

# STAYING THE COURSE

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21



» 1889 «  
FOUNDATION

*The mission of the  
1889 Foundation is to  
support innovative  
programs and initiatives  
that improve and transform  
the overall health and  
wellness of Cambria and  
Somerset Counties.*

Please visit our website at [www.1889foundation.org](http://www.1889foundation.org) to review our grants process and grants guidelines to determine eligibility for funding.

*Somerset County*





Cambria County

Dear friends and supporters,

Once again 1889 Foundation has experienced a transformative year, in a time of tremendous challenge for our community. The ongoing COVID crisis has amplified needs across the entire region, such as mental health and food security. Addressing the social determinants of health will continue to be a major focus of 1889 Foundation's initiatives going forward.

The foundation has also experienced a change in leadership, as Scott Becker has succeeded James Cascio as board chair. We are grateful for Jim's leadership and dedication, especially leading the foundation through a very important strategic planning process. We look forward to Jim's continued involvement as a member of the board and are thankful to Scott for stepping forward to fill this vital role.

The funding guidelines established in our last fiscal year have enabled us to stay the course by remaining focused on our mission, and helping us to support strategic initiatives that will produce large-scale improvements in our community's health. In this report, you'll read about many of the activities of the past fiscal year, divided into broad categories – wellness and social determinants of health; early childhood and youth development; training and education; and mental health.

If you're reading this, you're someone who cares about our community and 1889 Foundation's work to improve health and well-being. Thank you for helping us stay the course, and we look forward to continued progress in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Mann  
President



## 1889 Foundation collaborates on COVID-19 emergency response

*Focusing on food, shelter and personal safety*

Since 2015, 1889 Foundation has partnered with the United Way of the Laurel Highlands (UWLH) to make regional investments in health and well-being, addressing needs identified through the United Way Community Impact Process. The partnership has delivered more than \$3 million back into Cambria and Somerset Counties.

Together with the UWLH, 1889 helped distribute more than \$315,000 since March 2020 to organizations working on COVID relief. The funding provided food for shelters and food pantries, helped schools get food out to students, additional staff

to handle patient influx, shelter, and PPE equipment so that organizations could continue offering services safely.

The COVID crisis has amplified needs across the region, while creating significant operational challenges for health and human service organizations. Food security and mental health services, especially to the most vulnerable, have emerged as priority needs in our community during the pandemic and beyond. 1889 Foundation will continue to address these needs through a variety of initiatives.


# Using the arts to promote health and wellness

*1889 Foundation continues to support a variety of local arts and cultural initiatives that relate to our mission of supporting a healthy community.*

**Creative Health Impact Grants (CHIG):** In partnership with the Pennsylvania Rural Arts Alliance, the 1889 Foundation Creative Health Impact Grant (CHIG) awards are focused on fostering connections between the arts and health and wellness of residents in Cambria and Somerset Counties. Funding of up to \$50,000 annually will support local non-profit organizations which have health and wellness initiatives with an artistic component. Funded projects in 2020-21 included such innovative projects as music enrichment for individuals with dementia, mindfulness programs for children and musical instruction for veterans with PTSD.

**Johnstown Symphony Orchestra:** The JSO has found ways to engage the community, such as holding concerts in non-traditional spaces, and virtual programming during the pandemic. A \$50,000 grant will enable the JSO to present intimate concerts in underserved communities, provide access to music to aging populations who cannot attend concerts in a traditional setting, and provide music training to children and adults.

**Johnstown Area Heritage Association (JAHA):** A \$250,000 grant in support of the Johnstown Flood Museum Revitalization Project helped JAHA unlock additional funding for the museum, which is one of Johnstown's flagship attractions. The grant supports two exhibitions: "Voices of the Survivors," an interactive exhibition based on firsthand survivor accounts of the 1889 flood, and "The Flood in 3-D," which will allow visitors to take a virtual tour of the devastation.



*Detail from a mosaic bench at Laurel View Village, created through a CHIG grant.*



## WELLNESS, SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

### Community Care HUB launched

In September 2020, the 1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health (CPH) officially launched the Community Care HUB to improve the outcomes of vulnerable populations in Cambria and Somerset Counties.

