



MONTANA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
*all about Montana's future*



September 2021

---

## **Mary's Letter**

Dear Friends,

Community matters more than ever.

Earlier this month, I participated in "The Well Being of One of Us Affects All of Us" which was a gathering of funders and health care providers focused on well-being. We learned about the role mental health plays in overall wellness. This was a relatively new topic for me, so entered the conversation as a listener and learner. What I learned merely scratched the surface of the subject. I learned about some of Montana's greatest challenges. I also learned finding the solutions to those challenges is not easy.

I learned about factors that contribute to mental wellness. I learned about varying degrees of challenges, and the ripple effect those challenges have on individuals, families, communities, and society at large. I learned about "[Deaths of Despair](#)" and how Montana is seeing rising numbers of suicides and suicide attempts by young people. I learned about the challenges of accessing mental health services, especially in rural and tribal communities. I also learned about people and organizations who are working tirelessly to stem the tide of youth suicide. People who are dedicating their lives to helping others.

We are honored to announce the creation of the [Montana Mental Health Access Fund](#) which was created to increase access to mental health services in Montana, with a particular focus on rural and tribal communities. Montana has one of the highest suicide rates in the Country while accessing mental health services across the State remains a challenge for many. The fund will make grants to eligible nonprofit health clinics and hospitals to provide mental health services in their community. The goal of the fund is to help make mental health services available to all Montanans by 2025.

Well-being is a daunting subject, full of varied, complex challenges without a simple, linear solution. For me, exploring possibilities and partnerships will take time, patience, persistence, and perseverance. Yet, that's exactly what will be needed.

One of the most important things I was reminded of was the importance of connection. It matters a lot more than you might think. We all need someone we can count on – a friend, partner, parent who can share their shoulder, lend us their ear, and help prop us up when we're down. Those connections matter.

One of our dearest friends, Dale Woolhiser often says *Montana is just a small town with a million of my closest friends*. Thank you for your friendship and caring for *The Last Best Place* the way you do. Together we can help our fellow Montanans and ensure Montana's future by giving for the good of Montana forever.

Sincerely,



Mary K. Rutherford  
President & CEO

---

## 2020 Census Update



Last month the [U.S. Census Bureau released](#) the long-awaited results of populations and racial compositions of Montana counties, cities, and towns. The data from the 2020 Census will be used to define the state's two U.S. House Districts. Government agencies, researchers, and private sector businesses will also use the data to

allocate funding and understand how the country is changing over time. Learn more about how the 2020 Census data will affect Montana [here](#).

---

## Remembering Stanley Nicholson, Founder of the Seeley Lake Community Foundation

On September 13th, 2021, Stanley Nicholson passed away peacefully at St. Patrick's Hospital in Missoula.

Stan was a beloved member of the Seeley Lake community, and founder of the Seeley

Lake Community Foundation. He was an avid advocate for the community.

Stan will be missed greatly by his family and friends. He was a guiding light for all who had the pleasure to meet him and was an incredibly kind and humble soul.



This past August, Stan was able to attend the Seely Lake Community Foundation banquet and was happy to catch up with many of his friends.

[Click here](#) to view the full obituary online.

May his family, friends, and the Seeley Lake community find comfort in this time of grief.

---

## Strengthening the Circle

*By Bonnie Sachatello-Sawyer, Executive Director, Hopa Mountain*



From its start in 2006, [Strengthening the Circle](#) (STC), a Native nonprofit leadership program, was designed as a peer-to-peer training model grounded in education, mentoring, and coaching through a four-day annual training program with follow-up training and technical assistance. This

program was built on knowledge acquired from over thirty years of Native nonprofit support.

STC aims to build the capacities of experienced and emerging nonprofit organizations that respond to the needs of Native American families and communities. [Read more](#).

---

## Why Year-End Giving Matters

According to [Giving USA](#), Americans gave a record \$471 billion to charity in 2020. Additionally, in a 2019 report, [Blackbaud Institute](#) reports that December is the most popular time to give, accounting for about 18% of overall giving. As we head into fall and the “giving season,” now is a great time to consider a year-end gift to the causes you care about. Many nonprofits rely on funds raised during the fall to support their work and further their mission. This is especially critical this year as many nonprofits have had to once again pivot to virtual fundraising events or even put them on hold.

Not sure where to start? Consider giving to one of the following and support nonprofits across Montana.

**[The Montana Veterans Fund:](#)** This endowed fund was created in 2019

to continue the good work of the honor flights and support veterans in Montana now and forever. [Donate now](#).

