



Meigs County Foundation
An affiliate of
FOUNDATION FOR APPALACHIAN OHIO



Meigs County Foundation

2024 Annual Report

Advancing a flourishing Meigs County





FOR A FLOURISHING *Meigs County*

About us

The Meigs County Foundation (MCF), a geographic affiliate of the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio, provides a way for anyone with a heart for Meigs County to support our people and communities, today and for years to come.

Donor generosity fuels the work of doers who give their time and talent to meet our communities' greatest needs and opportunities – all while building a strong foundation for Meigs County's future.

With the support of our donors, we award grants annually to nonprofit and public organizations for projects and programs that advance opportunities across five funding areas, known as our Pillars of Prosperity.



Arts & Culture



Community
& Economic
Development



Education



Environmental
Stewardship



Health
& Human
Services

Our investments improve health, create educational opportunities, advance economic development and environmental stewardship, and provide access to arts and cultural experiences.

Our committee

- Travis Abbott
- Ryan Buckley
- Susan Clark
- Candice Hess
- John Hoback
- Tricia McNickle
- Erin Morgenstern
- Barbara Musser
- Dru Reed
- Paul Reed
- Charlene Rutherford
- David Shaver
- Jennifer Sheets
- Laura Sheets
- Perry Varnadoe, *secretary*
- Linda Warner

Want to learn more?

For more information about planned giving, to make a gift to MCF or to create a fund to support a cause closest to your heart, please contact us!



740.753.1111



Meigs@fao.org



Meigs County Foundation

www.AppalachianOhio.org/Meigs

2024 Grants

The Meigs County Foundation, in partnership with the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio, awarded 17 grants, totaling \$66,954, in 2024.

Chester Shade Historical Association

The Chester Academy was established in 1839 to serve students throughout Meigs County. This grant is funding a Smart Board and other items to create an educational floor at this historic building – a nod to the original use of the Academy and a space to teach area youth and others about the history of Meigs County and surrounding areas.

Eastern Local School District

Three grants, funded by the Buckley family, were awarded to the Eastern Local School District:

- To fund the Science Olympiad Team for students in grades 6-12
- To modify the backboards at the elementary school gym to allow them to be lowered for youth practices and games
- To purchase equipment for the Eastern Eagles Archery Program

God's Hands At Work

In 2024, an MCF grant allowed God's Hands At Work's mobile food pantry to provide 16,500 pounds of food to 1,200 Meigs County residents, including approximately 300 families. This grant is continuing that assistance in 2025, feeding a growing number of our neighbors who could use a helping hand – from young families and seniors to those experiencing homelessness.



Nearly 50 students on the Eastern Eagles Archery Team qualified for the 2025 State Bullseye Tournament, and both the elementary and high school teams qualified for national competition. A 2024 MCF grant, funded by the Buckley family, is providing the program new equipment.



It takes a community, including many who volunteer to package food boxes, to make God's Hands At Work's mobile food pantry available to residents in the most rural Meigs County areas. This is the third consecutive year that MCF grants are supporting the pantry.



Match met in 2024!

In early 2024, FAO announced a 50-cent match for every \$1 given to any endowment fund within affiliate foundations' family of funds. A total of \$300,000 in match funding was available for each affiliate foundation through Nov. 8. Thanks to the generosity of our community, MCF met our match, raising \$900,000 in donations and matching funds – and creating four new funds – to support a flourishing Meigs County!

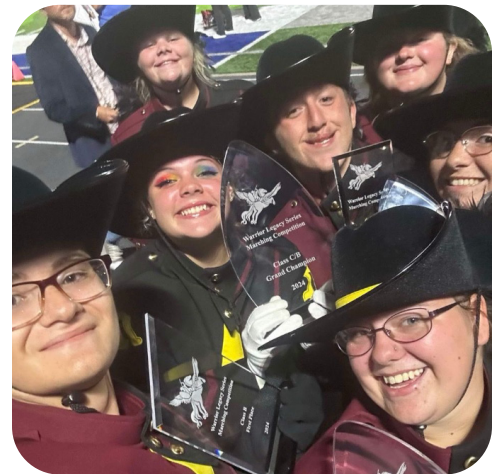


A 2023 MCF grant allowed the Meigs County Farmers' Market to provide vouchers to 300 local veterans to help them purchase food for themselves and their families and to add seven more classes to the market's free educational programming.

