

HARNESSING THE ENERGY OF MICHIGAN COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

Stories of Community Leadership, Resident Engagement and Clean Energy Results



Michigan, like the rest of the United States, is experiencing a major energy transition. Previous sources of energy like coal are being replaced with natural gas and renewable energy sources. At the same time, efforts to increase energy efficiency are on the rise.

Working in partnership with experts in the clean energy field, the **Council of Michigan Foundations** offered opportunities for community foundations to learn more about clean energy and explore what taking a leadership role on this issue could look like in their communities.

To strengthen the leadership capacity of Michigan community foundations interested in supporting clean energy initiatives, the **Charles Stewart Mott Foundation** offered a one-time grant opportunity known as **Community Foundations for Clean Energy** demonstration projects. These grants supported projects aimed at catalyzing, designing and conducting community activities to produce clean energy more effectively and efficiently and in ways that also create jobs, increase family economic security, grow business and bolster civic engagement.

Four communities (three individual community foundations and one regional team comprised of three community foundations) were awarded Community Foundations for Clean Energy grants.

This publication offers an introduction to their demonstration projects and provides a glimpse of their early results. Moreover, their stories demonstrate the breadth of opportunities community foundations have to play a leadership role in the shift to clean energy in our state.



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES TO CLEAN ENERGY RESOURCES

Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation

Charlevoix County Community Foundation

Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES TO CLEAN ENERGY RESOURCES

*Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation
Charlevoix County Community Foundation
Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation*



BACKGROUND

The three community foundations involved in this collaborative had never before worked together on such a wide-ranging project, and soon realized there was opportunity for a larger, regional conversation about clean energy transition.

During their discovery phase, the team connected with partners, stakeholders and regional experts to learn more about the existing state of energy in their communities. They found that meaningful work was underway in four of their local municipalities—Traverse City, the city of Charlevoix, the city of Harbor Springs and the city of Petoskey. Through a Community Foundations for Clean Energy grant, the team sought to strengthen regional partnerships and leverage synergies, while also connecting local municipalities to resources and industry experts.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OUTCOMES

Focused on the goal of building connections, the team engaged SEEDS, the Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities and the Michigan Environmental Council. Each of these

organizations provided services specific to their area of expertise, resulting in:

- Expanded community outreach and awareness.
- Increased knowledge and capabilities of the local municipalities around sustainable energy.
- Strengthened relationships between the community foundations, their partners and stakeholders.

“During the grant period, the City of Petoskey was contacted by the local Leadership Little Traverse class to inquire about a renewable energy project. The city’s initial response to the class members was, ‘Have you talked with the community foundation? They are leading a grant effort on this issue.’ Quite frankly, that referral is something that would not have happened prior to the clean energy initiative.”

Sarah Ford, Community and Donor Engagement Officer, Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES TO CLEAN ENERGY RESOURCES

Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation

Charlevoix County Community Foundation

Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation



COMMUNITY AND RESIDENT OUTCOMES

Much of the sustainable energy work happening throughout the region was under the radar. The team helped to bring this work to the attention of the public while also increasing awareness of sustainable energy through workshops and community meetings.

Throughout the coverage area of the three community foundations, conversations about renewable energy continue to be at the forefront, creating the collective support to make the transition to clean energy in communities. Several cities have expanded their dialogue beyond using renewable energy to discuss developing locally generated renewable energy, as well.

CLEAN ENERGY OUTCOMES

Prior to the team's efforts, none of the participating municipalities had benchmarked their facilities to track or monitor facility energy use.

Through the grant project, five municipal buildings in Charlevoix and Petoskey had the

American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) walk-through audits conducted. (Traverse City facilities received audits outside of this grant project). ASHRAE creates standards and best practices for energy survey and analysis that leads to actionable audit reports. Audits of facilities in Petoskey and Charlevoix identified a range of energy efficiency opportunities with favorable payback periods and savings-to-investment ratios.

