





## GAME CHANGER

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### AT GRAND VICTORIA FOUNDATION WE BELIEVE IN THE PROMISE THAT ILLINOIS COMMUNITIES CAN BE GREAT PLACES TO LIVE AND WORK, WITH QUALITY EDUCATION, ECONOMIC VITALITY, AND A THRIVING NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

Many leaders of Illinois community foundations share similar hopes for their communities. They want to make sure their young children show up at school ready to learn, that their residents can find jobs in a changing economy, that growth will produce livable communities and protect cherished natural areas for generations to come.

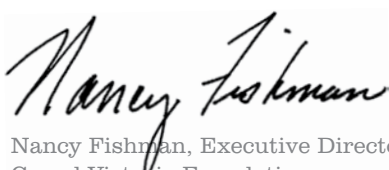
But until recently, community foundations outside Chicago were mostly small-scale operations with little capacity to take on such issues. Many had no operating endowment; some had no paid staff. Grantmaking was primarily reactive, and driven by the wishes of individual donors. Few community foundations had the experience to actively work through a strategy to achieve focused goals set by the broader community.

Grand Victoria Foundation set out to change this picture: to build active local philanthropy outside Chicago that could lead community revitalization efforts, develop place-based solutions to common problems, and work together with us and others to achieve things at a scale that really makes a difference for the people of Illinois.

Because we believe the best way to achieve results at scale is to start at scale, we launched Communityworks with a bold commitment: to support foundations across the state by providing substantial human and financial resources.

We meant Communityworks to be a game changer. And the evidence shows we're succeeding. Local philanthropy is now a strong and growing sector in Illinois. Most of the foundations that joined Communityworks have been transformed (their word, not ours). They have become robust institutions, with the endowments and staffing to undertake serious strategic work. They are leading community change efforts that, eight years ago, would have been unthinkable. Together, those efforts are producing significant results in early education, land use and protection, and workforce development. Just as important, the community foundations are achieving these results by engaging local residents, donors, and partners, and that engagement continues to build.

Because success breeds more success — because enthusiasm is contagious — because endowments grow over time — the community foundations are now positioned for growth and leadership over decades to come. *Nothing can stop it now.*



Nancy Fishman, Executive Director  
Grand Victoria Foundation



# communityWORKS

- 1 Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln | Springfield
- 2 Community Foundation of Decatur/Macon County | Decatur
- 3 Community Foundation of East Central Illinois | Champaign
- 4 Community Foundation of the Great River Bend | Bettendorf, Iowa
- 5 Community Foundation of Grundy County | Morris
- 6 Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley | Kankakee
- 7 Community Foundation of the Quincy Area | Quincy
- 8 DeKalb County Community Foundation | Sycamore
- 9 The DuPage Community Foundation | Wheaton
- 10 Evanston Community Foundation | Evanston
- 11 McHenry County Community Foundation | Woodstock
- 12 The Moline Foundation | Moline
- 13 Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation | Oak Park
- 14 Southeastern Illinois Community Foundation | Effingham

## NUTS AND BOLTS

Communityworks sought to build a network of foundations with capable leadership, adequate resources, engaged local partners, and a strategic commitment to create place-based solutions to local problems.

Communityworks began with eighteen (later sixteen) partners, ranging from small to very small. Grand Victoria Foundation gave the foundations significant funding and other supports, and outlined a transformational strategy to move them toward a leadership role in their communities on issues they shared with each other and with Grand Victoria Foundation. In addition, Communityworks convened the foundations to learn together and, where possible, collaborate around those shared interests in early childhood care and education, workforce development, and land use and protection.

By 2008, Communityworks had seeded broad changes in the original participants. Most had adopted new tools and attained a new level of professionalism in their operations. Fledgling foundations had established themselves and begun to grow; more established foundations had taken up the challenge of engaging their communities with imagination and gusto. They expanded beyond the traditional community foundation stewardship of donor-advised funds toward active engagement with local leaders exploring local interests and priorities. From these conversations they developed community impact plans, and began marshalling resources strategically to address those priorities. Their median assets more than quadrupled – an indication that their communities welcomed their new, more active role. The foundations began to collaborate not only with local partners, but with one another. All this is reported in *Communityworks: Everything Changed (2008)*.

### PHASE 1 MAY 2003 – MAY 2005

Financial and technical support to build leadership, communications, and capacity to raise and manage funds:

\$50,000/year, two years operating support, part of which could be used for salary;  
\$50,000 2:1 challenge grant for Communityworks endowment;  
participation in Learning Support Network.

### PHASE 2 JUNE 2005 – MAY 2008

Financial and technical support to deploy capacities on one or more target issues:

\$60,000/year, three years general operating support;  
\$200,000 1:1 challenge grant for Communityworks endowment;  
Community convenings, development of Community Impact Plan, participation in Learning Support Network.

### PHASE 3 SEPTEMBER 2008 – OCTOBER 2011

Package One

*Operating grants:* year 1 \$50,000; year 2 \$40,000; year 3 \$30,000;  
*Optional matching gift* of \$100,000 per year for administrative endowments;  
continued participation in Learning Support Network and Action Hubs.

