



Nelsonville Community Foundation
An affiliate of
FOUNDATION FOR APPALACHIAN OHIO



Nelsonville Community Foundation

2024 Annual Report

Advancing a flourishing Nelsonville area





FOR A FLOURISHING *Nelsonville area*

About us

The Nelsonville Community Foundation, a geographic affiliate of the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio, provides a way for anyone with a heart for Nelsonville and the surrounding communities of Buchtel, Carbon Hill and Murray City to support our people, 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 the 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

- Steven Cox
- Kevin Dotson
- Bill L'Heureux
- Jennifer L'Heureux
- Kevin Lowry
- Anita McDonald
- Betty Jo Parsley
- Megan Wanczyk

Want to learn more?

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



740.753.1111

Nelsonville@ffao.org

www.AppalachianOhio.org/Nelsonville

2024 Grants

The Nelsonville Community Foundation, in partnership with the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio and the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation, awarded 18 grants, totaling \$48,390, in 2024.



Appalachian Literary Arts & Storytelling Festival

In October 2024, the Appalachian Literary Arts & Storytelling Festival, founded by local educators Kaleigh Cox and Brianna Johnson who are serving their communities through FAO's Growing Home Fellowship, debuted on Nelsonville's historic square. This grant is supporting the 2025 festival, a two-day multigenerational celebration of writing, reading, publishing and performing Appalachian stories in all forms.



Nelsonville residents and Growing Home Fellows Casey and Kaleigh Cox are pictured with their children at the inaugural Appalachian Literary Arts & Storytelling Festival in Nelsonville. As part of her fellowship, Kaleigh founded the festival, which attracted 700+ people in its first year. A Nelsonville Community Foundation grant is supporting the 2025 festival.

Circle Round the Square

Circle Round the Square, a free summer program for youth in grades 5-12, began 20 years ago to provide Nelsonville-York students with opportunities for development through the arts, leadership and mentorship. This grant is funding an artist for the 2025 program, which will serve 36 youth and an additional 60 children at The Hive.



In 2023, the Nelsonville Community Foundation awarded a youth-led grant to Circle Round the Square to fund three student interns who stepped into leadership roles for the program's annual summer arts enrichment camp and workshops at The Hive. A 2024 grant is funding an artist for the program.

Athens County Department of Job and Family Services

In summer 2025, the Athens County Department of Job and Family Services will launch the Nelsonville Evening Farmers Market outside the new Athens Community Cares Resource Center. This grant is funding a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program processor, vouchers and marketing materials for this event that will support local agriculture and artisans, promote healthy living and economic growth, and nurture community engagement.



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, the Nelsonville Community Foundation met our match, raising \$900,000 in donations and matching funds to support a flourishing Nelsonville area!

2024 Grants

Chris Roell TBI Foundation Fund LLC

The Chris Roell TBI Foundation is dedicated to raising awareness for mental health, suicide prevention and traumatic brain injuries – and to connecting individuals and their families to resources, guidance and community to support them through their journeys. This grant is funding health care speakers to address these topics in our communities.

City of Nelsonville

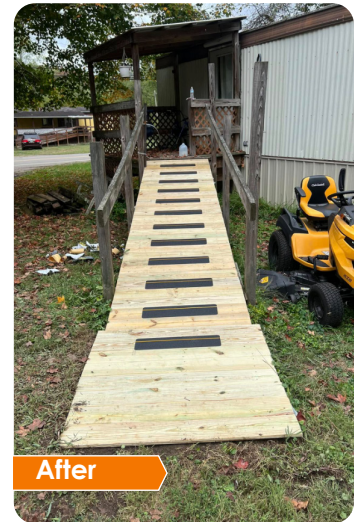
The fencing around Nelson Commons Park has several gaps, impacting the safety and beauty of this recreational area. This grant is helping to fund a new fence, the first phase of improvements to the park.

Helping Hands of Southeast Ohio

Helping Hands of Southeast Ohio was established in 2024 to address the need for home maintenance and safety services. This grant is supporting the nonprofit's Home Beautification and Safe at Home programs, which provide exterior home maintenance and minor interior home repairs for seniors and individuals with disabilities in Nelsonville and the surrounding communities of Buchtel, Carbon Hill and Murray City.



In spring 2024, a new sign – donated by the Nelsonville Rotary Club and made by Tri-County Career Center students – was installed at Nelson Commons Park. In fall 2024, the Nelsonville Community Foundation awarded a grant to help fund new fencing at the park.



Many seniors and individuals with disabilities don't have a support system, or the financial or physical means, to tackle interior and exterior home maintenance projects. A 2024 grant is supporting Helping Hands of Southeast Ohio's work to provide those services to members of our communities.

