



Foundation for Appalachian Ohio

# 2024 Education Pillar Impact Report

*Creating educational opportunities, so our people – and our communities – can flourish*



**The Foundation for Appalachian Ohio** is a community of givers – donors and doers committed to ensuring our region's people and communities flourish. Organized as a 501(c)(3) regional community foundation, we work to encourage and support gifts of time, talent and treasure.

Our Pillars of Prosperity serve as a roadmap for all we do. Each pillar – arts and culture, community and economic development, **education**, environmental stewardship, and health and human services – represents an area of investment essential to generating an abundance of possibility in our region. The stories in this report are testaments to the love and commitment our community of givers has for the children of Appalachian Ohio. Read on and be inspired.

**Thanks to donor generosity and transformative partnerships**, the children of Appalachian Ohio – from the first day of their lives through early adulthood – are receiving the resources, opportunities and encouragement they need to be successful in school and in life. Together, we are nurturing and investing in our region's future community builders, workforce and changemakers.

We are forever grateful to the individuals and organizations who make our work possible and who believe, just as deeply as we do, in the children of Appalachia. We invite you to join us.



**Education Pillar of Prosperity Impact**



**\$5.5M+**  
awarded in grants through the Education Pillar since 2013



**365**  
Education Pillar funds partnering with FAO in service to our communities



**4,900**  
scholarships awarded since 2004

In 2023 alone, we awarded **\$1.54 million** in funding to support education in Appalachian Ohio.



To learn more about what your gifts of time, talent and treasure made possible for the people and communities in our region, check out FAO's 2023 annual report and our 15 affiliate foundation partners' annual reports.







From 2019-2023, FAO has awarded more than \$150,000 in grant funding to support Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio programming in 13 Appalachian Ohio counties.

## Placing our littlest learners on a pathway to success

Built on a belief that if you can read, you can succeed, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio mails children, from birth through age 5, one free book each month – fostering a love of reading and putting our littlest learners on a pathway to success.

Over the past five years, FAO, our affiliate foundation partners and our donors have joined a coalition of local partners supporting and growing the program, half of which is funded by local nonprofits and communities with the remaining 50 percent covered by the state.



A new partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio is uniting generous FAO givers to create an endowment fund to permanently support the program in Appalachian Ohio, where 65 percent of our children are currently enrolled. Each gift to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio in Appalachia ensures this opportunity remains free for our children and families.







## Providing much-needed funding for civics education

High school students in Lawrence County are working in local government offices and being mentored by community members in public service roles. Their peers in Muskingum County are participating in National History Day competitions. And in Mahoning County, students are launching and leading a civics-based podcast.

Those are just three of 11 opportunities made possible in 2024 by a partnership between FAO and the Longaberger Family Foundation that is providing the children of Appalachia with the knowledge and skills to become informed and engaged in their communities, state and nation.

Over the past five years, our Civics Education in Appalachian Ohio program has invested more than \$95,000 in grants to provide K-12 students with opportunities to study, participate in and experience what it means to be engaged community members – opportunities that too often go unfunded.

## Eliminating barriers with support for educators and students



Our educators work day in and day out to nurture a lifelong love for learning in the children of Appalachian Ohio, so they can achieve their full potential. But far too often, they lack access to high-quality books and resources.



Through a grant from the American Electric Power Foundation and the AEP Ohio Foundation, we partnered with the nonprofit First Book as the first initiative launched through our Education Pillar. Through this partnership, educators and other individuals serving the children of Appalachian Ohio in under-resourced communities can register to access free and low-cost books and other educational resources.





## Putting the “see” in learning the ABCs

More than 37,000 K-12 students in Appalachian Ohio lack the glasses they need to see the board in a classroom or read a book, putting them at a persistent disadvantage in achieving key educational milestones.

In 2021, FAO piloted iSee with Vision To Learn, a public-private partnership aimed at addressing this healthcare disparity by bringing mobile vision clinics to public school districts across the region to overcome transportation barriers and optometrist shortages. The clinics – operated in partnership with the Ohio Optometric Foundation, Ohio Optometric Association, national nonprofit Vision To Learn, local optometrists and schools – provide the children of Appalachian Ohio free vision screenings, eye exams and prescription glasses.

In 2023, iSee with Vision To Learn became the first program to successfully complete the Ohio Treasurer’s Office’s pay-for-success ResultsOHIO program, and the Ohio Legislature, with support from Gov. Mike DeWine, appropriated funds to begin statewide expansion of the program.

**Need a reason to smile?**

Watch our video of children trying on their glasses for the first time.



### TO DATE, ISEE WITH VISION TO LEARN HAS:



Provided **8,965** students eye exams



Distributed prescription glasses to **7,296** students



Referred **1,466** students for a serious eye condition

# Planned giving that launched our scholarship program

From our earliest days, FAO and our supporters recognized that one of the most beneficial things we can do is encourage our region's young people to believe in their potential and to empower them to succeed.

Our scholarship program began in 2003, when Dr. Harry Keig left a bequest that established the Forrest Bachtel Scholarship Fund, which supports the educational and career goals of young people in Meigs County. And over time, his gift has inspired others to create scholarship funds for the youth of Appalachian Ohio.

To date, our scholarship program has awarded 4,900 scholarships across more than 280 funds, helping students pursue postsecondary studies at institutions of higher education and through vocational programs. Each of these funds is fueled by donors who recognize the vital role education plays in the future success of our young people, families and communities.



