



A Journey of Leadership and Community Growth

Strategic Plan
2011-2013



Our Vision is...

*The Community Foundation envisions
a vibrant, healthy and economically viable region
that provides opportunities for all people
to reach their highest potential.*

Our Mission is...

*To improve life and livelihood in our region
The Community Foundation advances leadership on
community solutions and philanthropy that
connects people who care with causes that matter.*

The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties – Who We Are Today

It is 2011 and next year we will be celebrating the 60th anniversary of the founding of The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties. As we mark a milestone anniversary, we are a well-respected community institution, which has made significant contributions to our community over its tenure. In 2007, we marked the occasion of our 55th anniversary with an award winning history book outlining milestones of community and philanthropic support resulting from our founders' vision and foresight. At the same time we created The Foundation's first formal strategic plan, built upon our extensive history, setting a stage for expansion of The Foundation's leadership role in our community.

We developed our first Strategic Plan to guide our work from 2006-2010, and with the current strategic plan (2011-2013), we will now be intentional in our efforts to deepen our impact. We have a staff of 10, a Board of Trustees of 20, assets of \$95 million and an approximate operating budget of \$1 million. However, given the fluctuations in the financial markets in recent years, we are keenly aware that our mission is to make a difference in our community regardless of asset size, average grant size or operating budget. We know that the best measure is the difference we make.

A Strategic Plan

During the past 12 months, in depth discussions took place at a retreat facilitated by a representative from the Aspen Institute with Trustees and staff. Trustees and management held a day long retreat in July 2010 to establish the initial framework of the Plan and an ad hoc committee of Trustees and staff built upon this initial feedback and assisted in the Plan's completion by reviewing and synthesizing the multitude of comments, suggestions and revisions by all committees, Trustees and staff. The Plan was formally adopted at the February 2011 Board meeting.

In the process, The Foundation also developed its first values statement and refreshed its mission and vision statements. Consultation with Aspen's nationally-recognized Community Strategies Group ensured that this plan is based on best practices of the community foundation field.



What We Heard – Common Themes

Leadership, relationships and capacity were the core themes of the July 2010 planning retreat, out of which the Plan was developed. Each theme is a standalone component and yet their interrelationships create the critical elements needed to achieve the Plan's goals, vision and strategies.

Leadership

The Community Foundation has the capacity to play a greater role in the community. Organizationally, we have many internal resources and skills with which to develop community solutions. We will use our knowledge, networks, reputation and Trustee and staff strengths along with our traditional grantmaking

to contribute and leverage a variety of resources to drive change in our community. Our leadership impact, not asset size, is our organizational hallmark and legacy.

Relationships

Growing and maintaining a variety of relationships with national, regional and local stakeholders is of utmost importance in building and fostering a strong philanthropic network poised to support and sustain community well being.

Capacity

The Plan's success, and ultimately The Foundation's leadership role to support philanthropic and community growth, is tied to our organizational governance, finance, systems and staffing strength.

The Strategic Plan – A Theory of Change

The Plan defines how we will change and evolve to better help the community do the same. It builds on the success of our past work, holds us accountable to our mission and reflects the larger role the community requires us to play to create stronger Herkimer and Oneida counties. It outlines how The Community Foundation, working together with others, will achieve our stated vision and intended impact. The Plan is flexible enough to allow Trustees and staff to adopt responsive annual work-plans



to accomplish its goals, and specific enough to define what success looks like at the end of three years. Given the Plan's ambitious nature of not only building internal capacity but engaging in external efforts for community benefit, we gave ourselves permission to review the three year timeframe focusing on progress toward our vision and key strategies. If additional time would benefit our ultimate goals, we may extend the plan for up to two more years.

Our colleagues at The Center for Effective Philanthropy may have stated it best in saying, “This duality - the sense that there has been demonstrable progress and, at the same time, that there is a long, long way to go toward philanthropic effectiveness - is reflected in (our) new strategic plan...”

Key definitions: The following components outline our organizational philosophies and set a path for our journey

Mission

*To improve life and livelihood in our region
The Community Foundation advances leadership on
community solutions and philanthropy that
connects people who care with causes that matter.*

Values

The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties holds itself accountable to promoting and adhering to a core set of values in its work and operations:

- *We work to create a better future for all the people in our region.*
- *We are a catalyzing force and partner for positive change.*
- *We address the community's most critical or persistent challenges and opportunities.*
- *We consistently include, collaborate with and unite the diverse people, institutions and resources that have stakes in our region to address those challenges and opportunities.*
- *We foster informed leadership that generates excellence, innovation and entrepreneurship.*
- *We produce significant, widely shared and lasting results.*
- *We commit ourselves to inspire giving in our region.*
- *We provide exemplary stewardship of the resources we manage and leverage.*
- *We govern and operate The Foundation in ways that exhibit and foster trust, integrity, accountability and good practice.*

Vision

*The Community Foundation envisions
a vibrant, healthy and economically viable region
that provides opportunities for all people
to reach their highest potential.*

Key Indicators: The following strategies are designed to keep our work focused on our mission, vision and values and are supported with measurable results to hold us accountable.

Strategy 1: Leverage the full range of The Community Foundation's resources to produce desired, measurable results on critical community issues and opportunities.

S1: Measurable Results

A: Financial or action investment in the priority community issues by The Foundation, its partners, donors and other community stakeholders will increase every year.

B: By year end 2011 and every three years thereafter, The Community Foundation will identify its priority community issues.

C: By year end 2011, The Community Foundation has a capacity building program that is strengthening not- for-profits that work on the identified priority community issues.

D: By year end 2011, the Community Indicators project will be updated and will provide new metrics and comparatives to the community.

