BIG STEPS: CELEBRATING THE SPIRIT OF SMALL TOWNS IN WEST VIRGINIA
"We have a strong sense of community here, so when we lose jobs, and people have to go to other states or cities for employment, that’s part of our culture that’s being taken away, too. There are ways that we can help to keep our sense of community together, and ways for us to draw closer to one another."

Dr. Dino Beckett, Williamson, West Virginia
The urbanization of America has been underway for well over a century. This reality is generally thought of in terms of the dramatic shift away from farming as the livelihood of most Americans, but rural America has also lost other industries, with the decline of the coal industry in Appalachia as a very pertinent example. Many West Virginia towns have lost the reason that first caused them to exist, and sometimes one hears the question, why does anyone stay in rural West Virginia? Over the decades, many have left these towns and moved to urban America, but many others remain, resisting the narrative that small towns die when companies depart. Those who stay insist that the non-economic assets of rural life — scenic beauty, strong community bonds, and unique Appalachian traditions — are culturally and spiritually rich, and provide a reason to stay and to seek opportunities for a viable, sustainable future.

For some West Virginia towns, this struggle has been undeniably successful. In these communities, West Virginians have recognized the value of self-sufficiency, deliberately creating an economy where they retain more of the wealth they help to create. This is a slow process, made more difficult by the lack of public resources to support such transitions. But in communities that have thoughtfully identified their opportunities and effectively marshalled available resources, there has been a remarkable rebirth, and there is positive momentum.

The story in this year’s Annual Report focuses on three of these communities — Grafton, Williamson, and Princeton. Each of these towns has taken a different approach in terms of the new identity which it seeks, but there is a consistency across these stories. I invite the reader to consider both the differences among these three towns and their similarities as to process, focus on available assets, leadership, and determination. Is there a reason to stay in rural West Virginia? Given the example of these towns — absolutely.

William P. Getty, President
GRIT.
It’s the self-sufficiency that keeps small West Virginia towns moving forward, building new opportunities, celebrating tradition, and fighting decline. More than 70 percent of West Virginians live in rural communities of fewer than 2,500 people. Globalization and shifting reliance on natural resources have posed some of their toughest challenges, pitting them against economic changes out of their control. Now they must name the reasons their rural societies should—or should not—survive.

Mary Hunt, economic development program director for the Benedum Foundation, poses the question facing many isolated communities, including those in West Virginia. “If the definition of a community is people, place, and purpose,” she asks, “what happens to rural communities when their original purpose has changed? Must the rural community be a casualty of a changing economy?”

Hunt argues that places can attempt to establish a new purpose, deliberately framing community life around assets like food, recreation, arts, energy, safety, and housing. Developing new assets may require new tools: high-speed internet, highways, access to different job training, or innovation. Most of all, the task requires commitment. Rural communities can embark on a path of self-sufficiency, retaining and reinvesting the wealth they create.

Public participation is key to the effort. So are connections to resources outside the community. For nearly a decade, non-profits have offered support. “An outsider can turn a mirror on the community to see its own potential,” says Cornelia Flora, a rural sociologist at Iowa State University. “That sometimes gives a new sense of opportunities.” More ambitious plans and resources follow. There is no finish line; towns thrive only by continually changing.

Grafton, Williamson, and Princeton are three West Virginia towns that have defined their local assets and found the tools to mine them. Their stories suggest that clear-eyed optimism for the future of rural West Virginia is both possible and necessary.

Government agencies, universities, lenders, and non-profits have stepped up to help small communities build the capacity for change. In addition to supporting individual projects, the Benedum Foundation invests in these statewide non-profit agencies that help communities plan their future.

POWER and POWER+
www.eda.gov/power/
The Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization initiative is a two-phase coordinated funding package through federal agencies, including the Economic Development Administration, the Department of Labor, the Small Business Administration, and the Appalachian Regional Commission. POWER and POWER+ grants assist communities hurt by changes in the coal industry and the energy sector.

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
www.cms.gov; www.hrsa.gov
These agencies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provide major funding to improve health care for people who are geographically isolated and economically or medically vulnerable.

Blueprint Communities Project
www.blueprintcommunities.com
The Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh offers first-step training and technical assistance to revitalize older communities through this program. Over 18 months, it helps them to build local leadership, gather baseline demographic and economic data, and create a strategic plan to achieve their aspirations.

Try This West Virginia
www.trythiswv.com
With mini-grants of $3,000 or less, this statewide non-profit encourages new ideas for health and wellness. Volunteers from more than 100 communities are creating and expanding projects under this flexible and innovative project, funded by the Benedum Foundation, and its health-focused community engagement strategies are now being adopted across Appalachia.

West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Centers
www.wvbrownfields.org
Located at West Virginia University and Marshall University, the Assistance Centers provide grants, technical assistance, and site redevelopment aid to help communities begin to reclaim polluted properties. The two centers promote economic development and environmental and public health protection.

West Virginia Community Development Hub
www.wvhub.org
The Hub helps aspiring communities tackle more sophisticated development plans. Through professional coaching for community leadership teams and small technical assistance grants, its Communities of Achievement Program (HubCAP) provides expert resources. Its Innovation Acceleration Strategy program is a one-year boot camp for towns seeking to diversify their economies. The Hub also supports the Turn This Town Around campaign, a one-year project to jump-start community planning, in partnership with New South Media, West Virginia Public Broadcasting, and the Benedum Foundation.
WE ARE SO FORTUNATE TO HAVE THIS HISTORY. WE’RE WELL-BLESSED. BUT WE CAN’T QUIT.”

TOM HART > ALL ABOARD GRAFTON
Grafton, Taylor County, is a railroad town at heart. That was painful to remember after CSX pulled jobs out of town in 1986. For 130 years, the railroad tracks curving along the Tygart River had been Grafton’s biggest asset, coveted by both sides during the Civil War and supporting generations of work for local families.

In 1920, the town boasted 8,600 people.

CSX’s departure was what one Grafton native called “the big dagger,” accelerating unemployment and flight. Grand old red brick buildings along Main Street crumbled, punctuated with vacant lots. Four years ago, a group of volunteers decided to compete for help in Turn This Town Around, an initiative of New South Media in partnership with the West Virginia Community Development Hub and West Virginia Public Broadcasting.

For inspiration, they returned to a proud history, the Tygart’s natural beauty, and their proximity to thriving nearby towns. All Aboard Grafton, with its rail engine logo, is slowly gaining steam.

Every Thursday at noon, the entire community is invited to the meeting of the volunteer civic improvement group. On a late May afternoon, during a brown-bag lunch, two dozen residents report concrete progress on the projects they’ve pledged to undertake.

