

## MISSION

Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods promotes the importance of nature for nurturing personal and community wellbeing, cultivating creativity, and inspiring learning. In doing so, we honor those who came before us thousands of years ago and their love and respect of this land.

Since 1984, Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods has been a nexus between communities, nature, and the arts. With a focus on youth, families, Veterans, seniors, artists, and local residents, our programs offer healing, inspire creativity, and liberate both the self and collective from the traumas of the past. In response to a changing climate, we lift up the strengths, assets, and hopes of communities to achieve greater environmental, racial, and economic justice. And through intentional collaboration, our partnerships respond to community needs today and inspire hope for a resilient future. We work with more than 50 partners and 250 artists annually to offer programs focused on physical and emotional health, artistic and musical creativity, and community and personal wellbeing.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A land acknowledgement statement is designed to bring more awareness and understanding of the history of indigenous peoples and their territories, but it should also be more than that; it should be a call for us to rethink our relationship with the environment and the histories of all peoples, and to challenge the legacies of settler colonialism in our society.

Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods honors this land as the traditional home of Algonquian speaking peoples. We celebrate their traditions and culture and their immemorial ties to this land.

Today, Brushwood Center continues to be a place where many people from diverse backgrounds find healing, vitality, and relationship with nature. We honor the multi-cultural traditions of the land, the history of native peoples, and those who continue to maintain and shape these traditions today.



**Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods**  
21850 N Riverwoods Road, Riverwoods, IL 60015  
[WWW.BRUSHWOODCENTER.ORG](http://WWW.BRUSHWOODCENTER.ORG)



## BRUSHWOOD CENTER AT RYERSON WOODS

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



## BRUSHWOOD CENTER AT RYERSON WOODS

Dear Friends,

Amidst the challenges of 2020, Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods remained true to our mission and responsive to the needs of our community.

Brushwood Center doubled-down on our COVID-19 response, recognizing that nature and the arts are powerful pathways to healing. With the help of our donors, volunteers, and partners, Brushwood Center expanded our programs, reaching more than 8,000 people through in-person and virtual offerings.

### NURTURING WELLBEING

- Engaged 2,000+ people of all ages and backgrounds through virtual art and nature programs. From art therapy for teens to a bilingual youth bird camp, Brushwood Center created supportive online spaces for social connection, learning, and emotional wellbeing with more than 50 partners.
- Collected 6,000+ cloth face masks, sewn by our committed volunteers using materials from the Brushwood Art Supply Exchange (BASE), and distributed them to Lake County Housing Authority, City of North Chicago, and more than 30 high-need organizations including hospitals, homeless shelters, veteran organizations, and senior living facilities.
- Facilitated the creation of a 40' collaborative mural, painted by 17 veterans and artists, at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center in North Chicago, creating a healing space for thousands of doctors, patients and staff during this high-stress time.

### INSPIRING LEARNING

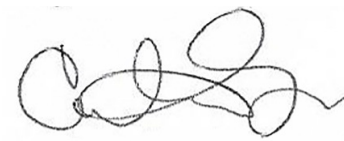
- Distributed 800 Nature Explorer Backpacks to families from low-income communities through our partners at Boys and Girls Club of Lake County, Nuestro Center, Faith in Place, Round Lake Schools, and Highwood Public Library. The Backpacks contained bilingual (English and Spanish) activities, preserve maps, and art supplies to help families feel safe and knowledgeable accessing greenspaces where they live.
- Broke attendance records with 2,300 viewers of the Smith Nature Symposium Awards Ceremony, honoring Bill McKibben and Sue Halpern! The Symposium Series welcomed 34 local leaders and activists over two months through roundtables focused on building a more just and sustainable future.

### CULTIVATING CREATIVITY

- Showcased more than 275 artists and performers through exhibitions, artist spotlights, online concerts, front-porch shows, and partnerships, including the award-winning virtual exhibition of *Fresh Air* in collaboration with Project Onward and Forest Preserves of Cook County.
- Launched a new Music and Wellness program under the direction of renowned conductor, Vladimir Kulenovic, to share healing harmonies inspired by nature with our community.

Nature and the arts have never been more important for our physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. Thank you for helping Brushwood Center provide vital programs for the health of people and nature.