The HUB is an organized, outcome focused, network of Care Coordination Agencies (CCAs) who hire and train community health workers (CHWs) to reach out to those at greatest risk. The HUB helps to coordinate community resources to reduce the medical, behavioral and social barriers to care. The HUB's initial focus is on improving the outcomes for pregnant women and their families in Cambria and Somerset County who qualify for medical assistance, or have been diagnosed with gestational diabetes.

From September 2020 through June 2021, the center has closed 475 pathways for HUB participants, meaning they were guided through a barrier to their overall health, such as housing, transportation, social service referral, or food security. There have also been 222 social service pathway referrals made, helping connect participants with needed services.

*"The HUB helps to coordinate community resources to reduce the medical, behavioral and social barriers to care."*

The CPH has also taken an active role in combating the COVID-19 pandemic by participating in the Cambria-Somerset Covid Task Force, helping recruit contact tracers, and more.

### 1889 secures \$100,000 Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge grant

1889 Foundation received a Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge grant from the Aetna Foundation, together with the American Public Health Association (APHA) and the National Association of Counties (NACo). The grant was awarded to 20 communities that are changing the way they work together across sectors to reduce disparities in chronic disease outcomes, health, and social determinants of health.

Partners on the grant include the 1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health; United Way of the Laurel Highlands; Community Action Partnership; Beginnings, Inc.; Alleghenies United Cerebral Palsy; and Greater Johnstown School District and Communities in Schools.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

### Communities in Schools program makes an impact

*1889 Foundation is currently working in cooperation with CPH's Community Care HUB and the Greater Johnstown School District (GJSD) through a pilot program that is connecting Community Health Workers (CHWs) to students in grades K-4 identified by the GJSD as having higher health, behavioral and social service needs.*

Students identified by school personnel as having higher health risk indicators, such as high BMI, food insecurity, multiple social determinants of health (SDOH) needs are referred to the HUB to connect with a CHW. The CHW works with the student and his/her family in their homes to address the student's needs and improve the overall health of the entire family.

The statistics are impressive:

- 1,162 parents were served in the 2020-21 school year
- 93% of students with a behavioral goal met or made progress toward that goal
- 75% of students with an academic goal met or made progress toward that goal
- GJSD CIS Navigators visited hundreds of homes to check on students during the pandemic, provide food/clothes/resources, and assist with attendance tracking

Sen. Wayne Langerholc assisted in obtaining a \$100,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education to expand this same model to other Cambria County elementary schools and grow the number of students and families served. Funding is used for incentives for students such as gym memberships, nutritional and tutoring programs, as well as resources and needs that are identified through the CHW's SDOH screening tool, i.e., food security, transportation, mental/behavioral health, dental need and more.

"The Community Care HUB makes a tremendous and meaningful impact on our residents. Collaboration across the public and private sectors has benefited our region, and continued expansion of this program will reach even more students and families. In turn, these families will receive the resources they need to maximize their full potential and success," Sen. Langerholc says.



## **\$516,000 Secured for YMCA through 1889 grant and collaborative efforts of Rep. Jim Rigby**

Physical activity is a key part of maintaining and improving health, and the Johnstown YMCA offers accessible, affordable programs that encourage just that. A \$230,000 grant from 1889 Foundation will fund several YMCA initiatives that will help improve the mental and physical health of people in our region. Rep. Jim Rigby worked to obtain an additional \$286,000 grant obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services and the PA Department of Education. "We don't become unhealthy overnight, so we need time to build systems, programs and connections that will start creating a healthier community – both physically and mentally healthier. Here at the Y, we're excited for the future again," YMCA CEO Shawn Sebring says.

*"The Health and Wellness Priority Goal is one of nine goals outlined in the VT25 Strategy."*

## **1889 participates with Vision Together 2025**

1889 Foundation and the 1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health are leading the Health and Wellness Priority Goal Work Group as part of the Vision Together 2025 (VT25) Strategy. The VT25 Strategy is a united approach for economic development, creating a culture of health, and an enhanced quality of life for the greater Johnstown area, prepared with hands-on involvement from a wide range of community sectors.

The Health and Wellness Priority Goal is one of nine goals outlined in the VT25 Strategy. Focus areas of the goal are physical health, substance use prevention/treatment/recovery, mental/behavioral health, and social determinants of health.