## In 2024, FAO's scholarship program has ...



Awarded  
\$658,828



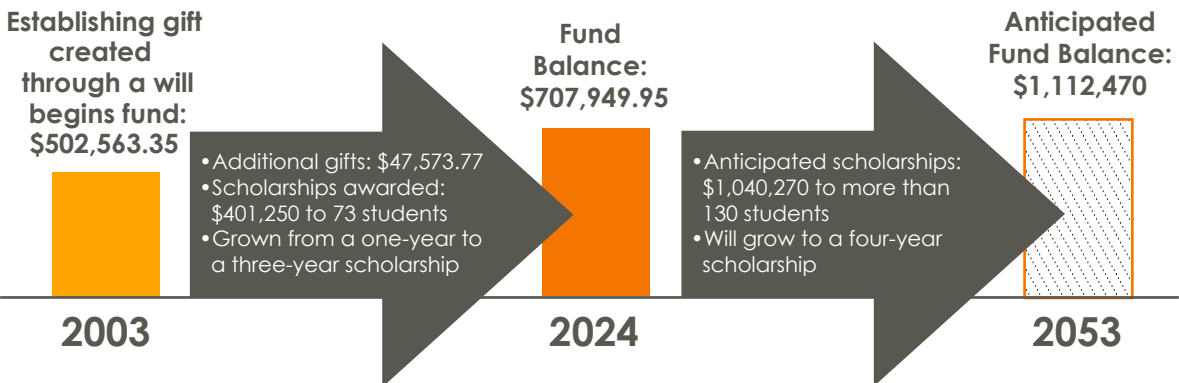
through  
589  
Scholarships



to  
332  
Students

## 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.







## Investing in the next generation of community builders

One of our newest public-private partnerships, our Growing Home Fellowship, is investing in our region's next generation of community builders – starting with 18- to 35-year-olds who work with Appalachian Ohio's K-12 population.

Launched with 121 fellows, the “Classroom to Community Cohort” includes classroom educators, student support service providers and behavioral and education programming partners, representing 29 of Appalachian Ohio's 32 counties. In exchange for committing to live, work and volunteer in the region for five years, the fellows receive a financial stipend and access to a leadership program that includes skill development, mentoring and networking. In 2024, these fellows are implementing service projects that are advancing opportunities across our Pillars of Prosperity and our communities.



Through our Growing Home Fellowship, we are deepening our fellows' commitment to community and empowering them to lead in ways that span classroom and community – all while inspiring the children of Appalachia who they serve every day to follow in their footsteps.

### Watch our Growing Home Fellowship speakers

The Growing Home Fellowship sees leaders and visionaries across Ohio and beyond give their time, expertise and encouragement to our fellows – gifts that will inspire all those committed to our communities.







# ABOUT THE FOUNDATION FOR APPALACHIAN OHIO

## OUR MISSION

We seek to unleash the potential within Appalachian Ohio by growing and leveraging gifts that advance sustained transformation.

## OUR VISION

Flourishing people and flourishing communities, today and in perpetuity

## OUR IMPACT



**1,550+** grants, scholarships and fellowships totaling **\$9.5 million** awarded in 2023



**700+** donor-established funds



**\$133 million** in charitable assets

## STAY IN TOUCH!

Follow us on social media to learn more about our work in Appalachian Ohio.



Foundation for Appalachian Ohio



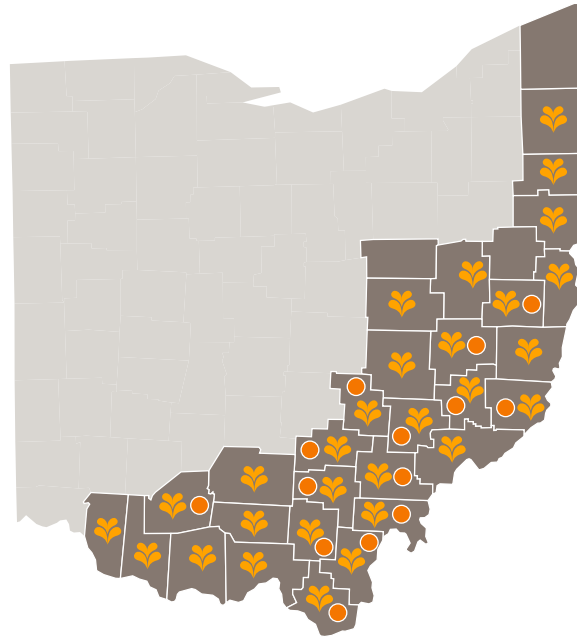
@FDNforappalachianohio



Foundation for Appalachian Ohio

The **Foundation for Appalachian Ohio** is a community of givers who bring together our time, talent and treasure to create opportunities and advance sustained transformations across our 32-county region. We maximize our impact by investing in local solutions, supporting transformative leaders and advancing approaches that are collaborative, holistic, evidence-based and sustainable.

## OUR COMMUNITY



### 15 Affiliate Foundations

(including the region-wide African American Community Fund and 14 geographic affiliates)

**111 Growing Home Fellows** currently serving across 29 of our 32 counties.



= County with one or more Growing Home Fellow(s)



= Affiliate Foundation

## OUR PILLARS OF PROSPERITY

Together with our community of givers, we 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.

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