Be well,



Catherine Game  
Executive Director



A. Gail Sturm  
Chair, Board of Directors







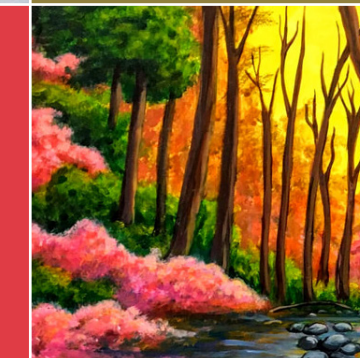
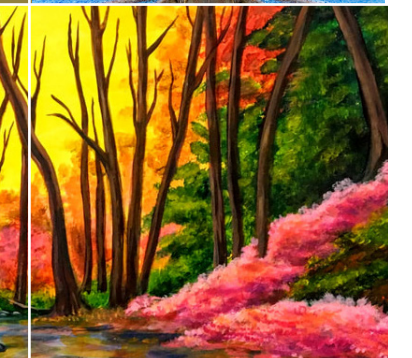
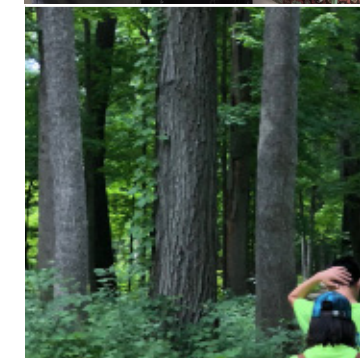
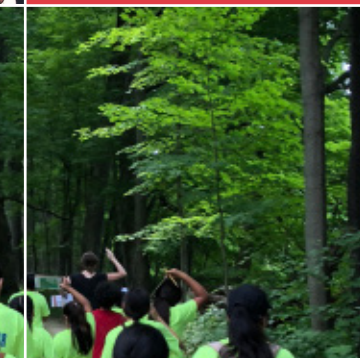
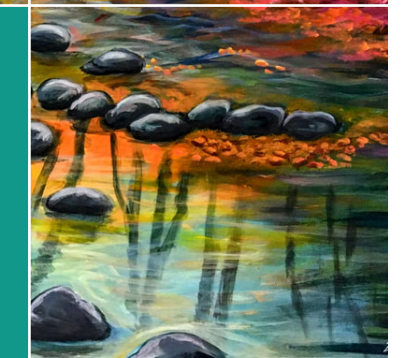
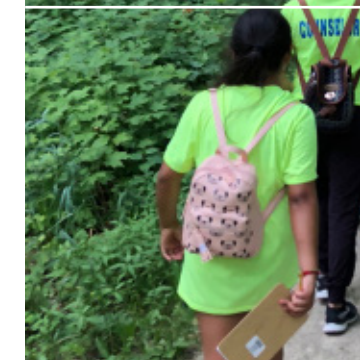
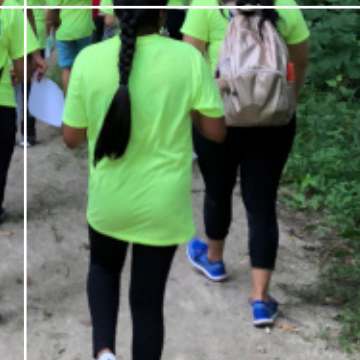

### Brushwood Gallery:

Nature was the driving force of *Tides: A Prelude*, a riveting exhibition based on the gravitational pull of the sun and moon on the earth's bodies of water by artist Arica Hilton.

## BRUSHWOOD CENTER RESPONDS TO COVID-19

		<p><b>Mindfulness in Nature:</b> Tools available at no charge, from our Brushwood Breath video series to onsite mindfulness prompts and labyrinth at Brushwood Center.</p>	
<p><b>Cloth Mask Drive:</b> 6,000+ masks sewn by volunteers and distributed to healthcare providers, homeless shelters, veteran organizations, and senior care facilities in Lake and Cook Counties.</p>			
		<p><b>At Ease Online:</b> A free, online art and nature series for military veterans and their families to access creative expression and engagement with nearby nature.</p>	
<p><b>Veterans Mural:</b> Facilitated the creation of a 40' collaborative mural with veterans at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center.</p>			
		<p><b>Stay-at-Home Science and Education Activities:</b> Available weekly in English and Spanish for families to learn about nature from their own home.</p>	