2024 Grants

Meigs Band Boosters

The Marauder Band provides Meigs High School students opportunities to learn, compete, perform and shine – like in 2024 when the band earned a Superior rating at the Ohio Music Education Association state finals for the first time in 20 years. This grant is funding percussion equipment as well as instrument and uniform repairs and replacement for the band.



Members of the Meigs High School Marauder Band celebrate the awards they received at the 2024 state finals.

Meigs County Farmers' Market

2025 marks the seventh season for the Meigs County Farmers' Market – voted Ohio's No. 1 farmers' market for the second consecutive year in the annual America's Farmers Market Celebration™. MCF grants have supported the market from its very beginning, and this year will be supporting its veteran food voucher and Music Along the River programs.



Meigs Local Blessings in a Backpack has been feeding K-5 students over the weekends since 2013 – this year with support from an MCF grant.

Meigs Local Blessings in a Backpack

Up to 65 hours. That's how long Meigs County children are home each weekend during the school year – sometimes without adequate nutritional food. This grant is funding bags of nonperishable food to address the weekend nutrition gap for Meigs Local K-5 students at the highest risk for food insecurity.



In 2024, Meigs United Methodist Cooperative Parish, also known as the Mulberry Community Center, provided backpacks to 166 students – down from 191 students in 2023 after a sharp drop in private donations over the past two years. A 2024 MCF grant is supporting the program, which hopes to serve 200 students in 2025.

Meigs Local School District

Two grants were awarded to the Meigs Local School District:

- To support Meigs High School Treats and Trends in providing students with food, hygiene items and clothing, funded by Travis and Julie Abbott
- To fund a learning experience at Hocking Hills State Park for Meigs Middle School eighth-grade students

Meigs County Schools Food Pantry

According to Feeding America, 19.4 percent of Meigs County residents are food insecure. Donors, volunteers, businesses and organizations have been helping to fill this need for school-age children and their families through the Meigs County Schools Food Pantry since 2021. This grant is purchasing food for monthly, year-round distributions.

Meigs United Methodist Cooperative Parish/Mulberry Community Center

Meigs United Methodist Cooperative Parish, also known as the Mulberry Community Center, provides back-to-school backpacks and supplies to students in all Meigs County school districts. With increases in the cost of living, the need for this assistance is rising while the donations that fund the project are declining. This grant is supporting that program.

Community highlight



The Meigs County Schools Food Pantry provides a monthly, year-round distribution of healthy and nutritious food to school-aged children and their families impacted by food insecurity in Meigs County ...



while also bringing together many volunteers (including local students), donors, businesses and organizations dedicated to ensuring our neighbors have what they need to flourish.



What started as a conversation among seven Middleport residents has grown into the Riverbend Arts Council, a nonprofit that has brought arts programs into our schools, sponsored talent shows, adopted the Meigs County Community Band and continues to showcase and encourage local artists. A 2024 MCF grant is supporting two of the organization's projects this year.

2024 Grants

Riverbend Arts Council

For more than 30 years, the Riverbend Arts Council has served as a hub of creative learning for Meigs County residents, offering opportunities that span painting, photography, gardening, music, culinary crafts and more. This grant is supporting a series of free art classes for local emerging artists and the purchase of music stands for the Meigs County Community Band.

River City Players

Middleport-based River City Players has been growing theatrical experiences in Meigs County for 25 years, providing local residents artistic opportunities and families affordable outings while drawing visitors to our community and boosting the economy. This grant is funding a wireless microphone system, sound equipment and marketing materials for the community theater.



