The James and Katherine Navota Endowment Fund provides income for the Community Foundation's discretionary grantmaking program. James Navota is a graduate of East Aurora High School. He graduated from Northern Illinois University with a degree in business administration in 1964. He joined Barber Greene Company in 1965 and served in many marketing and sales positions, leaving in 1987 as director of sales, construction management.

Following two years with the Old Second National Bank, Mr. Navota joined Lyons Wire Space Products holding various positions in marketing and sales, retiring as vice-president of sales and marketing for Sycamore Systems in 2006. He served on many industry boards and committees throughout his career. Katherine Navota graduated from Marycrest College in 1964 and came to East Aurora as a classroom teacher. She held several reading/language arts positions for the district and retired in 2006 after twelve years as principal of Rose E. Krug Elementary School. Mrs. Navota is active in several educational and philanthropic organizations and currently serves on the board of directors and executive committee of the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley.

The Genevieve and Dale T. Berg Scholarship Endowment Fund was created by Genevieve Berg as a memorial to her husband. Dale Berg (1925-2010) was born in Shabbona, Illinois and was a graduate of Hinckley High School. After high school, he took a job as a dairy technician. He enlisted in the United States Navy in November 1942 and served on duty in the Pacific. During the war, he became proficient at repairing aircraft radios. In 1948, he married Genevieve Olson, also of Shabbona. Mr. Berg received further training in radio electronics at Capital Engineering Institute in Washington D.C. from which he graduated in 1948. Shortly thereafter, the couple moved to Aurora. Mr. Berg’s first job out of school was with May Appliance in Aurora where he repaired radios, televisions and appliances. Soon after, he took a job as a technical writer with Halcrothers, a manufacturer of audio equipment. Eventually, he became an electrical contractor and ran a successful business, Berg Electric, in Batavia with his partner and brother Richard Berg. Mr. Berg was a dedicated member of our Savior Lutheran Church in Aurora where he served as a deacon, trustee, usher and coordinator of the Radio Ministries for fifty years.

The John and Gwen McKee Endowment Fund provides income for the Community Foundation’s discretionary grantmaking program. John McKee is a life-long resident of Aurora, Illinois and is a graduate of West Aurora High School. In 1958, he graduated cum laude from Beloit College with a degree in economics. He then was employed in the family owned business, McKee Door Company, until it was sold in 1986. Mr. McKee has served as director and president of the Aurora Family YMCA, The Aurora Foundation (now the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley) and the Kiwanis Club of Aurora. He also has been a trustee of Aurora University and the Aurora YMCA. In 1992, he received the Cosmopolitan Club’s Distinguished Service Award and in 2005, he was named recipient of the Kiwanis Club’s Service to God and Fellowman Award. Gwen McKee was a 1958 graduate of Beloit College and was employed for two years at IBM as a Systems Representative. She is a talented and prolific quilter, producing quilts for family, friends, and charitable causes. The McKees are members of New England Congregational Church. Mr. McKee has served as moderator and member of the church’s major governing boards.

The Lois A. Nelson Memorial Scholarship Fund was established by her family at the time of her passing. Scholarships from the fund are reserved for students graduating from East Aurora or West Aurora High School. Lois A. Nelson (1932-2011) was born in 1932 in Northbrook, Illinois. She was a graduate of the East Aurora High School Class of 1950. Mrs. Nelson served as a secretary at Todd and Greenman Elementary Schools in West Aurora School District 129. In addition, she was a parishioner of St. Rita of Cascia Church for fifty three years. Mrs. Nelson was pre- ceded in death by her husband of fifty-two years, Wayne Nelson. They were parents of six children. According to her children, “Our mother has always had a generous spirit, in lieu of flowers, we ask that donations be directed to the Community Foundation of Fox Valley in her name to fund scholarships for the continued education of students in need who have graduated from East and West Aurora High Schools. On any given day our mom and grandmother was going to bridge, knitting club, PEO or to the opera. We are grateful that she was able to continue her love of life until very recently. To know her was to love her!”

The Robert J. and Mary Jayne Pooley Endowment Fund was created by the couple’s family and friends at the time of Mrs. Pooley’s passing. The fund provides scholarships to students entering the field of nursing. Robert Pooley, Sr. is a lifelong resident of Aurora. He attended St. Mary Grade School and East Aurora High School. He was a graduate of Iowa State University and received a degree in general engineering. He returned to Aurora and joined his father to form Leon B. Pooley and Son (Baldwin twenty Robert J. Pooley, Inc.), a company that built single family homes in the Aurora area for thirty years. He also was a member of the Illinois Realtors Association. Mary Jayne Pooley (1956-2011) was born in Hanibal, Missouri. At the age of nine, her family moved to Aurora. She was a graduate of Madonna High School and St. Joseph School of Nursing, both in Aurora. Mrs. Pooley returned to the workforce in 1982 as a nurse and addictions counselor. Before her retirement in 2007, she worked for twenty-two years at the Community Counseling Center in Aurora. In 1957, Mr. and Mrs. Pooley were married in Holy Angels Church. They made their home in Aurora, raising six children.

The Edna M. Rollins Endowment Fund was created upon the receipt of a bequest from the estate of Edna Rollins. The net income of the fund is distributed on an annual basis to the East Aurora Educational Foundation Fund within the Community Foundation, Edna M. Rollins Elementary School and St. John’s Episcopal Church. Edna Rollins (1916-2010) was a lifelong Auroraian. She was a 1935 graduate of East Aurora High School. Three years later, she began a career with the school system that lasted forty-three years. She served as the director of financial and administrative services and also as treasurer of the district. In 1980, the board of education voted to name an elementary school after her. The Edna M. Rollins Elementary School became a source of great pride to her and she visited the school at every opportunity. A believer in lifelong education, Miss Rollins earned a bachelor’s degree from Aurora University in 1972. She also took additional courses at Northern Illinois University and the University of Illinois. A charter member of the Illinois Association of School Business Officials, she was the first woman to serve on its board of directors. Miss Rollins also was named Woman of the Year by the Aurora Business Women’s Association and the YWCA Aurora.

The Community Foundation is a non-profit, tax-exempt philanthropic organization that administers individual charitable funds from which grants and scholarships are distributed to benefit the citizens of the Greater Aurora Area, the Tri-Cities and Kendall County, Illinois.

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Change Service Requested
The Community Foundation has launched a new service for its donors. We now videotape the lives of those who maintain endowment funds within our organization.

This video features our founder and first president, William B. Greene. This video can be viewed on the welcome page of our website (www.CommunityFoundationFRV.org).

If you currently have an endowment fund or are considering the establishment of one, please know that this service is available for your loved one.

We believe it is important to preserve the family histories of those who have chosen to create a permanent legacy within the Community Foundation.

We also believe it is important to find new ways to express our gratitude to those who have played a meaningful role in our development. Through the Community Foundation, you and your family will be remembered for generations to come.
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