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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Rochester Area Community Foundation Joins Yates Community Endowment in Making Grants to Nonprofits Serving Yates County**

In an effort to expand and enhance its support for counties in the Greater Rochester-Finger Lakes region, Rochester Area Community Foundation joined forces with its geographic affiliate, Yates Community Endowment (YCE), to award \$142,200 to 16 nonprofits serving Yates County and its residents.

Grants from the Yates Community Endowment Fund, along with contributions from several funds established by county residents to support Yates County, amounted to \$50,400. The Community Foundation added \$91,800 from a variety of funds to this grantmaking round.

The Community Foundation's infusion of grant dollars into Yates County is part of a new, intentional strategy to expand its grantmaking to counties in its service area outside of Monroe.

"Rural counties, often overlooked by funders, need a great deal more support to bolster social innovation and lessen the disparities faced by its residents. With this boost in funding, our goal is to increase access to critical services and enhance operations of outstanding nonprofits that serve our rural neighbors," said Erin Barry, vice president of Community Programs at the Foundation.

In counties where the Foundation has geographic affiliates, like Yates, "our staff will collaborate with those local advisory committees to make more impact together and co-invest in projects and programs that promote the Foundation's broad grantmaking goals of equity and vitality," Barry said.

Individuals serving on the Yates Community Endowment Advisory Board live in Yates County, know their communities' pressing needs, and can help identify where funding gaps exist.

With the additional money from the Community Foundation, this grant round represented a 126 percent boost over last year and increased the average grant size from \$5,000 to \$8,887. The 16 grants range from \$1,000 for the Yates County History Center and the Penn Yan Theatre Company summer camp to \$45,000 to help Rainbow Junction, Ltd. renovate its current location and another site in Dundee in order to provide more families with reliable and safe childcare and school wrap-around care.

"Grantmaking Committee members were so excited about having significantly more money than they thought they were going to have ... and how they could maximize the impact of those dollars," said Ann McMullen, co-chair of the Yates Community Endowment. "The additional funding is great, but the additional presence (of Community Foundation staff) here is making a difference in the community knowing more about the Endowment."

The 2023 grantees are:

**Bishop Sheen Ecumenical Housing Foundation:** Supports emergency relief funding for housing-related emergencies for Yates County residents. \$2,500

**Court Appointed Special Advocates of the Southern Tier, Inc.:** Provides support for the advocacy program for children, birth to age 21, who are involved in the Family Court system because of neglect or abuse by a parent or parental figure in their lives. \$9,000

**Dundee Library:** Supports the creation of a community courtyard garden that is accessible to people of all mobility levels. \$2,500

**Finger Lakes Health Foundation, Inc.:** For the purchase of alternating-pressure mattresses that provide comfort to and help in the healing of skin conditions for patients confined to bed for long periods of time at The Homestead at Soldiers & Sailor's Memorial Hospital in Penn Yan. \$5,000

**Keuka Housing Council:** To support Firm Roots, a new program at the HOPE Center that will allow any child up to age 17 to enjoy a fresh cooked meal at any time during normal operational hours. Participants also will have the opportunity to learn different life skills, such as how to prepare meals, budgeting, job preparation, and daily living skills. \$15,000

**The Living Well:** Supports expansion of the DreamCatchers after-school program into the Dundee community. \$20,000

**Milly's Pantry:** For the backpack program, which provides school supplies to Yates County students. \$2,500

**Our Town Rocks:** Supports improvement of the physical, social and economic health of individuals of all ages by encouraging self-reliance and providing opportunities to cultivate an active, healthy mind and body. \$10,000

**Penn Yan Theatre Company:** For the summer theater camp for Yates County youth. \$1,000

**ProAction of Steuben and Yates, Inc.:** Provides continued operational support for the much-needed HOPE Center Keuka Food Pantry, which helps to stabilize families in economic crisis and support them as they work toward self-reliance. \$7,800

**Rainbow Junction, Ltd.:** Provides support for the renovations needed at the existing Penn Yan center and the newly acquired Dundee location to open more child care slots for families. \$45,000

**St. Mark's Terrace HDF Corp.:** To add a compact recumbent elliptical cross trainer to the wellness program at this older adults' housing community. \$3,400

**Saunders Finger Lakes Museum:** Supports development of the Nature Escape Sensory Trail, also called the NEST, which adds to the museum's experiential offerings that inspire appreciation and celebration of the cultures and ecology of the Finger Lakes Region. \$10,000

**Yates County History Center:** Provides operational support to this historical treasure in downtown Penn Yan. \$1,000



**Yates Cultural & Recreational Resources, Inc.:** To support operations at the Yates Community Center, including the fitness center, ELEVATE Youth and Core Adult programming, walking trail, and fields. \$2,500

**YMCA of Greater Rochester Camp Cory Scholarships:** For scholarships for Yates County youth ages 3-15 to attend the YMCA day camp at Camp Cory in Penn Yan. \$5,000

In addition to funding from the Yates Community Endowment Fund, these grants were made by possible by YCE affiliate funds that include the Robert F. Flickinger Memorial Fund, McMullen Family Fund, Spring Hill Fund, and Willie Taaffe Memorial Fund.

Community Foundation funding came from its Community Impact Fund, which pools contributions from more than 100 permanent funds established specifically to support changing community needs, along with David and Carol Laniak Family Fund, Greater Rochester Women's Fund, Iacona Youth Success Fund, Philip and Dolores Neivert "Fun Fund," William P. and Abigail Roberts Van Wagenen Fund II, and the V.J. Stanley Sr. Fund.