In 2024, Middleport's River City Players partnered with The Blakeslee Center to present a USO tribute dinner and show. A 2024 MCF grant is supporting the theater that has been serving Meigs County since 2000.

"We are honored to support these outstanding organizations and their dedication to filling needs and expanding opportunities for the people of Meigs County. None of this would be possible without the generous donors who walk alongside the Meigs County Foundation in service to our communities."

– JENNIFER SHEETS, MCF COMMITTEE MEMBER



The Meigs County Foundation celebrated its 2024 grant recipients during a November event at The Blakeslee Center in Middleport. Earlier in the year, the Meigs County Council on Aging (MCCA) established The Blakeslee Center Endowment, a member of MCF's family of funds, to support MCCA and its mission to provide multi-generational services, programs, activities and resources to the Meigs County community.

River of Life Care Closet

The River of Life Care Closet has been caring for the Meigs County community since the 1970s. This grant is funding food for the program's food pantry, which is serving more of our neighbors on fewer donations as the price of food – especially protein – rises.

Village of Rutland

A 2023 MCF grant funded the replacement of four of the Rutland Civic Center's gymnasium doors with fire-rated doors – a step forward in making the building suitable for use as an emergency shelter. This grant is funding four additional doors, which will complete the project and provide the community a place for shelter, to hold events and to celebrate special occasions.



The River of Life Care Closet's food pantry served nearly 500 new households from January 2023 through September 2024 – with help from a 2023 MCF grant. A 2024 grant is continuing that assistance this year.



Our impact in 2024



**\$5.7
MILLION**

In assets for the people
of Meigs County



**\$80,536
AWARDED**

Across MCF's family
of funds



**\$34,000
GIVEN**

In scholarships through
MCF and FAO funds



**18
FUNDS**

Partnering with MCF
in service to
our community

Our family of funds

- Meigs County Foundation
- Bachtel Scholarship Fund
- Bedford Township Community Scholarship
- The Blakeslee Center Endowment
- Brandi Thomas Memorial Scholarship
- BraylynStrong Childhood Cancer Awareness Scholarship Fund
- Buckley Family Fund
- Camp Kiashuta Endowment
- Charles A. and Joan Corder Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Chester-Shade Historical Association Fund
- Eastern Local Alumni & Friends Endowment
- Karr-Aanestad K9 Foundation Fund
- Leifheit-Michael Family Scholarship Fund
- Meigs County Schools Food Pantry Fund
- Meigs Performing Arts Fund
- New Haven School Fund
- Reed Family Fund
- The William M. and Janet P. Betcher Memorial Endowment for Library Services

Investing in Meigs County's young leaders

In 2024, FAO teamed up again with its affiliate foundation partners to fund projects developed and implemented by local youth under age 18. The goal of this funding is to inspire young people to embrace roles as changemakers committed to creating strong, vibrant communities.

The Racine Methodist Youth Group

received funding to purchase hygiene items and detergent for a new showering and laundry facility at the Mulberry Community Center for individuals experiencing homelessness or in need. The grant is also funding 100 meal tickets, which the youth are decorating with encouraging messages, to be distributed to individuals who come to the center for food.

A 2024 MCF grant is helping local youth stock an area at the Mulberry Community Center where individuals who use the shower and laundry facilities can get what they need to bathe and wash their clothes. The youth took their love for community a step further: personalizing meal tickets for those who access free meals at the center.





Answering the call to lead and serve in Meigs County

In 2023, FAO and its affiliate foundation partners welcomed the inaugural class of Growing Home Fellows, including seven individuals living and/or working in Meigs County. The fellows have committed to live, work and volunteer in their communities for five years and receive a financial stipend and participate in a leadership program that includes coaching. In 2024, the fellows began implementing service projects in our communities, including:

Dylan Haynes



A lifelong Meigs County resident, Dylan Haynes is a Shawnee State University alumna who teaches 12th-grade English at Meigs High School and coaches the school's varsity cross country team. Dylan is currently pursuing a master's in humanities from Marshall University. She is serving through the Meigs County Chamber of Commerce Ambassador program, connecting the chamber, local businesses and local schools. Dylan was recently elected to serve on the village council in Syracuse.



