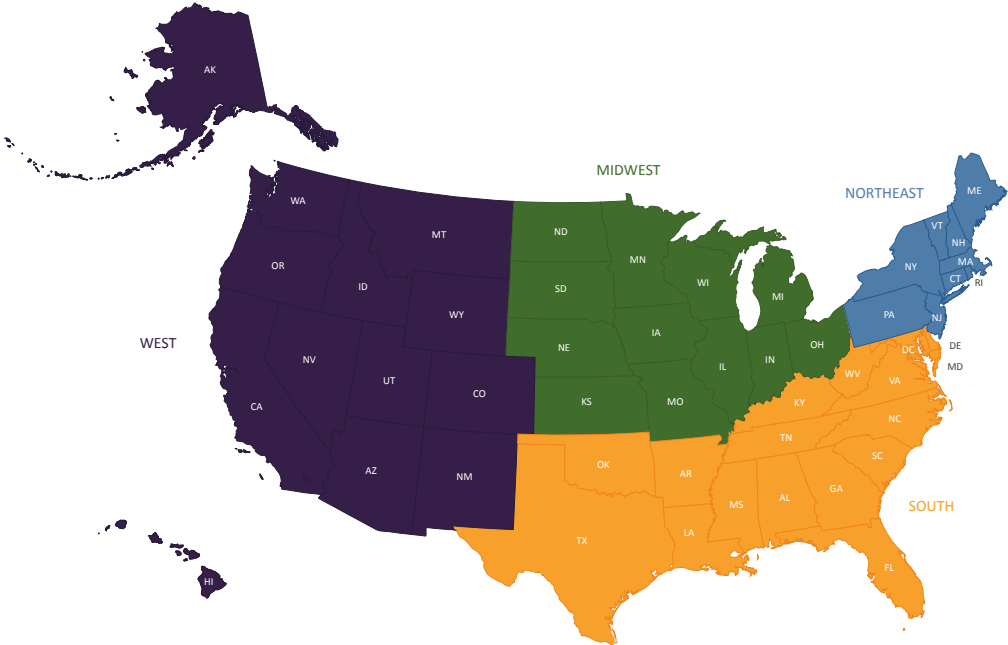


# National Impact of Community Foundation Donor Advised Funds (DAFs)



Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) are a unique philanthropic tool. They allow donors to establish accounts at institutions, such as community foundations, and remain involved in supporting the causes and issues they care about. Community foundations oversee and manage funds on behalf of families or individuals and, in many cases, have the discretion to direct some of the resources to priority causes the foundation identifies. **Together, DAFs and community foundations bring local solutions to the causes and issues that matter most.**

## Midwest: Michigan

“A DAF set up to [support] children’s needs in the community funded the replacement of many playground structures deemed unsafe, but that the city couldn’t afford to fix.”

## West: Nevada

“By working with the community foundation, one DAF donor provided start-up funding to create an arts and media center for a struggling liberal arts college in a rural town. If there had been a mandatory payout requirement on the DAF, the fund would not have been able to ‘save up’ enough assets to make this purchase that had been so important to the whole community.”

## Northeast: New York

“One of our donors took care of her mother who had Alzheimer’s disease. Remembering how hard that was for her, our donor created a fund in her mother’s name and asked us to help create a program to recruit and train volunteers to provide respite for family caregivers serving people with Alzheimer’s and other dementias.”

## South: Oklahoma

“We launched [an initiative] after several donor advisors approached us for more information on local veterans’ needs. Our donor advisors’ interest initially resulted in \$250,000 in funding to launch two new veteran-resources projects, and has since inspired our board to prioritize the needs of post-9/11 veterans as part of our strategic plan.”

## ALABAMA

“DAFs made more than \$470,000 in grants to help with recovery efforts in the wake of the 2011 tornado outbreak that affected many Alabama counties. Without these funds, we couldn’t have provided as much [support].”

## ALASKA

“From a capital campaign to build a youth shelter, to funding a [house building project], to having 10 DAF donors join the Community Foundation to start a teen suicide grant cycle, our DAFs address local needs.”

## ARIZONA

“Our DAF is our region’s sole supporter of efforts to recruit and train youth to participate in government.”

## ARKANSAS

“A small business owner... established 6 donor advised endowments for his 6 grandchildren. He told the grandchildren: continue to give to this fund throughout your lifetime; find something in the community that you are passionate about and support it—be a part of your community; and pass this value of giving to your children.”

