



BERRIEN
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
For Good. For Ever.™

Berrien County Gives Back

Tiny Home Imagined By Big Hearts

The children at St. Augustine Episcopal Church have big hearts for the homeless and those needing affordable housing.

What started out as project to provide a tiny home for someone experiencing homelessness morphed into an affordable small home rental that is managed by Harbor Habitat For Humanity. **A For Good Grant from the Berrien Community Foundation** along with the help of many community organizations and resources came together to make this project possible.

“There’s a lot of pride we have for these kids,” said Bruce Banghart, a congregant at St. Augustine Episcopal Church. “It was the kids’ idea and it caught on in the church and then in the community. It’s really rewarding that we get to enjoy doing something and at the same time knowing it is helping someone who could use a little boost in the world.”

From the get-go, the kids helped by presenting the project to other churches, fundraising, choosing colors, and painting and tidying up. They recognized the great need in the community for affordable housing, and this tiny home was a solution for the group of half a dozen or so youths.

It took many hands to make the house build a success — from the church’s diocese to Lowes to the Thursday Crew who built the house. Architecture students at Andrews University also chipped

in by designing the home and building walls. The house, located on Linden Avenue in Benton Harbor, has a main floor of 600 square feet with a 400 square-foot loft.

In December, the house was completed and the keys handed off to Harbor Habitat for Humanity during a house blessing. The home is open to anyone meeting the income requirement and rent will be less than 30 percent of their monthly income. Renters do not need to be in the nonprofit’s homeownership program. The rental income received will go toward taxes, insurance, upkeep and to help the church build more tiny homes.

The project was imagined by children in the church’s Children’s Chapel and overseen by a three-person board; Banghart focused on construction while Cara Gillespie and Vicki Schroeder worked on the fundraising and business side of things.

The whole process was a cool experience for the kids, Banghart said. And plans are in the works to get the ball rolling on a second tiny home soon.



Upcoming Grant Application Due Dates

February 14 – Heart of Cook Grants

February 15 – Golden Acorn Classroom Grants

February 25 – For Good Grants

March 14 – Heart of Cook Earth Day Environmental Grant

March 15 – Frederick S. Upton Foundation Grants

April 13 – Frederick S. Upton Foundation Big Idea Grant

April 29 – Alamar Nonprofit Sustainability Grant

www.berriencommunity.org
269.983.3304
Winter 2022



Scholarship Season Is Here!

BCF is welcoming three new scholarships to its lineup this year! Each of them have unique targets on students they wish to help. From tech students in Brandywine (**Wilson Family Scholarship**), to Berrien County Youth Fair participants (**Patrick Freehling Memorial Scholarship**), to med-tech students (**Jean M. Heisner Medical Technician Scholarship**), these scholarships offer help to students pursuing their dreams.

Because of generous donors, BCF offers more than **70 scholarships** for traditional and nontraditional students each year.

Applications are due **March 4, 2022**. To find more information and download an application visit www.berriencommunity.org/scholar.



For Good For Ever

Parenting classes, building a laundromat in a community hub, promoting financial literacy and providing books for students in Harbor Country are just a few of the **31 projects** and programs receiving a **For Good Grant**.

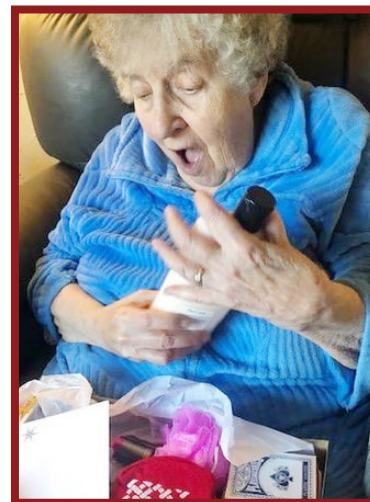
Berrien Community Foundation awarded more than **\$137,000 in For Good Grants** during the Fall 2021 grant cycle.

Each application was reviewed by groups of awesome volunteer community members. Visit www.berriencommunity.org/news to see the complete list of For Good Grant recipients.

Showing Seniors We Care

Many volunteers were hard at work letting senior citizens know they are being thought of this winter season.

More than **70 families** answered the call to help pack **Senior Care Kits**, which are full of basic care items and some goodies, too. Each family was tasked with assembling the kits and writing a note that, in turn, went out to some of our most vulnerable and homebound seniors. In total, they packed close to **800 Senior Care Kits!** Our friends at Meals on Wheels and Area Agency on Aging helped distribute the gifts. Funds from **BCF's Senior Empowerment Endowment** and partnerships with Honor Credit Union, Whirlpool Corporation and Spectrum Health Lakeland Foundation helped with funding to make this project possible.



And Teens, Too!

The teens in T.E.A.M. also got in on charitable acts this holiday season to bring cheer to some teens in the foster care system! T.E.A.M. members (the youth advisory committee for BCF) partnered with the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to gift a Christmas present to some of the more vulnerable teens in foster care throughout Berrien County.

