



Morgan Community Fund  
An affiliate of  
FOUNDATION FOR APPALACHIAN OHIO



Morgan Community Fund

# 2024 Annual Report

*Advancing a flourishing Morgan County*





Pictured at the 2024 Morgan Community Fund Awards Dinner are (from left) committee members Devan Eier, Mike Workman (emeritus), Cinda Erickson, Adam Shriver, Kelsey Wells, Quincy Robe, Sarah Griesmyer, Chris Penrose and Sherri Simons, director of outreach at the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio. Photo courtesy of One Moore Snap Photography

## About us

**The Morgan Community Fund (MCF)**, a geographic affiliate of the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio, provides a way for anyone with a heart for Morgan 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 Morgan 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.



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

## Our committee

- **Devan Eier**
- **Cinda Erickson**
- **Sarah Griesmyer**
- **Chris Penrose**
- **Quincy Robe**
- **Adam Shriver**
- **Kelsey Wells**
- **Mike Workman, Emeritus**

## 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



Morgan@fao.org



Morgan Community Fund

[www.AppalachianOhio.org/Morgan](http://www.AppalachianOhio.org/Morgan)

## 2024 Grants

The Morgan Community Fund, in partnership with the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio, awarded eight grants, totaling \$16,700, in 2024.

### Building Bridges to Careers Inc.

This grant allowed 15 Morgan County students to attend the 2024 Discover Entrepreneurship Day at Marietta College's BIG (Build, Innovate, Grow) Workshop. The day provided students opportunities to learn from and network with potential and existing entrepreneurs and business owners, fueling an understanding that entrepreneurship is a career path and that an entrepreneurial mindset is beneficial to any career path.

### Washington-Morgan Community Action

More than 60 percent of children in the Morgan Local School District are eligible for free and reduced lunches – meals that don't exist when school recesses for the summer. This grant is supporting the 2025 Summer Feeding Program, providing free hot lunches and shelf-stable breakfast and weekend meals to children ages 1-18 at three sites in Morgan County.

### MoCo Kitty Kontrol

In 2024, an MCF grant helped 32 Morgan County residents access MoCo Kitty Kontrol's low-cost spay/neuter services, assisting with a financial hurdle for our neighbors while controlling the kitten population in our communities. This grant is continuing that assistance, providing vouchers to help fund the spaying or neutering of 25 Morgan County cats in 2025.

### Morgan Community Support and Solutions

The McConnelsville Community Garden has become an even brighter spot in town, thanks to this grant. With funding for the first fall art internships, two Morgan High School students collaborated with Morgan County Community of the Arts to complete a mural at the garden. The project nurtured the students' interest in the arts – while contributing to their community.



A 2024 MCF grant funded Morgan Community Support and Solutions' first fall art internships, providing an opportunity for Morgan High School students (from left) Kimmy Price and Avery Palmer to create a community public art piece for Morgan County. In addition to completing a mural at the McConnelsville Community Garden, these student-artists also were able to network with professional artists in Morgan County and beyond.



A 2024 grant from MCF is providing students at Tabor Ridge Christian School opportunities to flourish – both inside and outside the classroom. The grant is helping to fund pre-K curriculum and playground supplies at the school in Stockport.

## 2024 Grants

### Morgan County Health Department

Morgan County residents have been asking for the return of Safety Town, a hands-on learning experience that educates children preparing to enter kindergarten on everything from pedestrian and fire safety to engaging with local public service officials. This grant is funding the purchase of materials to bring this popular program back to our community.

### Morgan Local Schools

Members of the Morgan South Care Team see it often – students who lack basic hygiene items and food essential to their well-being and ability to learn. This grant is supporting the team's work to provide students at South Elementary School with hygiene items as well as food for long weekends and breaks.

### Tabor Ridge Christian School

In the past year, Tabor Ridge Christian School in Stockport has expanded from a preschool to also include K-6 classes. As the school undergoes a major classroom renovation to accommodate its growing student body, this grant is helping to fund pre-K curriculum and playground supplies, providing additional learning opportunities for Morgan County's children.



### Community highlight

Bob Mather from Morgan County United Ministries Manna Harvest Food Pantry is pictured with some of the \$1,600 worth of essential, non-food items collected during Morgan Junior High School's Thrive Drive '24. The student-led service-learning project received a 2023 youth-led grant from MCF.

## Investing in Morgan 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 Morgan High School FFA** received funding for a project spearheaded by Ava Hinkle, president of the group, who is developing the "Shining Stars Stockshow," an opportunity for individuals with special needs to participate in exhibiting an animal at the Morgan County Fair. Through this project, Ava and her fellow FFA members will work with the Morgan County Board of Developmental Disabilities and collaborate with community members with special needs, building stronger relationships within the community.

*Myka Jane is seen with her Grand Champion Market Hog at the 2024 Morgan County Junior Fair. A youth-led grant from MCF is helping to bring new opportunity for individuals with special needs to exhibit animals at the 2025 fair.*



## Answering the call to lead and serve in Morgan 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 Morgan 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:

### Ashley Cain



Ashley Cain is a mother, wife and educator from southeast Ohio who lives and teaches 10th-grade English in Morgan County.