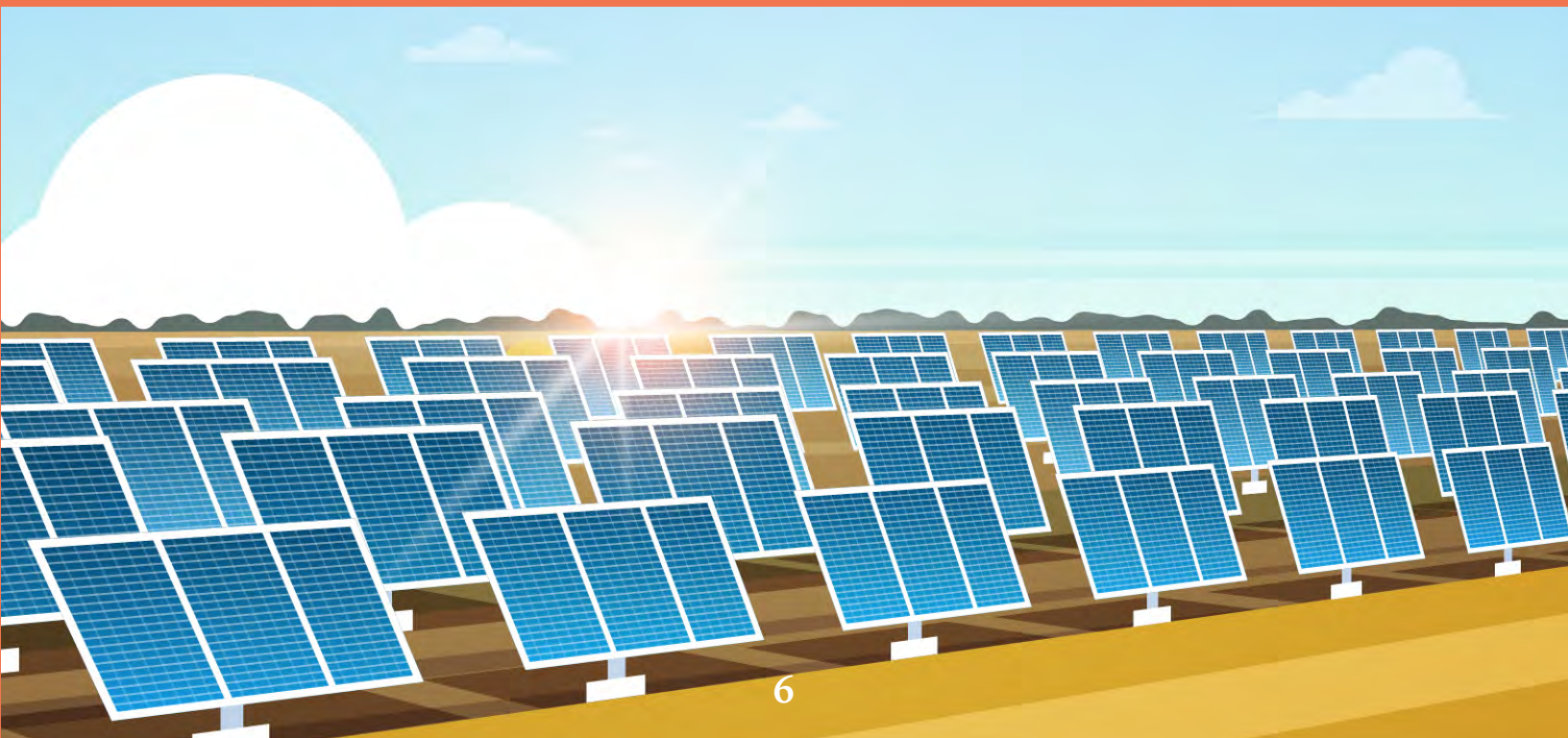
Additionally, 14 municipal facilities have benchmarked their energy use through the ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager. Charlevoix and Petoskey have established energy management goals, and Petoskey has made progress in integrating energy management goals into its sustainability plan.

Overall, the local municipalities made significant progress toward their clean energy goals, with Traverse City and Petoskey establishing 100% community-wide renewable energy goals, complete with aggressive timelines. Traverse City Light and Power has procured 5.4 megawatts of solar energy, achieving its initial goal of 100% of city facilities powered by renewable energy in advance of its 2020 target.



DEMONSTRATING SOLAR POWER IN THE UPPER PENINSULA

Community Foundation of Marquette County



DEMONSTRATING SOLAR POWER IN THE UPPER PENINSULA

Community Foundation of Marquette County



BACKGROUND

In 2012, the Community Foundation of Marquette County (CFMC) partnered with the Eagle Mine and the Superior Watershed Partnership to form the Community Environmental Monitoring Program. This was CFMC's first attempt at a formal community leadership effort. CFMC played a neutral entity role to legitimize the third-party, mine-funded environmental monitoring.

With the success of that work in hand, CFMC saw the opportunity to continue their leadership role and engage the community around clean energy through a Community Foundations for Clean Energy grant. Working in partnership with the Superior Watershed Partnership and Michigan Energy Options, the team created energy educational materials, developed three demonstration sites that illustrate energy efficiency and renewable energy practices, and convened an energy awareness community event.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OUTCOMES

The team reports that their clean energy-related efforts have led to an expectation on the part of local communities and leaders that CFMC is a

key participant in conversations around energy and other topics of importance to the community and its residents. This proverbial place at the table had not been widely available to CFMC before their work on clean energy.

