighting chance of success.”

Then with a twinkle in his eye says, “I guess because we enjoyed giving too.”

Together they established a donor-advised fund through the Will County Community Foundation, called the Tonelli Fund with scholarship funding contributions directed to Joliet Catholic Academy, St. Dennis School in Lockport, and Lewis University.

Dennis sees his partnership with WCCF as a perfect fit, and is secure in the knowledge that it is administered by a board who track changing needs of the community.

“Being educated does not necessarily guarantee success, but it can certainly help,” he notes.

He also said the main factors influencing his decisions in choosing WCCF were the matching grants made by Chicago Community Trust while it still achieves his goal of contributing to education. “So it is mutually beneficial.”

Reflecting on his past successes he takes into account certain factors that influenced his achievements and believes his peers determine professional success.

“But personal success to me is first achieving one’s objectives, and second, realization of one’s goals.”

He considers his success as raising two children who are responsible professionals and well-adjusted family members.

He said for Geri, family success was paramount and she was very proud of them. Their son, Rodney, is now the President at Ruettiger, Tonelli & Associates while daughter, Rhonda, is a speech therapist at Marian Joy Rehabilitation Center.

“Integrity and responsibility would be the most important lessons we taught them.”

Dennis considers the Will County Community Foundation already successful, having extended several grants for education and health services.

“Our goal is to continue to inform potential philanthropic donors of the opportunity to contribute to the foundation for the greater good of the citizens of Will County.”

Celebrating his retirement, Dennis now fills his days playing golf and steering the new First Community Bank in Lockport and Homer Glen.

WCCF: Firmly Rooted for the Future

By Sandor Brattstrom, *Executive Director*



As the new Executive Director, it is my honor to serve the residents of Will County leading your Community Foundation, addressing the needs of our citizens through the leadership of our Board of Directors, and the charitable giving of many individuals. Already I have been involved in my first round of grant-making and am excited to see the new approaches being taken. Think of WCCF as a permanent savings account of charitable giving for generations to come, strengthening our community now and forever!

This year WCCF will invest over \$168,000 to benefit thirteen charities addressing a variety of issues. These are grants that are helping kids through vital before or after school help;

working to fight obesity in children; preventing hunger by providing needed food assistance; and providing education and direction to struggling families.

Whether your specific passion or interest is in the arts, healthcare, or human services, you can open a fund (a savings account if you will) to facilitate your charitable giving. And while you are able to address your specific charitable interests, the income earned on the total assets of the foundation collectively work in a collaborative way to benefit our entire community. This is how we can today create a legacy for generations in the future!

To follow the theme established by my predecessor Sandra Cowgill, the seeds of the future of the Will County Community Foundation have been firmly planted, taken root, and we are growing. Whatever is the seed of your charitable interests, won’t you take time to plant it with the Will County Community Foundation?

WCCF Board Announces Three New Members

JAY BERGMAN

Jay Bergman is President and CEO of Petco Petroleum Corporation of Hinsdale. He is also Chairman of the Board of the American Heartland Bank & Trust Company, a Chicago area financial institution. A graduate of Joliet Central High School and Southern Illinois University, he was appointed to the Board of Trustees of Illinois State University in 2004 and is currently in his second term.



Jay Bergman

In 2008, he was appointed as a member of the Illinois Board of Higher Education and is the only person that concurrently serves as a university trustee and a public member of the IBHE in the state of Illinois.

“Many in the community would like to leave a lasting legacy to help those in the area,” he stated. “The WCCF gives them the opportunity to not only provide funding for the future but also to designate the type of programs that it should be used for.”

Jay said that for a number of years, he has been involved with another foundation that started with hardly anything and now has an endowment of nearly \$100 million adding, “I hope to use that knowledge to help the WCCF as it becomes an important part of our community.”

ALAN BRUGGEMAN

A 1966 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Alan Bruggeman served as a carrier pilot during the Vietnam war. In 1974 he graduated from Tulane University School of Law and immediately started as an attorney in Will County. Presently he is with Bruggeman, Hurst & Associates in Mokena.

Alan has a long history of board associations and has served on the boards of Hands of Hope of Illinois; Health Directions, a for-profit business of Ingalls Hospital, and the U.S. Naval Academy Class of 1966 Foundation.

“I look forward to working on fundraising events for the Will County Community Foundation to raise awareness in the business community about WCCF,” he said. “I hope to promote its work to strengthen education, neighborhoods and the safety of our communities through charity and pride in Will County.”

Alan is married to Laura Golden. They enjoy golf and traveling to warm places during the winter.

DR. THEODORE M. KANELLAKAS

Dr. Theodore M. Kanellakes has been a practicing allergist in Joliet for 33 years. A graduate of Stritch School of Medicine-Loyola University, he served two years as a Major in the Army Medical Corp in Vietnam, followed by a fellowship at the University of Michigan Medical Center.