## HELPING OUR YOUTH, VETERANS, AND FAMILIES THRIVE

			<p><b>Senior Newsletter:</b> Beautiful newsletters brimming with nature and art content and available at no charge to senior living facilities in a ready-to-print format.</p>
<p><b>Smith Nature Symposium:</b> The virtual program honored Bill McKibben and Sue Halpern with record attendance and welcomed 34 speakers over a two month period.</p>		<p><b>Summer Explorer Backpacks:</b> Bilingual backpacks distributed to children from low-income communities and jam-packed with supplies for learning and exploring throughout the summer.</p>	 <p><b>EXPLORADOR DE VERANO</b> Actividades de Naturaleza</p>
	<p><b>Healthy Happy Hour:</b> Virtual presentations with Q&amp;A featuring special guest lecturers with expertise in the arts, nature, and wellbeing.</p>		
		<p><b>Artist Spotlight:</b> Featuring environmental artists and opportunities to support artists during this financially challenging time.</p>	
		<p><b>A National Research Project:</b> Developing a survey in collaboration with Northwestern University and partners to identify the impact of access to nature on health and wellbeing during COVID-19.</p>	

## AT EASE: ART AND NATURE FOR VETERANS



### Brushwood Center's At Ease Program Combines Art, Nature to Help Veterans Heal

### "After the class you can see their inner light is shining"

Excerpt from article by Sheryl Devore, Lake County Sun, Printed October 27, 2020

The changes are subtle, but U.S. Air Force veteran Michael Kardas has noticed. He teaches photography to veterans through the At Ease program offered by Brushwood Center in Riverwoods.

"At the beginning of the class, you could see they were a little shattered," Kardas said, referring to trauma some of the participants might have experienced while serving in the military.

"The reality is, right after the class you can see their inner light is shining a little bit. It's been very moving for me," said Kardas, who has found his own solace in nature and art. What makes the 6-year-old At Ease Program

unique is that it combines art with nature to promote healing, he said.

"Brushwood Center is focused on promoting nature and the arts as pathways to healing," she said. "So often we experience those separately. When you bring it all together, it's a holistic experience. We've heard that over and over from veterans who participate in this program."

Since the arrival of COVID-19, group outings for the program have been on hold, but Brushwood Center is creating virtual programs on photo editing, drawing, painting, writing and studying nature. Most recently, At Ease program participants studied photography and practiced their skills at the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie in Wilmington, Illinois, managed by the U.S. Forest Service.

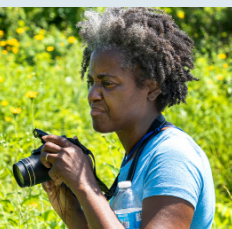
Kardas, who helped teach veterans for the Midewin prairie project, admitted that when he was in the Air Force, he had some issues as well. He described feeling as if he were a broken porcelain glass that couldn't be glued back together. Today, he is in the 12-step program and said photographing nature helps.

What has helped him the most is

Greg DuBois, a U.S. Navy veteran who also works with Brushwood's At Ease program and is an ardent birdwatcher, is creating a series of presentations on photo editing and ways to use bird-related apps for smart phones.

"As spring migration nears, we will do another photography webinar more focused on bird photography, and a birding-by-eye and ear program. And that will be followed in May with a bird photography field trip," DuBois said.

"By being involved in Brushwood's veteran's program, I can contribute not only to the environment but also to the men and women who have made significant contributions to our country that often are under appreciated by the general public," he said.



## IT'S A W.I.N: ART AND WELLNESS IN NATURE

### Supporting Youth and Families During COVID-19

"Some kids won't struggle with online school but other kids are more hands on, they love art and music class. You're taking away sports and that's how they learn. All these programs used to be offered by the school but now they won't have that outlet. If there was any way of providing anything like that it would be a great asset for children," said Maria Colunga, Parent Liaison, Round Lake Area Schools District.



Brushwood Center worked with Colunga, a long-time community advocate who leads the Round Lake Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee, to facilitate a free, virtual bilingual Bird Camp for 20 Round Lake students through a pilot program with Environment for the Americas and the USDA Forest Service International Programs. The camp connected participating Latinx students with ornithologists and bird guides in Central and South America.

Through partnerships like this with vital community organizations in Waukegan,



North Chicago, Round Lake, and Highwood, Brushwood Center provided nature and art programs and resources for more than 800 families through the It's A W.I.N. (Art and Wellness in Nature) initiative. From bilingual Nature Explorer Backpacks to virtual field trips and camps, each program was customized to support the cultural, educational, and behavioral health needs of families during the pandemic.

Building on these efforts, in October Brushwood Center launched a virtual



after-school program to address the growing mental health crisis for middle and high school students.

