

Community Fund raises more than \$1.1m for local charities

Administered by the Adirondack Trust Company, the Community Fund has given local dollars back to area nonprofits since 2012 through the awarding of Lend-A-Hand Grants

Saratoga Springs, New York—Each year, the Adirondack Trust Company Community Fund awards and distributes Lend-A-Hand Grants to many familiar local nonprofit organizations in Saratoga, Warren, and Washington counties.

In 2022 alone, its independent Advisory Committee awarded \$75,560.68 in Lend-A-Hand Grants to 35 local nonprofit organizations.

The Community Fund, a 501(c) (3) charitable organization, was established in 2009. Since then, the organization has raised more than \$1.1 million—all through donations from community members, business partners, and donation-matches from Adirondack Trust Company (ATC). While ATC serves as the Trustee and Administrator of the Community Fund, the organization works under the guidance of an independent Advisory Committee, comprised of leaders from our community.

The Committee is currently led by Chair Colleen Carlson, and supported by Treasurer Caroline Putman; Susan Bokan; Steve Boxley; Vinnie Crocitto III; Mary Hallquist; Philip Klein; Brian Straughter, Ed.D.; and Joyce Ure. Together, they represent local philanthropists, business owners, community members, and stakeholders in the continued prosperity of the area for all. The Independent Advisory Committee is responsible for coordinating the awarding of annual Lend-A-Hand Grants.

“It’s an honor and a pleasure to have worked with the Community Fund since 2016,” ATCCF Chair Colleen Carlson said. “The impact the Community Fund and Lend-A-Hand Grants have on our area is great and diverse. There are many needs and so much work to be done—I’m proud that the Community Fund can help support many of these nonprofit efforts.”

In 2012, the Community Fund began its central fundraising effort with the now-Annual Autumn Giving Match Campaign. Each October, the Community Fund partners with local businesses to raise awareness and money for the Community Fund. Each dollar raised by individuals and businesses during this month is matched by ATC, essentially doubling the donation. Sponsorships leading up to the monthlong Autumn Giving also receive the generous match. The community dollars raised goes directly back into the community through the distribution of Lend-A-Hand Grants, while the donated match is contributed to the General Fund, a trust intended to be a perpetual source of capital for local charities.

The organizations that receive funding through Lend-A-Hand Grants are varied and span a wide range of needs, from food insecurity to respite services. Over the years, the Community Fund has touched dozens of nonprofits. Here are just a few examples of local organizations supported by the Community Fund.

After the Fire

After the Fire’s volunteers respond to calls to help victims of fire 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The Halfmoon-based organization formed in 1991, and seeks to provide fire victims assistance through anything from emotional support to information, referrals, and resources, to clothing, personal hygiene products, and shelter.

“Over the years, the Community Fund has enabled After the Fire to continue to double the amount we are able to give fire families of Saratoga County during their time of loss and need,” said After the Fire Vice President Maureen Smith.

As a 2022 Lend-A-Hand Grant recipient, After the Fire intends to use its funding for gift cards to be given to fire victims. These cards allow for the purchase of personal items and necessary supplies that may have been lost in a fire.

Saratoga Bridges (NYSARC, Inc., Saratoga County Chapter)

Saratoga Bridges is an instrumental agency in providing an array of opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Programs include clinical, community integration, day programs, employment and supported work, family support, outreach and advocacy, residential options, and more. The organization also runs the Creative Endeavors Arts Center to give individuals the ability to hone their creativity.

“The generous Lend-A-Hand Grant provided by the Community Fund will allow us to continue enriching our artists with in-person and virtual art classes,” said Saratoga Bridges Assistant Director of Communications Pamela Polacsek. “Additionally, the grant provides funds to purchase a variety of supplies, materials, and equipment for our Creative Endeavors Art Center.”

“One of our talented artists, David, shared this sentiment, which is indicative of how important art is in their lives: ‘I create for people to enjoy and love! It comes from my heart.’”

Shelters of Saratoga

Shelters of Saratoga has been transforming lives of neighbors for more than 30 years, assisting those who face homelessness with supportive services, safe shelter, and a path toward independence.

“The Adirondack Trust Community Fund Lend-a-Hand grant provides Shelters of Saratoga with the opportunity to build meaningful connections with people living on the streets through the distribution of food and supplies,” said Shelters of Saratoga Director of Development Rosemary Royce. “It is the catalyst for encouraging people to use community services, such as shelter, health services, and supportive housing.”

The organization’s funding from its 2022 Lend-A-Hand Grant will be used to purchase non-perishable food and supplies that will be distributed through its street outreach program.

As the winter snows slowly melt, the Community Fund and its Advisory Committee has its eyes on the 2023 Autumn Giving, with plans already underway. The organization is beginning to work with local business and media partners to collaborate on fundraising efforts. If you or a business owner you know would like to participate in the one-month community-wide fundraising push, please reach out to the Community Fund at mail@atccf.org to find out how you can get involved.

The Annual Autumn Giving Match Campaign’s pinnacle is its Annual Evening of Autumn Giving—a casual networking event—will take place this year on Tuesday, October 17, at the Canfield Casino. The upbeat event celebrates the organizations that enrich the community and have used Lend-A-Hand Grants to often greatly enhance programs. The Evening of Autumn Giving is open to the public, and tickets will be available at atccf.org beginning in September. One-hundred percent of ticket sales are donated to the Community Fund, and is also matched by Adirondack Trust. Reach out to mail@atccf.org for advanced information about event sponsorship and honorary committee opportunities.

Below, you'll find a list of 2022 Lend-A-Hand Grant awardees; a complete compendium of awardees, along with additional information about Lend-A-Hand Grants and opportunities for donors, may be found on the organization's website, atccf.org.

A Dapple a Day Equine Center; AIM Services, Inc.; After the Fire; Ballston Area Community Center; The Ben Osborn Memorial Fund, Inc.; Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Southern Adirondacks, Inc.; Caffè Lena; Camp Abilities Saratoga; Camp Little Notch; Catie Hoch Foundation; Community, Work & Independence, Inc.; C.R.E.A.T.E. Community Studios; First Baptist Church of Ballston Spa's Summer Lunch Program; Flutters of Hope, Inc.; Franklin Community Center, Inc.; Habitat for Humanity of Northern Saratoga, Warren, and Washington Counties; Hudson Crossing Park; Malta Avenue Elementary PTA; NYSARC, Inc., Saratoga County Chapter (Saratoga Bridges); Nipper Knolls Equine Center; Open Door Mission; Operation Adopt-a-Soldier, Inc.; Prospect Center—Center for Disability Services, Inc.; Queensbury Senior Citizens, Inc.; Rebuilding Together Saratoga County; Saratoga Center for the Family; Saratoga County Children's Committee; Saratoga County History Center; Saratoga Pride, an affiliate of the Pride Center of the Capital Region; Saratoga/Wilton Soccer Club; Senior Citizens Center of Saratoga Springs, Inc.; Shelters of Saratoga; SNACpack (Saratoga Nutritional Assistance for Children); Stories for Success Saratoga, Inc.; Veterans & Community Housing Coalition.

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Adirondack Trust Company Community Fund
31 Church Street
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
(518) 584-5844