



Union County Foundation
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MAY 2019

Year two for annual support campaign

Become a “Friend of the Foundation” for 2019



Chris Schmenk
Board Chairperson



Dave Vollrath
Executive Director

For much of its 25th anniversary year in 2018, The Union County Foundation reflected on historic milestones in the organization’s growth. From our incorporation in 1993, to opening an office in downtown Marysville in 2000, to launching our annual dinner celebration in 2013, these moments were vital markers as the Foundation expanded.

But the most important part of our history is hard to measure: it’s the countless people who stepped up over the past quarter century to make the

Foundation dream a reality. Whether they served as board members, event volunteers or donors, these individuals shared a desire to make Union County an even better place to live.

The funds they have created are many and diverse! People support their passions and the Foundation provides an outlet to do just that. Looking ahead, a major challenge for UCF is how to staff and manage the 107 funds currently housed there – an ever-increasing number thanks to our citizens’ generosity.

That inspired a new effort launched last year: a program to help offset the operating costs needed for an \$12 million foundation. The Foundation board calls this campaign the “Friends of the Foundation,” and has decided to make it an annual activity.

On behalf of the UCF Trustees, we invite you join the 2019 “Friends of the Foundation” by utilizing the enclosed envelope or donating online to The Friends of the Foundation Fund at unioncountyfoundation.org.

Thanks so much for your support. Here’s to an even more successful next 25 years!

Retirement open house to honor Sue Devine

As we feature “Friends of the Foundation” in this newsletter, we announce with mixed feelings the retirement of one of UCF’s best friends: Sue Devine, director of finance and development. It’s a bittersweet farewell after her outstanding performance over 17 years.

Sue joined the Foundation in 2002 and served in several administrative roles before being promoted to her current position in 2007. A 1982 honors graduate of Bowling Green State University in finance and international business, she has lived in Marysville since 1994.

Currently president of the Marysville Board of Education, Sue is married to Marysville native Steve Devine. The couple has three children, Stephanie, Paul and Connor and recently welcomed their first grandchild, Stephen.

To honor Sue, the Foundation is hosting an informal “drop by” pizza party on Friday, May 31 from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the UCF office, 126 N. Main St. Sue’s friends and colleagues from her years of service are invited to stop in to wish her good luck.



Retiring staff member Sue Devine at an MHS scholarship presentation

Thanks to the 2018 Friends!

The first-ever members of the “Friends of the Foundation,” whose contributions helped offset operating costs, were:

David and Lynne Allen
Dr. Phillip Atkins
Cathy Conlon Blackford
Ken Boehm
Azalene Bond
Brashares Foundation
Tom and Jane Brower
Jim and Susan Cesa
Don and Roberta Coder
Matt and Evie Collins
Michelle Cramer
Gerry Dackin
Ann Davis
Bob and Pat DeGroot
Steve and Sue Devine
Elks (inter-fund)
Kimberly Godfrey
David and Teresa Goins
Dave and Judi Green
Le Herron
Barbara Holcomb
Chip and Staci Hubbs
Ingram Funeral Home
McAuliffe’s Ace
Tom McCarthy
John and Sharon Merriman
Jim and Carolyn Mitchell
Avanelle Oberlin
Shirley Ormeroid
Rita Parker
Thomas and Donna Rausch
Carmen Shields
Julie and Cory Spain
JoAnn Stillings Family Trust
Trianfo Family Trust
David and Jane Vollrath
David and Andrea Weaver
Jim Westfall
Scott Westfall
Anthony and Sarah Will
Dwight and Dawn Youngkin
Steve and Bonnie Yurasek

Annual giving is just one way many UCF “Friends” are enhancing the community through the Foundation. A few examples of their other programs are on the following page.

Meet a few “Friends of the Foundation”

College scholarships. Community dinners. Drug prevention programs. Town fireworks funds. Cancer research. Housing assistance. Kids’ camps. Memorial plazas. Health care foundations. Food pantries. Books, backpacks, toys, clothing donations. Sports team sponsorships. Livestock sales.

Donors to the Union County Foundation have countless causes that fit the organization’s Vision Statement: “To enhance the quality of life for all the citizens of Union County by promoting and facilitating charitable giving in Union County.”

Last year alone, the Foundation awarded \$798,814 to hundreds of people and projects – allocations that ranged from less than \$20 to more than \$30,000. In its first 25 years, UCF has invested more than \$9 million in the community, through the generosity of local donors.

As we reach out to promote this year’s “Friends of the Foundation,” meet a few of them who have launched other initiatives as well.

The DeGroot Family Scholarship

Created by: Bob and Pat DeGroot

Focus of support: A Marysville High School senior, preferably planning to major in business or engineering.

Background: Since 2009, the DeGroots annually have funded a scholarship for an MHS graduating senior, to show the couple’s appreciation for their adopted hometown. The DeGroots moved to Marysville in 1965, after Bob purchased the local Firestone retail franchise from its previous owner. Previously a corporate district manager for Firestone, he operated DeGroots Tire Service until he retired in 1993.

Founders’ comments: Originally from New York, both Bob and Pat quickly grew to love Marysville’s small-town atmosphere. “I used to walk uptown and knew everybody I passed by name,” Bob recalled. Pat noted, “We don’t have children, and with this scholarship we thought we’d do what we can for other kids.”



Bob and Pat DeGroot around the time they moved to Marysville in the 1960s (left) and the couple today.

The Paul and Betty Devine Fund

Created by: Betty Devine and her son, Steve

Focus of support: Special projects of MHS athletics and assisting students who need financial help for pay-to-play sports, uniforms or equipment.

Background: Created in 2016, the fund honors the late Paul Devine (1924-2012), a Marysville native who met his wife, Betty, while a student at Heidelberg College. The couple married in 1950, returning a few years later to Marysville where Paul worked for Scotts for 37 years. A gifted athlete, Paul excelled in football, which he played in high school and college. After graduating, he was a coach and teacher at Covington High School.

Founders’ comments: “Paul believed that being involved with sports taught kids so many good lessons about life and themselves. It makes me happy to know this fund is helping children who need a hand up,” said Betty Devine.



Paul and Betty Devine on their wedding day in 1950 (left) and Betty today.

The Jeffrey L. “Griff” Griffith Scholarship

Created by: Carmen Shields

Focus of support: A North Union High School senior, with athletics participation, leadership abilities and financial need.

Background: Launched last year by his wife, Carmen, the annual scholarship is a tribute to the late Jeffrey “Griff” Griffith (1954-2017), a 1972 NUHS graduate who earned All-Conference honors in football and All-State in baseball. He was a lifelong, avid athlete and outdoorsman, who worked for 42 years for Ohio Edison as a lineman.

Founders’ comments: “Griff was the kindest, hardest-working person I ever knew,” said Carmen Shields. “He felt it was so important to be involved in your community and he loved Richwood and North Union High School. Griff knew that sports teach kids discipline, camaraderie and sacrifice – I want to honor his legacy with this scholarship.”



Griff Griffith in the 1970s at an Ohio Edison golf tournament (left) and Carmen Shields in 2018 with the first recipient of his namesake scholarship at North Union High School, Jacqueline Lortz

What is your passion, when it comes to living in Union County? To learn more about how you can create a charitable fund through The Union County Foundation, contact Executive Director David Vollrath, at 937-642-9618 or info@unioncountyfoundation.org.