Package Two

*Operating grants:* year 1 \$50,000; year 2 \$40,000; year 3 \$30,000;  
A \$1 million grant for permanent administrative endowment and a \$1 million grant to the permanent Communityworks endowment.  
*Optional matching grants* to build operating and/or Communityworks endowments:  
1:1 match up to \$2 million over three years, matching gifts from new donors, Communityworks donors, and lapsed donors;  
continuing participation in Learning Support Network and Action Hubs;  
Action Hub Fund \$500,000 fund to support collaborative efforts designed to have a broader impact.

### PHASE 3 INVESTMENTS

Between 2008 and 2011, thirteen foundations continued with Communityworks for a third phase of capacity building and collaboration (one opted out of full participation but stayed on as a partner).

In this phase Grand Victoria Foundation sought to make sure that the foundations had the human and financial resources to implement their action plans and continue to grow as sustainable local organizations. In two packages (keyed to different levels of foundation capacity), Grand Victoria Foundation provided operating grants and funded endowments for both operations and Communityworks programming. It offered to match endowment funds raised, an incentive to help the foundations engage donors to support implementation of their ambitious community plans.

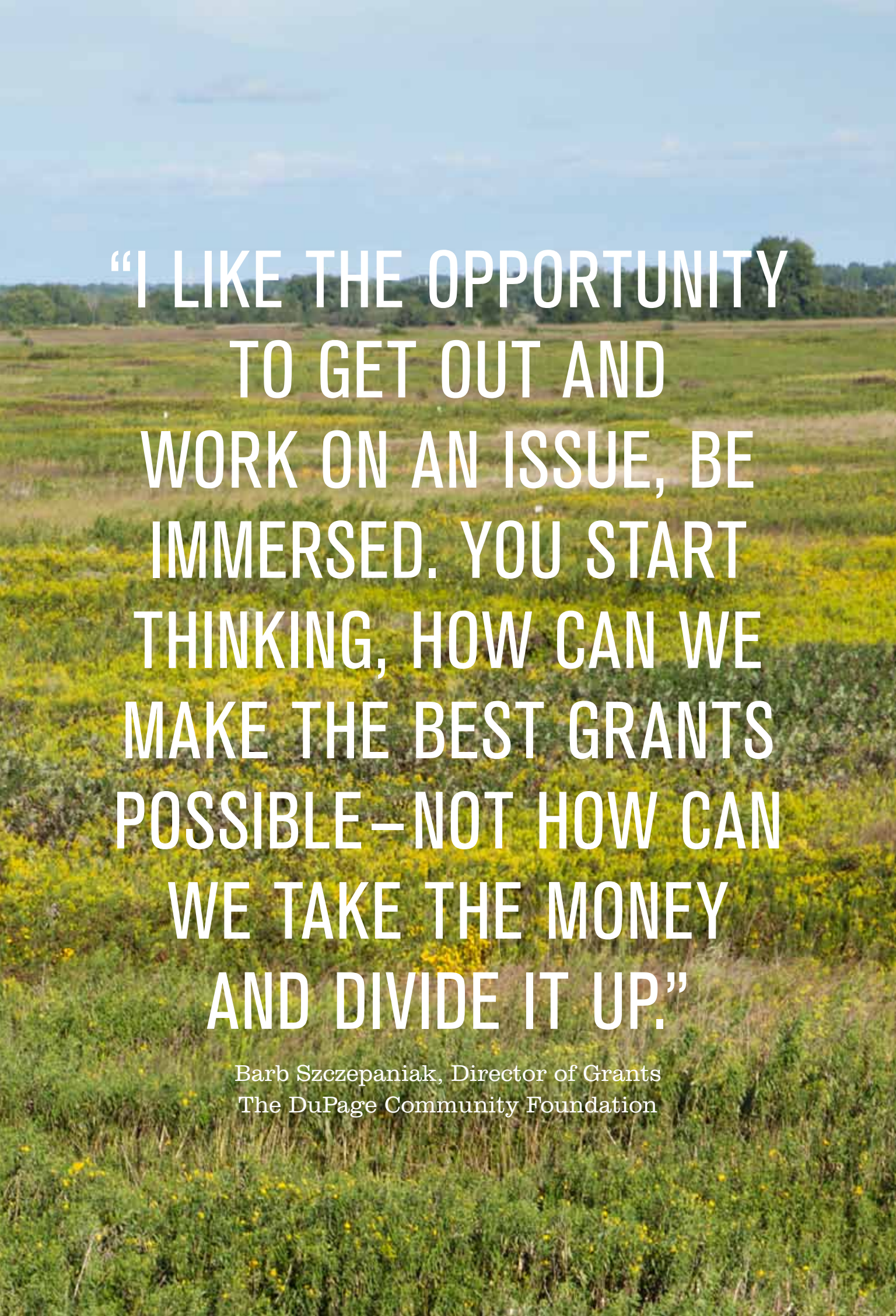
To make sure they had the capacity to carry out the plans, participants were required to have full-time program staff and were offered access to a network of content specialists. They were also invited to collaborate on early childhood, land use and protection, and workforce issues, with \$500,000 allocated by Grand Victoria Foundation for potential large-scale collaborative projects.

