Celebrating 45 Years of Community & Collaboration

A Message from Board Chair Mary Frey Bennett

This year marks 45 years of grantmaking at the Frey Foundation! We are thrilled to be reaching this milestone. Through three generations, the Frey Foundation has centered its philanthropy through the lens of community. A sense of place is at the heart of our work and we are forever grateful for this opportunity.

Over the years, a lot has changed. The field of family philanthropy has grown and matured, as has our foundation. Through it all, important hallmarks of our organization have remained true, including our commitment to place and collaboration.

Place is core to the Frey Foundation’s identity. West and Northern Michigan communities connect our family to its history and legacy. For us, place is the tie that binds, and we are intentional about keeping community at the heart of our philanthropy. In fact, we believe that the best neighborhoods intentionally make room for everyone and create a sense of belonging.

In 2015, our board of trustees began a journey to reexamine our grantmaking in one of our key program areas—Building Community. We wanted to dig in deeper to be a part of creating meaningful impact. We focused on listening and learning from the communities we serve in order to understand the current challenges and also identify great programs and solutions that were already working.

Ultimately, we saw the opportunity to build on efforts that improve housing affordability and accessibility, understanding there is no single response to this issue and that different communities require different approaches. Continuing an attribute of the Frey Foundation passed down from our second generation to the third generation, the team began convening and collaborating with partners in both regions to identify innovative new ideas.

In this report, you will see some of the results of these efforts. You will also hear from some of our stellar partners who are leading the way in the quest to ensure all community members have access to quality housing that they can afford.

On behalf of our board and staff, it is an honor to serve alongside you in this work. Together, we are fostering innovation and strengthening communities where families can thrive. Just imagine what we can all accomplish in the next 45 years!

With thanks and appreciation,

Mary Frey Bennett

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