Putting the “see” in learning the ABCs

A partnership between FAO, the Ohio Optometric Foundation and Association, and national nonprofit Vision To Learn brings mobile vision clinics to schools across the region, providing students vision screenings, eye exams and prescription glasses – at no cost to families. In fall 2024, the first two Nelsonville-York Elementary School students to visit the van when it first came to the school two years earlier received another screening. They and 14 additional students received the vision care needed to be successful – in school and in life.





A 2024 grant from the Nelsonville Community Foundation funded an April 2025 field trip to Passion Works Studios for Nelsonville-York Middle School art students. At the Athens studio, the students worked with artists of all abilities to learn color theory, technique, business skills and more.

Nelsonville-York City Schools

Six grants were awarded to Nelsonville-York City Schools:

- To fund personal health supplies for students
- To fund middle and high school students' participation in the Ohio Association of Student Leaders programming
- To provide stipends for high school students to dine at an Ohio University dining hall as part of an immersive learning trip, exposing them to different cuisines, diverse cultures and a college experience
- To help fund an immersive field trip to Passion Works Studio for middle school art students
- To purchase supplies for cooking labs in food and fitness as well as food science classes to expand the variety of cooking methods students are learning
- To purchase iPads for the middle and high school choir

Nelsonville-York Youth League

The Nelsonville-York Youth League, offering baseball and softball programs to children ages 3-12, is growing – with 140 kids participating during the 2024 season. This grant is helping enclose an unused shelter house at Polley Field and transform it into an all-season hitting/pitching facility for these young athletes.

Community highlight



Students in Nelsonville-York City Schools' second-grade classrooms are enjoying learning on new iPads, thanks to a 2023 grant from the Nelsonville Community Foundation. A 2024 grant is funding the purchase of iPads for the district's middle and high school choir, allowing students to download music apps and access music education programs.



Cort Forgrave, president of the Nelsonville-York Youth League and an FAO Growing Home Fellow, received a 2024 grant from the Nelsonville Community Foundation to help create an all-season hitting/pitching facility for local youth at Polley Field.



A 2023 Nelsonville Community Foundation grant helped fund artist fees for Stuart's Opera House's 2024 Summer Arts Camp, a three-week theater/movement and music program that served 45 students ages 10-18. A 2024 grant is supporting two annual performances by the Nelsonville-York Drama Club, which is hosted and sponsored by the opera house.

2024 Grants

Southeast Ohio History Center

Athens County-based Invisible Ground uses audio, augmented reality, visual elements and place-based storytelling to make the history of communities come alive – all through a user's mobile device. This grant is supporting Invisible Ground's work to produce immersive historic markers for Nelsonville landmarks and a related podcast episode.

Southeast Ohio Youth Mentoring

The Youth in Leadership School Mentoring Program at Nelsonville-York pairs college students with elementary students facing adversity for one-on-one mentoring on school grounds. This grant is funding materials for the program that helps our youth build self-confidence, expand social-emotional skills, make positive choices that enhance well-being and achieve success in life.

Stuart's Opera House

The Nelsonville-York Drama Club, hosted and sponsored by Stuart's Opera House through its Arts Education Program, allows students to learn performance and back-stage skills, including stage management, set design, lighting and sound design. This grant is supporting the club's two annual performances.



In late 2024, Invisible Ground debuted a new immersive historic marker at Stuart's Opera House, showcasing past and present and interior and exterior images of this jewel on Nelsonville's Public Square. A grant from the Nelsonville Community Foundation is supporting future immersive historic markers for other Nelsonville landmarks.



In 2024, the Nelsonville Community Foundation awarded seven grants to Nelsonville-York City Schools, including a youth-led grant to support student-led planning for the high school's 2025 prom.

Investing in Nelsonville'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 Nelsonville Community Foundation awarded youth-led grants to:

- **Appalachian Life Fellowship** to support Trevor Boggs' Eagle Scout project focused on improvements to Nelsonville's Polley Field
- **Nelsonville-York City Schools** to support student-led planning for the 2025 prom

Trevor Boggs throws out the first pitch at the opening ceremony for the Nelsonville-York Youth League's 2025 season. A Nelsonville-York High School student, Boggs received a 2024 youth-led grant from the Nelsonville Community Foundation to support the many improvements he is making to Polley Field as part of his Eagle Scout project.



"Announcing our grant recipients is always the highlight of our year, but this year is even more special and impactful. Thanks to a historic gift from the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation, we are awarding our largest amount of funding to date – investments that will benefit our neighbors and communities both now and for years to come."