As outlined in these pages, Communityworks since 2008 has seen continued impressive development of foundation resources, capacity, and community leadership. Exciting local initiatives have sprung up around the state. Today, community foundations have become a vital and productive presence in their communities, a potential force for statewide change, and sturdy local partners for public and private sector efforts to improve the quality of life in Illinois.









**“I LIKE THE OPPORTUNITY  
TO GET OUT AND  
WORK ON AN ISSUE, BE  
IMMERSED. YOU START  
THINKING, HOW CAN WE  
MAKE THE BEST GRANTS  
POSSIBLE—NOT HOW CAN  
WE TAKE THE MONEY  
AND DIVIDE IT UP.”**

Barb Szczepaniak, Director of Grants  
The DuPage Community Foundation



# GROWTH

## AS A RESULT OF COMMUNITYWORKS, LOCAL PHILANTHROPY ACROSS ILLINOIS IS STRONG AND GROWING.

Over the eight years of Communityworks, the community foundations have greatly expanded both their resources and their capabilities. The numbers tell part of the tale. Participants’ endowed assets have increased more than tenfold, on average, since 2003 — a reflection of both the Grand Victoria Foundation investment and of the foundations’ new, higher profile in their communities. Together, the 13 current participants have endowed assets of nearly \$225 million. Whereas before most participants had no operating endowments, today they all have such endowments, collectively worth \$20 million — critical resources to support their leadership work. They have achieved this growth in a period of financial crises that continue to shake the nonprofit world.

When Communityworks began, foundations averaged one employee. Adding professionals in program and administration has brought them to the point where almost all have at least three full-time staff, and half have more. Program staff, in particular, have generated a significant level of new activity, and are often the linchpins of collaborations with community partners and other foundations.

### NEW CAPACITY AND SKILLS

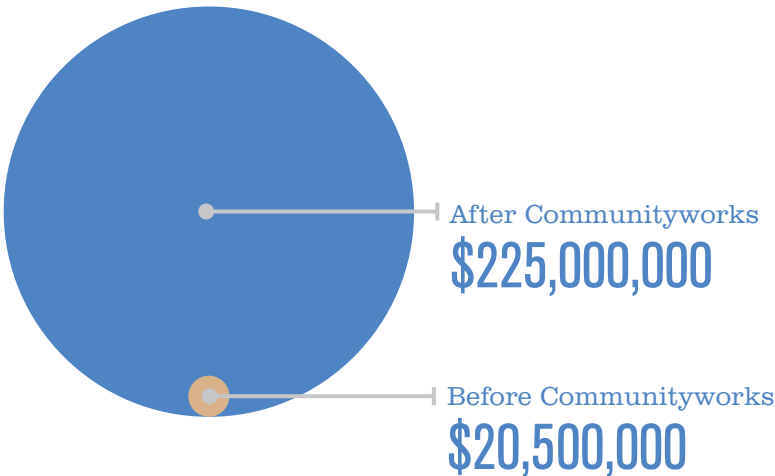
Capacity building, which was a major feature of Phases 1 and 2, has also paid off. Foundations now use the tools they learned through Communityworks across all areas of their work. Decatur/Macon, for example, worked through its recent leadership transition in a thoughtful, strategic way, largely drawing on lessons and resources acquired through Communityworks.

Across the board, the foundations have shifted to a more strategic approach to their work. As Barb Szczepaniak, Director of Grants at DuPage, puts it: “You start thinking, will this really have an impact? How can we make the best grants possible? — not, how can we take the money and divide it up?” Great River Bend capped its reactive grantmaking at \$250,000 and allocates the rest of its funds to “negotiated strategic grants.” Says President and CEO Susan Skora, “Communityworks taught us that.” “The strategic approach is now part of the culture of the foundation,” says Land of Lincoln CEO John Stremsterfer.

Having been encouraged to convene local residents to develop their impact plans, foundations now routinely organize public meetings to explore areas of concern. “We learned to convene community members through Communityworks; now we’re showing others how to do it,” reported Deanna Cada, former Program Director at DeKalb County Community Foundation.

### TOTAL ENDOWMENT

Total endowments have grown 1000%.  
This type of growth makes it easier to attract more donors because they feel confident that the community foundation is here to stay.





“Transforming the purpose of the community foundation from depository of donor funds to a leader of community change—that really was transformational.”

Wegi Stewart, President, Community Foundation of Decatur/Macon County

CHANGE IN FULL-TIME STAFF

Expanded staff has brought additional capacity for strategic grantmaking and community connections.



“Our work on the education collaboration has shown the model,” says Decatur’s Wegi Stewart. “We’re looked at as a neutral place, where people with different interests can come together and reach agreement on how to do things more efficiently. For example, we’re working to get all the after-school tutoring programs together, so that we can look at the whole picture and see where we need to allocate resources. When we send out an invite, people respond because they understand the need to do things not as competitors but as collaborators.”

The foundations are engaging donors and partners to address local priorities in ways they seldom did before. The number of donors has grown nearly sevenfold since Communityworks began, to just over 14,000. All the foundations have leveraged additional resources, totaling over \$7.9 million, to support their work through Communityworks, along with \$700,000 in in-kind services.

