



# A letter from our Chair

Mary Frey Bennett

Some might say that philanthropy and community service are part of being a Frey. It is something that my siblings, cousins and I have observed of our grandparents and parents throughout our lives. The drive to make the places we love—the places that we call home—strong and vibrant is a core to our identity.

After dedicating my career to the nonprofit sector and serving as a Frey Foundation trustee for the past four years, I was honored to become the Foundation's chair at the start of 2017. I am thrilled to serve in this capacity. I am also grateful for the thought and intention my father and his siblings put into preparing my generation for the significant opportunity and responsibility to lead our family's foundation.

Today, our multigenerational board shares a commitment to embracing our differences and learning together. Our parents' generation has long-standing relationships in the communities we serve and a proven track record of forging successful collaborations. Members of my generation bring a new set of experiences, relationships, perspectives and ideas to the table.

More significant than our intergenerational board however, is our collective commitment to learning from the communities we serve. To get to a place of real and lasting change, we must dig into core community issues. To this end, we've been on a listening tour, gathering information from our grantees, community members and civic leaders. Our intention is to use this information to evaluate and refine our grantmaking strategies in the near future.

For the Frey Foundation, place matters. We remain committed to West and Northern Michigan. Alongside foundation staff, our board is working to understand how community issues differ throughout our service area. For example, we recognize that access to affordable housing looks different in Grand Rapids than it does in rural Northern Michigan. Through our research we hope to uncover these nuances so that we can find meaningful solutions and programs to support through our grants.

My predecessor and long-time Frey Foundation chair, David Frey, has said that our legacy is making great game-changing grants. In this new leadership role, I am excited for the challenge to continue this legacy and build on it.

Thank you for being on this path with us. We are grateful for the opportunity to share resources, deepen relationships and carry on our family tradition of strengthening our communities.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Frey Bennett".

**FREY FOUNDATION**

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