



FOX CAREY HAMPEL MAGEE GRYNSEL WETZEL SIMONIAN BUCKINGHAM GREENBERG TURNER SEDER CRATER WEISS

**ADAM KRIKORIAN** SOULE  
FARNUM CIAFFONE HIBSON SAHAGEN-LONSTEIN  
DAVENPORT ROSENBLATT  
PASKELL CLIFFORD TAFT  
GRENON PETTIT LYONS  
LANGE FALBY BARRY

**MORGAN MASON**  
JUNNILA JEPPSON MALDONADO ARROYO  
DUKE RAUTH CARTER PAPPAS KEENAN  
FREELAND WOLCOTT ENGELSTEDT EARLY  
HALVEY THOMPSON CHARETTE BENNETT  
WOODBURY JENSEN  
MILLER HIGHT HARRIS  
STODDARD GORDON  
BELVAL RAND SJOSTEDT  
QUEENAN MCGUINNESS  
DUNBAR CRAWFORD  
MOYNIHAN ADDERLEY  
SHERWIN NEEDLEMAN

**DEWEY HESS**  
LEPORE WOLFSON MOSCHOS  
DRAWBRIDGE GIFFORD NYLUND  
ROWLAND LANGLEY LAVIGNE  
DAVIS MANSFIELD FRANK SOFFAN  
HARRINGTON ARMS

**TILTON** MORTER RODMAN PIERCE  
CAHN CANNON GORMAN  
FARNUM CIAFFONE CHESSON HUSISIAN HUGO  
DAVENPORT HIBSON SAHAGEN-LONSTEIN  
PASKELL ROSENBLATT  
GRENON CLIFFORD TAFT  
LANGE PETTIT LYONS  
FALBY BARRY

# 50 YEARS OF BUILDING A FOUNDATION

**LUSSIER GREEN** TRIPP  
JOHNSON AUGUSTUS  
INGLIS SALZER CHURCH  
CONSTANTIAN LOCK  
FITTS BETTKE DODGE  
STEELMAN GEORGULES  
CUNNINGHAM CURTIS  
TRUMBULL BARTON  
CHISHOLM HADDAD  
SULLIVAN FREEMAN  
ALEXANDER SILVER  
THEO-STEELMAN BATH  
SCHUYLER GUTRIDGE  
TORGENSEN WADE

**FLETCHER**  
SHUMAN GOODMAN DEAN  
WILDING-WHITE WRIGHT  
WATKINS SUNDBERG CHASE LOOFT  
HALE STINSON ARTHUR LIAZOS

**CUSHMAN** MITRA LEWRY  
NORLIN KELLY  
GRACE FELS BJORK GROSS FEINGOLD  
GOULET COCAINE KUHNER DAVIDIAN

**BOOTH ROMANO CREPEAU**  
KUBELUS CURRIE ROSSITER ELLISON PERSKY  
EDINBERG RICHMOND BINKOSKI HENDRICKS

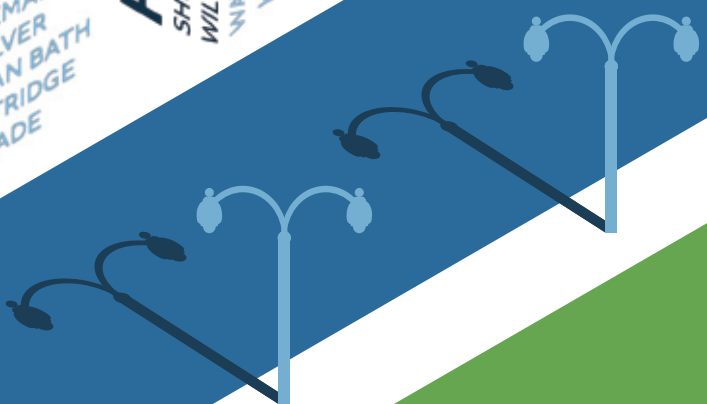
**1975**  
REYNDERS PRATT  
ECONOMOS SMITH  
VASILIKY MOSCHOS  
JAY BERRY ALDEN  
HANSON NESBIT  
HYDE EYDENBERG  
AHLQUIST FELDMAN  
DIDONATO FORBES SHORT DANIELS  
HERRON DYMEK CHARVES EPPINGER  
FEDELI LOGAN HUROWITZ DEANGELIS  
COWAN ELLSWORTH SOLOMON THOMSON

**TOSONI LUND**

GUYOTT WHIPPLE  
BOWDITCH SALEM  
KEELER

**2025**  
ANNUAL REPORT

HAKIM JONES  
SIMONATIS SIBLEY  
AHLFORS TINSLEY  
OAKLEY PROUTY  
RICHARDSON SALA  
REMILLARD TAYLOR  
KRESSLER HIGGINS  
ROTHSCHILDE LEWIS  
BARTHOLOMEW  
MASTERMAN HEDIN  
MARTIN FERRARO  
BOZENHARD RAWJI  
CHANDLEY BREGER  
LANE MCDONOUGH  
TOBIN SEAGER DIK  
WEINER HA LEMIRE  
CARRICK GOWETZ  
CHRISTENSEN RILEY  
GROGAN SOUTHGATE





**About the Cover**

Inspired by the above Foundation ad from 1999, our cover honors the hundreds of individuals and families that have established endowed funds with us over the past 50 years, including the Foundation's founders whose names appear largest. The other names in a larger font appear throughout this report, celebrating the impact their funds made this year. Each name on this cover represents a contribution to the permanent foundation that sustains generosity across generations.

**“Leafing” a Legacy**

The acorn leaf from our old logo appears throughout this report, highlighting stories from previous years that connect to where the Foundation is today.

- 06** Community Priorities
- 16** Nonprofit Support Center
- 20** Scholarships
- 24** New Funds
- 28** Financial Information

**Letter to the Community**

Dear friends,

This year marks a meaningful milestone for Greater Worcester Community Foundation. For 50 years, we have had the privilege of stewarding generosity, partnering with nonprofits, and investing in the people and places that make Worcester County strong.

Our 2025 Annual Report reflects on that history and the many people who shaped it. The cover celebrates the names of our endowed fundholders, representing one important piece of the broad community of support that has helped build the Foundation over the past five decades. That community includes not only these fundholders but also nonprofit organizations that hold endowment funds with us, donors who use donor advised funds at the Foundation to carry out

thoughtful and responsive grantmaking, companies that have used the Foundation as a charitable giving partner, and individuals and organizations who have contributed to funds of all kinds.

Inside this report, you will see how that collective generosity has built more than an institution. It has helped strengthen our nonprofit sector, support generations of young people, and create tangible impact across Worcester County.

As we celebrate 50 years of our community's foundation, we do so with deep gratitude and confidence in what lies ahead. The Foundation's past has been built by many hands, and its future will be as well. Thank you for being part of this enduring story.

With appreciation,

**Pete Dunn**  
President & CEO



**Joyce Augustus**  
Board Chair





**1998**

The Foundation launches the Youth for Community Improvement (YCI) program, empowering young people to identify community needs and recommend grants to local nonprofits.