First up: the upcoming First Friday celebration on Main Street. Tom Hart, chairing the meeting, details plans for the monthly social at Toad Hall, a new community patio in the center of the business district. Next, Breanna Collins, VISTA Leader for the West Virginia Hub and Tom’s stepdaughter, reports that a ten-foot patriotic mural, sponsored by a local auto dealer, has been unveiled on Main Street in time for the Spirit of...
BORN IN GRAFTON, MAYOR PEGGY BARNEY IS PART OF ITS EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN DOWNTOWN. A POPULAR FARMERS MARKET, NEW SIDEWALKS, AND A NEW PUBLIC PATIO ON MAIN STREET FLANK THE HISTORIC BRICK HOTEL AND TRAIN STATION, TWO CENTURY-OLD LANDMARKS AWAITING REDEVELOPMENT.
ABOVE: MORE THAN THREE DOZEN POTENTIAL BUSINESS OWNERS ATTENDED THE SUMMER KICK-OFF PICNIC FOR ENERGIZING ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES IN GRAFTON. THE WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT HUB IS OFFERING ADVICE ON OPPORTUNITIES FOR RETAIL AND SERVICE START-UPS. BELOW: CITY MANAGER KEVIN STEAD LED THE EFFORT TO REPURPOSE A HISTORIC RAIL FREIGHT STATION FOR COMMUNITY USE.
Grafton festivities over Memorial Day. A new community stitching group is looking for members; Tom Hart volunteers to “wind up yarn.” Ron Curry delivers a thank-you for the $30,000 contribution from the city to the Taylor County Arts Council’s roof repairs. Bryan Smith says the town’s first kayaking club event attracted two dozen participants. Based on the enthusiastic reception, the Adventure Club will sponsor a raft of outdoor events at Tygart Lake in early September. Anti-litter advocates Sherry and Lou Friend plan more volunteer trash pick-ups along Route 50, and are working with Bryan Smith and county authorities to place dumpsters and recycling containers near the elementary school for a public cleanup event featuring free food and kids’ games.

“You’re on to something!” Hart tells the pair. “We could get WVU Extension folks to help, too.”

As a Main Street merchant, Tom Hart believes the street is still the town’s most significant civic space. The Memorial Day observance created here in 1867 is the oldest continuous celebration in the country, an annual homecoming weekend that attracts more than 3,000 participants. Historical markers interpret its Civil War skirmishes. The town historical society uses a formerly grand bank to exhibit photos and memorabilia. And a few blocks down the street, in a handsome 19th-century church, the International Mother’s Day Shrine marks the creation of the holiday by Taylor County’s Anna Jarvis. The Shrine faces the imposing relics of Grafton’s railroad heyday, the B&O Railroad station and hotel, and the now-shuttered Manos Theater.

“We’re so fortunate to have this history. We’re well-blessed,” Hart says. “But we can’t quit. We still need a vibrant anchor of some kind.”

Grafton’s slow-but-measurable momentum was put into gear in 2014, when Grafton and Matewan were each awarded $75,000 and technical assistance from Turn This Town Around. The year-long project helped them to identify projects and provided advice to get started. An expanded Memorial Day celebration, which this year included a celebrity concert, was a goal identified early on; a Main Street cleanup, more retail businesses, and a year-round farmers market were other priorities. Detailed action plans resulted in a real estate breakthrough last year.

One vestige of Grafton’s railroad history was the vacant 1880 CSX freight building. City manager Kevin Stead viewed the structure as the town’s “last chance to acquire railroad property;” the nearby B&O passenger depot and hotel have already been acquired by the non-profit Vandalia Foundation for preservation.

With help from the West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Center, which aided the town’s attack on 100 derelict structures around
town, Grafton assessed and remediated the freight station, and took possession of the property in the fall of 2016. The building will meet another long-term community goal. It will become a sturdy indoor home for the town’s seasonal farmers market, allowing year-round operations. “I really like the interior look, all brick and exposed beams,” says Stead. “In addition to the farmers market, we can have offices and performance space for bands and plays. We think the market will grow. We have more interest from vendors, and there’s a nostalgia factor” for the setting. The city is eligible for federal transportation funding to defray the $550,000 cost of the build-out. Grafton must find a 20 percent match.

With an annual budget of just $2 million, Grafton has struggled to afford the costs of a comeback. Help arrived last year, with state permission to impose a one percent local sales tax. The new levy is expected to generate an additional $400,000 this year. The funds helped the city attack 100 derelict properties and pour a new sidewalk for the Taylor County Courthouse on Main Street.

In 2016, students at WVU devised a pro bono branding campaign for the town that accented its history, natural beauty, and arts scene. But the town knows that growing new businesses is the only way to sustain momentum. For that, outside help is essential.

Once again, Grafton is working with the West Virginia Hub, this time in a three-year effort to attract new companies. Energizing Entrepreneurial Communities provides hard data and advice on how to encourage companies to invest. The U.S. Center for Rural Entrepreneurship supplies data on local demand in dozens of economic sectors; the Hub provides coaching for new business owners. A kick-off picnic to introduce the project attracted 40 participants.

Grafton’s proximity to the I-79 corridor and larger towns is a mixed blessing. They provide good jobs within easy commutes but supplant local retail offerings.

“A lot of community members shop elsewhere, in Morgantown or Bridgeport and Fairmont,” explains Amanda Workman of the Hub. “We want to attract them to buy in their own hometown.”

Mayor Peggy Barney attributes the breakthroughs of the past three years to one word: “timing. I was involved in community action programs here fifty years ago, economic opportunity stuff. In the Sixties, you had to have people appointed to serve, not volunteering. Roles were prescribed then. I think this time, with our involvement with the Hub, we brought together a new generation. We have a diverse group that is working. We help each other. We’ve passed our third anniversary and we’re still going strong.”

“HOPE COMES IN SO MANY DIFFERENT FORMS AND FASHIONS. NEW ACTIVITIES KEEP FAMILIES ENGAGED—STAYING, INSTEAD OF LEAVING.”

BRYAN SMITH, ADVENTURE CLUB VOLUNTEER AND DIRECTOR, TAYLOR COUNTY PROJECT HOP2E
ABOVE: WHEN GRAFTON’S ADVENTURE CLUB LAUNCHED KAYAKS ON TYGART LAKE, PADDLING BECAME A POPULAR FAMILY OUTING. WITH A SECOND GRANT FROM TRY THIS WEST VIRGINIA, THE CLUB IS ADDING WATERCRAFT AND EVENTS ON THE LAKE. BELOW: THE TAYLOR COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL SPONSORS HANDS-ON STAINED-GLASS ARTS CLASSES AND EXHIBITS AT ITS MAIN STREET GALLERY AND WORKSHOP.
IN WILLIAMSON, HEALTH CARE IS AN ECONOMIC DRIVER.”

DR. DINO BECKETT > WILLIAMSON HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER
“W e're the best at being the worst,” jokes Dr. Dino Beckett, CEO and medical director of Williamson Health and Wellness Center. He’s acknowledging the area’s daunting health statistics: Mingo County ranks near the top of the state in chronic diseases like obesity, hypertension, and diabetes. Addictions and challenges grew as the town shrank, a victim of downturns in coal mining and manufacturing. When Beckett, now 48, returned to his hometown after earning his medical degree, he added a free clinic to his practice. But he soon saw that the town needed a new model for both health care and economic development. He knew that residents shared a desire for healthier lives. He also believed that the town’s huge health needs could inspire its business opportunities. What if clinic revenues could be reinvested for other health-related projects? With childhood friends and government allies, he began to explore how the town could help itself.