## CALIFORNIA

“Our community foundation was approached by a nonprofit to raise funds for transitional housing for foster youth. We approached several DAFs and private foundations in the community, and we raised the funds quickly for an immediate need.”

## COLORADO

“We have a donor who established a fund to address concerns about the safety of individuals and families ... who find themselves in mental health or substance abuse crises and cannot afford treatment.”

## CONNECTICUT

“One of our DAFs established annual grants to improve the quality of urban education through support of excellent teachers and to increase community awareness of the power of teachers in the educational process.”

## DELAWARE

“With generous support from a DAF at the Delaware Community Foundation, a church, is helping hundreds of men and women learn to speak English, increasing their ability to participate in the workforce, their children’s educations and the community. Since its establishment in 2003, this DAF has donated more than \$6.5 million to support nonprofit programs that serve Delaware.”

## FLORIDA

“We just completed a campaign to provide food for the 21,000 kids in our community on free and reduced lunch during the school year, but not fed in the summer. The campaign raised over \$1.2 million for our local food bank - the initial challenge of \$500,000 came from over 40 donors who held DAFs.”

## GEORGIA

“A donor interested in environmental issues approached us with an initiative to help nonprofit organizations make their buildings more energy efficient... The donor funded the entire program and has helped more than 125 organizations with more than \$1.3 million in capital improvements, resulting in average savings of 16% on energy consumption and 20% on water usage. The program is now piloting similar initiatives in 2 other states with funds from the donor.”

## IDAHO

To ensure that a small farm community would always thrive, they established a \$550,000 endowed fund at the Idaho

Community Foundation as part of their estate planning to benefit their beloved Emmett and Gem County.

Since 1992, the Rawlinson fund has distributed nearly \$730,000 in grants and – thanks to ICF’s investment committee – has grown 70% larger than the original gift. It has created parks, funded local theater groups, helped schools and much more.

## ILLINOIS

“One DAF funds an organization that provides a unique service of transforming tattoos and body art for individuals trying to escape gang affiliation, prostitution and/or abusive relationships. This organization would not be eligible for grants from our foundation but is thriving because of grants from this DAF.”

## INDIANA

“DAF funds created an initiative to address water quality. The grant required community groups to address water quality in a manner that encompassed education, provided data driven results and is replicable in other areas. As a result [a local college] now houses the [center].”

## IOWA

“One DAF provided \$100,000 of seed funding to a new organization that will implement a community plan to transform a public park and watershed area into a \$40 million public learning and recreation area twice the size of NYC’s Central Park.”

## KANSAS

"A major employer in our community established a DAF so that their employees could be involved in giving back. Their DAF has helped improve the quality of life in our area by funding local park projects, youth library programs, and public health initiatives."

## KENTUCKY

“A donor with a DAF at the community foundation had inquired with several local charities about accepting securities and they did not have the ability to accept that type of gift. The community foundation is going to help him facilitate the transfer of appreciated securities to his DAF so he can make some year-end gifts to local charities.”

## LOUISIANA

“Recently, a university had an emergency scholarship need and staff reached out to various donors who were able to help fund the need. Also, through the foundation’s education events, two

DAFs provided funding to help at-risk youth.”

## MAINE

"A donor advised fund established by a couple from Aroostook County, the ‘rooftop’ of Maine, reflects their passion for cultural preservation, specifically the Acadian culture, which was celebrated at the World Acadian Congress in Fort Kent in 2014.”

## MARYLAND

“We hold a DAF from a family with 4 children that wanted to create a tradition of discussing community concerns and awarding grants based [those] discussions. It is the donors’ hope that their kids will become more cognizant of people in need and will realize that generosity is a responsibility [for] all in the community.”

## MASSACHUSETTS

“One of our funds grants several hundred thousand dollars each year to public schools in poor communities for educational technology they could not otherwise afford.”

## MINNESOTA

“A DAF funded the building of a community hospice house. This would not have occurred any other way.”

## MISSISSIPPI

“Our oldest DAF was opened by a very strategic philanthropist who aims to have her DAF-granting activity make social change or long-term improvements in the community. She thinks, plans and gives long-term.”

## MISSOURI

“Donors have built up significant DAFs over the years [to] support key community projects, such as our performing arts center and a new cancer center for our regional hospital.”

## MONTANA

"Many donor advised funds in Montana provide desperately needed grant money to purchase safety and emergency equipment for small, rural, volunteer fire departments. This equipment ensures the safety of the volunteers as well as supporting residents with medical emergencies until they can be transported to a regional medical facility."

