

May 2022



BERKS COUNTY  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

# Giving MATTERS

## Scholarship founders remember Reading graduate with cleanup and scholarship

A recent Adopt-a-Highway cleanup honored the legacy of a former Reading High School student for the 19th year in a row.

Members of the Jorge Luis Acevedo Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund of Berks County Community

Foundation gathered to pick up trash and improve a roadway near the intersection of Lancaster Avenue and Route 422 in Reading.

Acevedo, also known as J.R., was killed by a drunk driver in 2003 when he was 17.



His family says they hope others can learn something from J.R.'s story.

"It's not only don't drink and drive, (but) it's also (being) careful who you get into the car with," said Ada Acevedo, J.R.'s mom.

Each year, the Community Foundation honors the memory of J.R. by awarding a scholarship to a Reading High student pursuing an education in culinary arts. The scholarship fund was established by J.R.'s family.

For news coverage of the recent cleanup, [go to WFMZ](#).

Click here for information on the [Jorge Luis Acevedo Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund](#).

Learn [how to start a charitable fund and other ways to give here](#).

---

### Scholarship recipient becomes scholarship donor

In related news, [here's a story](#) about one of our scholarship recipients and how bilingual students can earn college credits for languages they already speak.

What the story doesn't mention is that Daniel Cortes, Esq., who received a scholarship from the Community Foundation in 2008, went on to become a donor to one of our scholarship funds in 2021. "Pay it forward" is a philosophy we hear often from our scholarship recipients who go on to donate to our scholarship funds.

All of our funds [accept donations here](#).



**Apply for K-12 tax credit  
scholarships May 15-31**

The online application for K-12 tax credit scholarships in Berks County will be available [on our website](#) from May 15 through May 31 for the 2022-2023 school year.



## INSIDE INFORMATION

### Survey to help develop plan to increase Internet access

As part of a county-wide effort to close the digital divide by increasing access to affordable high-quality broadband Internet service, the County of Berks in partnership with several community agencies, including Berks County Community Foundation, has developed a Berks County Broadband Survey.



The information collected will be used by the County's technical consultant for this project to identify gaps in service as well as residents' satisfaction with their current Internet access.

Participating in the survey should take less than 10 minutes. Participation is essential for the County to develop a practical plan to begin the process of expanding broadband access. [Take the survey here.](#)

### In the news...

A grant from the Gilmore | Henne Community Fund of Berks County Community Foundation helped pay for 26 trees that were planted at E.J. Dives Playground in southeast Reading for Arbor Day. The activity was a partnership between the Community Foundation, the City of Reading, the Reading Area Water Authority, Met-Ed, and Berks Nature.

[Read more and watch a brief video at Berks Weekly.](#)



Studio B Fine Art Gallery in Boyertown announced a \$2,500 grant from the James K. and Nancy Lang Boyer Family Fund of Berks County Community Foundation. "The Boyer family have been ongoing supporters from 'Day 1' for the mission and efforts of Studio B," noted Jane Stahl, Studio B's Director of Community Relations. "Nancy (Boyer) was fondly named 'The First Lady of Boyertown'; she loved the community, and we loved her." Boyer passed in 2020 at 94 years.



Read about the announcement at [Studio B's blog](#), at [bctv.org](#), in the [Reading Eagle](#), or on [Yahoo News](#).

You can also read about James and Nancy Boyer leaving a legacy of caring [on our website](#).

The United Way of Berks County gave the Community Foundation [a shoutout in WFMZ's coverage](#) of the United Way's move to new offices in downtown Reading.

Congratulations to our colleague Christi Terefenko on [receiving the ATHENA Leadership Award](#) on April 20 at the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance's 11th Annual Women2Women Conference + Expo at the Santander Performing Arts Center.



In 2015, Christi co-founded and is now executive director of [VOiCEup Berks](#), which operates as a fund of Berks County Community Foundation. VOiCEup connects people to meaningful volunteer and service-learning opportunities. It also hosts the Youth Volunteer Corps of Reading, which operates the local [Youth Advisory Board](#) in cooperation with the Community Foundation.

In these roles, Christi and her VOiCEup co-founders, Rachel Kuhn and Christie Botterbusch, have been responsible for leading hundreds of local youth in more than [20,000 hours of community service](#).

In her remarks when accepting the award, Christi gave a shoutout to the [Power of the Purse in Berks County](#) - a women's giving circle that is administered by the Community Foundation - for funding some of the VOiCEup programs that empower local women and girls.

Christi also thanked her three local mentors: Sharon Mast, Pat Giles, and [Franki Aitken](#), the Community Foundation's COO, and herself a former recipient of the ATHENA Award.

Women2Women hosts the ATHENA Award Program in Berks County. The ATHENA Leadership Award honors those who exhibit a commitment to professional excellence, community service, and active assistance to women in their attainment of professional excellence and leadership skills.