In southeastern Illinois, the philanthropic scope has expanded geographically as well. Two original participants (Effingham and Mattoon) merged to form the Southeastern Illinois Community Foundation which is now an umbrella organization and is affiliating with regional funds in nearby cities.

The numerical totals, of course, mask individual differences, which are considerable, and don’t include the foundations that opted out after Phase 2. But among continuing participants, the growth not only in size but in community engagement and strategic grantmaking is unmistakable.

RESOURCES LEVERAGED

Investments by the foundations have in turn brought in new resources to their communities.

Hard dollars leveraged:

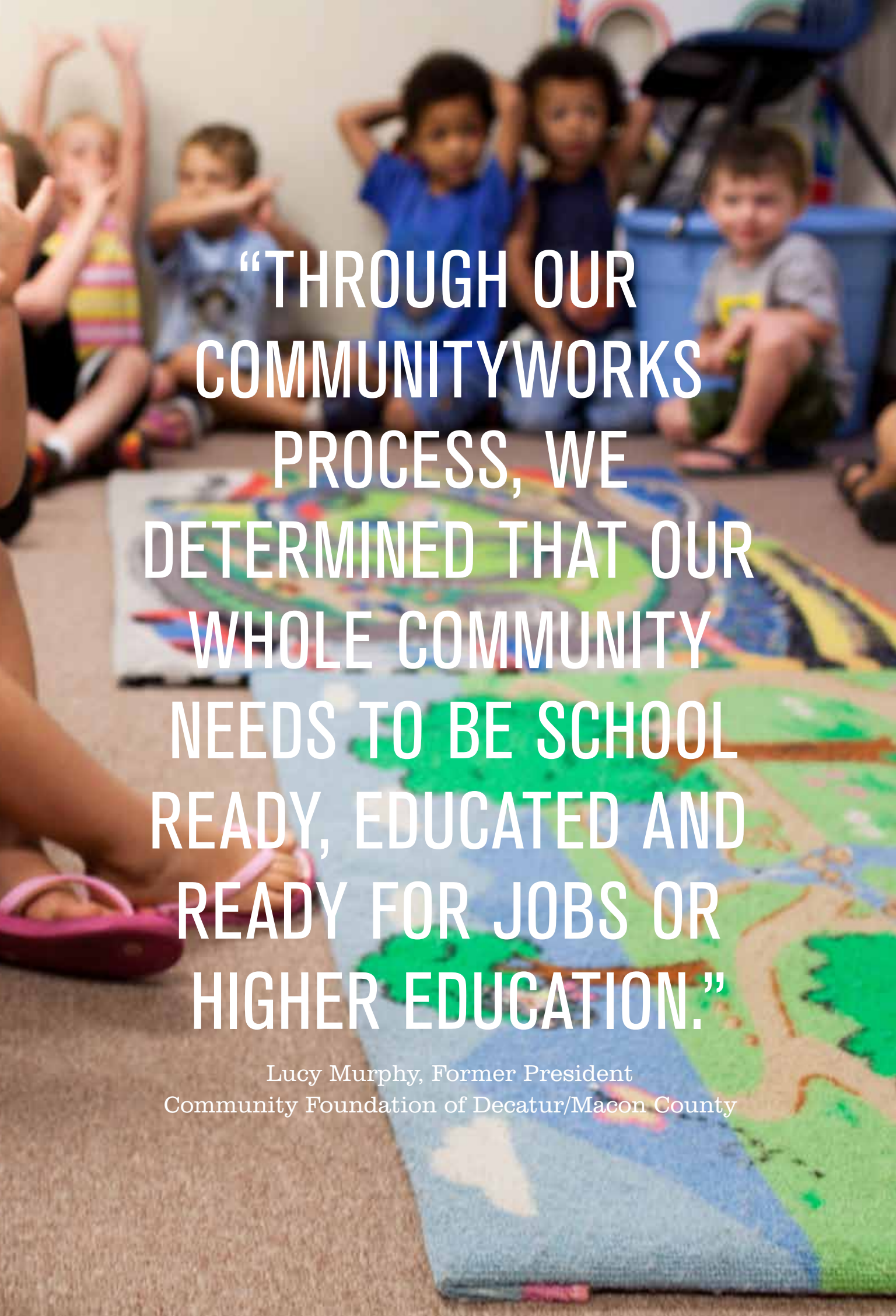
OVER \$7.9M

In-kind services leveraged:

\$734,850





A group of young children are sitting on a large, colorful play mat on a carpeted floor. The mat features a landscape design with green trees, a blue sky, and a winding path. The children are of various ethnicities and are dressed in casual clothing. Some are looking towards the camera, while others are looking away. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the classroom environment.

**“THROUGH OUR  
COMMUNITYWORKS  
PROCESS, WE  
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WHOLE COMMUNITY  
NEEDS TO BE SCHOOL  
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READY FOR JOBS OR  
HIGHER EDUCATION.”**

Lucy Murphy, Former President  
Community Foundation of Decatur/Macon County



# ACHIEVEMENTS

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## THE FOUNDATIONS HAVE BECOME BOTH LEADERS AND FUNDING PARTNERS FOR SIGNIFICANT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN ILLINOIS COMMUNITIES.