Through the planning and implementation process, the team has created the momentum necessary for the Upper Peninsula, and Marquette County specifically, to experience a major energy transition.

COMMUNITY AND RESIDENT OUTCOMES

Community engagement activities to increase awareness of the benefits of energy efficiency culminated in a Clean Energy Summit attended by over 75 business and nonprofit leaders. These leaders agreed to participate in collaborative efforts designed to strengthen energy efficiency and increase opportunities for alternative energy sources. During the Clean Energy Summit, participants shared their knowledge and brainstormed potential energy solutions far beyond the expectations of the CFMC partners. Anecdotally, the partnership has noticed an increase in conversations about the possibilities of alternative energy since the beginning of the clean energy initiative.

DEMONSTRATING SOLAR POWER IN THE UPPER PENINSULA

Community Foundation of Marquette County



CLEAN ENERGY OUTCOMES

A vital element of CFMC’s project was to demonstrate the potential for solar energy in the Upper Peninsula. To this end, the CFMC-led partnership identified two households and installed a solar array on an older residential building recently purchased by a young family, and signed up another household to buy solar energy from the solar farm operated by the Marquette Board of Light and Power. To demonstrate the potential cost savings and efficiencies of renewable energy for the business community, the partnership also installed solar panels on the CFMC office building. Data will be collected and reported over time to analyze the cost savings and other potential benefits of investing in solar energy in the Upper Peninsula.

“Before our initiative, the prospect of installing solar on the rooftop of a home or business was thought of as something that only an extreme environmentalist would do. Our project has demonstrated that it can be done and in a year from now, we will have the data to prove it is economically advantageous.”

Gail Anthony, CEO, Community Foundation of Marquette County



EMPOWERING YOUTH IN THE FUTURE OF CLEAN ENERGY

M&M Area Community Foundation



EMPOWERING YOUTH IN THE FUTURE OF CLEAN ENERGY

M&M Area Community Foundation



BACKGROUND

M&M Area Community Foundation (MMACF) assembled a high-performing Clean Energy Team consisting of board members, staff, current and potential fundholders, and volunteers from their communities. During the discovery phase of their initiative, the team focused on work already being done around clean, renewable energy and identified potential gaps that would inform their initiative. As a result, a three-pronged approach was created:

- Increase the overall energy understanding within each community.
- Partner with local school districts to embed energy proficiency in the existing curriculum.
- Strengthen and expand MMACF's community engagement.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OUTCOMES

The local narrative of the work of MMACF has shifted and broadened beyond their well-known role as a grant and scholarship provider. The Community Foundations for Clean Energy demonstration project has raised the level of awareness of MMACF and has increased community trust in its leadership abilities and overall organizational credibility.

MMACF's board has shifted its collective mindset to take calculated risks and assume a leadership role around topics of importance to the communities it serves. The initiative has also helped to build the leadership capabilities of the organization's individual board and staff members.

“The most important thing we learned was that MMACF has the capacity to take on a leadership role in changing community attitudes and behavior. MMACF established itself as a resource for good throughout the two counties it serves. We are now seen by at least a segment of the region as a thought leader and a resource that is making a lasting impact for the future.”

North Shetter, member of the MMACF Clean Energy Team

EMPOWERING YOUTH IN THE FUTURE OF CLEAN ENERGY

M&M Area Community Foundation



COMMUNITY AND RESIDENT OUTCOMES

MMACF's Clean Energy Team traveled the breadth of its service area to deliver information on clean and sustainable energy. Information booths, presentations, a dedicated webpage, social media posts, ample press coverage, newsletters and seminars were created and/or hosted by the team.

Through their work with local school districts, the team supported 10 schools in completing energy audits and funded LED replacement projects. MMACF plans to carry this project forward primarily by facilitating connections between the clean energy resources they have discovered through their work and potential beneficiaries.

The most significant outcome of the team's work is the new dynamic that has been created between MMACF and the participating school districts. The team's original idea was to introduce new curriculum into school districts to help address the gap between promoting and installing renewable energy sources and producing the next generation of renewable energy-proficient students. The team soon learned that teachers did not have the time to teach incremental material and still achieve state curriculum mandates. Working with the K-12 Environmental

Education Program at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, workshops were developed that trained teachers to incorporate energy information into the existing curriculum. Teachers from 17 schools across 12 districts received this education and subsequent resource packages.