The [Met-Ed Sustainable Energy Fund](#) of Berks County Community Foundation and one of that fund's grant recipients, Berks County-based Solarflux, were featured April 28 in one of Berks Alliance's [Spotlight programs](#).

UGI Energy Services LLC announced [a contribution of \\$200,000](#) to support 70 private and parochial schools and scholarship organizations in Pennsylvania through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) program, which is part of the Educational Improvement Tax Credit



Program. That contribution included a \$10,000 donation to the Opportunity Tax Credit Scholarship Fund of Berks County Community Foundation.



## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

To apply for a grant, use our online application system, which you can [access here](#). You must create an account to access the system.

The following opportunities are available at this time:

**Arthur O. & Clara M. Schlegel Memorial Fund**

This fund provides grants that support the medical costs of physical differences in Berks County children whose guardians are unable to meet such expenses. Expenses that may be covered include direct and indirect medical expenses, such as travel costs associated with treatment. [Learn more here.](#)

#### **Bridge Fund**

This fund provides grants of less than \$1,000 to address critical needs that place juveniles at increased risk of entering the foster care system or the juvenile detention center. [Learn more here.](#)

#### **Cystic Fibrosis Fund of Berks County**

This fund supports the needs of individuals with cystic fibrosis, including both direct and indirect medical expenses and necessary, but ancillary, expenses related to treatment. [Learn more here.](#)

#### **Friends of the Berks County Public Libraries Fund**

This fund distributes grants for special projects and emergency needs at Berks County's public libraries. [Learn more here.](#)

#### **Ira M. Becker Fund**

This fund provides grants to educate young men (up to age 30) in Berks County, one at a time. These funds can be used for educational purposes but not for tuition. An individual may apply for a grant, or a caseworker or court official may also apply on behalf of an individual. [Learn more here.](#)

#### **Jess's Sunshine Fund**

This fund provides grants to support families who are residents of the Boyertown Area School District with dependent adult or minor children who have special needs arising from a long-term catastrophic illness or injury. [Learn more here.](#)

#### **Margaret B. Moeller Memorial Fund for Alzheimer's Home Care Companions**

This fund provides grants for families in the Boyertown Area School District with individuals who suffer from Alzheimer's disease or other types of dementia to obtain the services of in-home care companions, aides, or other providers of respite care. [Learn more here.](#)

#### **Pets in Need Fund and the Darryl and Susanne Shoff Fund**

These funds provide grants for veterinary care for animals in life-threatening situations. Applicants must be residents of Berks County and be referred to the funds by their veterinarian. Learn more [here](#) and [here](#).

#### **Susan E. Kraus/Robert W. Gill Fund**

This fund provides grants for recently discharged adults who were once in foster care who either lived in a Berks County foster home and/or were Berks County residents at the time of their placement in foster care. These grants are to assist them with transitional housing costs in general and/or educational expenses. [Learn more here.](#)

To apply for a grant, use our online application system, which you can [access here](#). You must create an account to access the system.

### Grant recipient opens "Summer Sing" registration

Berks Youth Chorus offers Summer Sing as a free weeklong program, open to all young people entering grades 3 through 7. Campers learn music and vocal fundamentals in a fun, engaging, and physically active setting. Students sing in small and large groups, explore their voices, improve music literacy, learn choreography, and play games. BYC provides all music and education materials and a snack each day. The program concludes with

a concert for family and friends. This year's Summer Sing will be July 25-29, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at Atonement Lutheran Church, Wyomissing. Register/learn more at <https://www.berksyouthchorus.org/>.

Over the years, Berks County Community Foundation has awarded BYC more than \$40,000 in grants, including a grant of \$4,500 in 2021 from the First United Church of Christ Mission Fund. One of the areas of focus for the First United Church of Christ Mission Fund is to support programs and initiatives that help children from Berks County participate in activities that their families would not otherwise be able to afford.





Learn how to donate to our funds or how to start your own fund at <https://bccf.org/>.



## INSTAGRAM MOMENTS

Four of our most popular recent posts...  
Click on each to learn more!





[Follow our Instagram](#)

[View this email as a web page](#)

The mission of Berks County Community Foundation is to promote philanthropy and improve the quality of life for the residents of Berks County.

Berks County Community Foundation  
237 Court St., Reading PA 19601  
610.685.2223  
[info@bccf.org](mailto:info@bccf.org)  
[bccf.org](http://bccf.org)



This e-newsletter is issued monthly and is the only place where we comprehensively compile all current funding opportunities.

Berks County Community Foundation develops, manages and distributes funds for charitable purposes in the community. The official registration and financial information of Berks County Community Foundation may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1.800.732.0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.