**2004**

One of the Foundation's founders, Jack Lund, establishes the Renaissance Award through an endowment, providing a \$5,000 cash prize to a local nonprofit leader for personal renewal or inspiration.



**JUNE 2025**

Colin Novick, Executive Director of the Greater Worcester Land Trust, receives the Renaissance Award in recognition of his 27 years of leadership and conservation impact. The Foundation matches the \$5,000 award with a \$5,000 grant to the organization.



**1975**

After months of study and planning by a small group of community leaders, the Foundation's Articles of Organization are approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on September 18, 1975.

**SEPT 2025**

Fundholders, board members, and friends celebrate the Foundation's 50th anniversary at the Worcester Art Museum, unveiling a new brand and logo for the first time in 25 years.



**APRIL 2025**

Twenty-one students, representing the most geographically diverse cohort in YCI's history, award \$40,000 to nonprofit organizations addressing youth-identified priorities: mental health, educational support, basic needs, and access to arts and culture.

LOOKING

BACKMIRRORING

THE YEAR(S)  
IN REVIEW

FORWARD



**1988**

Robert W. Booth makes the largest gift in the Foundation's history at the time, and the largest gift to any community foundation in the nation that year: \$10 million in honor of his father, George F. Booth.



**APRIL 2025**

The former Becker College donates \$13 million to the Foundation to carry on its legacy, establishing a \$10.2 million Becker Scholarship Fund for students in Worcester and Leicester, and a \$2 million Becker Global Public Service Award.



**1994**

George Peter and Anna Krikorian establish a donor advised fund to support a wide range of charitable and educational programs.



**JULY 2025**

George Krikorian Jr. leaves a bequest to the Foundation, converting his family's donor advised fund into a discretionary fund and creating a new \$1.3 million fund to support individuals with physical disabilities.

# WEAVING THREADS OF BELONGING

Love Your Labels helps young people connect to confidence, community and joy through creative expression.

Love Your Labels is an LGBTQ+-led nonprofit dedicated to uplifting queer and trans youth through creative expression and community building. Founded in 2018 by Joshua Croke, the organization is rooted in the belief that self-expression is lifesaving, and that creative practices offer powerful tools for identity exploration, mental wellbeing and community.

Fashion design is a focal point of Love Your Labels. Its flagship initiative, Threads, teaches design and sewing skills to LGBTQ+ youth. "Threads works to create an affirming, supportive environment for youth and provide space to explore identity and build community through the creative lens of fashion," explains Josh.

Using a project based learning model, Threads provides hands-on experience in garment construction while fostering life skills such as collaboration, communication and problem solving. Participants work toward creating a custom runway garment featured in the program's culminating Youth Fashion Showcase and leave the program with their own sewing machine.

Through project funding from the Foundation, the Threads program expanded in 2025 to offer two cohorts, and general operating support helped Love Your Labels focus on strategic planning and long-term sustainability.

"At a time when attacks on trans rights and LGBTQ+ people are increasing at the federal level, we see the psychological harm happening to our young people," says Josh. "Part of our resistance work is bringing the community together and rooting in joy and celebration of queer and trans identity."

In 2024, Love Your Labels brought Cass Dallas on board to serve as a therapist-in-residence, integrating emotional regulation, stress management, and social-emotional learning into the Threads curriculum.



The Threads program offers cohorts for Grades 6-9 and Grades 10-12.

The Threads team includes President & Founder Joshua Croke, Program Coordinator Dani Killay, lead Fashion Educator Sam Donovan, Fashion Educator and Threads alum Caelum Lam, and therapist-in-residence Cass Dallas (not pictured).



The team has seen an increase in need for mental health support both from youth and parents. "We've had more requests from parents and families on how they can support their kids and the community," says Josh. They've built a parent and caregivers group and are working with the Worcester Public Schools LGBT Family Advisory Council to address needs for students in and out of school.

Since its launch, Threads has served over fifty youth and continues to grow, with a goal of introducing youth job opportunities that build skills and career readiness in safe, affirming roles. "What it comes down to," says Josh, "is that our young people are looking for space and connection, now more than ever."

To learn more about Love Your Labels, visit [www.loveyourlabels.org](http://www.loveyourlabels.org).



This year, the community gathered for a Lunar New Year celebration, welcoming the Year of the Fire Horse with traditional lion dancing and food made by volunteers.

Far right: SEACMA's mushroom farm yielded over 1,500 pounds of organic mushrooms in 2025.



# PRESERVING CULTURE, NOURISHING COMMUNITY



## SEACMA advances food security for immigrant families through culturally responsive programs, urban agriculture and community connection.

Founded in 1999, Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Massachusetts is a Worcester-based nonprofit dedicated to ensuring that immigrants and refugees can thrive and participate fully in civic life.

SEACMA was originally formed to serve Vietnamese and Cambodian communities but now reaches a wider Asian immigrant population, including Nepali, Karen, Karenni, Rohingya, Chinese, Laotian, and Afghan families. Approximately 90% of clients are low-income, and many face housing instability, limited English proficiency, and barriers to accessing public benefits and healthcare.

Eliminating barriers is key to SEACMA's mission and programming, including its food security program that receives funding from the Foundation. "There are so many obstacles that prevent our clients from accessing support," explains Tuyet Tran, SEACMA's Executive Director. "Navigating complex benefit systems like SNAP can be hard due to language barriers and administrative requirements, and meal programs often don't offer food that is culturally appropriate."

To combat this, SEACMA developed its own food security program, distributing fresh produce and protein boxes tailored to the dietary and cultural preferences of clients. In the winter, when access

becomes more difficult, SEACMA provides weekly hot meal deliveries to individuals unable to travel to the center.

In 2025, the program distributed more than 3,000 pounds of food and delivered 135 hot meals directly to the homes of older adults in the winter months. A defining feature of the food security program is urban agriculture. Older adults and youth volunteers cultivate Asian vegetables and herbs in two urban gardens in downtown Worcester.

Beyond food distribution, SEACMA offers activities across generations. "We really want to expand in the area of healthy aging," says Tuyet. "We've started doing more programming for older adults, to get them to socialize and try to combat loneliness and depression." Activities include dance classes, volleyball games, cooking classes, and karaoke nights.

Recent changes by the federal administration have impacted SEACMA, reducing funding and creating heightened anxiety among the immigrant communities it works with. In response, SEACMA is strengthening its infrastructure and pursuing new vendor partnerships to secure culturally appropriate foods while continuing to expand its outreach. "What we're trying to do is continue to provide really good services," says Tuyet. "Our priority is to be responsive to whatever the community needs are."

**To learn more about the Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Massachusetts, visit [www.seacma.org](http://www.seacma.org).**

# SIXTY YEARS STRONG

## Spanish American Center meets families' needs with compassion and culturally grounded care.

The Spanish American Center was founded 60 years ago to address the needs of the growing Hispanic and Latino population in the Leominster and Fitchburg area. Initially established as an information and referral network, the Center has expanded into a multifaceted organization providing wraparound social, health, educational, and cultural services. The Center's vision is that every person live in a safe, healthy, peaceful, and prosperous community to enjoy the full benefits of society.

