



The Cook Family Foundation

PURPOSE

Serving as both a resource for the community and a catalyst for positive change.

OBJECTIVE

Through strategic, proactive use of funds and grants, strengthen institutions, extend their mission and enable their growth.

STAFF

Tom Cook, *Executive Director*
Nancy Barnes, *Foundation Administrator*

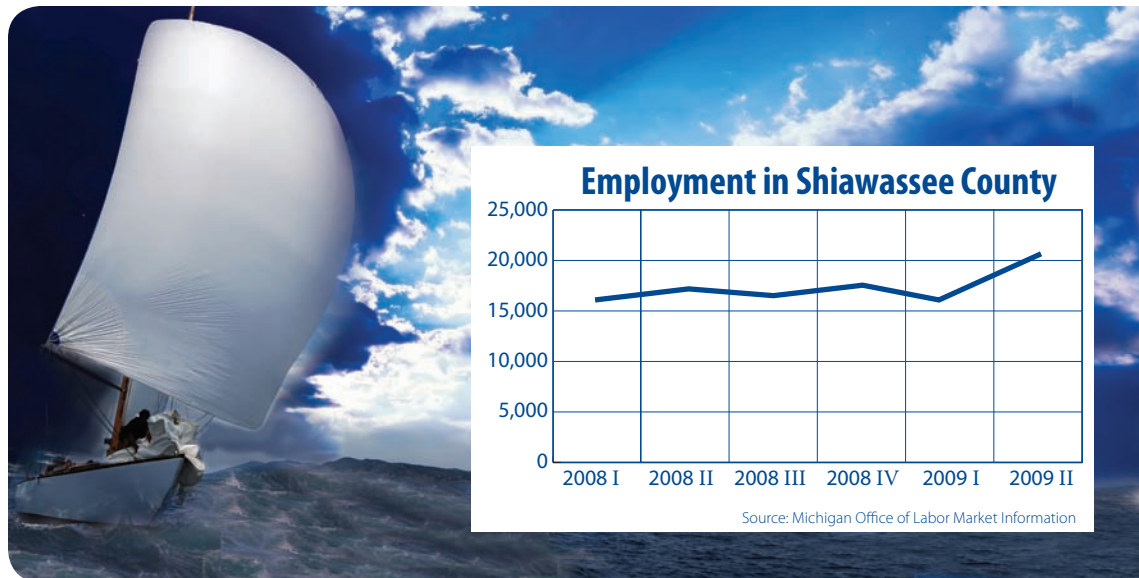
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A Community Sails Forward

Like a ship in a storm, Shiawassee County forges ahead in difficult times.

The last year reminds us how much a healthy community needs a healthy economy. We have also learned that the economy of Shiawassee County depends on the economy of our state and of our nation. Nonetheless, several new efforts to build on local assets and recruit home talented entrepreneurs promise that when the larger economic winds shift, our community may sail forward.

Since 2003, the Cook Family Foundation has invested \$175,000 in the Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership (SEDP), a public-private partnership, because we believe that our mission of building up community organizations cannot be achieved without a strong local economy as a foundation. Whether it be our schools and local governments or our nonprofit agencies, they all depend on local revenues and donations to be successful.

While County unemployment rates of close to 17% indicate the economic challenges before us, and are a measure of the increased need that social service providers face, there are a few pieces of good news. Despite difficult economic times in 2009, the County lost no major industries and several employers increased employment (see graph). Since its inception, the SEDP, which provides professional assistance to businesses and local governments, has provided support on 54 projects (24 new businesses and 30 expansions) resulting in over 1,100 new jobs in the county.

“With the components of a new business venture available and quite affordable in Shiawassee County, we can help people get a start in manufacturing, professional services, or even retail.”

— Justin Horvath
SEDP President/CEO



New Website Recruits Entrepreneurs to Come Home www.growinghometownfutures.org

The Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership (SEDP), with support from the Cook Family Foundation, has started a new program to encourage former residents of Shiawassee County to return to their roots to relocate, start or expand a business. The effort builds on the successful programs of the SEDP, but plans to use a specific internet and social media marketing strategy to link up potential entrepreneurs to the resources and opportunities in Shiawassee County.

“With the excellent schools we have, one of the greatest products in Shiawassee County are talented young people,” says Tom Cook, Executive Director of the Cook Family Foundation. *“We send some great kids off to get great college educations, but unfortunately many of them start careers in other places. The goal of the Growing Hometown Futures product is to help these people think about their hometown as a place to take the next step in their careers.”*

“With the components of a new business venture available and quite affordable in Shiawassee County, we can help people get a start in manufacturing, professional services, or even retail,” says Justin Horvath, SEDP President/CEO.

There have already been successes. Tial Products, an Owosso-based manufacturer of performance turbochargers, was started in California in 1994 by brothers Gregg and Brian Jones. They had originally grown up in Shiawassee County, and relocated the operation home in 2000. Beginning here with just a few employees in leased space, they now own a large manufacturing facility in the city, employing 25 people with good paying jobs.

Homegrown Efforts Bode Well for the Future

The SEDP relies on the investment of 70 businesses and 19 public sector entities. The Cook Family Foundation is the largest private investor; Shiawassee County is the largest public investor. The SEDP indicates the self-reliant attitude of the community and the local board and staff have successfully brought together the public and private sectors to work on the common goals of job retention, job expansion, and new business recruitment. Finally, an active partnership with the Shiawassee Regional Chamber of Commerce brings the support of the local business community.