Dr. Theodore M. Kanellakas

He was recently elected Vice-President of the Illinois State Medical Society. Currently he is the Vice Chairman of the Illinois AMA delegation to the American Medical Association.

He serves on the Foundation Board of Provena St. Joseph’s Medical Center and is a member of the Board of Directors for the Center for Economic Development of the Will County.

One of the high points in his career was the establishment the Will-Grundy County Medical Clinic, the first free clinic in the state of Illinois and the third in the nation. He is one of the Clinic’s co-founding members.

He said he is excited to play a role in the future improvement and success of Will County.

“I have been very active both in the medical community and the Will County Community in trying to improve the quality of life. My role is to continue to work with the Foundation to encourage donor contributions through my involvement in other aspects of this community and with other individuals.”

He hopes to be a good ambassador adding, “I am privileged to once again contribute my expertise and time in improving the quality of life in Will County.”

Dr. Kanellakes is married to Patti and is the proud father of three sons Milton, Theodore D (Elaine), and Christian.

WCCF Board Members Ensure Continued Success

Building and maintaining a strong WCCF board does not just happen. It is a continuous process. The board is the public face of WCCF. Those who serve on the board reflect and interact with the community to ensure accountability. This ensures the foundation’s success as a fundraiser and grant-making entity.

WCCF Announces 2008 Grants

The Will County Community Foundation (WCCF) grant committee has recommended seven proposals for grant renewal and one collaborative proposal for the 2008 grant cycle. The committee recommended funding of \$168,200.

GRANT RENEWALS

Child Care Resource and Referral - A renewal grant of \$10,000 for the continued support of the Family, Friend & Neighbor Childcare Training Program in Will County.

Education Service Network NFP, Inc. - A renewal grant of \$10,000 in support of the Fairmont Partnership's School Community Literacy-Wellness Coordinator.

George Werden Buck Boys and Girls Club - A renewal grant of \$25,000 for continued support of the Boys and Girls Club after school program. This program will serve ninety students, whose academic performance will be tracked.

Harvey Brooks Motivation and Development Foundation - A grant of \$10,000 to support "Coachables" programming. The entire grant must be expended for implementation of the Coachables program for girls. The grant is contingent on Harvey Brooks applying for program support from the Women's Sports Foundation GoGirlGo! Program, with this contingency must be met by December 2008.

Provena Saint Joseph Medical Center - A renewal grant of \$25,000 for continued support of the Kids 'N Nature Adventure program.

Spanish Community Center - A renewal grant of \$12,000 to support training and implementation of the Creative Curriculum at the Spanish Center and the Lambs Fold Woman's Shelter.

Warren- Sharpe Community Center - A renewal grant of \$16,200 to support the addition of computer trainers to provide support for day programming.

COLLABORATIVE GRANT

Northern Illinois Food Bank - The grants committee recommends a grant of \$60,000 to support a Backpack pilot program at the Parks Elementary School. The program provides food-filled backpacks to children at risk of chronic hunger or low nutrition on weekends when they do not have access to other food assistance programs and involves collaboration between a well established organization—the Northern Illinois Food Bank, and School District 86, which is directed by Superintendent Phyllis M. Wilson.

*WCCF will present grants of
\$168,000 at its Grants Reception:
Thursday, Nov. 13, from 5:30 – 8:00 pm
University of St. Francis,
San Damiano Hall, Motherhouse 3rd. Floor,
520 Plainfield Road, Joliet IL, 60435
For information call 815-740-6301*

Meiners Retires from Board of Directors

DAVIN W. MEINERS

Dave Meiners retires after serving as one of the original members of the WCCF Board, and wishes the board much success.

"At the first meeting, I became excited," he said. "I realized what an asset the WCCF could become for the Will County Community."

Dave is a member of the Board of the United Way of Will County and a former board member of the Will County Center for Economic Development.

"It was a pleasure to work with the Chicago Community Trust, the Board of the WCCF, to establish the WCCF brand," Dave said.

He hopes that, in the future, when someone contemplates his or her legacy and giving, that WCCF will be thought of immediately as the place to go for advice.

"We need to educate residents about the existence and purpose of the WCCF," he suggests. "Philanthropists in Will County need to know that the WCCF can assist with their future giving."



Davin W. Meiners

He said he will miss the board meetings where he met some of the most generous and caring people, and where he witnessed the first grant awards being presented. "It was extremely rewarding to see the fruits of one's labor," he said.

Dave retired after a diverse 33-year career with Illinois Bell/SBC as Director of External and Government Affairs and is now a part-time contract engineer for AT&T.

Dave has been married to Charlene for 33 years. They have three sons; Jonathan, Steven & Jeffrey.