E: By year end 2012, a plan will be in place to sustain and regularly update the Community Indicators project for the next five years.

F: By year end 2013, The Community Foundation will disburse at least 50% of our annual grantmaking to address our identified priority community issues, including but not limited to, community leadership activities of The Foundation.

S1: Action Objectives:

- 1: Design strategies to address and communicate about selected priority community issues and evaluate progress
- 2: Maintain and strengthen The Foundation's community grantmaking program
- 3: Determine and implement "development strategies" that directly enhance The Foundation's and community's ability to address critical community issues
- 4: Assist in strengthening singular and groups of not-for-profits addressing critical community issues
- 5: Be an information resource (knowledge broker) on critical community issues for donors, not-for-profits, community leaders and other funders
- 6: Utilize and strengthen staff and Board's understanding and expertise to address critical community issues through leveraging the full range of foundation resources

Strategy 2: Increase and develop The Community Foundation's relationships and the community's awareness and understanding of our role.

S2: Measurable Results:

- A: The Community Foundation will have stronger relationships with our current business partners, and will increase the number of relationships annually.
- B: Every year, The Community Foundation's relationship with the community will expand beyond a responsive grantmaker to a collaborative leader on critical community issues.
- C: Starting in 2011, The Community Foundation's marketing materials and messages will consistently reflect our branding and leadership roles.
- D: By year end 2011, The Community Foundation will have determined its role and level of participation in the Leadership Alliance.
- E: By year end 2012, The Foundation's identified target markets have a better understanding of The Community Foundation's role, services and impact.

S2: Action Objectives:

- 1: Determine The Foundation's role in current collaborative relationships and seek to establish new partnership opportunities aligned with our organizational goals
- 2: Increase The Foundation's recognition by its target stakeholders as a philanthropic and collaborative leader

Strategy 3: Build The Community Foundation's financial assets available to catalyze community betterment.

S3: Measurable Results:

A: By the end of 2013, The Community Foundation will have total financial assets of \$109 million. The increase will be the result of both asset growth and new contributed dollars with an emphasis on new discretionary and selected field-of-interest monies.

S3: Action Objectives:

- 1: Increase the amount of contributions annually
- 2: Research and develop specific strategies to increase discretionary and field-of-interest assets
- 3: Determine best practices for maximizing The Foundation's investment return in various economic climates

Strategy 4: Ensure and align management, governance and infrastructure capacity to achieve our strategic goals.

S4: Measurable Results:

A: Every year, The Community Foundation reviews and assigns leadership and accountability for specific strategies and associated actions in this plan to specific Board committees.

B: By July 2011, The Community Foundation will have a capacity building plan that details the governance, finance, systems, staffing and other resources needed to successfully implement the three-year strategic plan.

C: By year end 2011, The Community Foundation will have adopted and initiated a business model that supports the sustainability of The Community Foundation in pursuit of this strategic plan.

D: By year end 2012, The Community Foundation will have updated and aligned its technology and communication systems to successfully implement the strategic plan.

E: By year end 2013, The Community Foundation will be in office space that aligns with our strategic goals.

S4: Action Objectives:

- 1: Review current capacities and design resource allocation plans to implement and achieve our four strategies and all measurable results
- 2: Design and implement an integrated technology plan for The Foundation that supports organizational priorities
- 3: Maintain certification in national standards for community foundations
- 4: Determine facility needs for 2014 and beyond that incorporates and aligns with our key strategic priorities and stakeholder needs
- 5: Develop and implement Trustee and volunteer educational initiatives
- 6: Create a Board succession plan based on criteria requirements and anticipated turnover
- 7: Assign responsibilities to ensure management, staff, Board and standing committee work plans align with the Plan and measure progress periodically

The Plan Influence

The Trustees and staff will use the Plan to focus the development of new annual policies and work-plans for the next three years to achieve specific measures of success. In turn, these measurable results in the plan are the rationale for the development of action objectives and activities that will be needed to hit those targets. It is these action objectives, management benchmarks and tactics that our annual business plan is built on.

Committee and staff reports will be crafted to review progress toward achieving strategies and measurable results to determine if our action objectives and tactics are producing the results we seek. By working with flexible, “living” action objectives and focusing on results, rather than activities, we will know when to modify our tactics in pursuit of our main strategies.

Additionally, since success is framed within the context of the strategies and vision, we will see indications of progress on the conditions that need to change to meet our overall plan vision:

*The Community Foundation envisions
a vibrant, healthy and economically viable region
that provides opportunities for all people
to reach their highest potential.*

Our Mission
What we do

To improve life and livelihood in our region The Community Foundation advances leadership on community solutions and philanthropy that connects people who care with causes that matter.

Our Values
How we act

- Create a better future for all
- Be a catalyzing force and partner
- Address the community's most critical or persistent challenges and opportunities
- Collaborate
- Practice informed leadership
- Produce significant, widely shared and lasting results
- Inspire giving in our region
- Act as stewards
- Foster trust, integrity and accountability

Our Vision
The condition we wish to achieve with this plan

The Community Foundation envisions a vibrant, healthy and economically viable region that provides opportunities for all people to reach their highest potential.

Strategies
Conditions that must be achieved

- Leverage the full range of The Community Foundation's resources to produce desired, measurable results on critical community issues and opportunities.
- Increase and develop The Community Foundation's relationships and the community's awareness and understanding of our role.
- Build The Community Foundation's financial assets to catalyze community betterment.
- Ensure and align management, governance and infrastructure capacity to achieve our goals.

Measurable Results
How we will know if we're successful

Document results, not activities, to fuel continual learning.



**Strategic Plan
2011-2013**