**Philanthropy West Virginia’s Sample Guest Article for CF Week:**

**Community Philanthropy is driving WV Forward**

As a state built on resolve, hard work, and creativity, West Virginia’s spirit of hard work and impact also exists in our philanthropy. West Virginia’s quiet, humble, and contributing force of philanthropy is always at work driving our state’s growth and overcoming societal challenges in the Mountain State. Community Foundations are a major part of that force that allows for citizens from every walk of life to invest in their community’s present and future needs and causes. From economic development to health to education to community revitalization, community foundations are a critical part to community strength and progress.

You might not realize that West Virginia is a successful model in community foundation impact and leadership. Over the past 55 years, West Virginia’s citizens at regional and county levels have created their own community foundations in the Mountain State. Right here in ***\_\_(insert county name or region name here)\_\_*** County, we are fortunate to have the ***\_\_(insert name of community foundation here)\_\_***. With nearly 30 community foundations, affiliates, and area funds in our state to date, West Virginia’s community foundations serve 55 counties and contribute millions of dollars in community grants and scholarships each year. We take the week of November 15 to 21, 2020 to celebrate community foundations as both a state and nation. As our community foundations in West Virginia are:

* conveners of business, government, nonprofits, and the public to ensure thriving communities,
* leveraging partnerships with state and national foundations to create opportunities,
* investing in critical organizations and causes to advance basic human needs, economic development, education, health, the arts, and so much more,
* a driving force in partnership with nonprofits, businesses, and the general public for tackling some of West Virginia’s greatest challenges

Our community foundations are having a monumental impact on the quality of life in our state as they drive West Virginia Forward, a few examples of this impact include:

* Engaging our state’s historic transfer of wealth with private citizens working with community foundations to create new endowments to support community vitality in a variety of ways through the Keep5Local program (keep5local.org).
* ***(Insert a reference to the work your community foundation is doing here on community and economic development.)***
* Educating on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion such as The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation’s Summit on Race Matters in West Virginia virtual series, which educates the public on various DEI topics.
* Facilitating innovative programs to attract and retain an educated and civically-engaged workforce with the Parkersburg Area Community Foundation & Community Foundation for the Ohio Valley’s Civic Leaders Fellows Program. The program gives college students each summer professional work experiences connecting them with community leadership opportunities and long-term careers.
* Driving community revitalization with business, government, nonprofits, and the general public. In Huntington, the Foundation for the Tri-State Community (FTSC), the City, and many partners secured the America’s Best Community national prize. This supports the Huntington Innovation Project to transform neighborhoods and blighted spaces into hip hubs for advanced making, innovative manufacturing and healthy community improvements -- all connected by broadband.
* Focusing on business growth and workforce development through the Tucker Community Foundation in the Potomac Highlands. They are creating multiple community partnerships, hosting convenings, and investments that promote local development with tourism, agriculture, and entrepreneurial training.

All of this impact in driving West Virginia forward - through community foundations - comes from our citizens from all walks of life who put their community’s interests, their own money, and future aspirations into practice. West Virginia’s greatest opportunities lie ahead and philanthropy is a driving force to secure that goal. As we celebrate Community Foundations week November 15 -21, 2020, we recognize the state’s progress, the generosity of our citizens, and promote growing the spirit of giving forward. We are thankful to celebrate the impact of the ***\_\_(Insert your community foundation’s name here)\_\_.*** Our community is honored to celebrate the achievements of local donors, our community foundation, and our state’s progress in November and throughout the year who #PutWV1st.