

Frequently Asked Questions

Why would I give to the Allegan County Community Foundation instead of giving directly to the charity of my choice?

Donors may direct their gifts to funds the Foundation already holds for local organizations or causes, to the internal funds that allow the Foundation to award grants and operate, or they may want to establish their own Donor-Advised Fund. There are several advantages to contributing through the Foundation:

- **Due Diligence:** The Foundation adheres to strict guidelines when overseeing the distribution of any grants or scholarships. *Is the organization recognized by the IRS and State of Michigan as an active tax-exempt non-profit? Are their records filed appropriately with the IRS and Attorney General? Are they staffed adequately to fulfill the requirements of a grant award?* These responsibilities and much more are part of the Foundation's commitment to being conscientious stewards of donor gifts.
- **Donor-Advised Funds:** DA Funds allow a donor to establish a fund with the Foundation that identifies the organizations they want to fund annually, occasionally, or in the future. They may be actively involved in the process or simply issue a directive for us to fulfill. A single gift to a DA Fund allows the donor to direct giving to multiple organizations, knowing that due diligence will take place and they may be as active in the process as they choose. They are also aware that the Foundation will be serving the community in perpetuity so their gift may serve many generations with prudent oversight.
- **Long-Term:** Gifts to endowed funds are never spent – only the growth is distributed from endowments. So a gift to a donor's favorite non-profit endowment held by the Foundation helps secure the future of the non-profit, much like our own retirement plans do for us. In time, the steady growth of a non-profit endowment can provide a significant portion of the organization's operating costs; allowing the organization to address their mission instead of concerns about fund raising.

Do I need to inform the Foundation staff if I have included the Foundation in my will?

The short answer is no. The correct answer is that we can serve your intentions so much better if we know what you would like your gift to support. Through conversation with the Foundation staff we can make sure that your intentions are well documented and that the intentions you have today are respected and upheld far into the future.

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What if one of the organizations I designate in my Donor-Advised Fund dissolves?

If you are still living, we will discuss the options with you. You may request us to research other organizations with a similar mission or you may choose to add a new non-profit to your list of potential grant recipients. If you are no longer living, we are obligated and committed to stay as closely aligned with your original intentions as possible. We are responsible for researching and determining other opportunities that may address the purpose for which your fund was established. Which reiterates the importance of capturing and documenting your intentions as well as possible.

The list of questions is endless but we hope we have addressed a few of the most important questions when considering a planned gift. We are always available to you or your advisor when additional questions arise.