“Health care is an economic driver,” explains Beckett, not only for big cities but also for towns like his. Ten years into the experiment, Williamson Health and Wellness Center, now a federally qualified health center, has expanded its staff from seven to 50 people and will add another 20 this year. The clinic’s philosophy of preventive care, promoting wellness through healthy food and activity, has also encouraged a raft of new ideas. One innovative project in development would convert a notorious “pill mill” into a one-stop facility to treat substance abuse and help people in recovery to prepare to join the workforce. With a goal of “10,000 healthier lives,” wellness is becoming the asset that unites the local community.
FRESH LOCAL FOODS ARE INTEGRAL TO WILLIAMSON’S WELLNESS EFFORTS. THE CLINIC HAS A PRESCRIPTION VEGGIES PROGRAM THAT GIVES PATIENTS COUPONS TO RECEIVE FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES AT THE MARKET, WHICH ALSO ACCEPTS SNAP AND WIC CARDS. LOCAL FARMERS SUPPLY PRODUCE FOR DELIVERY THROUGHOUT MINGO COUNTY ON THE MARKET’S MY MOBILE MARKET TRUCK, AND VOLUNTEERS TEND THE HIGH TUNNELS AT THE RAMELLA PARK GARDEN OF EATIN’, NEAR A PUBLIC HOUSING HIGH-RISE.
Williamson’s progress in using new tools to reduce chronic disease has gained national attention. The town was honored in 2014 by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Culture of Health award for its inclusive approach to wellness. It has received federal POWER grants to work with Coalfield Development Corporation to link abuse recovery and job training. Over $1 million from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Health Resources and Services Administration—a rare feat for a small rural clinic—helped Williamson build a robust clinical and social data warehouse and train a new model of community health workers. In June, Beckett also received the 2017 Rural Health Practitioner of the Year award from the National Rural Health Association.

For Williamson, it’s been a decade-long journey in self-discovery.

“Back in 2005, the Benedum Foundation gave us some money to get a clue. We didn’t know what community capacity building was,” says Beckett. Plans developed in the Blueprint Communities process and the HubCAP program followed. Foundations and universities lent support. “Now, we have to remember where we came from—we started by painting light poles.”

Strong partnerships developed through the Mingo County Diabetes Coalition underpin much of Williamson’s progress. Becoming trusted visitors to patients’ homes, community health workers comprehensively screen, monitor, and clinically treat high-risk diabetes patients. They also help address other family needs: healthy food, physical activity, housing, transportation, and more. “It takes a few visits to gain trust,” says Melissa Justice, who directs the current staff of three workers. “Then they’ll say, ‘I was hoping you’d show up. How do I take these medicines?’ ”

“It’s an odd dynamic—the patients want to please us,” says Beckett. Comprehensive data proves that patients who stuck with the program experienced a drop in a key blood sugar measure, hemoglobin A1c, by 2.2 percent. “That’s huge,” says Beckett. “If you were a drug manufacturer and you were able to drop [A1c levels] by just 0.6 percent, you would have a billion-dollar drug.”

The positive results of Williamson projects funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have prompted insurers like Aetna Better Health of West Virginia to prepare to share claims data with clinics. Discussions are underway.
“Treating diabetes is one of our highest expenses,” says Kimi King, director of clinical services for Aetna. Diabetes and prediabetes cost West Virginia an estimated $2.5 billion each year. If insurers reimburse clinics like Williamson for effective community health outreach, providing preventive care will become a proven business model for clinics around the country.

As its hashtag suggests, #HealthyintheHills is more than a preventive care program. It’s an open invitation to connect with neighbors and co-workers. “Running kept me in the community,” says Alexis Batausa, a Williamson native who struggled with his weight through high school and into adulthood. Now 33, he is a health and wellness promoter at Williamson Health and Wellness Center and president of the Tug Valley Road Runners Club, which holds more than 20 races and events each year; the club now has funding from Try This West Virginia to develop a statewide running resource network. Middleschoolers sign up for Batausa’s afterschool fitness programs, while adults turn out for his Tuesday Night Track program at Belfry High School. Neighbors are joining the summer beach volleyball league. The Lunch Walk Challenge and Healthy Feud draw communities locally and nationally to engage in healthy activities.
Local fresh food has been hard to find. Now, volunteers tend the Ramella Park Garden of Eatin’, with three high tunnels and raised beds near a public housing complex. A seasonal farmers market will soon take over a former American Legion hall downtown, adding a full-time commercial kitchen and local grocery. Other greenhouses at the high school and local farmers deliver enough produce that the market can deliver fresh fruit and vegetables weekly throughout Mingo County on the My Mobile Market truck. The project accepts SNAP, WIC, debit cards, cash, and other vouchers, including the Health and Wellness Center’s Prescription Veggies. Other sustainable projects include innovations in solar energy, green building job training, and creative reuse for old downtown buildings; in addition to the renovated “pill mill,” other storefronts are being targeted for tourism development, meeting spaces, and a hostel.

Williamson is developing high-tech tools for health and new health entrepreneurs. Passport, a new software application to debut this year, creates incentives for users to self-report their daily physical activity and healthy eating. Developed by University of Virginia students, the program also accepts written entries. Users will earn points that can be used for related online purchases, like race registration or running shoes. The app promises to be a valuable tool for preventive health researchers as well.

Williamson has also worked for the past year with students from Stanford University Graduate School of Business. With Impact Experience, a global program, the team identifies entrepreneurial opportunities in Williamson and connects the community to potential venture capital to build new businesses.

“In rural counties, people know each other. What works in Williamson is the community partnerships, not one agency doing it on their own,” says Richard Crespo, a professor of community health at Marshall University who has led diabetes prevention efforts throughout Appalachia. “Early on, they brought a lot of people together. Everyone is voicing dreams for their area, figuring it out.”
JUST AS RETAILERS OFFER INCENTIVES TO LOYAL SHOPPERS, WILLIAMSON'S #HEALTHYINTHEHILLS PROGRAM REWARDS HEALTHY CHOICES LIKE GYM WORKOUTS AND SMART EATING STRATEGIES. THE PASSPORT PROGRAM LETS USERS REPORT DAILY PROGRESS IN A BOOKLET OR A NEW SMARTPHONE APP DEVELOPED BY STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA. MEMBERS CASH IN THEIR CREDITS WITH PARTICIPATING RETAILERS AND AT COMMUNITY EVENTS LIKE ROAD RACES. THE RESULTING DATA GIVES A CLEARER PICTURE OF WILLIAMSON'S COMMUNITY HEALTH.
WELCOME TO DOWNTOWN PRINCETON
COOL CRUISING NIGHTS
THIRD SATURDAY
SUPPORT THE PRINCETON RENAISSANCE PROJECT
CALL 304 913 4956
"When some people see the murals, it’s like smoke signals to them: ‘Wow, there are creative people here, where are they?’"
Young artists born in Princeton had a DIY dream: a place to create and perform. After more than a decade of intense effort, the group has matured into a force for economic redevelopment along newly repaved Mercer Street, the historic center of the county seat.

A steady schedule of concerts, festivals, public murals, and arts-related businesses offer a new reason to walk downtown. This year, the business district will welcome ten new entrepreneurs; in 2018, the historic Lavon Theater will reopen after 35 years. As foot traffic grows, the artists have two requests: new crosswalks, and sustainable commerce.

Greg Puckett wears three hats. As executive director of a social service non-profit, elected official, and hands-on volunteer, he has shoul-dered tasks from hauling trash dumpsters to emceeing a live “ Newlywed Game” at a community Valentine’s Day event. “There’s a hesitation in a downturned economy to make change happen. Everyone says no,” says the Mercer County Commissioner. Now, patience and frugality are paying off. “One opportunity has layered itself on another. Eventually we’ll get to our goal.”