## **Community Action Plan developed together with Vision Together 2025**

As part of Johnstown's Vision Together 2025 initiative, the 1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health and several other community partners have been working on a Local Foods, Local Places Community Action Plan. This opportunity was made possible through the Local Foods, Local Places Technical Assistance program facilitated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and project partners.

The plan, which was kicked off at an Oct. 1-2 workshop, focuses on improving coordination between community partners to advance food system initiatives; increasing access to local foods that promote improved health outcomes; introducing place-making best practices to enhance Johnstown as a place to live, work, and visit; and helping connect food entrepreneurs to resources to establish and grow their local businesses.



## 1889 funds new ice skates

Cambria and Somerset Counties have lacked opportunities for public ice skating. Through a \$25,000 grant from 1889 Foundation, the 1st Summit Arena at the Cambria County War Memorial (Johnstown) and the North Central Recreation Center (Ebensburg) were able to purchase new rental skates so that kids and adults can enjoy this popular, healthy form of exercise.

“Skating provides a great year-round activity to keep active and fit,” says Jean Desrochers of the 1st Summit Arena. “The stability, control and strength involved in ice skating, either competitively or recreationally, are key elements in the activity that make it a fun and healthy activity for all ages and abilities.”

Last year more than 10,000 people participated in 65 new public skating sessions made possible by the new skates. Desrochers expects these events will be held annually, allowing even more people access to this healthy form of exercise.



## 1889 supports running programs for kids

1889 Foundation supported the Healthy Kids Running Series, a 5-week program held in spring and fall for kids pre-K through 8th grade. The program gives kids the chance to build healthy exercise habits that can last a lifetime. “For our spring 2021 series, we had an amazing 307 runners – the Johnstown program ranked top 15 in the world,” says Misty Stephens, who coordinates the program locally.

1889 also provided free registration for all participants 17 and under (86 runners, a full 16% of all who participated) in the Path of the Flood Historic Races, a 5K, 8-miler, and 12-miler and presented annually by the Johnstown Area Heritage Association and Cambria County Conservation & Recreation Authority.

## 1889 supports Cambria County Backpack Program

The Cambria County Backpack Program provides food to kids at risk of going hungry on the weekends when they have no access to school-based meals. 1889 Foundation supported this program with a grant of \$25,000, which has provided 25,548 meals to 249 participants in 2020-2021 so far.

This year, the CCBP is working to improve the nutritional value of the foods provided, while providing education about healthy recipes and shopping on a budget. The long-term goal is to continue developing and strengthening the CCBP program, and position it as a tool to connect families with other healthy foods, as well as wellness resources in the community.



# TRAINING & EDUCATION

*The first recipient of the Betty Rimesburg May scholarship speaks at graduation, under a photo of the scholarship's namesake.*

## 1889 supports the next generation of medical professionals

1889 Foundation has provided scholarships and continuing education for aspiring and current healthcare professionals for almost three decades. Beginning as Conemaugh Health Foundation in 1993 and continuing to present day 28 years later as 1889 Foundation, medical education has always been a priority because it is such a necessity. This year was no exception as 1889 Foundation provided over \$106,700 in funding for various medical education programs.

Training and medical education programs certainly felt the affects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Particularly for medical education programs which very often includes hands-on training and direct contact with people. Many classes were taught through virtual or hybrid processes which eventually evolved into social-distanced learning. And along the way these students persevered and worked harder than ever to continue their education despite the limitations created by the pandemic.

Through the obstacles, nursing programs such as Conemaugh's School of Nursing succeeded in graduating their students with many receiving scholarships provided by 1889 Foundation. Funding was also provided for students and healthcare professionals in the allied health programs, emergency medical responders, nurse practitioners, interns, residents, educators, and law enforcement just to name a few.

We are very honored to be able to continue to support these healthcare students and professionals and we thank our generous donors who help to make that possible.



## A tale of two sisters: the Garnet Romesburg Glenn Nursing Scholarship and Betty Romesburg May Nursing Scholarship established

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The families of Garnet Romesburg Glenn and Betty Romesburg May, sisters who trained at Conemaugh Valley Memorial Nursing School in the 1930s and 40s, have established new scholarships at 1889 Foundation. Garnet, the eldest of the two, began her career in the operating room at Somerset Hospital before moving to the private practice of Dr. Marlin Cargill. She later worked with Dr. Pete Musser until her retirement in her late 70s. Having served patients for over 50 years for two local physicians, she was known to practically everyone in and around Somerset.

