

1. In January, we submitted an article how donors can give and remain involved. This sparked some follow up questions about donor advised funds. One such question was **how much do I need to start a Donor Advised Fund?**

Current donors can create an advised fund for as little as \$1,000 (via check or shares of stock). With that initial donation donors can recommend grants to one or several charities at the time of the donation or over the next year. The minimum grant recommendation is \$100 per charity. This service is free to Forever Fund donors at the \$400+ level.

Donors who want to create a permanent (endowment) fund can be started with any gift amount, as long as the gifts to the fund reach \$10,000 within a specified time period – usually 12 to 36 months. The time for building the fund is established in the fund agreement. (If this requirement is not satisfied, the Community Foundation board, at its sole discretion, can pool the monies with another fund.) Note: Donor advised funds may **not** accept donations from an IRA account.

For more information contact the Community Foundation's office for more information at 517.278.4517 or at info@BrCoFoundation.org

2. In January, we submitted an article how donors can give and remain involved. This sparked some follow up questions about donor advised funds. One such question was **is there a way my Donor Advised Fund can continue supporting my community after I am gone?**

Yes! Donors often create a lasting legacy by specifying that the advised fund will become unrestricted after they no longer wish to advise or upon the advisor's death. This allows the Community Foundation to respond to emerging needs and opportunities far into the future (like the Forever Fund), but still uses the name of the fund. Donors can also opt to continue supporting the particular charities, causes, or interest areas that they while they were advising. The details of how the fund will be distributed after the advisory period are included in details of the fund agreement at the time the fund is created.

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3. **What other types of Funds are held at BCCF?**

In the October 2018 installment of our quarterly article series, we covered unrestricted funds. And in the January 2019 installment, donor advised funds. Both of these fund types allow donors to identify and support a broad charitable purpose or category of interest. We also hold fund vehicles that have more narrow scope: designed funds, support specific organization or organizations; agency funds are endowments created by charitable organizations; and scholarship funds, support post-secondary education. Another fund BCCF sometimes holds is a Special Project Fund. We recognize that we can sometimes serve donors and benefit the community by establishing these temporary funds to assist with fundraising for a particular project or cause for community groups that are not organized charities.

If you missed any of our article series, please visit our website at BrCoFoundation.org! For more information contact the Community Foundation's office for more information at 517.278.4517 or at info@BrCoFoundation.org

4. **What are National Standards and why are they important?**

Getting the accreditation shows the Community Foundation's commitment to go above and beyond federal and state law requirements to demonstrate accountability and excellence to communities, policymakers, and the public. In addition to basic legal compliance, the Branch County Community Foundation has a long history of benchmarking our governance, finance, and grantmaking against the best practices of our peers. We have always met or exceeded these benchmarks. Currently BCCF is accredited through the National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations accreditation program. There are 26 required benchmarks to meet National Standards. The Branch County Community Foundation has passed National Standards every year since its inception in 2006. Before there were standards at the national level, BCCF and other Michigan community foundations voluntarily complied with state-wide standards we all helped develop to assure excellence in philanthropy. For more information contact the Community Foundation's office for more information at 517.278.4517 or at info@BrCoFoundation.org

5. What is the process for requesting grant funds from the Community Foundation? How much has BCCF given out in grants to date?

Giving back is one of the Community Foundation's primary functions. We take a portion of the income from our investment and use it to support all kinds of programs and projects that benefit people in our area. Organizations, community groups, and local government can all be partners in our vision of creating positive social change by submitting an application. We accept applications in the January and August and convene committees made up of donors who help us review and make recommendations for funding to the BCCF Board of Directors. Those who have an idea for improving our community can contact us to talk about the feasibility of submitting a grant during the next appropriate grant cycle. The Community Foundation has given out over \$14 million in grants and scholarships since its inception in 1991. For more information contact the Community Foundation's office for more information at 517.278.4517 or at info@BrCoFoundation.org

6. What ways can I give to BCCF?

Donating to the Community Foundation can be as simple as visiting our website at www.BrCoFoundation.org. The Community Foundation accepts gifts in forms of check, cash, marketable securities, bequests, real estate, and more! For more information on types of gifts we accept, contact the Community Foundation's office for more information at 517.278.4517!

7. Is there a way to be involved with BCCF in addition to making a donation?

Absolutely! The Community Foundation has many opportunities for community members to get involved. We also convened several committees each year, and we're always looking for qualified volunteers to serve on those committees. The Community Foundation is also seeking donor-ambassadors to help educate the community on the work that we do. If you're interested in any of these opportunities, please contact the Community Foundation today at 517.278.4517! We'd love to visit with you and help you find the right opportunity!

8. How can local youth get involved with BCCF?

One of the best ways for local youth to get involved with BCCF is to join the Youth Advisory Council (YAC). YAC is the Community Foundation's youth philanthropic program. The program consists of individuals, ages 12-21, from Branch County and Colon. YAC is dedicated to effective grant making, endowment building, leadership, and improving our communities by involving youth in the decision making process. YAC meets once a month September through May at the BCCF office. We often have other committee openings, office volunteer, and internship opportunities as well. Contact us at info@BrCoFoundation.org to learn more!