Local arts activism goes back to 2006, when the McKinney family bought a three-story building on the corner of Mercer and South Ninth. It became home to Lori McKinney and husband Robert Blankenship, as well as their recording studio and concert hall. The couple began hosting open mic nights and concerts in their vast third-floor ballroom, undeterred by the occasional leaks in the roof. They organized summer music festivals in nearby Pipestem. They used old buildings as a canvas for murals. And they began to attract like-minded artists.
ABOVE: Mercer Street’s cultural offerings attracted a new pottery-painting business, co-founded by Jessica Lambert (at right). Regular events like an art walk, car cruises, and holiday celebrations have increased pedestrian traffic downtown. BELOW: Repainted with images of well-known Princeton painters and performers, Artists’ Alley honors local talent.
ABOVE: Books are the theme of a mural facing the Princeton Public Library, an active community partner. Local companies donated paint for the project, while local artists donated their vision. Below: Artist and Concord University teacher Chase Bowman, a Princeton High School graduate, is now working to open an art gallery and studio downtown. “I impress on students that where they are from is part of their strength,” he says. “We have an old, deep culture. We draw from that to make better art.”
Informal networks brought Lori McKinney into civic discussions. “We didn’t have capacity [in community development], but we’d been working with Community Connections,” Puckett’s human services non-profit, recalls McKinney. “They are the owner of the theater. We’d borrow their projector.” In 2012, Puckett joined McKinney at the Create West Virginia conference. “Sparks flew! I will never forget it.” Shortly thereafter, she became a community organizer as well as an artist, organizing Princeton’s entry into the 2013 Blueprint Communities program. “The formula was absolute perfection,” she says in retrospect. Three derelict Mercer Street buildings were torn down. Another three were sold and remodeled. Artists volunteered to paint.

The first visible signs of renewal, the Mercer Street murals, met with some skepticism. “People say, ‘you can’t put lipstick on a pig,’ but it is part of a broader strategy,” McKinney argues. “It’s part of attracting people here. When some people see the murals, it’s like smoke signals to them: ‘Wow, there are creative people here, where are they? Let me seek them out.’ That’s how you gather a group of people. You start events together and people volunteer and want to hang posters and get involved.”

When the non-profit Princeton Renaissance Project was born in 2013, artists found cultural allies along Mercer Street. The Explore! Science Center and the Princeton Railroad Museum had opened nearby. An independent bookstore offered a casual gathering place. The Princeton Library repurposed the stately post office as a community learning center with Wi-Fi in its computer lab, expanded evening hours, and an IDEA lab with circuit boards and a 3-D printer.

“We have to actively use the space,” says Brittany Rothausen, the energetic library director. “We have a small service population, about 12,000 people. But we are adding 1,000 cardholders a year. You couldn’t imagine this [activity] seven years ago,” when the library faced two tattoo parlors.

Stages Music School provided another artistic anchor. The greenhouse for aspiring performers, directed by Melissa McKinney, Lori’s sister, now enrolls 200 students. The school has a cadre of young talent that has toured throughout the Southeast and eagerly performs at local events, including a popular open mic concert every Monday evening at the RiffRaff Arts Collective’s ballroom, The Room Upstairs.

The school has expanded into a new two-story space, but its basic mission remains the same: to promote appreciation for the arts while encouraging students to use music to make positive change in themselves, their communities, and the world.

“An hour a week can change young lives. I’ve seen it,” says Melissa McKinney.
“IN BLUEPRINT COMMUNITIES, WE LEARNED YOU’VE GOT TO START WITH ONE FOCUS POINT. THE THEATER WAS ONE OF OUR OLDEST BUILDINGS. SO WE WENT AHEAD WITH IT. NOW WE’RE WORKING ON FIVE WHOLE BLOCKS.”

ROBERT FARLEY, PRESIDENT, PRINCETON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Frequent free public events on the street, from holiday celebrations to car cruises, have made downtown a more welcoming destination. Stepped-up law enforcement helps, too. Local police have a presence on Mercer Street and have tripled drug arrests in the past few years. Vendor and sponsors defray some of the costs for festivities like New Year’s Eve fireworks, but Puckett says turn-out is a bigger priority than earnings. “Events build human capital, not fiscal capital,” he notes. Hundreds of residents have participated in countywide cleanup campaigns, collecting nearly 300 tons of trash in one month last spring, and the high school’s Junior ROTC is refreshing the town’s welcome sign.

The town has steadily increased the sophistication of its community engagement efforts with adults as well as youth. State Flex-E-Grants helped created a workshop to encourage a more diverse business community. With support from statewide development group A Vision Shared, the Renaissance Project invited entrepreneurs to a pitch competition for new businesses downtown. After a spirited onstage final round, four new business owners received mini-grants for an iconic diner, a coffee shop, a craft co-working space, and a yoga studio. Top prizewinners received in-kind donations of local media advertising in addition to cash. A candy factory, a craft brewery, and another retail spot hope to follow.

Princeton inspires other West Virginia communities in a traveling performance described by program creator Lori McKinney as a “TED talk and rock show with workshops.” The program, called Create Your State, received support from the Benedum Foundation.

This summer, a new marquee was hoisted above the Lavon Theater. With a new $300,000 loan from local First Community Bank, the Lavon project presents Princeton with its next big challenge. The theater requires another half-million dollars to fully equip and furnish its space.

“Communities like Princeton move from smaller short-term projects to larger, often redevelopment projects,” says Stephanie Tyree, The Hub’s executive director. “The process can create revenues and build a redevelopment budget, which is a necessity. Part of our role as community coach is to provide support to help them keep up the momentum and take the next big step.”
ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation is an independent foundation established in 1944 by Michael and Sarah Benedum, natives respectively of Bridgeport and Blacksville, West Virginia. The Foundation’s assets at year-end 2016 were $347,304,439. Since its inception in 1944, the Foundation has made more than 8,300 grants totaling over $473,000,000.

During his lifetime in the oil and gas business, Michael Benedum amassed a fortune, ranking him in his day among the 100 wealthiest Americans. Michael Benedum operated his worldwide business from corporate headquarters in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Mr. and Mrs. Benedum established residence in Pittsburgh in 1907 and lived here for over 50 years. They named the Foundation in memory of their only child, Claude Worthington Benedum, who died in 1918 at age 20. In creating the Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Benedum expressed the wish that grantmaking be focused in West Virginia and Pittsburgh, their native and adopted homes.

MISSION

To encourage human development in West Virginia and Southwestern Pennsylvania through strategically placed charitable resources.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles guide the Foundation’s grants programs in those regions:

• We honor Michael and Sarah Benedum’s belief in “helping people help themselves,” and we seek opportunities to cultivate the creativity of people and communities.

• We nurture leadership within the communities we serve, and we participate in leadership when it adds value.

• We encourage planning, projects, and programs that cross geographic and political boundaries so that access to services and economic growth is maximized.

• We expect collaboration among the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in order to leverage the resources that each can bring to common concerns.

• We strive to advance innovative practices that demonstrate measurable and sustainable benefit.

• We seek projects that contribute to advancement in public policy.

THE FOUNDATION’S ROLE

In seeking to achieve our mission and acknowledging lessons learned in 70 years of grantmaking, the Foundation has identified its role as follows:

“The Foundation largely takes on the agenda of the people we serve. Our business is to help people help themselves. This is not intended to suggest that the Foundation’s role is passive. To the contrary, we go out into the field and listen closely. We build strong and supportive relationships with grantees. We provide technical assistance. We broker ideas and institutions. We create partnerships. We undertake analyses of issues and problems, and we promote public awareness of them. We help to build broad consensus for change. We seek to empower people to develop their own capacity and the capacity of their institutions to succeed. We leverage not only funds but interest, involvement, and commitment.”