"We are creating a virtual community with our students as we explore big topics like self-care, community care,

"A lot of our families are having a hard time right now. Having the backpacks took a bit of financial burden off of their shoulders."

— Fernando Vargas, Nuestro Center Program Associate, Family Services of Lake County

and mental health through creative expression," shared Dani Abboud.

"By partnering with local teaching artists and community leaders, we aim to provide our students with the tools they need to navigate mental health crises, as well as help them recognize the power they already have to solve the complex issues facing our communities and environment," Abboud added.

These activities include poetry, visual arts, and digital artwork created through open-source coding platforms. Students will create a final project that explores their journey with stress, what gives them hope, and what they want to change as our future leaders.

Thanks to support from Illinois Humanities, Brushwood Center commissioned ethnographer Carla Aldana and illustrator Janet McDonnell to document stories of community resilience in Lake County. The above illustrations feature the story and perspective of Maria Colunga.

## DONORS

Abbott	Robert and Sylvia Carlson	Dean and Jenny Fischer	Martha Hinchman	Beau LaSalle	Susan Noyes	Mary Jean Samer	Sophia and Jonathan Twichell
Michelle Abboud	Carol's Cookies	Tessa Fischer	Mary P. Hines	John and Pat Leonard	Oberweiler Foundation	Ryan Santoro	U.S. Forest Service
Abbie	Marion and Gene Cartwright	John B. Foster	Beth Hope	Joseph Levi	Dennis O'Brien	Henrietta Saunders	International Program
Emily Ackerman	Laurie Casey	John and Joanne Fox	Horizon Therapeutics USA, Inc.	Michael Levin	Mary O'Donnell	Elizabeth Savage	Max Vandermark
Jerry Adelman	Rebecca Cawood and Scott Ratterree	Anne and Calvin Frost	Susan Farwell Houston	Karen J. Lewis	Anne O'Donnell	Anna Schneider	Vidya Venkataramanan
William and Mary Aiston	Keith Cerk	Don and Barbara Fuhrmann	Jim Huisel	Valerie and Michael Lewis	Lori Osborne and Mark LeBien	Jim Schrader	Ann Vertovec and David Audley
Bruce Alexander	Keith Cerk	Yumiko Fukui	Jonathan Huisel	Celine Lillie	Robin Outcalt	Susie Schreiber	Village of Riverwoods
Jamal and Salwa Alwattar	Jae Chang	Catherine Game and John Cawood	Steve Huisel	Leslie Linke	Ben Paley	Jackie Schultz	Brian Voden
Andy and Richard Amend	Doug Chapman	Joan and Russell Game	Hunter Family Foundation	Cheng Hwei Liu	Carmen Patlan	Gary Scott	Gary Voden
Polly Andrews	The Chicago Community Trust	Will Garza	Pat Husain	Cheryl Longhini	Carol Paulini	Connor Sexson	W.W. Grainger, Inc.
Michael Applebaum	Susan Clabby	Robin Gaston	Tom and Susan Hynes	Lumpkin Family Foundation and Friends	Jane and John Peterson	Adam Shaffer	Angela Walker
Rita Arnold	Cathy Coakley	Emilian Geczi and Laura Flores	David Iacuzzi	LUMW Foundation	Sally Peterson	Frances Shaw	Ryan Wallace
Christine Astarita	ComEd-An Exelon Company	Patrick Gemignani	Judith and Anthony Iacuzzi	Hadley Macdonald	Joanne Phelan	Gina Sheade	Kenneth Waller
Audubon Great Lakes	Britt Conway	John and Florence H. Gepson	Liz Iacuzzi	Rick Maechling and Carrie McNally	Diane Phillips	Patrick and Susan Sheehan	Kathleen Warren
Floyd and Bobbie Babbitt	Kathy Cosgrove	Robert and Elisabeth Geraghty	Regin Igloria	Ann Maine and Gordon Wood	Jess Piet	Parker Sheppard	WBEZ Chicago
Joy Bahena	Bob and Winnie Crawford	Laura Giampietro	Illinois Arts Council Agency	Robert Paul Malchow	Jaime Plotkin	Timothy C. Sherck	Jerry Weber
Faith P. Bailey	Michelle Cronin	James and Louise Glasser	Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs	Linda Martin	Jaymie Polet	Ed Sherman	Marti Weidman
Hallia Baker	Michelle and Steven Cucchiaro	Robert Glazauskis	Illinois Humanities Council	Joel Massel	Silvia and Ramiro Prudencio	David Shimberg	Sue and Weitzman
Carole and John Ball	Alice Curry	Andrew Kimmel and Suzanne Neumann	Isabelle Innocenti	Stephen Mathis	Garr Punnett	Julia and Bob Sierks	Janet Angel Welch
David and Sue Barkhausen	María Dabrowski	Glenn and Fran Konieczny	Cort Jacoby	Joe McCandless	Marilyn Quas	David Silver	Keenan White
Henry and Lele Barkhausen	William Dannenberg	Giving Fund	John and Kathleen Schreiber Foundation	John and Judy McCarter	Janet Raciti	Adele Simmons	Sandi and David Whitmore
Ann and Steve Bartram	John Davis	Robert Miller and Jill Goldberg	Elyse Johnson	Michael McGlocklin	Patricia Ramdin	Laurence Singer	Susan and Thom Widell