Neddy Latimer, the Center's Executive Director for more than 40 years, plays a key networking role to ensure residents get the support they need. "You could bring up any agency or nonprofit in the area," says Melanie Trottier, Resource Development Manager, "and Neddy knows somebody there." After Hurricane Maria, the Center leveraged this networking role to coordinate support for individuals and families who were displaced from Puerto Rico and relocated to Massachusetts. In 2023, the Center supported emergency efforts related to

the influx of migrants to the state by providing food and other resources to local shelters.

In addition to crisis response, the Center has steadily expanded ongoing programs that strengthen families and promote community wellbeing and connection. The food pantry provides reliable access to fresh and shelf-stable food for residents in need, offering a large box of supplies to 25 families each weekday. Youth in grades 4-12 attend Crossroads, a hands-on, STEM-based after school program which prioritizes youth mental health through therapist-led activities; Verano Alegre welcomes kids ages 5-13 for summer fun, meals, and academic enrichment.

The Center takes a data-driven approach to shaping its programs, including efforts to address gender-based violence through awareness-raising and community-based services for survivors. Rocio Varela-Bravo, who coordinates the Center's new E.A.R.S. (Emitting a Resilient Spirit) program, explains, "Even though domestic violence cuts across all communities and socioeconomic strata, Latinos and other minorities in Massachusetts experience the highest rates of abuse."

The Center already offers a long-standing domestic violence program, which provides one-on-one advocacy,

**Elders United provides social connection and culturally responsive activities for older adults to combat isolation, and English as a Second Language classes help newcomers build speaking skills and confidence.**



safety plans, and referrals to emergency shelters for those in need. This new education program provides culturally sensitive workshops on topics like healthy relationships and emotional and psychological abuse, with materials available in English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Portuguese.

Across its programming, the Center has seen growing demand and a broader client base, including more English speakers. "When SNAP benefits were on hold, we had a lot of first-time clients coming to the food pantry," says Melanie. "We are here for the community: the doors of the Spanish American Center are open to everyone."

**To learn more about the Spanish American Center, visit [www.spanishamericancenter.org](http://www.spanishamericancenter.org).**

# AGENCY THROUGH EDUCATION

## A new partnership helps residents recognize cancer symptoms sooner and navigate barriers to care.

Based in Westborough, DetecTogether is a nonprofit education and advocacy organization dedicated to improving cancer outcomes through early detection education. Founded by Jim and Nancy Coghlin, the organization was created in response to a critical gap in public understanding of how cancer can be identified early. Now in its second decade, its mission remains focused on saving lives through education and patient empowerment.

A central element of DetecTogether's work is addressing the lack of awareness around early cancer

detection and how cancer often presents outside of routine screenings. While screenings are essential, they apply to only a small fraction of the more than 200 types of cancer, leaving many cancers to be identified through symptoms and changes in health. DetecTogether's approach emphasizes "patient activation," encouraging individuals to take an active role in their healthcare.

"We've identified the most common cancer symptoms and traits," explains Tricia Laursen, President & Executive Director of DetecTogether. "We give people a practical roadmap so they understand their role in identifying these symptoms, know when to seek care, and how to collaborate with providers to accelerate diagnosis and effective treatment."

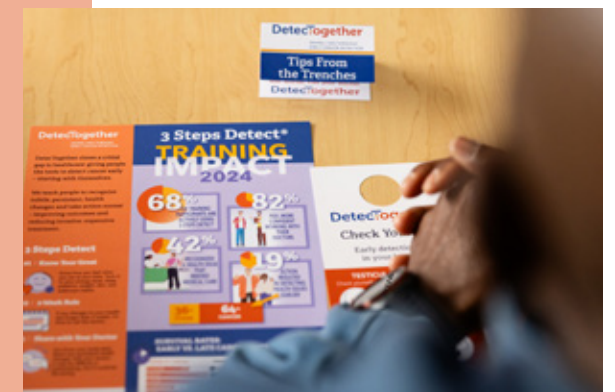
In 2025, DetecTogether partnered with CHANGE (Community Health Awareness Network Grows Equity) and the Family Health Center of Worcester to broaden its impact and reach underserved communities.

Lovo Koliego, President and Founder of CHANGE, focuses on improving healthcare access to the African immigrant community in Worcester. She explored the opportunity to introduce DetecTogether training to this community, noting "there are beliefs and behavior that stop members of the community from getting timely care or screens." To address these barriers and ensure training was done in an authentic and trustworthy way, Lovo introduced the idea to local parishes, recognizing that pastors and their wives were key influencers in the community. "It was a resounding success," says Lovo. "The consensus was this really needs to be done."

Now, CHANGE and DetecTogether are working together to host the "3 Steps Detect" training at churches. CHANGE will provide on-site support to help individuals navigate health insurance and access care, while community health workers from Family Health Center can assist with setting up appointments and answering questions.

However, challenges remain. "Due to the current climate around immigration, some folks aren't attending church anymore," explains Lovo. "So, we're doing the hybrid approach a lot." Between online and in-person trainings, the team is able to reach hundreds of people, and they plan to grow significantly. "We believe this approach is very scalable," says Tricia. "By training trainers on 3 Steps Detect, we can help more people to detect cancer early, which we know leads to better prognoses and saves lives. When people are equipped with the right knowledge, they become their own strongest advocates."

To learn more about DetecTogether, visit [www.detectogether.org](http://www.detectogether.org). To learn more about CHANGE, visit [www.changeglobal1.org](http://www.changeglobal1.org).



"We give people a practical roadmap so **they understand their role in identifying these symptoms** ... and how to collaborate with providers."

Trusted community leaders learning 3 Steps Detect® to bring these skills into their communities.



# IMAGINING THE POSSIBILITIES

**BVEF's youth programs connect students with hands-on experiences that build leadership, skills, and confidence for the future.**

Founded in 1999 and grounded in the belief that strong schools create strong communities, Blackstone Valley Education Foundation builds meaningful partnerships among schools, local businesses, and community organizations throughout southern Worcester County. Initially focused on awarding grants to educators, the organization has evolved to deliver learning, mentorship, and leadership development programs, with an emphasis on early career exposure for students.

Executive Director Dr. Erin Conley believes early career exposure is critical to bridging opportunity gaps for young people. "Some students only know their city block, which limits what they can visualize for themselves and the professions they're exposed to," she explains. "Others have a plethora of networks and exposure to all kinds of professions. We want to transform education so that all students are better prepared to enter the workforce."

At the center of BVEF's work is the Blackstone Valley Youth Leadership Academy, now entering its 21st year. This eight-month leadership and career exploration program puts students in authentic workplaces and connects them with industry mentors. Historically serving high school students from districts across Worcester County, funding from



Greater Worcester Community Foundation has allowed BVEF to include middle school students.

The Youth Leadership Academy includes 12 to 14 in-person sessions, hosted at industry partner sites. Students gain insight into leadership across sectors while building essential soft skills. After one session, a ninth grader from Hopedale Jr./Sr. High School said, "Prior to this session, I did not know that there was more than one definition of leadership...I can see myself applying what I learned to improve myself and make a difference in my community."