Excerpted from In the Company of Extraordinary People: A Special Report upon the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Benedum Foundation, 1994

GRANTS PROGRAMS

In keeping with the wishes of Michael and Sarah Benedum, the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation is a regional philanthropy focusing on West Virginia and Southwestern Pennsylvania. The Foundation generally invests two-thirds of its grant dollars in West Virginia and one-third in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

The Foundation serves the entire state of West Virginia. In Southwestern Pennsylvania, the service area includes Allegheny, Washington, Greene, and Fayette Counties. This four-county area is a natural connector between Pittsburgh and West Virginia and contains rural communities that may benefit from the Benedum Foundation’s experiences in West Virginia. However, the Foundation recognizes that economic regions do not follow political boundaries, and, therefore, the Foundation both encourages projects that cross state lines and supports economic and education initiatives that benefit the multi-state region centered on Pittsburgh.

The Foundation makes grants in two program areas that span both states: Education and Economic Development. In addition, the Foundation supports Community Development and Health & Human Services grants programs in West Virginia and, in Southwestern Pennsylvania, supports the major performing arts organizations within the Cultural District.

From time to time, the Foundation revises specific areas of interest within its grants programs, and grant seekers are encouraged to view the Foundation’s website for the most current descriptions.
EDUCATION
The Benedum Foundation seeks to promote successful learning through the formal education system. Academic achievement and preparation for the 21st-century workforce are the ultimate objectives of this program.

The Foundation places a high priority on teacher quality and the most advanced instructional tools. Because schools do not function in isolation, the Foundation also looks to the resources of community organizations, business, and higher education to reinforce the learning objectives of the classroom. In preparation for the rising demands of the workplace, the Foundation recognizes the need for all students to be prepared, without remediation, to pursue some form of post-secondary education.

Although the Foundation is interested in any significant opportunity to improve the education system, specific areas of interest include:

- Programs that improve teacher quality through professional development and innovative instructional strategies.
- Arts education, the integration of arts into other disciplines, and the partnership of community arts groups and higher education with the PreK–12 education system.
- Career education that aligns secondary and post-secondary programs to high-demand, high-wage occupations.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Innovation will be the cornerstone of the future success of the economy in West Virginia and Southwestern Pennsylvania. The Foundation supports economic development activities based upon the region’s strengths in research, technology, and advanced manufacturing. The Foundation’s agenda seeks to promote regional planning and cooperation, recognizing that, with respect to any endeavor, “region” should mean whatever area is most appropriate to optimize the available opportunity, without reference to historic, geographic, or political boundaries. The expected outcomes of the Foundation’s Economic Development grants are the creation and growth of innovative, wealth-producing businesses and high-quality jobs.

In addition, many of the communities in the region served by the Foundation are rural and enjoy abundant natural assets that provide economic opportunities that complement centers of technology-based growth. The Foundation supports efforts to advance agriculture, outdoor recreation, artisanship, and heritage tourism. Specific areas of Foundation interest include:

- Promotion of entrepreneurship.
- Projects that promote technology-based economic development.
- Programs to promote the growth and accessibility of new capital for businesses in distressed communities and areas of high unemployment.

WEST VIRGINIA GRANTS PROGRAM
In addition to the areas of interest discussed above, in West Virginia the Foundation also makes grants in Health & Human Services and Community Development.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
West Virginia’s best future requires that all families have access to high-quality health care and human services, and to the resources that enable them to raise their children to be productive members of their communities.

Emphasis in this program area is placed on innovations in health care delivery systems, a strengthening of the public health infrastructure, and community-based health promotion, especially with regard to chronic disease prevention and patient care management. Collaborative efforts are encouraged that provide technical assistance, develop programs, document effectiveness, and improve public policy. Specific areas of interest include:

- Support for a healthier quality of life for West Virginians through access to affordable health care, preventive health services, state-level policy development, provision of a medical home, and the delivery of quality patient care.
- Ensuring a system of accessible and affordable health care for children, early intervention services that lead to school success, and the promotion of child-focused public policy designed to prepare children to grow, learn, and prosper.
- Public oral health education, implementation of preventive strategies and programs, connecting people to a dental home, and achievement of the goals of the state oral health plan.
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Improving capabilities of leaders, organizations, and interested citizens to address challenges and opportunities will help communities be more prosperous through their own efforts.

The Benedum Foundation promotes the economic well-being and quality of life of West Virginia communities. Specific areas of interest include:

- Activities that engage diverse groups of citizens in the life of the community.
- Helping communities organize, plan, and implement ambitious but achievable improvement strategies.
- Leadership development.
- Programs that improve the effectiveness and accountability of nonprofit and public organizations.
- Efforts to expand technology access, affordability, and utilization.
- Activities that provide decent, safe, and affordable housing through home construction, repair, and financing and homeowner education programs.

SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA GRANTS PROGRAM
In addition to the Education and Economic Development program areas described above, the Foundation believes that the arts play a significant role in economic development. Pittsburgh’s exceptional arts community and the Pittsburgh Cultural District provide a competitive advantage to the region’s economy. The Foundation supports the major performing organizations within the Cultural District, as well as specific projects that add value to the Cultural District, especially through cooperative ventures among resident organizations.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A GRANT
Before applying for a grant, applicants should carefully review the Foundation’s Mission and Guiding Principles, and our grants program descriptions. Seeking a grant from the Benedum Foundation is a highly competitive process. As you might expect, the Foundation receives more applications each year than we are able to fund, which means that even some proposals that fit within the description of the Foundation’s grants program may not be selected for funding.

RESTRICTIONS
The Foundation generally does not make grants in support of:

- Organizations located outside West Virginia or Southwestern Pennsylvania
- Individuals
- Organizations not exempt from taxation under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3)
- Student aid, fellowships, or travel
- Construction or equipment
- Endowment
- Ongoing operating expenses
- National organizations
- Biomedical research
- Religious organizations for religious purposes
- Individual elementary and secondary schools
- Annual appeals or membership drives
- Conferences, films, books, and audio-visual productions, unless an integral part of a Foundation-supported program

APPLICATION PROCESS: WHAT TO EXPECT
After reviewing the information listed above, submit your application using the Foundation’s online grant application process found on our website (www.benedum.org).

The Foundation does not have submission deadlines, and applications are accepted throughout the year. Once we receive your completed online application, an automated response will be sent to you acknowledging receipt. You should receive a response to your application within 60 days, at which time you will be notified if your project is not one the Foundation can consider, or if you should submit additional information.
Although some of our grants have impact in both West Virginia and Southwestern Pennsylvania, for ease of reference, grants authorized in 2016 are listed below alphabetically by region of primary benefit.

Readers, especially grant seekers, should be aware that the emphasis of the Foundation’s grants program evolves over time and that grants as reported may not be indicative of the Foundation’s future program emphasis.

