



## **\$800,000 fund is basis for grants that serve elderly**

Foundation announces Bridging Communities Fund for nonprofit aid

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PRESS-GAZETTE • NOVEMBER 16, 2009

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A new \$800,000 community fund has been established to provide grants to nonprofit organizations that serve the elderly in Northeastern Wisconsin.

The Greater Green Bay Community Foundation Thursday announced that the new Bridging Communities Fund will focus on meeting the needs of the elderly and providing for their quality of life in Northeastern Wisconsin.

"There are a wide variety of programs in our community that could potentially benefit from this fund," foundation President David Pamperin said in a statement. "We are eager to award some of the available dollars to programming in the community to help improve the quality of life for area seniors."

The funds were made available by the Bridging Communities Foundation, formerly known as the Wisconsin Health Care Foundation, said Martha Ahrendt, vice president of programs. The WHCF owned a nursing home that was sold in 2007, providing capital for the Foundation to invest. After the sale, the WHCF changed its name to the Bridging Communities Foundation to more clearly reflect the intent of the board to provide for elderly needs in Northeastern Wisconsin.

"Their intention was that we make grants of about 5 percent of that \$800,000 fund each year, basically the interest earned by the principal," Ahrendt said. "That makes this essentially a permanent fund that can continue as long as we do."

The Bridging Communities Fund will be made available through the foundation's Funds for Greater Green Bay granting program. The description — to meet the needs of the elderly and provide for their quality of life — is deliberately broad.

"It's not just about health care or medical needs," Ahrendt said. "We could be talking about continuing education, the arts, a wide variety of things to help the elderly live better or have a better lifestyle. That's why we're keeping it fairly broad."

According to Bridging Communities Board President Ron Van Dyck, in 2009 the Bridging Communities Foundation decided it did not want to be in the business of soliciting, evaluating and approving grants, so it turned to the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation.

"We decided that the foundation could provide the expertise to continue what we had started, namely providing funding to community organizations for the care of the elderly," Van Dyck said.

With the acquisition of the Bridging Communities Fund, the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation now offers a portfolio of 25 Field of Interest Funds. These are funds established by private donors or charitable organizations to support particular interest areas, specific program initiatives, causes or geographic areas.

Local nonprofits are invited to submit applications to the Community Foundation for financial support of programs in these interest areas, and grant awards are made by matching community programs with available Field of Interest Funds. For information about the Funds for Greater Green Bay granting program, nonprofit representatives can visit [www.ggbcf.org](http://www.ggbcf.org).

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