A defining feature of the program is its emphasis on "learning by doing." Middle and high school students learn in separate, age-appropriate tracks, with middle schoolers building foundational leadership and career awareness and high schoolers diving into topics such as financial planning, marketing, and public speaking. Students then design and implement community impact projects, from independent high school initiatives to team-based efforts like the student-led STEM Unfiltered conference.

Erin, who has a deep educational background and completed her Ed.D. in Curriculum, Instruction, and Leadership, is now leading BVEF's strategic vision to expand geographically and programmatically across Massachusetts and into Connecticut and Rhode Island. In addition to working directly with students, BVEF supports teachers and career coordinators in adopting this approach. "We make sure everything we do at BVEF helps the students build their networks, gain access to mentors, and get that early exposure," says Erin.

**To learn more about Blackstone Valley Education Foundation, visit [www.bveducationfoundation.org](http://www.bveducationfoundation.org)**

**Youth Leadership Academy students tour AccessTCA, an exhibit and event marketing company in Northbridge.**



"I can see myself applying what I learned to improve myself and **make a difference in my community.**"



1991

In 1991, three area organizations — the United Way of Central Massachusetts, the Colleges of Worcester Consortium, and Greater Worcester Community Foundation — recognized the need for a regional resource that could help nonprofit staff and boards meet their missions and make the most of limited resources. Together they formed the Coalition for Not-for-Profit Management Assistance, which offered workshops, seminars, and short-term consultation to strengthen local organizations.

By 1998, the coalition's expanding range of services called for a more permanent home. It became an established project of the Foundation and adopted a new name, the Nonprofit Support Center.

**Today, the Nonprofit Support Center equips organizations at every stage of development through grants, consulting, and professional development.**

### Nonprofit Effectiveness Grants

In response to changes in the federal funding landscape and rising uncertainty across the sector, the Foundation shifted its Nonprofit Effectiveness Grants to a rolling deadline this year, making it easier for organizations to seek timely support.

We also partnered with consultant Heidi Holtz to support two organizations participating in an



Former WCF staff (L to R): Audrey Klein-Joach, Cynthia Kelly, Wendi Stein.

intensive planning process tailored to their stage of growth within the nonprofit lifecycle.

Studio Theatre Worcester, featured on the next page, participated in this lifecycle work and received a Nonprofit Effectiveness Grant from the Foundation to support their continued development.

### Workshops and Learning Opportunities

In 2025, we hosted a full year of workshops and learning opportunities for nonprofits focused on fundraising, financial management, leadership, marketing, and other related topics. More than 300 participants engaged in our NSC programming,

and we look forward to introducing cohort-based learning opportunities in the coming years to help deepen connections and support sustained impact within Worcester County's robust nonprofit sector.



## Mergers and Shared Services Fund

### Ascentria/Goddard and Hall Senior Living



Launched in late 2024, the Mergers and Shared Services Fund supports nonprofits that are exploring a merger or shared service model with another organization. The fund operates with a rolling deadline.

In 2025, we awarded five grants through this program, including a grant to Ascentria Care Alliance to support its affiliation with Goddard and Hall Senior Living. This partnership united two long-standing institutions that have served the Worcester community for more than 150 years, each with a deep commitment to compassionate, high-quality care.

Efforts were already underway to bring Goddard and Hall Senior Living into the Ascentria network, and the process was generating substantial legal expenses. Through the Mergers and Shared Services Fund, Ascentria received a \$20,000 grant to help offset these costs and complete the affiliation. Now a member of Ascentria Care Alliance, Goddard and Hall Senior Living offers 68 independent and rest home beds for local seniors.

## Nourishing Tomorrow's Leaders

### Building the next generation of nonprofit board members

This year, we launched and graduated the first Worcester County cohort of Nourishing Tomorrow's Leaders, a board training and leadership development program designed to strengthen nonprofit governance across the region.

This program originated from the Gifford Foundation in Syracuse and has been running since 2014, graduating more than 250 individuals from the program. We are proud to be the first organization to license this program and bring it to Worcester County, where we saw immediate interest from individuals wanting to serve on nonprofit boards. More than 40 applicants applied for 20 available seats, and participants were selected based on their relevant lived experience, skills, and interest in the nonprofit sector.

Over nine weeks, participants met at YWCA Central Massachusetts, where weekly sessions were facilitated by experienced community leaders and covered fiduciary and legal responsibilities, equity in governance, managing conflict, and more. The YWCA generously provided space and childcare to ensure accessibility for participants with families.

The cohort celebrated its completion with a graduation ceremony at Girls Inc. of Worcester, achieving a 100 percent graduation rate.



# CASTING A NEW LIGHT

Investing in internal systems and structures to bolster Worcester's creative growth.



Left to right: Elijah Lidonde, Rob Klimeczko, Megan Lummus, Morgan Fitzpatrick, John Wayland Somers, Lizzie Seaburg.

Not pictured: Kim Dexter, Lydia Cochran, Sandy Clancy, Veronica Bailey, Aya Khoury, Johnny Esposito.



**“Partnering with other local nonprofits** is key to the meaningful impact of our productions.”

Studio Theatre Worcester, founded in 2018, is a professional theatre organization with a mission to offer a professional theatre experience that reflects the diversity and vibrancy of Worcester's communities while providing compensated opportunities for artists.

Serving Worcester and the broader Worcester County region, the organization operates as a nomadic theatre company without a permanent venue. This flexible model allows them to collaborate with community partners and stage performances in a range of locations, including Worcester Academy's black box theatre and Salem Covenant Church. Performing in different spaces lets the company tailor each production to the environment, creating immersive experiences that deepen audience engagement.

Community engagement is central to the mission. The theatre builds partnerships with local nonprofits to bridge the issues explored onstage with real-world solutions community groups are creating. As Literary and New Works Director Lydia Cochran explains, “The pandemic was an opportunity to reflect and think about what our audiences needed. Community engagement and partnering with other local nonprofits is key to the meaningful impact of our productions.” Past collaborations have addressed mental health, civic engagement, and LGBTQ+ advocacy, transforming productions into platforms for dialogue and reflection.

With clarity around programming, Studio Theatre Worcester turned inward to examine other aspects of the

organization with support from Heidi Holtz at Stillwork Consulting through the Foundation's Nonprofit Lifecycles work. “We took a self-evaluation of our organization,” said John Somers, Artistic Director, “and mapped out what needed to be strengthened for continued growth.”

This work underscored the need to reassess the theatre's governance structure. As a volunteer-led organization, staff and board roles were often undefined and overlapping. “Through Heidi's work and the due diligence she put in with wonderful questions and thoughtful guidance, we realized it was time to bifurcate our board and our staff,” John says. The theatre is now moving toward a separate autonomous board that will govern the staff, a move that will help clarify roles and reduce burnout.