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In launching Communityworks, Grand Victoria Foundation invested in local potential to create place-based strategies that could both benefit local communities and seed the kind of systems changes that can improve the lives of people across Illinois. With their new capacities and resources, the community foundations are leading community change initiatives that in some cases are reaching scale locally and, as a whole, offer the promise of statewide change. The work on early childhood offers the strongest example.



### SCREENINGS & SUMMER CAMPS

It's now widely accepted – and borne out by research – that infants, toddlers and preschoolers develop major brain capacity well before they show up for school. Because kids spend these early years in many different settings, community foundations tailor their efforts to improve early learning in light of cultural norms and community resources.

Community meetings in Evanston, for example, zeroed in on persistent learning and achievement gaps between low-income children, largely children of color and their higher-income, mostly white schoolmates, gaps that are already evident by the time kids start kindergarten. Evanston Community Foundation responded by organizing and funding home visiting for vulnerable families in the early months of a child's life, along with an array of other supports to encourage new parents to help their kids learn.

Leaders in Decatur were likewise concerned at discovering that 40% of local five-year-olds (over 400 children) weren't ready on the first day of kindergarten. So they created a pre-kindergarten summer camp where 150 kids learn basic pre-school skills and have plenty of fun along the way; by the end of the summer 73% of those kids test ready for kindergarten. Kankakee and Grundy both picked up that idea and have created their own summer events. These and other programs include screening for vision, hearing and developmental problems to make sure kids get help early on to overcome problems that might hinder learning.



## FOCUSING ON QUALITY

Other foundations are working to build quality learning experiences into child care, where nearly 500,000 Illinois children spend their days. In Quincy, where most child care is in small, home-based settings, mentoring by the West Central Child Care Connection offers providers tips, resources (a toy lending library, for example) and assessment tools to help them focus on boosting children's learning. So far 51 child care workers have participated, about 20% of the home-based child care providers in the county, and the foundation is busily spreading the model to nearby counties.

In DeKalb and McHenry Counties, the foundations are helping child care centers improve their quality, as measured on the state Quality Rating System (QRS). In DeKalb, as a result of these efforts, seven of the ten eligible local child care programs have received a QRS Star Rating of 2 or greater, which qualifies them for additional state funding; the foundation's investment returned \$4 for every \$1 spent.

Grundy convenes regular meetings of early childhood professionals. DuPage has supported a peer-to-peer support network and leadership training for center directors. It is also helping families of young children through Positive Parenting DuPage, and supporting startup of Educare, a high-quality child care center in West Chicago.

Some foundations started with early childhood but went several steps further. Both Decatur and Land of Lincoln are leading broad coalitions to improve the quality and coordination of education from pre-K through college. For its part Decatur has articulated a goal of becoming "the best-educated community in Illinois." Evanston has adopted a similarly bold vision: "Every child ready for kindergarten, every youth ready for work."

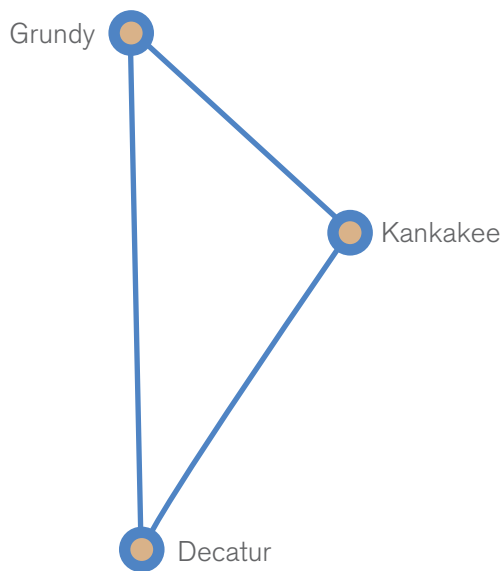
Through such efforts and others, thousands of Illinois children are benefiting from better quality early learning opportunities, screening for developmental problems, and pre-K experiences to prepare them for school. Some foundations hope to build on these efforts through possible joint advocacy for improved state policies and investments in early childhood.



“The best thing that came out of this for us was the evolution of the Southeastern Illinois Community Foundation and our opportunity to serve rural Illinois.”

Joedy Hightower, President and CEO  
Southeastern Illinois Community Foundation





## SHARING IDEAS & STRATEGIES

Drawing on Decatur’s successful pre-K summer camp to promote school readiness, foundations in Grundy and Kankakee created their own late summer back-to-school events.



## LAND USE & WORKFORCE

Though early childhood programming has been the most active Communityworks area, foundations also launched significant efforts on workforce and land use/protection issues.

DeKalb, for example, by its own admission started out with little knowledge of land use but, by listening carefully to local officials, learned the critical importance of water infrastructure. It responded by providing sophisticated mapping tools for planning water infrastructure investments, and then funded engineering consultations that helped communities improve their storm water ordinances to qualify for further state funding.

On workforce, foundations have traded ideas and adopted similar approaches. Both Land of Lincoln and Community Foundation of Great River Bend won funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to train people for careers in nursing, a fast-growing job sector in Illinois as elsewhere. Moline, DeKalb, Grundy, Great River Bend, Evanston, and Southeastern have launched efforts to spark the imaginations of high schoolers to think about careers or start their own ventures.