Working closely with local and state resources, the SEDP coordinates to help entrepreneurs and growing businesses find the financing, facilities, staff, or technical assistance needed for economic expansion. In addition, the active involvement of local government in SEDP helps streamline the approval process and secure support. Confident in their ability to help businesses take advantage of the economic opportunities in our community, the SEDP is now reaching out to a special group of entrepreneurs: people who grew up here or have other ties to Shiawassee County (see sidebar article).

Over the last several years, the SEDP staff have built strong public and private relationships not only within Shiawassee County, but also with economic developers at the regional and state level. Thus, when a local business wants to grow, SEDP can help them tap into assistance from a variety of resources. When local governments are following up on an inquiry from a new business, or have a site to promote, SEDP can provide both expertise and contacts.

The economy is not what it needs to be today, but the Cook Family Foundation makes investments for the future. The support given to the SEDP has paid off already in the retention of jobs and several specific developments that have benefited the community. But the real payoff will come when the national and state economy come back, and Shiawassee County sails forth as a strong and shining community.

*Bruce Cook, SEDP
Board Vice-Chairman;
Margaret McAvooy, SEDP
Board Chairperson; and
Justin Horvath, SEDP
President and CEO.*





The
Cook Family
Foundation

2009 Grants

Through strategic, proactive use of funds and grants, the Cook Family Foundation strives to strengthen institutions, extend their mission and enable their growth. Our goal is to help initiate change and growth within an organization, and as such the Foundation is willing to provide financial support for programs, facilities, equipment, staffing, professional development, contracted services, or other tools for positive change. Each year the Cook Family Foundation reviews grant proposals from community organizations with emphasis on key areas as highlighted in this listing of projects funded in 2009.

Community Institutions \$132,450

Nonprofit Capacity Building Program (NCBP)	44,292
Owosso Community Players	30,000
Capacity Building	23,003
Owosso Community PLayers	
Relief After Violent Encounters	
Steam Railroading Institute	
Capital Area Community Service-Homeownership	10,000
Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership	25,000
Other Community Grants	155

Education and Youth \$105,716

Owosso Public Schools	
International Baccalaureate	19,000
Performing Arts Committee (PAC)	3,452
Shiawassee Regional Education Service District	
Shiawassee Scholars	77,934
Other Education and Youth	5,330

Environment \$60,000

Nature Conservancy: Shiawassee River Project	50,000
Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN)	10,000

University of Michigan \$100,809

Scholarships and Support	100,809
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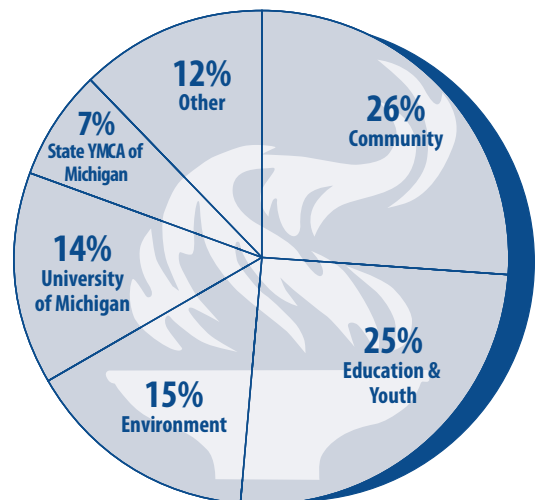
State YMCA of Michigan \$10,000

Scholarships to Hayo-Went-Ha Camps	10,000
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Additional Financials \$110,241

Administration, Office and Dues	92,139
Communications	6,957
Taxes	4,300
Other Grants	3,600
Professional Services	3,245

Total Disbursements \$519,216



In the last five years, the Foundation has made grants totaling nearly \$2.7 million in five main areas.

Contact us for grant information and assistance at nancy@cookfamilyfoundation.org

Shiawassee Nonprofit Capacity Academy

The Non-Profit Capacity Building Program (NCBP) provides education and support for area non-profits. If you are a staff or Board member of a non-profit, we encourage you to take advantage of these low-cost sessions. They are a great way to network with other organizations. For more information, contact Nancy at nancy@cookfamilyfoundation.org

My Fund Development Plan April 28 • 9:00 a.m. - 12 p.m. – Memorial Healthcare South Auditorium

For many small and mid-size nonprofit organizations, our fundraising is catch-as-catch-can. Events come and go, we pursue grants with no clear focus, and we forget about tracking and leveling-up our individual donors. In this session we will review common sources of revenue and strategies for analyzing where your money comes from (and why), and will draft a framework for a fund development plan that will give board and staff concrete goals, benchmarks, and accountability.

Effective Evaluation: Do We Make A Difference?

May 24 • 9:00 a.m. - 12 p.m. – Memorial Healthcare North Auditorium

We all know that we have to prove that we make a difference, but do we know how to measure what matters? Can we align efforts, outcomes and impact? Starting with an effective (and accurate) need statement as your foundation, we will practice how to build a plan. When it comes to evaluation, you always need to “begin with the end in mind.”

Strategic Messaging: If Nobody Knows, Nobody Cares

June 23 • 9:00 a.m. - 12 p.m. – Memorial Healthcare South Auditorium

Have you ever wondered why “nobody seems to know what we’re doing?” In this session we’ll explore strategies for nonprofits to become more strategic in crafting messages to specific audiences - and tailoring the delivery method to that audience’s preferences. Learn to tell your story in a way that will make people listen!

Contact Us for a Grant Application

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