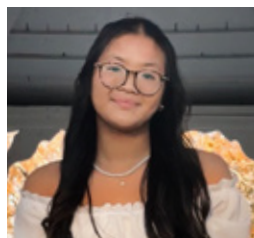
Building on this progress, Studio Theatre Worcester also received a Nonprofit Effectiveness Grant from the Foundation to work with a consultant to strengthen fundraising and development practices. “There are a lot of donors who give a tremendous amount to the arts in the region,” says John. “And they don't know we exist, even though we are in their backyard.” With a roadmap in place, the team is confident that its governance and business model can grow in alignment with its programming and support long-term success.

To learn more about Studio Theatre Worcester, visit [www.studiotheatreworcester.org](http://www.studiotheatreworcester.org).

## Sumner B. Tilton Memorial Scholarship Fund

1985

The largest scholarship fund at the Foundation prior to 2025 was established by Sumner B. Tilton Jr., the Foundation's last living founder. In 1985, he and his sister created the fund in memory of their father with support from three local private foundations. The Sumner B. Tilton Memorial Scholarship supports students attending any "outstanding college or law school", reflecting his father's belief in the power of higher education.

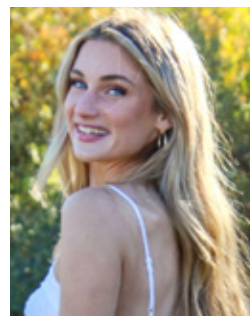


Since its creation, the Tilton Scholarship has made awards to more than 350 students and maintains a current balance of \$2 million. In 2025, the fund provided several renewing and new awards, including a renewable scholarship for Tracy N. from Worcester. Tracy dreamed of attending college in Boston, but the financial burden was significant. A renewable award totaling \$10,000 from the Tilton Scholarship Fund helps her study chemistry at Boston College on a pre-med track.

## The Lawrence M. and Augusta L. Keeler Scholarship Fund

1978

Greater Worcester Community Foundation's first scholarship fund was started by Lawrence and Augusta Keeler, who transferred their private trust to the Foundation in 1978. Lawrence and Augusta, who lived in Whitinsville, chose to designate their scholarship to support Northbridge students with financial need and a strong desire to succeed in college.



From an initial gift of \$45,221, the Keeler Scholarship has grown to \$176,000. Since its creation almost 50 years ago, it has awarded nearly 200 scholarships to students, providing renewable support that stays with students throughout their college experience.

In 2025, the Keeler Scholarship supported Mara K. from Northbridge, who chose to stay in Worcester County to study biomedical research at Assumption University. In addition to her renewable \$6,000 scholarship, her award will be matched by her college thanks to a partnership between Assumption and the Foundation.

## 2025: A Transformational Year for Scholarships

In 2025, the Foundation committed \$1.84 million in scholarships to support 443 local students pursuing college, vocational training, and professional degrees. This annual investment reflects both the strength of our endowed scholarship funds and the generosity of donors who believe deeply in education as a pathway to opportunity.

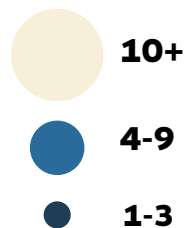
The year also marked a historic milestone with a \$13 million gift creating the Becker Scholarship Program. This extraordinary investment will expand access to higher education for generations of Worcester County students, dramatically increasing affordability and opportunity.

Together, these milestones reflect the evolution of the Foundation's scholarship work, from a single fund rooted in one family's love for Northbridge to 150+ funds that open doors for hundreds of students each year.



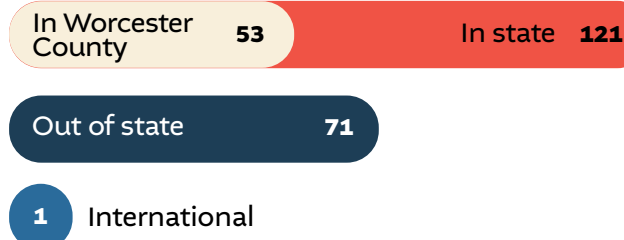
## 2025 Awards by Region

Our scholarships supported students from 66 towns and cities in Worcester County and beyond.



## College Geography

Many of our scholarship students stayed close to home for their studies.



Once an endowed fund is created at Greater Worcester Community Foundation, it makes grants to the community in perpetuity. The funds featured here were established years ago but continue to shape Worcester County today. They played an important role in our 2025 Community Grants program by supporting the nonprofits highlighted in this year's annual report.

## Economic Opportunity

1992

**Francis A. and Jacquelyn H. Harrington Human Services Fund:** Born in Worcester, Francis A. Harrington built a distinguished career with the Paul Revere Insurance Companies. The Harringtons had their own private foundation, but in the 1990s the trustees found themselves inundated with human services funding requests. Recognizing GWCF had the staff and expertise they did not, they partnered with the Foundation to establish this field of interest fund to support human services in the Worcester area.

2002

**Joseph A. Tosoni Fund:** A lifelong resident of Fitchburg, Joseph was a Korean War veteran who worked for many years as a boilermaker in local paper mills. Though he had little formal schooling himself, he deeply valued education and believed others should have the opportunity to pursue their goals. Joseph left a bequest to establish a field of interest fund benefiting residents of his hometown area, ensuring future generations would have access to opportunities he greatly respected.

## Basic Needs

1988

**Robert W. Booth Fund in Memory of George F. Booth:** George F. Booth, known as "Mr. Worcester," was the city's leading newspaperman for more than half a century, serving as publisher of The Evening Gazette and later the Worcester Telegram and Evening Gazette. His son, Robert W. Booth, carried that commitment forward as president of WTAG radio until his retirement in 1977 and later an owner of the Telegram & Gazette until its sale in 1986. Robert created a discretionary fund at Greater Worcester Community Foundation in 1988 with a \$10 million gift in honor of his father.



**Southeast Asian Coalition (p. 8) was supported by the Booth and Arms funds.**



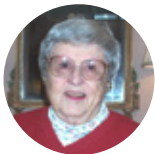
**Spanish American Center (p. 10) was supported by the Harrington, Tosoni and Crepeau funds.**

2006

**Lorraine Crepeau Fund:** Lorraine and her husband, Chauncey, lived modestly in Worcester's Burncoat neighborhood and maintained their lifestyle after receiving an unexpected inheritance from a cousin. With no children or close relatives, Lorraine was drawn to the idea of leaving the remainder of her estate to the Foundation. When she died in August 2006, eight months after her husband, this fund was created to support her chosen causes.

2014

**Isabel K. Arms Fund:** Born in New Jersey in 1915, Isabel attended Bancroft School in Worcester before moving on to college and serving as a lieutenant in the U.S. Naval Reserve Corps. After returning to Worcester, Isabel connected with the Foundation in 1986 and began establishing a number of funds at the Foundation in honor of her father and other family members. After her passing in 2014, Isabel left an additional gift through her trust to establish this discretionary fund.



2004

**Norman L. and Dorothy A. Sharfman Fund:** A Worcester native, Norman L. Sharfman founded Sharfman Jewelers with his father and managed the store for nearly five decades before retiring in 1986 and selling the business to longtime employees. Norman married his wife, Dorothy, in 1939, and they remained together until her passing in 1989. Together, they shared a deep commitment to expanding opportunity for disadvantaged youth and named Greater Worcester Community Foundation as a beneficiary of their estate.