Betty, who was six years younger than Garnet, joined the US Army Nurse Corps not long after her graduation from nursing school. She served as an operating room nurse at an Army general hospital in the Panama Canal Zone. After the war, she went to work in the operating room of the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor, and then in the University of Chicago hospital. Although Betty stopped working as a nurse after the birth of her son, she kept her nursing license current into her 90s.

Throughout these sisters' long lives, they continued to value their Conemaugh education, and their Somerset County roots. The Garnet Romesburg Glenn Scholarship and the Betty Romesburg May Scholarship will cover the tuition for two outstanding final year nursing students at the Conemaugh School of Nursing, beginning with the 2021-22 academic year. 1889 Foundation is grateful for this generous gift!



Garnet (left) and Betty, ca. 1944.

# 1889 Foundation helps Stop the Bleed

*About 60 percent of trauma deaths occur in 20 percent of America – the most rural parts of the country, according to Tom Causer, Trauma Coordinator for Conemaugh Health System/Duke Lifepoint. That’s because severe bleeding can kill in less than five minutes, and in rural areas it takes more time for medical personnel to arrive to aid a critically-injured person.*

Stop the Bleed is a program designed to give first responders and others the knowledge and equipment needed to provide first aid to a traumatically injured person, buying critical time before medical help reaches the scene.

1889 Foundation has provided enhanced Stop the Bleed kits to over 200 police cars in Cambria and Somerset counties. The kits provide equipment to save the victim’s life, as well as personal protective equipment for the officers. The kit also has decontamination supplies for the officers to decontaminate themselves and the scene after the emergency is over. Training has been provided to the officers in the proper use of the kits.

“We’re grateful to the foundation for equipping our officers to deal with this type of emergency, further enhancing safety of our officers and the people we serve,” says Randy Cox, Somerset Borough Chief of Police.

1889 Foundation has been funding the Stop the Bleed program since 2016, and hundreds of presentations and kits have been distributed across the region.



## 1889 supports mental health initiatives

*Veteran Community Initiatives (VCI) is a local non-profit that works to support veterans by providing everything from career counseling to assistance in accessing veteran benefits resources.*

1889 funding has enabled VCI to expand its Operation Family Caregiver program and rural veteran programs, both of which support mental health. Quarterly trainings are offered free of charge to veterans, their families, veteran service agencies, and other organizations that work with veterans, with a focus on helping veterans and their families overcome trauma.

1889 provided a range of additional grants designed to help improve mental health. These included:

- A grant of \$25,000 to the Laurel Highlands Alzheimer's Association to provide education and respite care for the families of patients.
- A \$5,000 grant to Victim Services to fund counseling for children coping with grief.

## 1889 supports Cambria County Drug Coalition with funding for training

1889 has supported many initiatives of the Cambria County Drug Coalition (CCDC) to help reduce the impact of drug and alcohol use in our community. In July 2021, 1889 funding helped the CCDC present "Drug Impairment Training for the Educational Professional," (DITEP) for school nurses, administrators, guidance counselors, law enforcement, healthcare providers, and others. Some 27 area professionals attended, and gave rave reviews of the program's content. "I can't believe how much I didn't know about drugs – this has been one of the best, most informative trainings I've ever attended," one wrote.



Educators from the region take part in a drug impairment training presented by the Cambria County Drug Coalition.



Tom Caulfield, VCI President/CEO, informs rural veterans of the services and programs available to them at one of several veteran outreach events held throughout the year.

# 1889 Foundation



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*The Clara Barton Society recognizes patrons who have had the wisdom and foresight to have their financial and estate plans in order, and have included 1889 Foundation in their estate planning with a planned gift by will, trust, or gift annuity. Members are acknowledged in this annual report and also on our donor wall. The wishes of contributors who want to remain anonymous are always respected.*

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*1889 Foundation funded new ice skates for North Central Recreation Center and 1st Summit Arena at the Cambria County War Memorial, so that public ice skating sessions are now possible.*

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