Mary and Gerry Batsford	Janie Dee	L. Golden	Jacalyn Ramdin Johnson	Anne McNerney	Ben and Ginevra Ranney	Carol Slingo	Linda Wiens
Ralph and Beverly Behrens	Dennis Delman	Gorter Family Foundation	Nagawa Kakumba	Stephanie McShane	Edward and Melanie Ranney	Pamela Sloan	Wild Birds Unlimited
Francis Beidler III and Prudence R. Beidler Foundation	Lisa and Jim Dempsey	Grainger Foundation	Julie Kalainov	Jean Meilinger and John Schneider	George and Vicky Ranney	Paul Sortal	Margo Windler
Robert and Carol Beiffuss	Melissa Denton	Danielle Green	Sophia Kandul	Javier Mendoza and Eleanor Ranney-Mendoza	Jean Ranney	Sharon Specht	Wally Winter
Tami Bellisario	JoAnn Desmond	Janice Greenwald	Carol and Arnold Kanter	Edward and Lin Michael	Hector Rasgado-Flores and Cecilia Pena-Rasgado	Robert Spletter	Julie and Chris Wood
George and Martha Bermingham	Diameter Music	The Guilded Aisle	Sarah Karnes	Blair Miller	Anne Grall and Jack Reichel	Gail Spreen	Lynda and John Woodson
Better Media	Dolores Diaz	Gurnee Rotary Club Charitable Foundation	Kawai Pianos	Burt Miller	Beth Reiman	Sarah Steadman	Judy and Nicholas Woznyj
Munisha Bhatia	Linda and Warren Dickey	Donna Gustafsson	Sheila and Joe Keitel	Million Dollar Round Table Foundation	Julia Rettig	Steans Family Foundation	Courtney Wright
Linda Bitsas	James and Sarah DiMatteo	Suzanne and Christopher Hagen	Kerri-Ellen Kelly	Jeffrey Mono	Hayes Richardson	Trisha Steele	Kyunghee Yang
Norman Bleier	Joann Dinneen	Tina and Terry Haight	Kay Kempf	Andrea Moore	Elizabeth Richter	Henrietta Sterl	Debra Yates
Linda Gawthrop Boden	Victor Dixon	Mark Hallett	Lynne Kennedy	Lois Morrison and Justin Daab	Robert Ritacca	Nancy and Adlai Stevenson	Patricia Youngberg
Marshall Bohlin and Rebecca Keays	Elizabeth Dlouhy	Lucy Hammerberg	Susie and Steve Kessler	Vince Mosca	Riverwoods Preservation Council	Marty Stone	Deborah and Michael Zimmerman
Bold Bison	Tom and Barbi Donnelley	Mary and Bruce Hamming	Heidi Kiesler	Bradley and Nancy Mueller	Robert R. McCormick Foundation	Rachel Stone	Margie Zivin
Jackie Land Borchew	Jim and Ana Doyle	Harmann Family - John and Laila Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation	Shawn Killackey	Gregory Mueller and Betty Strack	John Rogner	Tom and Susan Strachan	Jane and Les Sturgeon
Nick Bothfeld and Bobbie Brown	Richard and Sylvia Dresser	Harold M. and Adeline S. Morrison Family Foundation	Heeyoung Kim	Joan Mueller	Karen Dexter Rollison	A. Gail and Bill Sturm	Nick Sturm
Bruce and Beth Wiley Boyd	Caron Drolet and David Pickhardt	Brandon Hayes	Kumie Kim	Monica Munaretto	Barbara Rosborough	Margaret Sullivan	Joanne Sullivan
Laurie Breitkopf	Beth Drucker	Brooke Hecht	Edward King	Aiden Murphy	Rosborough Partners	Elizabeth Sterl	Margaret Sullivan
Mary Ann Bretzlauf	Glenna Eaves and Christopher Boebel	Rosemary Heilemann	Will Kleinrichert	Lisa Murphy	Barbara Rose	Nancy and Adlai Stevenson	Elsbeth Sweeney
Charles Brinley	Marina Elise	Rob and Amy Heinrich	Ellen Knable	Lisa Musgrave	Bernie and Judith E. Rosenstein	Robert Ritacca	Gavin Taves
Debbie Brown	Mallory Elizabeth	Ann and Thomas Heinz	Emma Koehler	Pamela Myers	Anne Rossiter	Riverwoods Preservation Council	Stephanie Taylor
Lorie and Cornelius P. Brown	Jody Elting	Carolyn Herber	Donald Kolb	National Philanthropic Trust and Friends	Rotary Club of North Chicago	Robert R. McCormick Foundation	Audrey Thomas
Meghan Bucaro	Mary Engstrom	Carrrianna Hess	Susan Krakora	Josy and Kenneth Nebenzahl	Jonathan Rothman	John Rogner	Brooke Thureau
Buchanan Family Foundation	Kellie Eppel	Rich and Carol Hillsberg	Andrew Kuby and Leslye Winslow	Joan Neil	Erin Rowell	Karen Dexter Rollison	Jeri Tinsley
Isabelle Cadrot	Family Piano Co.	Arica Hilton and Sven Asmus	Mara Kupferberg	Linda and Lydon Neumann	Lorra Rudman	Barbara Rosborough	Total Insurance Services, Inc.
Mary Cadrot	Matt Felvey		Donna La Pietra and Bill Kurtis	Linda and Lydon Neumann	Rebecca Ruff	Rosborough Partners	Margaret Treadway
Joe Calhoun	Nancy and David Fencil		Linda LaBuda	Cathy Nissen-Drechsler	Cathy Ryerson	Rosborough Partners	Kate Tully
Tess Callero	Fidelity Charitable Giving		Lake Forest - Lake Bluff Rotary Club Foundation	Francine Norling	Ellen Salk	Riverwoods Preservation Council	Martha Twaddle
Vicki Carlee	First Bank of Highland Park		Kitty and Rob Lansing	North Shore Gas	Charles and Louise Saltzman	Robert R. McCormick Foundation	