1982

## Youth Development

**Youth Opportunity Fund:** Created in 1982 by Jack Adam, with significant support from Norman L. Sharfman, the Youth Opportunity Fund was the community foundation's first field of interest fund and remains a cornerstone of its investment in young people. Jack Adam envisioned an endowment that would generate lasting support for projects giving low-income youth opportunities to engage in experiences beyond their daily environment and exposure to new ideas and possibilities.



**BVEF (p. 14) was supported by the Youth Opportunity Fund.**



**Ruth & Jack Adam**

2000

## Arts & Creativity

**Ruth and John Adam Fund:** John "Jack" Adam Jr. and his wife, Ruth, shared a deep commitment to education and to Greater Worcester Community Foundation, where Jack was a founding director and its second president. Having no children, they chose to direct their legacy toward the community that meant so much to them, creating a field of interest fund to support youth to succeed in school and beyond.



**Love Your Labels (p. 6) was supported by the Sharfman and Adam funds.**

## Health & Wellbeing



**DetecTogether (p. 12) was supported by the Fallon/OrNda Community Health Fund.**

1996

**Fallon/OrNda Community Health Fund:** This fund was established with \$4 million following the sale of Saint Vincent Hospital by Fallon Foundation to OrNda Healthcare to support programs designed to improve the health status of vulnerable populations within the Central Massachusetts communities served by Fallon Healthcare System.

These funds represent just a few of the 34 new funds created in 2025. Each reflects a donor's commitment to strengthening our region and investing in its future. From supporting emerging needs to advancing long-term community priorities, these new funds are already helping expand the reach and impact of the Foundation.

## Agency

Second Chance Animal Services began as an animal shelter and grew to help more pets in need, operating community veterinary hospitals that provide access to veterinary services in North Brookfield, Southbridge, Springfield and Worcester. In 2025, the organization helped 64,000 pets in need.

To support its continued growth, Second Chance established a nonprofit endowment fund at the Foundation to ensure the organization can provide vital services to the community for years to come. This fund will help sustain Second Chance's mission of offering accessible, high-quality veterinary care, adoption programs and other services that help pets receive the care they deserve.



## Designated



The Emerald Club of Worcester Fund was established by the Emerald Club Board of Directors to honor the members and donors who have generously supported the Mercy Centre's staff and clients since 1958.

The fund supports Catholic Charities of Worcester County and is restricted to the Mercy Centre, helping underwrite client and staff celebrations, employee recognition and retention efforts, and educational or vocational programming for clients. In the event the Mercy Centre program closes, the fund will convert to a field of interest fund to support organizations serving adults and children with developmental disabilities, ensuring the Emerald Club's legacy of impact continues well into the future.

## Field of Interest

The ONE Worcester Legacy Fund was established to carry forward the mission of ONE Worcester, a nonprofit that provided free consulting and coaching to strengthen Worcester-area nonprofits. Housed at Greater Worcester Community Foundation, the fund supports nonprofit effectiveness by investing in early-stage, grassroots and smaller-budget organizations through the Foundation's Nonprofit Effectiveness Grant Program, ensuring ONE Worcester's values and impact continue to benefit the community for years to come.



## Donor Advised

Chris O'Keeffe has worked in nonprofits for more than 30 years, including serving seven years as Vice President for Program at GWCF. After his wife, Holly Baab, passed in 2025, Chris established a donor advised fund at the Foundation to guide his grantmaking. He also joined our legacy Acorn Society, committing to leave an additional gift to his fund upon his passing. At that time, the fund will be converted to a field of interest fund dedicated to the protection and advancement of immigrants in Worcester County.



## Scholarship

C. Carvill Moore had a lifelong passion for education and community service. He spent his career as an English teacher with the Leicester School Department, retiring in 1995, and remained deeply engaged in the field through service on local, state, and national education associations. He chaired the Leicester Public Library Board, was a longtime member of the VFW and the Worcester Lodge of Elks, and previously served in the U.S. Army.

Through his trust, Carvill established a scholarship to support Leicester High School graduates pursuing English or a related field of study. Recognizing the Foundation's strong scholarship program and local expertise, his trustee selected Greater Worcester Community Foundation to manage and administer the fund. Each year, the scholarship awards two renewable \$5,000 scholarships to students from Leicester, continuing Carvill Moore's commitment to education and opportunity.



“Having had an insider’s perspective on how GWCF makes its grant decisions, I’m completely comfortable with using it as the **primary vehicle for my philanthropic legacy.**”

Chris O'Keeffe

These stories highlight two powerful commitments to public education: one made through a bequest fulfilled this year and one made through a planned gift from a living donor. Together, they demonstrate how legacy giving can make a lasting difference for students and schools across our region.

## Linda and Albert Romano

2011

Albert and Linda Romano shared a deep belief in education, service, and giving back to the community that shaped their lives. Albert devoted more than 30 years to the Fitchburg Public Schools as a teacher and principal, influencing generations of students through his leadership and commitment to public education. Linda balanced a long professional career with a passion for lifelong learning and volunteering, giving generously of her time and talents throughout her life, including service on the Foundation's scholarship and outreach committees.

Together, the Romanos thoughtfully planned a charitable bequest to ensure their values would continue beyond their lifetimes. Now fulfilled, their gift of nearly \$800,000 has created three new funds at the Foundation:

**Linda V. Carlson Romano and Albert J. Romano, Jr. Fund**, providing discretionary grants.

**Linda V. Carlson Romano and Albert J. Romano, Jr. Scholarship Fund**, supporting Worcester County high school seniors who plan to study pre-law and pursue a legal career, or who plan to study and pursue a career in nursing.

**Linda V. Carlson Romano and Albert J. Romano, Jr. Tennis Endowment**, supporting the Tenacity's Summer Tennis & Reading Program.



Linda & Albert Romano

## Acorn Society Members

Anonymous (18)  
 James C. and Colleen S. Abrams  
 Robert S. Adler  
 Arthur Allen  
 Ann E. Bergman and Bill Glennon  
 Michele and David Bigelow  
 Mark P. Bilotta and Henry O. Ritter  
 Betty G. Bjurling  
 Maurice J. and Pamela K. Boisvert  
 Michael D. and Mary Ann S. Brockelman  
 James R. and Paula R. Buonomo  
 Kenneth F. and Nancy Candito  
 Brian M. and Maureen E. Chandley  
 Deanna and Richard Charves  
 Tucker Massey Clark  
 Elizabeth A. Clifford  
 James J. Convery and Tracy Craig  
 Richard P. Coonan  
 Kenneth C. Crater and Margaret Ferraro  
 Dix F. and Sarah Davis  
 Jane K. Dewey  
 Ross K. and Lisa F. Dik  
 Barbara M. Fitts  
 Warner S. and Mary F. Fletcher  
 Paul and Karen Fontaine  
 Gerald and Jane Freed  
 Dina R. and Gerald L. Gaudette III  
 Rodney M. Glasgow  
 Robert M. Gordon and Jane Ellen Thompson  
 Dennis F. and Frances C. Gorman