View the 2023-2024 Growing Home Fellowship Impact Report and see how we are investing in our region's next generation of community builders and leaders.



A planned gift providing growing support for Meigs County students

Dr. Harry Keig always held a special place in his heart for his Meigs County hometown of Middleport.

Even after becoming a successful surgeon in the Omaha, Neb., area, Dr. Keig remembered the difference his earliest teachers had made in his life – none more significantly than Forrest Bachtel, a longtime teacher and coach at Middleport High School. When Dr. Keig passed away in 2003, he left a \$500,000 gift in his will to start an endowment that would continue Coach Bachtel's legacy of serving students.

The Forrest Bachtel Scholarship Fund, which supports Meigs High School graduates who demonstrate academic and/or athletic excellence, was the very first scholarship established through the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio and is a member of the Meigs County Foundation's family of funds. First awarded in 2004, the Bachtel Scholarships have grown from one- to three-year scholarships – all through the power of endowment.

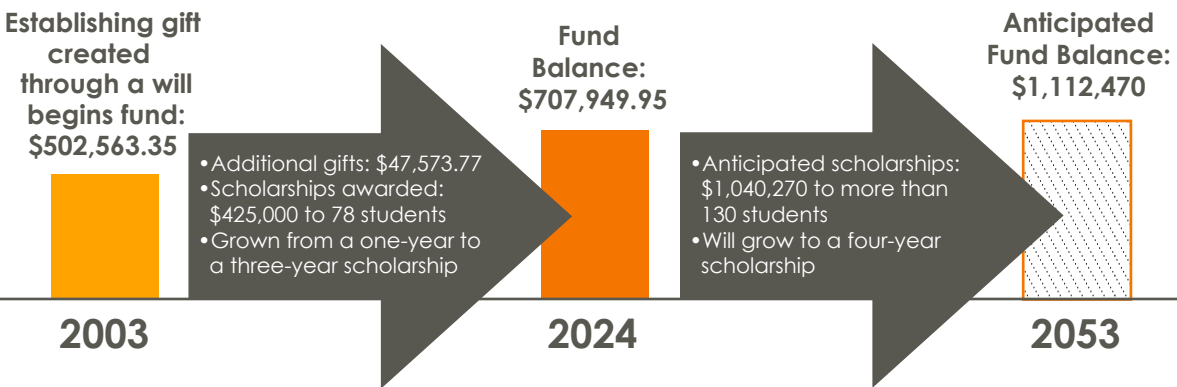


Your legacy is what you are known for today and how you will be remembered for years to come. While thinking about your legacy and your plans for the future, we hope you'll also consider a planned gift to support the communities and causes closest to your heart. Contact us to learn more.

740.753.1111 | Meigs@ffao.org
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The power of endowment: The Forrest Bachtel Scholarship Fund

Over a 50-year time period, the fund balance is anticipated to more than double while also providing over \$1 million in anticipated scholarships.



From 2004-2024, 78 Meigs High School graduates were awarded a combined \$425,000 in Bachtel Scholarships.



Meigs County
Foundation

An Affiliate of the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio

HELP SUPPORT THE PEOPLE, PLACES, PROGRAMS AND FUTURE OF MEIGS COUNTY

**Gifts to the Meigs County Foundation are
tax-deductible and can be made in a variety of ways.**

GIVE TO MCF

Gifts to the Meigs County Foundation's endowment fund permanently grow grant funding, with priorities locally determined, for nonprofit and public organizations working to increase quality of life in our communities. Your generosity supports efforts that improve health, create educational opportunities, advance economic development and environmental stewardship, and provide access to arts and cultural experiences.

CREATE A FUND

Provide sustained support for the causes closest to your heart by establishing a named fund through the Meigs County Foundation. We can help you create endowments to support specific charitable organizations or schools; scholarships to provide educational opportunities; donor-advised funds for family giving; corporate funds for a company's charitable grantmaking; and more.