## CONNECTING THE DOTS

In some cases, initiatives have developed as leaders realized that improving the quality of life in a community involves working across issues. In Grundy and Sangamon Counties, for example, discussion of job prospects for local workers made clear the importance of improving public transportation to enable people to get to jobs and child care. Grundy went on to spearhead a significant expansion of the local public transportation system, while Land of Lincoln is involved in discussions about high-speed rail. Oak Park-River Forest secured approval from both city governments to support implementation of a sustainability plan that articulates the opportunities to build a healthy economy and environment.

Kankakee started with a high-profile project: building a bike trail along the Kankakee River. Through its leadership of the Kankakee River Roundtable, the community foundation developed relationships with local governments and private landowners, all of whom owned land along the river. Out of that project have come new plans that recognize the river as central to the region's economic vitality. The relationships may lead to collaboration in other areas, adds Kankakee Executive Director Norm Strasma: “Through the Roundtable we now have people interacting on tourism and water quality, and I think that could lead to collaboration on legislative issues as well!”







**“CONVENING—WE  
DISCOVERED THIS  
WAS OUR NICHE.  
GETTING COMMUNITY  
BUY-IN IS VERY  
IMPORTANT.”**

Jim Baum, Board President  
Community Foundation of Grundy County



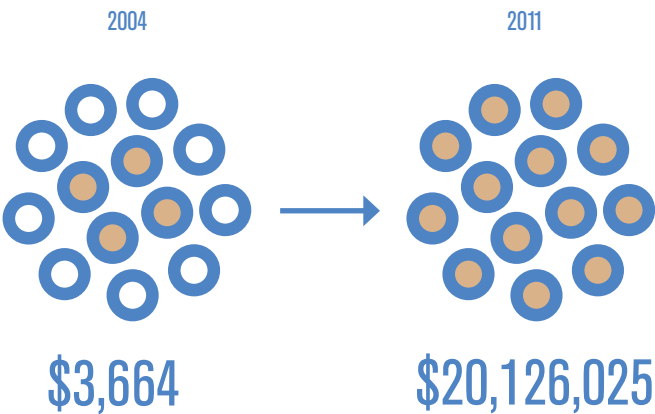
# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

JUST AS GRAND VICTORIA FOUNDATION SOUGHT  
LOCAL PARTNERS FOR ITS OWN WORK, IT ENCOURAGED  
THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS  
AND ENLIST LOCAL SUPPORT.

Engagement with community leaders and residents is a central element of Communityworks. While at first some were uncertain about reaching out, every foundation now engages local nonprofit and corporate leaders, donors, government officials and residents to explore local concerns, and they work with and through local partners to develop solutions. Those partnerships now go well beyond the initial Communityworks agenda to encompass other local issues. And the relationships are crucial in other ways. One foundation leader commented that, in the face of drastic state and local spending cuts, the foundations can work with local partners to figure out ways to cope — and at the same time, fend off unrealistic expectations that they can simply make up the shortfall.

## MATCHED ENDOWMENT

Before Communityworks 9 of the 13 foundations had no operating endowment; now they all do. The endowments increase the foundations' capacity and stability.



Many of these community engagement efforts involve intensive, ongoing commitments of time and energy. Evanston's Communityworks chairman, Paul Finnegan, marvels at the willingness of "a group of citizens, over six or seven years, to be so engaged and committed that they devote the amount of time, energy and vitality this committee has shown — it's just amazing."

The energy has been matched by tangible contributions. Where once they saw themselves almost exclusively as stewards of donor-advised funds, the foundations are now raising and leveraging money to support their work on local priorities. Communityworks endowments total \$36 million, and have made possible \$2.3 million in Communityworks grants.

The offer to match up to \$300,000 (in package 1) or up to \$2 million (in package 2) for foundation endowments proved a significant, but challenging, opportunity. The targets were big — part of Grand Victoria Foundation's determination to build capacity at scale. Five foundations made the match (two for the small package, three for the larger one) by the closing date of September 30, 2011. Many others came close.

Some foundations — notably Decatur/ Macon — viewed the match as a terrific incentive, and organized early to sell local donors on the opportunity. Others held off, thrown by the economic turmoil of late 2008 as Phase 3 was starting, and then found it challenging to mount a big enough effort to meet the deadline. Still, most foundations stepped up their fundraising significantly to make the most of the opportunity.

“We need to recognize that we have become leaders in our communities — we need to step up to that role.”

Philip Krupps  
Quincy Board Chair

The foundations built new relationships and learned to make the case to donors to support a broad agenda based on community needs. “In the past [building resources] was just about wealth attraction,” says Deanna Cada. “Now we say, here’s what your community foundation needs from you.” Those new fundraising capacities and relationships will pay off in the future. As Paul Finnegan put it, “The match forced us to raise our game.”



# COLLABORATION

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GRAND VICTORIA FOUNDATION BROUGHT COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS TOGETHER TO SHARE IDEAS AND RESOURCES AND COLLABORATE AROUND COMMON INTERESTS. FOUNDATIONS CHERISH THE RELATIONSHIPS THEY HAVE BUILT, THOUGH IT'S UNCERTAIN WHAT FORM FUTURE COLLABORATIONS WILL TAKE.