CLEAN ENERGY OUTCOMES

While it is difficult to quantify specific clean energy outcomes derived from this initiative, it is expected that changes to the school curriculum and increased community awareness will positively shift attitudes and behaviors related to energy, its use and sustainability.

The initiative has quantified some specific clean energy outcomes as a result of its Cool Choices Challenge. The Clean Energy Team invited classrooms to participate in a friendly competition. Each class was challenged to implement some form of energy efficiency measures in their classrooms and at home, then document the actions and outcomes to earn points. The five-week competition resulted in reductions in electricity, heat, water and gasoline use, as well as waste and carbon dioxide. MMACF believes that the curriculum changes, student involvement in the challenge, the widespread media and public communications have accomplished the goal of increasing overall energy conservation consciousness in each community.



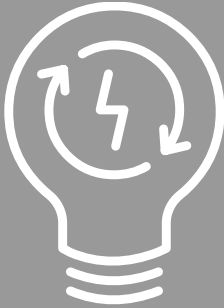
BUILDING NONPROFIT CAPACITY THROUGH ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Keweenaw Community Foundation



BUILDING NONPROFIT CAPACITY THROUGH ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Keweenaw Community Foundation



BACKGROUND

Growing awareness among business and community leaders of the unsustainability of fossil fuel-dependent energy sources to power the Upper Peninsula led leaders to form the Keweenaw Renewable Energy Coalition in 2014. Keweenaw Community Foundation (KCF) has been a partner in this work.

The coalition’s vision of solving the power issue has focused on replacing out of state, fossil fuel-based electric infrastructure with a renewable energy smart grid based on durable local resources: wind, solar and biomass assets. The coalition has transformed into the Houghton Energy Efficiency Team (HEET). It includes KCF and New Power Tour, Inc.—whose mission is to increase the use of renewable, water and energy-efficient technologies in the Upper Peninsula.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OUTCOMES

KCF is unique among grantees in that it had already taken on a community leadership role in the area of renewable energy and energy efficiency. The Community Foundations for Clean Energy grant opportunity has allowed KCF to expand its research and its reach and

enable its partners to come closer to realizing energy projects that, in the past, had seemed unlikely.

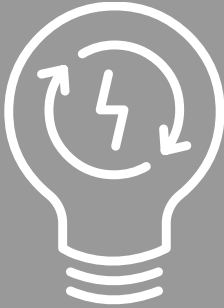
One such project is the ongoing development of an economic corridor between the Keweenaw and Finland, particularly related to woody biomass and its potential use as a renewable energy source, and as a plastic replacement product. KCF and New Power Tour, Inc. were instrumental in convening a Business & Technology Energy Conference, featuring Finnish representatives.

This event, in collaboration with the Michigan Forest Biomaterials Institute, brought together business and energy leaders from the Upper Peninsula and Finland. The event caught the attention of the Michigan Energy Office, who reached out to the Keweenaw community and offered a four-part energy and economic development series for community members.



BUILDING NONPROFIT CAPACITY THROUGH ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Keweenaw Community Foundation



COMMUNITY AND RESIDENT OUTCOMES

In addition to their work on renewable energy possibilities, energy efficiency is also a strong component of the KCF project. Seventeen single-family homes and several nonprofit organizations received an energy efficiency audit and retrofit services from HEET. The team also partnered with Michigan Technological University’s Keweenaw Research Facility to collect baseline and annual data on the energy and cost savings realized by the homeowners and nonprofits. This data will be shared and used in future community outreach and awareness activities.

CLEAN ENERGY OUTCOMES

One of the most surprising outcomes from this work is how willing the utility companies have been to engage with and participate in the collaborative space created by KCF and its community partners. The Keweenaw business community continues to invest time and resources into the pursuit of energy efficiency and reduced energy usage and costs. The development of an economic and energy

corridor between Keweenaw and Finland provides excellent opportunities for future innovation and achieving the original goals established by the Keweenaw Renewable Energy Coalition.

“Finland leads the world in most efficiently using forest resources to generate both electricity and heat. Their R&D has been developing since the mid-1970s, and now, not only do they have the most efficient equipment for both harvesting and combustion, but they also have the supply chain and social pieces put together through forest landownership cooperatives. We couldn’t be more pleased about bringing these experts to Houghton.”

Melissa Davis, Managing Director of New Power Tour, Inc.



COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS FOR CLEAN ENERGY

*A CMF initiative with initial support from the
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation*

To continue the conversation, please contact:

Andrea Judd-Shurmur

Director of Learning Services

Council of Michigan Foundations

ajudd@michiganfoundations.org

313.960.4192



Growing the impact of Michigan philanthropy