Susanne E. Gray  
 David R. Grenon  
 Philip N. Gross  
 Lori May Haddad  
 Claire L. Halvey  
 Richard E. Hedin  
 Donald Inglis  
 M Howard Jacobson  
 Kenneth R. Jones  
 Pam B. Kane and Roy T. Charette  
 Richard J. Kisten  
 Lionel M. and Cynthia E. Lamoureux  
 Sarah B. Lange  
 David P. Leach and Audrey Klein-Leach  
 Catherine Levine  
 Ann Lewis  
 Ann T. Lisi  
 Linda C. and Fred J. Looft  
 Mónica Escobar Lowell  
 Satya B. and Supriya Mitra  
 Barbara B. and Raymond E. Morin  
 Frederic H. and Victoria Mulligan  
 David A. Nicholson  
 Karen M. Nunley  
 Christopher M. O'Keefe  
 Martha R. Pappas  
 Marlene and David Persky  
 R. Norman Peters  
 Marsha R. Platt  
 Bonnie M. Prescott



## The John and Rita Kurty Fund to Enrich Elementary School Education in Barre, MA

John and Rita Kurty believed deeply in the power of public education to shape not only academic success, but also character and community. Originally from Barre, where she attended High Plains Elementary School and graduated from Barre High School, Rita carried those values with her throughout her life.

Inspired by excellent teachers and her own love of learning, Rita knew by fourth grade that she wanted to become a teacher and pursued that goal with dedication. After college and teaching positions in Amherst and Ludlow, she taught for more than 30 years in Westfield public elementary schools, nurturing students in the early years of their educational journeys. For Rita, teaching was a calling – rooted in care, curiosity, and the belief that every child deserves encouragement and opportunity. As one former student later wrote to her, “You really loved teaching, and that made me want to learn. You are the best teacher I ever had.”

Rita's husband of 57 years, John, shared the same values both in the classroom and on the athletic field. A high school and university teacher and coach, he challenged students to meet high standards while believing wholeheartedly in their potential. He led teams to multiple state and regional championships

and was inducted into both the Ludlow High School Sports Hall of Fame and the Westfield State Athletics Hall of Fame. At the time of his retirement, his winning percentage was the highest of any soccer coach, active or retired, in all New England divisions. Above all, John is remembered not only for his victories and accolades, but for the lessons he instilled in students about perseverance, integrity, and teamwork.

An anonymous donor has made a bequest in their names to Ruggles Lane School – the current public elementary school in Barre – to honor Rita's learning experiences in that town and her passion for excellence in elementary education.

This bequest gift reflects John and Rita's belief that strong communities begin with strong schools and that investing in children is one of the most powerful ways to shape the future.



John & Rita Kurty



Students learn together at Ruggles Lane School in Barre.

## 2025 Investment Performance

The Foundation continued its strong performance in 2025, generating more than \$35 million in investment returns by year end. We also received the largest gift in our history, a \$13.2 million contribution from Becker College, which helped bring total assets above \$270 million. The launch of a new Index Pool expanded investment options for donors seeking a more passively managed approach.

Our investment program is designed to preserve and grow the value of donor gifts, ensure long-term sustainability, and support community needs today.

We are grateful to our investment committee and the team at Prime Buchholz for their leadership, insight, and dedication.

### 2025 Investment Committee members:

Thomas J. Bartholomew (Chair), Maria Heskes-Allard, Warner Fletcher, Christopher McCarthy, Ann Tripp, Jim Collins, Abraham Haddad, John Shoro

## Summary Financial Statements

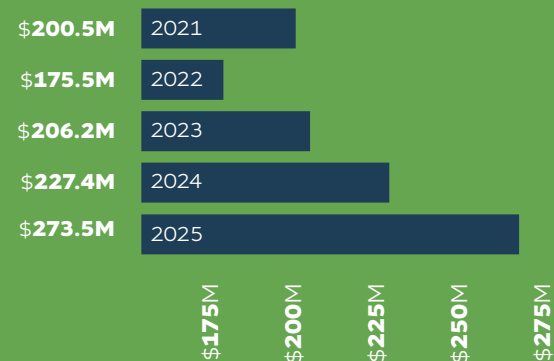
### Balance Sheet

<b>Assets</b>	
Cash & Investments	\$271.9M
Receivables & Others	1.6M
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$273.5M</b>
<b>Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	
Funds Held for Other Agencies	\$61.1M
Grants & Scholarships Payable	1.6M
Other	1.4M
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>64.1M</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$171.3M</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$273.5M</b>

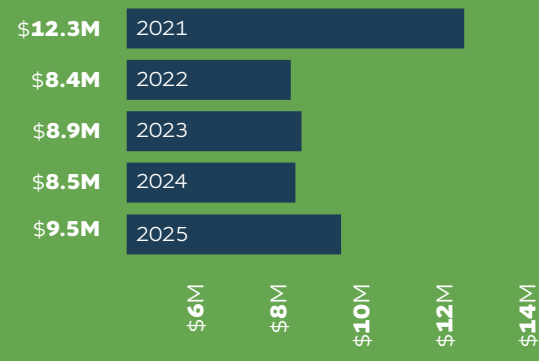
### Statement of Activities

<b>Revenue</b>	
Gifts & Donations	\$22.5M
Net Return on Investments	35.8M
Less Agency Fund Activity	(10.5)M
Other	0.5M
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$48.3M</b>
<b>Grants &amp; Expenses</b>	
Grants	\$9.5M
Less Agency Fund Activity	(2.3)M
Other	3.0M
<b>Total Grants &amp; Expenses</b>	<b>\$10.2M</b>
<b>Change in Assets</b>	
Change in Net Assets	\$38.1M
Total Assets Beginning of Year	\$171.3M
<b>Total Assets End of Year</b>	<b>\$209.4M</b>