## NEBRASKA

“Our local Boy Scout troop needed a new vehicle to transport scouts and equipment. The troop found a vehicle, but had a short window of

opportunity to purchase it. We called donor advisors and made up the difference in the amount of money they needed.”

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

“One of our donors established a small DAF and since doing so has become more involved in the community, more aware of issues and is moving significant resources to our community foundation to do more substantial grant-making in the future.”

## NEW JERSEY

In early summer, a grantee called with a pressing need: their neighborhood elementary school was hosting a summer school for the first time, and it wasn’t air-conditioned. With high temperatures expected and many students with asthma, they wondered if the Community Foundation could supply air conditioners. We sent the request to several donor-advised funds, and within two days they met the need. “We’re all a team and we’re so happy that everybody was able to work together and the folks at the Community Foundation were able to help get the units,” said Eva Gilbert, a first-grade teacher at the school. “It’s a success story.”

## NEW MEXICO

“Our community has experienced pressing needs in regard to homelessness, hunger and education. We were able to work with donor advisors to provide critical funding in these areas.”

## NORTH CAROLINA

“Six of our DAF donors recently responded to a time-sensitive need to assess the K-3 volunteer literacy packets and to align them to new reading standards at each grade level so that the curriculum being used by volunteers to strengthen literacy for those students would be more effective.”

## OHIO

“One of our donors with a flow-through DAF was able to contribute significant funding to build a skate park for local teens to give them a safe place to develop their sport, away from unsafe walls, steps and parking lots.”

## OREGON

“A local business leader and his wife created a DAF to serve their rural region of southwest Oregon. For 18 years the fund has supported the local university, a statewide children’s literacy program, a regional land conservancy and Oregon’s only [national park].”

## SOUTH CAROLINA

“Donor-Advised Funds continue to be such a powerful tool, both for the individuals involved, as well as, the nonprofit organizations that benefit. DAF’s can be used to teach philanthropy for a younger generation, for employees within a business to learn about the fabric of community efforts, for individuals looking to support important causes, and a myriad of other purposes. DAFs often inspire greater understanding of the community, eagerness to understand “giving well” and thoughtful and strategic investments in nonprofit efforts.”

## TEXAS

“One fund holder made a two-year grant to support [autism research], and another fund holder family uses their fund to support of Sarcoma research.”

## UTAH

“Many of our DAF holders are young entrepreneurs who were not philanthropic prior to selling a business or a wealth-creating event. Our DAFs fund the community foundation’s efforts to seed social enterprises that employ low-income individuals and create stability and sustainability in the nonprofit sector.”

## VERMONT

“Our Giving Together program invites DAF advisors to respond to vetted discretionary grant proposals so they can be fully funded. Without DAFs, our discretionary dollars would not address community needs as well.”

## VIRGINIA

“In 2013, three local nonprofits collaboratively submitted a \$100,000 proposal to create a respite program for families who adopt special needs children and need trained caregivers. A [group member] was so inspired and confident of [the community foundation’s] endorsement that she recommended a grant of \$100,000 from her DAF.”

## WASHINGTON

“We have had DAF holders contribute public art to our community, help with park renovations, and provide a variety of programs for youth, disabled and senior populations.”

## WEST VIRGINIA

“One of our DAFs makes grants to organizations with programs that assist young adults who have aged out of the foster care system and find themselves without any support.”

## WISCONSIN

“A number of DAFs have contributed to the collaboration between our YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, and public schools to create a model of child education that includes health and wellness, and a safety net for children.”

## WYOMING

“A couple who established a Donor Advised Fund at the Community Foundation of Jackson Hole recently partnered with the Competitive Grants Committee to help fund the Jenny Lake Restoration project in Grand Teton National Park. This national treasure is undergoing repair to its trail system and boat docks that have been almost loved to death. The same fund augmented another discretionary grant to the Senior Center to offer free lunches for the elderly in our community. This program offers a well-balanced meal and the chance to visit with friends, reducing depression and isolation and providing what is for some, their sole source of nutrition for the day. Without a relationship with the Community Foundation through their donor advised fund, this couple would have been unaware of these community needs.”

*Thank you to the many community foundations that shared their stories with us through the survey. Here is a sample of the stories we received. While some states had more than one story, other states did not have a DAF story from a community foundation. Please contact the Council at [govt@cof.org](mailto:govt@cof.org) to share a story from your state.*