LEAVE A LEGACY

Include charitable giving in your estate planning, giving you the peace of mind of knowing the communities and causes closest to your heart will continue to receive your support beyond your lifetime. The Foundation for Appalachian Ohio can assist you and/or your advisors with charitable research, provide options and create necessary documents or language for your plan.

How to make a gift



Mail to:

Meigs County Foundation
P.O. Box 109
Pomeroy, OH 45769

or



Online:

www.AppalachianOhio.org/Meigs
or www.tinyurl.com/GiveMeigs

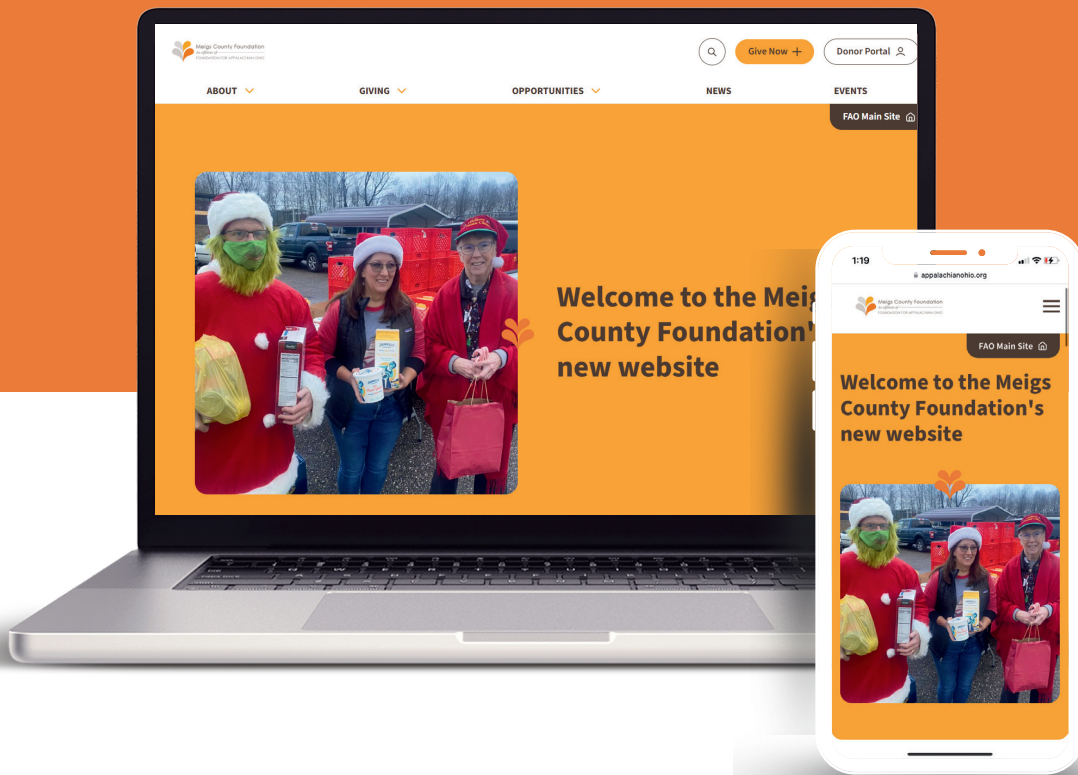
For information about establishing a named fund or planned gift, email Meigs@ffao.org or call 740.753.1111.

GIFTS OF ALL SIZES AND KINDS – CASH, STOCK, REAL ESTATE, ROYALTIES OR QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS FROM IRAS – MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



Our new website!

LIVE NOW



www.AppalachianOhio.org/Meigs



Featuring more stories of impact, easier navigation and a lot of inspiration, **our new website** tells the story of the Meigs County Foundation and a community of givers who are championing our people and communities. Discover how far we've come, where we're going and how you can leave your legacy for generations to come.