– STEVE COX, NELSONVILLE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION COMMITTEE MEMBER



Answering the call to lead and serve in our communities

In 2023, FAO and its affiliate foundation partners welcomed the inaugural class of Growing Home Fellows, including six individuals, who live and/or work in the Nelsonville area. 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:

Two Growing Home Fellows who work at Tri-County Career Center are addressing food insecurity. Bree Brown, a school counselor, and Aron Davis, the lead instructor of the Hospitality Lab, have started a food pantry at Tri-County to feed students and families in the local community. Bree has also created a pamphlet to help other individuals start pantries at their schools while Aron has also been supporting the Athens County Food Pantry.

Pictured are Aron Davis and students from Tri-County Career Center's Food and Hospitality Support Services program packing food bags and boxes for the Athens County Food Pantry.



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.

Our impact in 2024



**\$2.3
MILLION**

In assets for the people of Nelsonville and the surrounding communities of Buchtel, Carbon Hill and Murray City



**\$59,941
AWARDED**

Across the Nelsonville Community Foundation's family of funds



**\$5,000
GIVEN**

In scholarships through the Nelsonville Community Foundation and FAO



**10
FUNDS**

Partnering with the Nelsonville Community Foundation in service to our community

Our family of funds

- Nelsonville Community Foundation Fund
- The Baird Brothers Company Foundation Fund for Nelsonville
- The Katie McCoy and Mary Jane McKinley Music Scholars Fund of First United Methodist Church of Nelsonville
- Lee Beckett Legacy Scholarship Fund
- Max Conner Memorial Fund to Support the Nelsonville-York School District
- Moon Family Legacy Fund for Nelsonville
- Nelsonville Area Chamber of Commerce Fund for Nelsonville
- Nelsonville High School Alumni Association Scholarship Fund
- Nelsonville Presbyterian Farm Endowed Fund
- Stuart's Opera House Endowment Fund

A history-making gift for our communities

In 2024, we celebrated a history-making gift that will support our mission and benefit the people of Nelsonville and its surrounding communities now and forever.

The \$575,000 gift from the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation – the largest our foundation has received to date – has:

- Increased the amount of annual grant funding available for Nelsonville and the surrounding communities of Buchtel, Carbon Hill and Murray City for the next several years
- Provided permanent funding to support future needs and opportunities
- Allowed our foundation to secure an additional \$150,000 in matching funds FAO made available to its affiliate foundations
- Pushed our endowment fund, which fuels our annual grantmaking, past the \$1 million milestone

With a mission to improve the health and quality of life in the community through education, research and service consistent with its osteopathic heritage, the Osteopathic



Pictured (from left) are Osteopathic Heritage Foundation President/CEO Terri Donlin Huesman, Nelsonville Community Foundation committee members Betty Jo Parsley and Bill L'Heureux, and Emily Vigue, director of outreach at FAO.

Heritage Foundation has a long history of serving Nelsonville and southeastern Ohio.

"The Osteopathic Heritage Foundation remains steadfast in its commitment to the Nelsonville community," said Osteopathic Heritage Foundation President/CEO Terri Donlin Huesman. "The Foundation is proud to partner with the Nelsonville Community Foundation, and we look forward to partnering to advance local strategies designed to improve health and quality of life for generations to come."

Planned gift reflects love of family, community and faith

The Foundation for Appalachian Ohio is the connector for three lifelong priorities of Mary K. Walsh – family, community and faith. By creating their own legacy gift at FAO and encouraging others to do the same in her beloved community of Nelsonville, Mary K. and her husband, Marty, help ensure their passions continue to have resources beyond their lifetimes.

FAMILY. Raised in Nelsonville, Mary K. remembers vividly extended family of aunts, uncles and cousins coming home for holidays and reunions. They proudly filled one or two pews at the old Methodist church on Jefferson Street. Mary K. and her family felt love and security in their hometown surrounded by beautiful hills. The person she became – a corporate community involvement manager, wife, mother, grandmother and steward – was shaped by her family in Nelsonville.

COMMUNITY. Like today, the Nelsonville community of Mary K.'s childhood revolved around the Public Square, though the school buildings were all within walking distance during her early years. "For me, the Square was a place to shop, meet friends, go for walks, get ice cream and be intrigued by the old Stuart's Opera House – a place I passed on the way home from school," Mary K. said. The school provided a solid foundation through its caring, motivating teachers and friends and through opportunities such as band, choir and special groups that impacted Mary K.

FAITH. It was through church that Mary K. first learned about philanthropy and the importance of giving. She gave from her allowance, helped her grandmother and friends with fundraising dinners for the church, assisted her mother in caring for the children's nursery and witnessed her father and grandfather as they made repairs in the church.