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Communityworks convened foundations in Phases 1 and 2, both to build a statewide infrastructure and to create “learning communities” in the three issue areas. For Phase 3, Grand Victoria envisioned “action hubs,” supported by issue specialists, to enable collaboration around common interests identified in community plans, with potential funding from Grand Victoria Foundation for broader projects.

The strategy did not take hold. Some attribute that to lack of understanding about what the action hubs might do, some to lack of time. Mainly, the strategy proved less useful than originally envisaged because foundations working on the same issues chose very different strategies to respond to local needs. At the suggestion of the community foundations, “cluster discussions” at regular Communityworks quarterly meetings replaced the original action hubs. Grand Victoria redeployed the issue specialists to work one-on-one with local foundations to support their action plans.

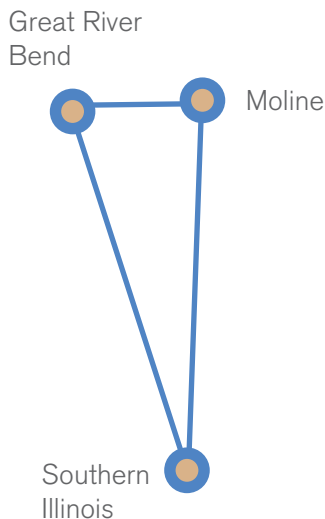
It's clear from their work that collaboration and idea exchange are happening at a more informal, one-to-one level. The focus on child care center quality ratings, the joint application for nurse training funding, the back to school fair idea, the continuum of learning concept are all examples where foundations have shared ideas. Smaller foundations especially continue to value getting help on operations concerns as well.

## RELATIONSHIPS IN PHILANTHROPY

Foundations also collaborate with other funders. DuPage has its own county collaborative with United Way, private foundations, Dupage County and local municipalities. Decatur, Land of Lincoln, Southeastern, and Champaign have created a “micro-grantmaking” collaborative with the Lumpkin Family Foundation. Evanston partners with the Mammel Foundation of Omaha on its capacity building program, root2fruit, and with several Chicago-area funders on the Illinois Early Childhood Fellowship. Moline, Great River Bend, and Southern Illinois have joined other community foundations along the Mississippi in the River Partnership of Community Foundations, a project of the Funders Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities. Four foundations (Land of Lincoln, Oak Park-River Forest, DuPage, and Champaign) won funding for local projects ranging from universally accessible fishing piers to playgrounds through the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Access to Recreation program. And almost all the foundations report involvement with the Council on Foundations.

Taking inspiration from similar alliances in other states, the Communityworks foundations, along with twenty others, have formed the Alliance of Illinois Community Foundations. The Illinois foundations see the Alliance as a mechanism to strengthen their sector and a platform from which to promote public policies that encourage more robust donor activity. The Alliance helped develop a Transfer of Wealth study for Illinois, which documents an estimated transfer of over \$180 billion by 2015 as family resources pass from one generation to the next. It has advocated for a state tax credit for contributions to community foundations modeled on a similar provision in Iowa.





### FORMAL COLLABORATION

Moline, Great River Bend and Southern Illinois participate in the River Partnership of Community Foundations.

“The networking has been excellent. So far our foundations have been working in different ways on different projects. Over time, I expect there will be more collaboration — for example, I think we’ll work together on early childhood policy because Grand Victoria brought us together.”

Norm Strasma, Executive Director  
Community Foundation of Kankakee  
River Valley

Eight foundations are also members of the Donors Forum, a statewide association of funders and nonprofits, and through the Donors Forum several have also participated in Midwest Community Foundations’ Ventures (MCFV), a regional support group that partnered with the Alliance on the Transfer of Wealth study. A recent retreat organized by MCFV left several Illinois participants with “a broader vision for what community foundations can be and very energized by what we could do as a group,” according to Wegi Stewart, President of Decatur/Macon.

### LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

With the Donors Forum no longer serving as Illinois contact for MCFV, the Alliance has agreed to take over that role. But it lacks paid staff, and foundation leaders express some uncertainty about its future. That leaves foundations unsure about what kind of collaboration they will maintain going forward. But program staff in particular are eager to collaborate. Mostly hired since 2008, they have learned much from statewide colleagues, and they are working to set up regular programmatic conversations through the Alliance.

Some foundation leaders want to go further. John Stremsterfer, based in Springfield as Executive Director at Land of Lincoln, argues for a strong state association of community foundations, with paid staff, to advocate on behalf of local communities. “If you want to get something done in Springfield, you need to have clout and somebody to exercise it,” he says. Norm Strasma of Kankakee believes that the foundations will build off their experiences dealing with local government and eventually join forces to achieve policy goals.

As a statewide foundation with limited resources, Grand Victoria Foundation launched Communityworks in part with the hope of being able to draw on local relationships and potential funding partners for its own work. It’s been challenging to develop peer-to-peer relationships while the funder-grantee relationship was going strong. Participants will have the opportunity to put the relationship on a new footing as Phase 3 comes to an end. “We’re looking forward to being a partner and potential co-investor,” says Nancy Fishman.