Through her Growing Home Fellowship service, Ashley is expanding access to fresh produce and food in Morgan County through mobile distribution. She has connected with multiple organizations, including Ohio State University Extension and Morgan Community Support and Solutions, to establish the Farm to Family Program, a mobile food pantry that addresses food scarcity when schools are out of session by delivering food boxes and information on healthy eating to families.

In September 2024, Ashley participated in FAO's inaugural Growing Home Fellowship pitch competition and secured funding to launch the program in summer 2025.



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

## A generous heart inspires a growing holiday tradition

In December 2024, the Morgan Community Fund (MCF) hosted more than 150 children and their families for a free event designed to provide the community with new holiday experiences – a growing tradition born out of the spirit of giving exemplified by a longtime Morgan County resident.

When Hazel Syphers passed away in 2014, she left a planned gift to MCF to provide a wrapped present to children who might not otherwise experience that Christmas joy. For the 2024 holiday season, MCF honored Hazel's wishes by adopting local families, with children receiving wrapped Christmas gifts and their families a complete holiday.

Over the past several years, MCF leaders, inspired by Hazel, have partnered with the local business community to spread the Christmas joy to more families throughout the county. Each December, Morgan County children are treated to a movie, goodies and other activities through this holiday event.

The 2024 activities included two free showings of the movie, "Elf," at the Twin



More than 150 children enjoyed art and music activities through the Crafty Bus – and received take-home art kits – during the Morgan Community Fund's 2024 holiday event.

City Opera House; visits with Buddy the Elf and Jovie; and an opportunity to enjoy art and music activities and take-home crafts through the Crafty Bus, sponsored by MCF in partnership with the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio. The Crafty Bus, a nonprofit based in southeast Ohio, brings arts and music activities to children throughout Appalachian Ohio who might not otherwise have such opportunities.

## MCF co-founder honored for service to others



Each year, the Jenco Foundation Fund and FAO recognize Appalachian Ohioans who go and above beyond in service to others. Morgan County's Mike Workman, a champion for his local community and the greater Appalachian Ohio region, was among the 2024 Jenco Award recipients.

A former member and chair of the FAO board, Mike was instrumental in the founding of the Morgan Community Fund. After volunteering several years as the executive director of the Morgan County Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) and successfully recruiting a large business to the community, the CIC board voted to reward Mike with a one-time \$50,000 bonus. Mike declined the payment personally but proposed it be used to start a community fund for Morgan County, which he co-founded, chaired for many years and continues to support.

Mike has advanced numerous educational programs through MCF and assists young entrepreneurs in finding success in our local communities. In addition to mentoring entrepreneurs in Morgan County, he is a volunteer mentor in Marietta College's Entrepreneurship and Career Development Center.





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## HELP SUPPORT THE PEOPLE, PLACES, PROGRAMS AND FUTURE OF MORGAN COUNTY

Gifts to the Morgan Community Fund are  
tax-deductible and can be made in a variety of ways.

### GIVE TO MCF

Gifts to the Morgan Community Fund'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 Morgan Community Fund. 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:**

Morgan Community Fund  
P.O. Box 577  
McConnelsville, OH 43756

or



**Online:**

[www.AppalachianOhio.org/Morgan](http://www.AppalachianOhio.org/Morgan)  
or [www.tinyurl.com/GiveMorgan](http://www.tinyurl.com/GiveMorgan)

For information about establishing a named fund or planned gift, email [Morgan@ffao.org](mailto:Morgan@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 impact in 2024



**\$2.3  
MILLION**

In assets for the people  
of Morgan County



**\$17,981  
AWARDED**

Across MCF's family  
of funds



**\$750  
GIVEN**

In scholarships through  
MCF and FAO funds



**15  
FUNDS**

Partnering with MCF  
in service to  
our community

## Our family of funds

- Morgan Community Fund
- Bryan Williams Memorial Scholarship
- Citizens National Bank Fund for Morgan County
- Lines-McElfresh Morgan County Tree Fund
- Lines-McElfresh Twin City Opera House Fund
- M&M Kiwanis Scholarship Fund
- Morgan County – Christmas in the Village Fund
- Morgan Community Fund Auxiliary Program
- Morgan County Companion Animal Care Endowment Fund
- Morgan County Historical Society Fund
- Morgan County Youth Development Fund
- Morgan Emergency Grant Program
- Morgan Foundation Christmas Wish for Kids Fund
- Outdoor Extravaganza Scholarship
- S.P.O.T. & MoCo Kitty Endowment

## Check out the Morgan Community Fund's new website!



Featuring more stories of impact, easier navigation and a lot of inspiration, **our new website** tells the story of the Morgan Community Fund 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.

[www.AppalachianOhio.org/Morgan](http://www.AppalachianOhio.org/Morgan)