## FISCAL YEAR 2020

### UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

#### REVENUE

Individuals	\$112,753
Foundations	\$174,000
Corporations	\$54,100
Government	\$54,147
Organizations	\$19,250
In Kind Contributions	\$1,165
Program Revenue	\$82,633
Other Income and Expense	\$4,098
Total Revenues	\$502,146

#### EXPENSES

Program Services	\$392,606
Management & General	\$36,816
Fundraising	\$76,152
Total Expenses	\$505,574

Net Assets without Donor Restrictions	\$(3,428)
---------------------------------------	-----------

#### NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

Net Assets with Donor Restrictions	\$8,430
Increase in Net Assets	\$5,002

**Total Net Assets at Beginning of Year**      **\$321,760**

**Total Net Assets at End of Year**            **\$326,762**

#### Board of Directors:

A. Gail Sturm, Chair  
 Mike Levin, Treasurer  
 John Leonard, Secretary  
 Michelle Cronin  
 Emilian Geczi  
 Robert Heinrich  
 Jonathan Huisel  
 Brad Mueller  
 Jacalyn Ramdin-Johnson  
 Eleanor Ranney-Mendoza  
 Hector Rasgado-Flores  
 Lorra Rudman  
 Martha Twaddle

#### Honorary Board:

Barbara Whitney Carr  
 Barbi Donnelley  
 Thomas E. Donnelley, II  
 James G. Goshalk, Jr.  
 John M. Haight, III  
 Maxine Hunter  
 Jossy Nebenzahl  
 George A. Ranney, Jr.  
 Adele Simmons  
 Susan Spears

#### Advisory Board:

Gerald W. Adelman  
 Henry W. Barkhausen  
 Maria Colunga  
 Teresa Horton  
 Joseph Kayne  
 Heeyoung Kim  
 Bill Kurtis  
 Donna La Pietra  
 Barbara G. Mahany  
 Gregory M. Mueller  
 Judith M. Stockdale  
 Bill Sturm  
 Angela Walker  
 Barbara Waller