### Total Assets by Year



### Total Grants by Year



### Contributions by Fund Type

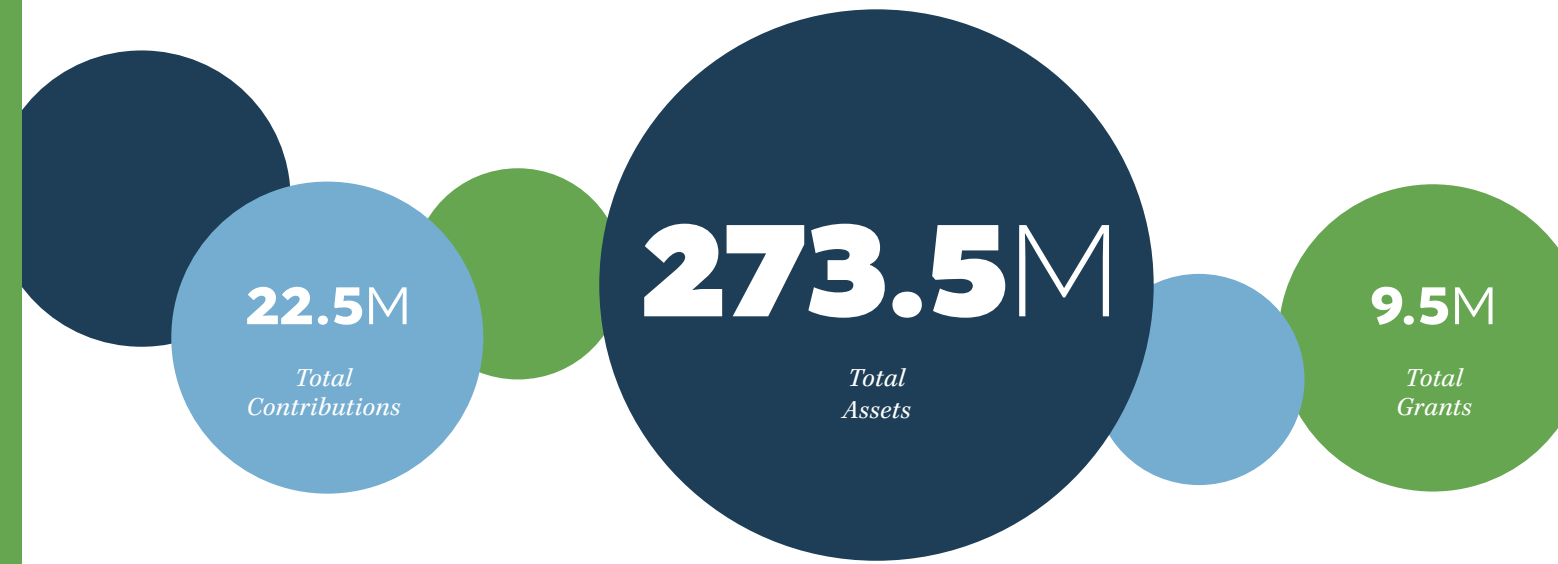
Scholarship	\$14.4M
Discretionary & FOI	3.0M
Agency	2.4M
Donor Advised	2.2M
Designated	0.5M
Planned Giving	—
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$22.5M</b>

### Assets by Fund Type

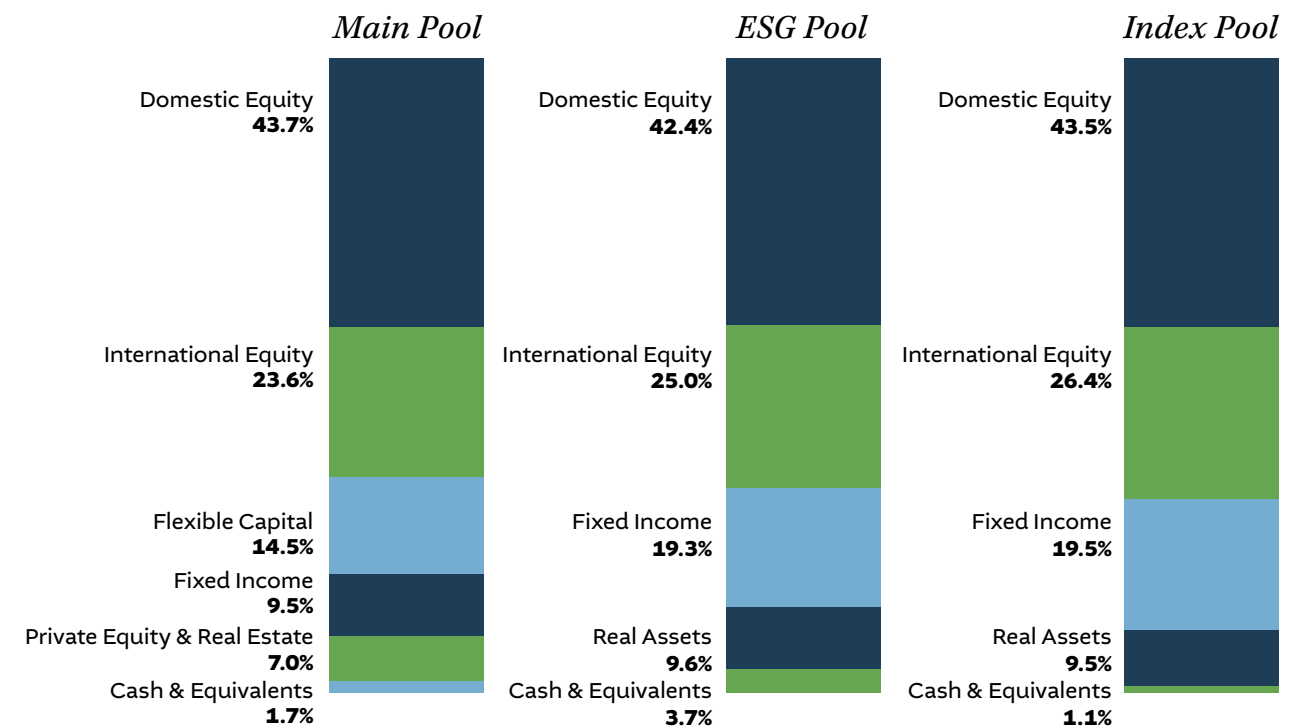
Discretionary & FOI	\$103.9M
Agency	61.1M
Scholarships	43.1M
Designated	39.9M
Donor Advised	24.2M
Planned Giving	1.3M
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$273.5M</b>

### Granting by Fund Type

Discretionary & FOI	\$3.3M
Agency	2.2M
Donor Advised	1.7M
Designated	1.4M
Scholarships	0.9M
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9.5M</b>



## Investment Pool Allocation



# Let's Work Together

For generations, Greater Worcester Community Foundation has partnered with donors to strengthen our community. Whether you are responding to today's needs or planning for the future, your philanthropy helps ensure Worcester County continues to thrive.



Tatum J. Davenport

*"The GWCF team took the time to truly listen, to understand not only our story, but the heart and emotion behind what we hoped to create. They asked thoughtful questions and ultimately helped us shape a vision that honored [our daughter] in a deeply personal and lasting way."*

**Mikaela Davenport,**  
Tatum J. Davenport Memorial Scholarship Fund

## Giving That Reflects Your Values

We offer flexible fund options that allow you to support the causes and organizations you care about, now and for years to come, including:



**Designated Funds** to support specific nonprofits.



**Donor Advised Funds** for those who want an active role in their giving.



**Discretionary and Field of Interest Funds** that allow us to support community needs and causes you care about.



**Scholarship Funds** to invest in Worcester County's next generation.

We also partner with nonprofits to build endowments that sustain their work over time. Learn more about our different fund types at [greaterworcester.org](https://greaterworcester.org).

## A Legacy That Lasts

Through planned giving, you can create a lasting expression of your values. By including Greater Worcester Community Foundation in your estate plans, you help shape the future of our community while honoring the story you want to leave behind. Legacy donors are recognized as members of our Acorn Society.

*Sample language: "I leave x% of my assets to Greater Worcester Community Foundation, a nonprofit corporation of Massachusetts, to be used to enhance (or create) a component fund (to be) known as the \_\_\_\_\_ Fund."*

### Let's start the conversation

To learn more, contact our Philanthropic Services team at [donorservices@greaterworcester.org](mailto:donorservices@greaterworcester.org)



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