**Women's Foundation of Montana:** Women make up nearly half the workforce, direct 80 percent of all consumer spending decisions, and control 56 percent of our economy. By supporting WFM, you can end gender discrimination in Montana workplaces and help Montana woman and girls reach their true potential. [Donate now](#).

**MCF Scholarship Fund:** Last year, MCF awarded nearly \$450,000 in scholarships to Montana students. Help more students pursue their academic dreams. [Donate now](#).

**MCF Gratitude Gift:** Whether you're passionate about education, the arts, rural development, or another important cause, a gift to MCF helps ensure our communities are the places we love to call home for generations to come. [Donate now](#).

**Leave Your Legacy:** Interested in leaving your legacy to benefit Montana? Consider establishing a legacy gift to forever support the causes you care about. Connect with our [staff](#) who can help you achieve your dreams.

---

## Consider Making Grant Recommendations Now

If you have a Donor Advised Fund at MCF, now is a great time to make grant recommendations. Due to the high volume of recommendations that are made in December, your grant awards may be significantly delayed if you wait until the end of the year.

It's easy to make your year-end recommendations on our [donor portal](#). Not registered? [Register here](#). (Please allow at least 1-2 business days after you register to complete the process.) If you need assistance, please contact Cathy Cooney, Director of Donor Services, at 406-441-4954 or [ccooney@mtcf.org](mailto:ccooney@mtcf.org).

---

## Fabulous Fridays – A Series of 8 Estate/Legacy Planning Webinars



Montana State University Extension is collaborating with Montana 4-H Foundation and MSU 4-H Center for Youth Development for an eight-part webinar weekly estate/legacy planning series titled ***Fabulous Fridays*** through October 1 - November 19, 2021.

The series will run from 10:00 to 11 a.m. with a 15 minute Q & A afterwards.

This webinar series will be presented by Marsha Goetting, MSU Extension Professor and Family Economics Specialist and Joel Schumacher, MSU Extension Economics Associate Specialist.

To register, [click here](#).

## September is National Preparedness Month

National Preparedness Month is observed each September to raise awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies that could happen at any time. This year's theme is "Prepare to Protect. Preparing for disasters is protecting everyone you love" and serves as a keen reminder you should have a plan for keeping you and your loved ones safe when disaster strikes. One way to be prepared is by creating a kit of emergency supplies. See a full list of recommended supplies to include in a basic kit [here](#).

## reImaging Rural Virtual Community Gatherings

Starting September 13, the team behind Re-Imagining Rural will kick off their Re-Imagining Rural Virtual Community gatherings. Twenty-three rural Montana communities are scheduled to attend the gathering over 3 separate evenings.



- September 13, 2021. **Rewriting the Rural Narrative.** Reframe your view of rural with "Brain Gain" author [Ben Winchester](#). You can view the gathering [here](#).
  - September 27, 2021. **We did it and you can too!** Short stories of successful projects from rural Montana community leaders that made things happen.
  - October 4, 2021. **Winning in Winnett, MT.** Hear about how residents in Winnett, population 182, went from possible dissolution of their county to a robust Beef to Schools program, new housing, and construction of a new community center.
- 

Learn more about the event and find the recordings from last year's gathering [here](#).

## Helena Area 20 under 40

Every year, the Helena Independent Record and Helena Area Chamber of Commerce recognize 20 young professional leaders in the Helena Area who have done great things by the age of 40. The [Helena 20 Under 40 class of 2021](#) included two members that do community foundation work locally and statewide. The Montana Community



Foundation's Director of Communications, [Teal Whitaker](#), and Helena Area Community Foundation's Executive Director, [Emily Frazier](#), were both honored as one of Helena's 20 under 40.

Congratulations to Teal and Emily! Read more about Teal, Emily, and the rest of the 20 under 40 recipients [here](#).

---

## We've Expanded our Team



The Montana Community Foundation (MCF) announces the addition of two key staff members located in Billings and Havre. [Heather Ohs](#) and [Jim Bennett](#) join MCF as Philanthropy Officers.

In their roles, Heather and Jim will work with donors and professional advisors to achieve their charitable goals through estate giving and planned giving. Learn more about Heather and Jim [here](#).

---

## In Case You Missed It

- [\*\*Local Community Foundation Convenings are going virtual\*\*](#)



## ABOUT MONTANA

### COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

We're all about Montana's future. Through the power of permanently endowed funds, we help people achieve their philanthropic goals and nonprofit organizations establish stable incomes to support their efforts. Our mission is to cultivate a culture of giving so Montana communities can flourish.



**Give  
Now**