### WEST VIRGINIA

#### EDUCATION

**Alliance For Excellent Education**
Washington, DC
Engagement of West Virginia school districts in a national effort to upgrade digital and personalized learning
$50,000

**Blue Ridge Community and Technical College**
Martinsburg, WV
To launch a college-credit integrated production technologies program for Eastern Panhandle high school students
$95,000

**Carnegie Mellon University**
Pittsburgh, PA
Introduction of robotics and accompanying instructional plans to elementary school classrooms in West Virginia and southwestern Pennsylvania
$100,000

To support the White House Frontiers Conference to explore the future of innovation in the United States and around the world
$35,000

**Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences of West Virginia, Inc.**
Charleston, WV
Design of learning labs related to art, science, and health
$167,000

**The Education Alliance-Business and Community For Public Schools, Inc.**
Charleston, WV
School-business partnership program that assigns student teams to real-world industry challenges
$163,500

Fundraising campaign to help teachers resupply classrooms affected by the June 2016 flood
$5,000

To showcase West Virginia education projects during the Remake Learning Days celebration and learning exchange
$12,700

For a national consultant to research and provide recommendations on methods of student assessment most closely aligned with West Virginia policy priorities
$75,000

**Heritage Farm Foundation**
Huntington, WV
Creation of instructional plans incorporating the Heritage Farm Maker Space, in partnership with a cohort of regional schools
$80,000

**Kanawha County Board of Education**
Charleston, WV
To establish a nationally-recognized professional development school model, Expeditionary Learning, in two low-performing schools in Charleston’s West Side
$130,000

**Marshall University Foundation, Incorporated**
Huntington, WV
Development of a PreK–5 science education program using outdoor learning labs
$121,000

**Oglebay Institute**
Wheeling, WV
For a student-designed theater production that is integrated into language arts, math, and science coursework
$55,000

**Regional Education Service Agency (RESA 1)**
Beckley, WV
Expansion of an outdoor science program in partnership with the Carnegie Mellon University CREATE lab
$106,000

**Regional Education Service Agency (RESA 2)**
Huntington, WV
For alignment of industry-sponsored simulated workplaces with the Southern Regional Education Board’s Advanced Career Pathway courses of study (over two years)
$240,000

**Regional Education Service Agency (RESA 3)**
Dunbar, WV
Development of a solar energy makerspace and curriculum in partnership with New Vision Renewable Energy
$125,000

For a peer review professional development plan to improve early grade literacy
$46,500

For a technology platform that enables school teams to organize student data and apply customized instructional practices
$162,000

**Regional Education Service Agency (RESA 5)**
Parkersburg, WV
Statewide expansion of a peer-mentoring college preparation program
$76,000

**Regional Education Service Agency (RESA 6)**
Wheeling, WV
For a PreK educational technology program developed by Carnegie Mellon University and The Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young People
$35,000

**West Virginia Department of Education**
Charleston, WV
Creation of an online clearinghouse of STEM education resources
$120,000

**West Virginia Division of Culture and History**
Charleston, WV
Distribution of STEAM mini-grants through a network of community-based arts organizations
$90,000

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West Virginia Healthy Kids and Families Coalition  
Charleston, WV  
For a mini-grant program that engages parents, educators, and community members to address educational problems in their local schools  
$158,000

West Virginia University Foundation, Inc.  
Morgantown, WV  
To host a West Virginia legislators forum on education  
$50,000

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Cabell-Huntington Health Department  
Huntington, WV  
For local health departments and the public health system to provide optimal services and improve health outcomes  
$60,000

CAMC Health Education and Research Institute, Inc. dba CAMC Institute  
Charleston, WV  
To provide telestroke services to nine rural hospitals in southern West Virginia to improve access to stroke care (over three years)  
$137,000

Center For Organ Recovery And Education  
Pittsburgh, PA  
To provide physicians and patients with reliable organ donation information and methods to register for participation in West Virginia  
$90,000

Crittenton Foundation, Inc.  
Wheeling, WV  
To enable integrated trauma treatment for PreK and first grade children in their school and home environments  
$120,000

Eastern Area Health Education Center, Inc.  
Martinsburg, WV  
To reduce food insecurity and negative health impacts by encouraging federal nutrition assistance recipients to use fresh local products  
$40,000

Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation  
Charleston, WV  
Support of collaborative grantmaking projects that have a health or economic impact on Charleston’s West Side  
$50,000

Greenbrier County Health Alliance  
Lewisburg, WV  
For a collaborative effort to engage local communities to address health needs by linking clinical and social service opportunities (over two years)  
$124,000

K.I.D.S./Fashion Delivers, Inc.  
New York, NY  
In partnership with West Virginia’s food banks, to provide clothing, shoes, books, educational materials, and baby products to families in need  
$40,000

Marshall County Family Resource Network, Inc.  
Moundsville, WV  
For a statewide capacity building effort to train and track the progress of Family Resource Networks in West Virginia  
$146,000

Marshall University Research Corporation  
Huntington, WV  
To provide resources and training to the perinatal oral health network, dental services for aging populations, and evaluation and services for school-based oral health programs  
$250,000

Marshall University Research Corporation  
Huntington, WV  
Documentation of outcomes and commensurate cost savings of a community health worker care coordination model  
$82,000

Rural Emergency Trauma Institute, Inc.  
Wheeling, WV  
Improvement of appropriate patient destination decisions within the West Virginia Emergency Medical System using real-time information  
$65,000

Team for West Virginia Children, Inc.  
Huntington, WV  
To build the capacity of in-home family education programs to improve the health and well-being of children and families  
$150,000

West Virginia Association of Free Clinics, Inc.  
Charleston, WV  
Expansion of access to adult dental care in southern West Virginia at two free clinic locations (over two years)  
$150,000
West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy, Inc.  
Charleston, WV  
Development of a report on the sustainability of Medicaid, including Medicaid expansion  
$75,000  

West Virginia Child Abuse Network, Inc.  
Charleston, WV  
Creation of a centralized billing infrastructure for medical and mental health services provided at child advocacy centers in West Virginia  
$60,000  

West Virginia Community Voices, Inc.  
Charleston, WV  
Development of a statewide initiative to improve the care of at-risk infants whose mothers use substances during pregnancy  
$125,000  

West Virginia Council of Churches  
Charleston, WV  
To build capacity of food pantries and the Mountaineer Food Bank in times of disaster  
$70,000  

West Virginia Development Office  
Charleston, WV  
For programs promoting community wellness, healthy food, and active living in West Virginia Main Street and ON TRAC communities  
$100,000  

West Virginia Healthy Kids and Families Coalition  
Charleston, WV  
To add youth engagement to the “Try This West Virginia” public health model  
$175,000  

West Virginia University Foundation, Inc.  
Morgantown, WV  
To provide assistance to cancer patients to improve quality of life and plans for advanced care, and to improve family understanding of patients’ late-stage values and interests (over two years)  
$56,750  

West Virginia Rural Health Association  
Shady Spring, WV  
To strengthen the organization’s ability to serve its members (over two years)  
$155,000  

West Virginians for Affordable Health Care  
Charleston, WV  
Promotion of consumer understanding of the value and uses of health insurance, and to support health system improvements  
$170,000  

Williamson Health & Wellness Center, Inc.  
Williamson, WV  
Sponsorships for the Williamson Learning Journey  
$5,000  

WV Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster  
Williamson, WV  
To increase organizational capacity to deal with the aftermath of June 2016 flooding  
$250,000  

To build organizational capacity and sustainability for disaster response in West Virginia  
$75,000  

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  

CommunityWorks in West Virginia, Inc.  
Charleston, WV  
Development of model senior living communities in three West Virginia communities  
$79,000  

To host the 2016 West Virginia Housing Conference  
$10,000  

Planning and coordination initiative involving the West Virginia National Guard and CommunityWorks in West Virginia, Inc. to advance economic development strategies related to housing, agriculture and flood recovery  
$40,000  

Create Huntington  
Huntington, WV  
For an impact analysis and creation of a strategic plan for citizen-led community development activities  
$45,000  

Highlander Research and Education Center, Inc.  
New Market, TN  
To support the 2016–17 Appalachia Transition Fellowship Program to engage emerging leaders in the economic transition of West Virginia and the Central Appalachian region  
$100,000  