**“WE NOW HAVE THE  
EXPERTISE AND THE  
RESPECT TO HELP  
FACILITATE REAL CHANGE  
IN OUR COMMUNITY.  
WE NOW HAVE THE  
RESOURCES TO REALLY  
MAKE THINGS HAPPEN.”**

Larry Johnson, Past Board Member  
Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln

## BUILDING THE SECTOR

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ILLINOIS PHILANTHROPY HAS TRADITIONALLY  
CONCENTRATED OVERWHELMINGLY IN THE CHICAGO AREA.  
GRAND VICTORIA FOUNDATION SET OUT TO RIGHT THAT  
BALANCE. TODAY COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS, TOGETHER  
WITH THEIR PARTNERS, MAKE UP A SOLID AND THRIVING  
PHILANTHROPIC SECTOR IN ILLINOIS.

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The collective endowed assets of \$225 million now held by participating foundations are an impressive accomplishment, considering that they were operating at a much smaller scale back in 2003. The \$36 million in Communityworks endowments will provide resources to implement the initiatives they have launched. To sustain that work it's likely that the foundations will have to continue to attract additional resources. Whether and how they will continue to do so will become clear over the next few years. Today they are actively on the lookout for new opportunities, notably from that projected transfer of over \$180 billion documented in the wealth transfer study. Capturing 5% of that would create over \$9 billion in resources for community foundations, which could make possible over \$450 million in grantmaking.

“There’s no doubt  
Communityworks  
has made us a different  
organization than we  
would be otherwise.  
It totally changed the  
path we are on, in an  
incredible way.”

John Stremsterfer, Executive Director  
Community Foundation for the Land  
of Lincoln

Meanwhile the foundations are attracting other resources. With their growing capabilities plus local influence and connections, they have become potential local partners for state, regional, and national funders. The Robert Wood Johnson, the W.K. Kellogg, and Lumpkin Family Foundation funding partnerships are examples. Joyce Foundation staff have explored the possibility of collaborating around issues like education and workforce.

Communityworks foundations are also beginning to extend their impacts in other ways. Some foundations have expressed interest in encouraging (and helping) other Alliance members to adopt some of the tools and strategies they learned through Communityworks. Four foundations – DeKalb, Oak Park-River Forest, Kankakee, and Grundy – offered ideas for engaging local communities at the annual conference of the American Planning Association in October 2011. West Central Child Care Connection, in Quincy, has shared its promising results on mentoring home-based child care providers at two statewide venues: the annual conference of the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies and the National Louis University training on mentoring. “We think what we’re doing could make child care better everywhere,” says staffer Marla Willard.



# DELIVERING ON THE PROMISE

THROUGH COMMUNITYWORKS GRAND VICTORIA  
FOUNDATION HAS HELPED CREATE SIGNIFICANT – AND  
SUSTAINABLE – RESOURCES TO FURTHER  
ITS MISSION OF SUPPORTING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES  
THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

With their robust endowments and expanded staffs, community foundations are doing great things in early childhood, workforce, and land use/protection, and they are positioned to continue their leadership role over the foreseeable future. More broadly, they have become active, sustainable local institutions that provide ideas, information, resources and leadership to help their communities thrive; and they are sharing their ideas and energy with one another.

By investing in Communityworks, Grand Victoria Foundation—with its foundation partners—created change at a scale that is likely to affect Illinois communities for decades to come. Together they are helping fulfill the promise that Illinois communities can be great places to live and work. Nothing will stop that now.

## POOLING DOLLARS

Grantmaking from other funds has greatly expanded the resources available to address community priorities.

### Workforce Development

TOTAL \$3,530,099



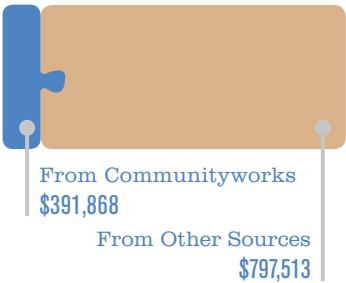
### Early Childhood Care & Education

TOTAL \$3,761,084



### Land Use & Protection

TOTAL \$1,189,381



“WHAT’S SO EXCITING ABOUT COMMUNITYWORKS  
IS THAT IT’S AT SCALE AND HAS NOT LOST ITS  
SENSE OF PLACE. THERE’S AN INFRASTRUCTURE  
NOW WITH INFLUENCE, MONEY, AND TALENT  
SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES AND PUSHING FOR  
GROWTH. PLUS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL  
FOUNDATIONS HAVE ENGENDERED SUCH A  
STRONG SENSE OF OWNERSHIP IN THEIR  
COMMUNITIES THAT PEOPLE WANT TO BE PART  
OF IT. THAT’S A GREAT PHILANTHROPIC MODEL:  
A BIG INVESTMENT THAT NOW HAS A LIFE OF ITS  
OWN AND THE MOMENTUM TO KEEP GOING.”

Nancy Fishman, Executive Director  
Grand Victoria Foundation





**GRAND VICTORIA**  
**FOUNDATION**

Grand Victoria Foundation  
230 W. Monroe Street, Suite 2530  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
312-609-0200  
*grandvictoriafdn.org*