Mary K. Walsh was presented FAO's 2015 Outstanding Volunteer Award, honoring her service on FAO's scholarship review committee and her efforts to beautify FAO's Nelsonville offices. She and her husband, Marty, live in Worthington, Ohio, and are part-time residents of Nelsonville, where they are involved in the community. In 2021, Mary K. turned to FAO to help First United Methodist Church Nelsonville create The Katie McCoy and Mary Jane McKinley Music Scholars Fund, a member of the Nelsonville Community Foundation's family of funds.

Years later, the love Mary K. felt for family, faith and community would merge at FAO. Inspired by an FAO donor's legacy gift-matching opportunity for various nonprofits in Appalachian Ohio, Mary K. and Marty Walsh made a legacy gift at FAO for Stuart's Opera House, where Mary K. served on the board of directors.

When Mary K. walked by shuttered Stuart's Opera House as a child, she wondered if it would one day reopen. Today, it is once again a shining landmark on Nelsonville's Public Square, providing cultural events, education and social opportunities for people of all ages.

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 | Nelsonville@ffao.org
www.AppalachianOhio.org/Nelsonville



Nelsonville Community
Foundation

An Affiliate of the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio

HELP SUPPORT THE PEOPLE, PLACES, PROGRAMS AND FUTURE OF THE NELSONVILLE AREA

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

GIVE TO NCF

Gifts to the Nelsonville Community 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 Nelsonville Community 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:

Nelsonville Community Foundation
c/o Foundation for Appalachian Ohio
35 Public Square, Nelsonville, OH 45764

or



Online:

www.AppalachianOhio.org/Nelsonville
or www.tinyurl.com/GiveNelsonville

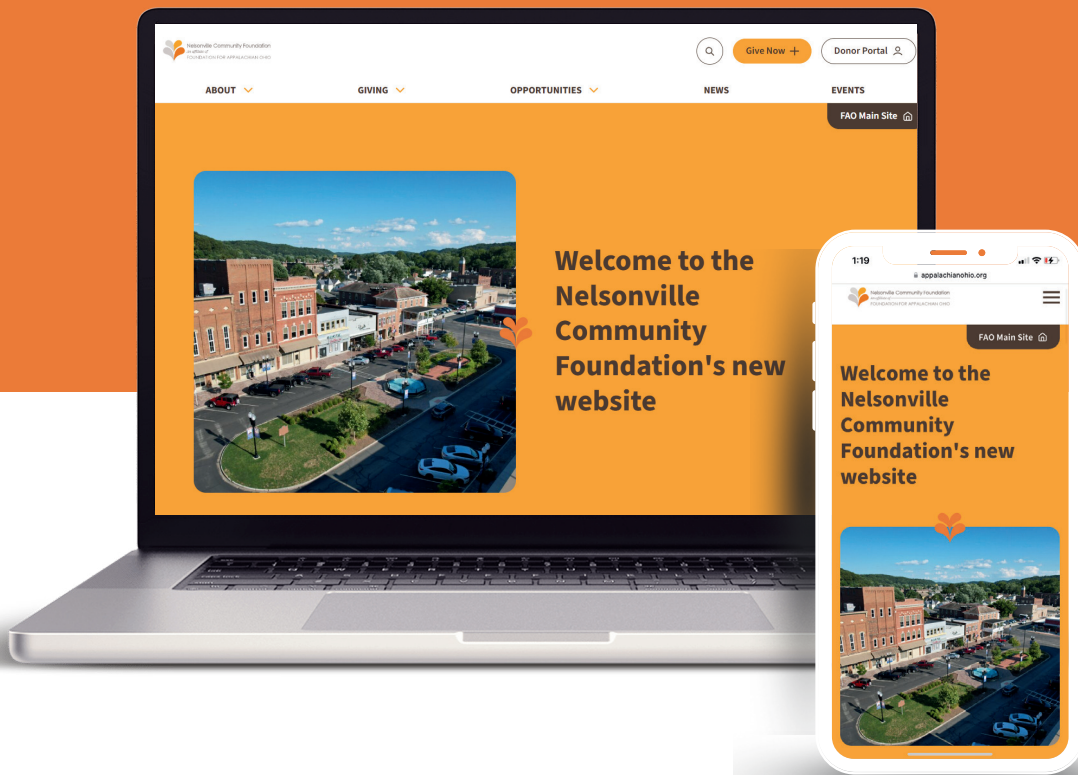
For information about establishing a named fund or planned gift, email Nelsonville@ffao.org or call 740.753.1111.

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/Nelsonville



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