MACED (Mountain Association for Community Economic Development)  
Berea, KY  
To support the Appalachian Funders Network to accelerate an equitable Appalachian transition by convening and connecting funders for learning, analysis, collaboration, and increasing investments in the region  
$15,000  

Parkersburg Area Community Foundation  
Parkersburg, WV  
To support the 2016–17 civic leaders fellowship program to connect college-age participants to career and civic engagement opportunities in 16 West Virginia counties  
$120,000  

Philanthropy West Virginia, Inc.  
Morgantown, WV  
Continued support for the West Virginia Nonprofit Association to provide training, policy development, and support services for small to medium nonprofits  
$16,000  

To advance the Keep5Local program strategies in 36 counties to expand local philanthropic resources for long-term community development  
$120,000  

Vision Shared  
Huntington, WV  
To provide support for the statewide network of Generation West Virginia Chapters  
$85,000  

To advance economic development in West Virginia by promoting entrepreneurship, technology-based economic development, workforce development, and education  
$130,000
West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy, Inc.
Charleston, WV
Support of the 2016 Summer Policy Institute
$5,000
For an education event regarding a proposed state earned income tax credit
$2,500

West Virginia Community Development Hub, Inc.
Fairmont, WV
To catalyze local community revitalization through policy development, project planning, capacity building, coaching, and technical assistance
$225,000

West Virginia Development Office
Charleston, WV
To support the 2016–17 West Virginia Flex-E-Grant program focusing on organizational and community capacity building efforts within communities impacted by the 2016 flood
$75,000

Your Community Foundation, Inc.
Morgantown, WV
On behalf of Morgantown Area Chamber of Commerce, for examination of the feasibility of merging economic development activities in Monongalia County under a single umbrella organization
$75,000

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Appalachian Community Capital
Christiansburg, VA
For matching funds for a revolving loan fund to grow tourism enterprises serving visitors to the Hatfield-McCoy recreational trail system in nine counties of Southern West Virginia (over three years)
$184,000

CADCO Foundation dba Charleston Area Alliance
Charleston, WV
As matching funds to support Advantage Valley, Inc. to conduct small business market analysis and comprehensive site planning for business and industrial properties, located within an eight-county region
$120,000

Coalfield Development Corporation
Wayne, WV
Expansion of social enterprises in agriculture, construction and renewable energy (over 18 months)
$395,000

Community Power Network
Washington, DC
Support of community engagement and implementation of six solar business cooperatives in West Virginia
$100,000

 Consortium For Entrepreneurship Education a/k/a EntreEd
Charleston, WV
Entrepreneurship education programs in four West Virginia counties (over three years)
$75,000

Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College Foundation, Inc.
Moorefield, WV
Entrepreneurship education and programming in West Virginia community colleges (over two years)
$150,000

Greenbrier Valley Economic Development Corporation
Maxwelton, WV
Development of new and existing farm businesses and increased local food production in the Greenbrier Valley of West Virginia
$150,000

Marshall University Research Corporation
Huntington, WV
Matching funds for federal POWER funding, to provide technical assistance to businesses in 20 southern West Virginia counties to foster job creation and retention, and increased access to supply chains and customers (over three years)
$430,000

New Appalachian Farm and Research Center, Inc.
Rock Cave, WV
Development of a farm to school transition plan based on regional supply chain systems
$27,000

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Washington, DC
To undertake a trail development plan and community outreach for the West Virginia portion of the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition system (over 18 months)
$150,000

Stonewall State Park Foundation, Inc.
Roanoke, WV
For a comprehensive feasibility study for a multi-purpose facility within the Appalachian Homestead Project at Stonewall Jackson State Park
$25,000

Washington County Council on Economic Development
Washington, PA
For expansion of the SBA micro-lending program into 16 additional counties in West Virginia
$120,000

West Virginia Food and Farm Coalition
Charleston, WV
For food system research and development, working group support, and cooperative business assistance (over two years)
$275,000

West Virginia University Foundation, Inc.
Morgantown, WV
To determine the potential to build underground storage facilities in the Marcellus/Utica shale region
$100,000
For a matching grant to an Appalachian Regional Commission application for a three-state, 61-county energy supply chain study and implementation program
$100,000
To provide legal services to students related to intellectual property and patents
$105,000
To assist communities in writing successful applications for funding to remove vacant and dilapidated structures
$50,000

Woodlands Community Lenders
Elkins, WV
For matching funds to increase lending capital for small business development, real estate redevelopment, and community facilities (over two years)
$200,000

WV Regional Technology Park Corporation
South Charleston, WV
For research related to establishing an economically viable, sustainable and scalable surface mine reclamation strategy designed to provide revenue, jobs and agritourism to economically depressed regions of West Virginia
$210,000
SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

EDUCATION

Allegheny Conference on Community Development
Pittsburgh, PA
For the 2016 workforce agenda
$193,000

Allegheny Intermediate Unit
Homestead, PA
For a re-granting program to advance STEAM education in schools throughout Southwestern Pennsylvania
$100,000

Bricolage
Pittsburgh, PA
For student-designed theatre productions that are integrated into language arts, math, science, technology, and fine arts courses (over two years)
$250,000

Carnegie Mellon University
Pittsburgh, PA
To provide outreach and professional development to the network of schools that have incorporated Entertainment Technology Center labs and educational tools
$110,000

Catalyst Connection
Pittsburgh, PA
For a school-business partnership program that engages students in solving real-world manufacturing challenges
$50,000

Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA
Development of a learning laboratory and professional development center for studio arts education
$100,000

Fayette County Career and Technical Institute
Uniontown, PA
To enable Southwestern Pennsylvania teachers to participate in Southern Regional Education Board training on nationally-recognized career education curricula
$15,000

Expansion of a national college-preparatory career education program to Fayette and Westmoreland County technical schools
$66,000

Fayette County Cultural Trust
Connellsville, PA
To match teaching artists with classroom teachers in Washington and Fayette County schools (over two years)
$270,000

Intermediate Unit I
Coal Center, PA
For a personalized learning initiative that combines continuous assessment of student performance matched with online access to customized instructional resources (over two years)
$244,000

Introduction of a product design and marketing curriculum to middle and high school classes in southwestern Pennsylvania and West Virginia
$100,000

McGuffey School District
Claysville, PA
Development of science and career education curricula using school-based aquaponics labs
$40,000

Sprout Fund
Pittsburgh, PA
For online communications and video documentation of advanced practices in manufacturing education
$50,000

The Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania
Pittsburgh, PA
Mapping and promotion of educational pathways that link maker education to manufacturing careers
$75,000

For a week-long showcase of exemplary educational programs in Southwestern Pennsylvania and West Virginia
$25,000

The United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania
Pittsburgh, PA
For a preschool-to-kindergarten transition program focused on literacy
$125,000

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

African American Cultural Center
Pittsburgh, PA
Support for the 2016–17 operations of the August Wilson Center
$50,000

Allegheny Conference on Community Development
Pittsburgh, PA
Development and implementation of the collaborative agreement executed by the administrations of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio in October, 2015 to enhance economic development from shale gas
$34,000

Catalyst Connection
Pittsburgh, PA
Support for a consultant to seek federal funding for the Tri-State Shale Initiative
$24,000

To fund the Tristate Infrastructure Council, including its Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database, to attract investment in infrastructure to enable economic growth throughout the Marcellus and Utica region
$75,000

For a public communications initiative that showcases regional manufacturing opportunities
$28,000

For a consultant to develop strategies and craft a proposal for federal funding related to coal impacted communities in Southwestern Pennsylvania
$15,000

Community Design Center of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA
To provide design assistance and community planning to Monongahela River towns in Washington and Fayette Counties
$100,000

Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania
Pittsburgh, PA
In coordination with Pittsburgh’s Bicentennial, to tell the story of the history of innovation in Western Pennsylvania
$10,000
Innovation Works, Inc.
Pittsburgh, PA
For business creation and growth in the manufacturing sector
$200,000

The National Road Heritage Corridor
Uniontown, PA
Expansion of the River Town Program, an economic development initiative based on recreational tourism
$175,000

Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Inc.
Pittsburgh, PA
Development of a technical assistance tool kit for trail town economic development
$100,000
Continued development of a regional trail network to advance trail town economic development
$200,000

Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Inc.
Pittsburgh, PA
Operating support for the 2016–17 season
$75,000

The Pittsburgh Foundation
Pittsburgh, PA
To support the activities of the Power of 32 Initiative
$15,000

Pittsburgh Opera, Inc.
Pittsburgh, PA
Operating support for the 2016–17 season
$75,000

Pittsburgh Public Theater Corporation
Pittsburgh, PA
Operating support for 2016–17 season
$75,000

Pittsburgh Symphony, Inc.
Pittsburgh, PA
Operating support for the 2016–17 season
$100,000

The Pittsburgh Trust for Cultural Resources
Pittsburgh, PA
Operating support for the 2016–17 Pittsburgh Dance Council season
$39,000
To support the 2016 Dollar Bank Three Rivers Arts Festival
$15,000

The Progress Fund
Greensburg, PA
Expansion of the Trail Town Program® along major corridors of the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition regional trail network
$150,000

Riverlife
Pittsburgh, PA
To provide riverfront planning tools and financing options to Monongahela River towns
$100,000

Sustainable Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA
For sustainability performance programs that reduce costs and improve efficiencies for regional businesses, municipalities, schools, and institutions
$172,000

University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA
Expansion of entrepreneurship assistance services to Washington, Greene, and Fayette Counties
$125,000

West Virginia University Foundation, Inc.
Morgantown, WV
For mapping and connecting major research strengths of West Virginia, Southwestern Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio universities and private facilities to attract new sponsors and drive regional economic development in natural gas utilization and manufacturing
$50,000

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
Pittsburgh, PA
To introduce architectural studies to Fayette County schools, incorporating Frank Lloyd Wright’s masterpiece, Fallingwater
$152,000

The Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania
Pittsburgh, PA
Operating and program support in 2016
$20,300

Philanthropy West Virginia, Inc.
Morgantown, WV
Program and operating support in 2016
$17,000

OTHER

The Foundation Center
New York, NY
2016 program support
$10,000

The Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania
Pittsburgh, PA
Operating and program support in 2016
$20,300

Philanthropy West Virginia, Inc.
Morgantown, WV
Program and operating support in 2016
$17,000
The Foundation makes multi-year commitments, with payments scheduled over as many as three years. At year-end 2016, outstanding grant commitments totaled $1,768,250.

The following chart displays invested assets, and authorizations and payments of grants and program-related investments (PRI) over the last five years. For further information, including the most recently available audited financial statements and tax returns, visit the Foundation’s website, www.benedum.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Investments Including Cash</th>
<th>Grants and PRI Authorized*</th>
<th>Grant and PRI Payments</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$343,549,325</td>
<td>$14,770,058</td>
<td>$14,587,325</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$376,498,558</td>
<td>$16,301,750</td>
<td>$15,926,350</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>$367,771,033</td>
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<td>$15,438,850</td>
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<td>$346,430,828</td>
<td>$14,559,850</td>
<td>$14,109,063</td>
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*Program-Related Investments (PRI); includes contingent grants.
The disposition of a not inconsiderable estate is never an easy assignment.

It has been a thorny & laborious problem for me because, recognizing my frailty & inadequacy, I have not been able to lose sight of the awesome responsibility involved.

If I could have looked upon my material goods as personal property, belonging to me alone, my task would have been immeasurably lighter. But I have never regarded my possessions in that light. Providence gives no fee simple title to such possessions. As I have seen it, all of the elements of the earth belong to the Creator of all things, and He has, as a part of the Divine Purpose, distributed them unevenly among His children, holding each relatively accountable for their wise use and disposition.

I have always felt that I have been only a trustee for such material wealth as Providence has placed in my hands. This trusteeship has weighed heavily upon me. In carrying out this final responsibility of my stewardship, I have sought to utilize such wisdom and understanding of equity as the Creator has given me. No one with any regard for his responsibility to his God and his fellow man should do less. No one can do more.

As I have seen it, life is but a proving ground where Providence tests the character and mettle of those He places upon the earth. The whole course of mortal existence is a series of problems, sorrows & difficulties. If that existence be rightly conducted, it becomes a progress towards the fulfillment of human destiny. We must pass through darkness to reach the light.

Throughout my adult life, day by day & year by year, I have been instilled with the conviction that wealth cannot be measured in terms of money, stocks, bonds, broad acres or by ownership of mine and mill. These cannot bear testimony to the staple of real excellence of man or woman. Those who use a material yardstick to appraise their wealth and foolishly imagine themselves to be rich are objects of pity. In their ignorance and misanthropic isolation, they suffer from shrinkage of the soul.

All of us aspire to a higher and better life beyond this, but I feel that the individual who seeks to climb the ladder alone will never find the way to Paradise. Only those who sustain the faltering ones on the rungs above and extend a helping hand to the less fortunate on the rungs below, can approach the end with the strength of sublime faith and confidence.

At the end of life each of us must face the great teacher that we call death. Stern, cold & irresistible, it walks the earth in dread mystery and lays its hands upon all. The wealth of empires cannot stay its approach. As I near my rendezvous with this common leveler of mankind, which takes prince and pauper alike to the democracy of the grave, I do so with resignation to the will of God, and with faith in His eternal justice.
Life has been sweet to me … sweet in the loved ones that have been mine, sweet in the friends who have surrounded me & rewarding in the opportunities that have come my way. I could not leave this earth with any degree of happiness and satisfaction if I felt that I had not tried to bring some of these joys to those less fortunate than I have been.

We know not where seed may sprout. In the poorest and most unregarded child who seems to be abandoned to ignorance and evil, there may slumber virtue, intellect and genius. It is our duty to sow and to nurture, leaving it to others to harvest the fruits of our efforts.

While I am conscious that my love for the land that gave me birth has been an influence in guiding the disposition of my estate, there are other practical reasons why I have favored my native state of West Virginia. It is not that I am unmindful or unappreciative of my adopted home of Pennsylvania, but rather that I have sought to appraise and balance the needs of each and the available potential for supplying those needs.

I cannot close my eyes to the realistic consideration that Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania abound in riches, having a citizenship in which men of great wealth are more common than rare. West Virginia is in a less fortunate position. There can be no question but that its needs are much greater than those of my adopted home. Consequently, in making specific provisions for West Virginia institutions, I have done so in good conscience, with a sense of equity & with recognition of a responsibility to distribute my estate in a way that will bring the greatest good to the greatest number. This decision was not made lightly or impetuously.

Conscious that in this Codicil to my Last Will & Testament, I am figuratively speaking from the grave, and that the great book of my account with the Creator has been closed beyond change or amendment, I submit my soul to His tender mercy, and my memory to the generosity & compassion of my fellow man.

Signed by Michael L. Benedum on the 15th day of June 1957
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