



The Cook Family Foundation

Spring 2026

PURPOSE

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

OUR VALUES

Have Integrity
Be Inclusive
Make True Impact

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The first investment in recycling made by the Cook Family Foundation was to Greater Laingsburg Recyclers. A \$17,000 grant in 2021 helped this volunteer group construct their current drop-off site.

Community Partnerships: A Pathway to Recycling

How, in this time and place, do we best “promote a more equitable and sustainable society”?

As a small philanthropy in a rural county, the Cook Family Foundation has found one path toward achieving its mission: recycling. In early 2025, the Foundation convened representatives from local governments, the private sector, and nonprofit organizations to see if we could find common ground around the topic of recycling - and the *Shiawassee Recycles!* workgroup was born. This collaboration has met monthly as an engaging way to address a complex problem together and work toward a stronger economy, a healthier environment, and overall community improvement. Several action-oriented partnerships have resulted; three of which are being funded through Foundation grants.

(See Community Partnerships, continued on Page 2.)



Through a series of monthly meetings, the Cook Family Foundation was able to identify and fund three recycling-related grants in 2025:



Chesaning's Resourceful Recycling and the Shiawassee Community Foundation's Youth Advisory Council collaborated on an electronic waste recycling event at OHS last year - a partnership created as a result of the Shiawassee Recycles! Workgroup.

▶ ***Shiawassee Recycles! Planning a Countywide Recycling Education and Marketing Initiative – \$25,000 Submitted by Shiawassee Regional Chamber of Commerce***

This is a planning grant to launch *Shiawassee Recycles!*, a countywide initiative that will create a “go to” website to connect residents, businesses, and municipalities with reliable recycling, composting, and materials management resources. With help from local partners, the project’s aim is to highlight the realities and benefits of recycling.



Shiawassee Recycles! Workgroup spearheaded by the Cook Family Foundation.

▶ ***Owosso Curbside Recycling Public Input Project – \$8,150 Submitted by the City of Owosso***

The City of Owosso is gathering input from residents and businesses on the Michigan state mandate to offer curbside recycling via twelve listening sessions facilitated by Dr. Kari Krantz. Attendees will share their thoughts and learn more about the facts, myths, and options of curbside recycling to help guide City leadership for next steps and decisions. The *Shiawassee Recycles!* Workgroup will host a Green Community event this summer to share the work that has been done through this collaboration, with opportunities for attendees to learn about and get funding for sustainable solutions to community waste management issues. Follow the Cook Family Foundation Facebook page or visit www.cookfamilyfoundation.org for updates.

▶ ***DJ Root Feasibility Study – \$35,000 Submitted by Shiawassee Health and Wellness***

This grant is funding an evaluation of the viability of transitioning the DJ Root Recycling Center to a public-private partnership paper/cardboard recycling program and identify work opportunities for employees with emotional and physical disabilities.





The
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2025 Grants

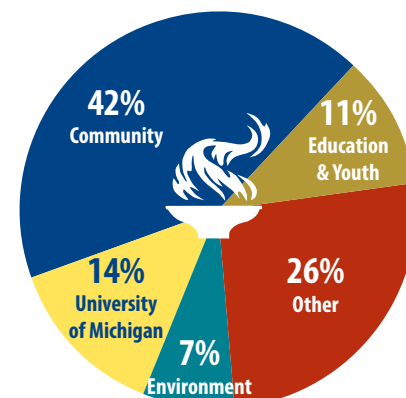
Through strategic, proactive use of funds and grants, the Cook Family Foundation strives to strengthen institutions, extend their mission and enable their growth. The Foundation is willing to provide financial support for programs, facilities, equipment, staffing, professional development, contracted services, or other tools for positive change.

Community Organizations	\$1,599,027	Education and Youth	\$230,986
Shiawassee District Library	\$705,000	Shiawassee Regional Education Services District - Shiawassee Scholars Program	\$135,000
Shiawassee Family YMCA	\$102,200	Early College Program	\$38,986
Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership	\$99,450	Early Childhood Preschool Scholarships	\$10,000
Nonprofit Capacity Building Program	\$88,078	Corunna Public Schools - CTE & Agriscience Infrastructure	\$35,000
SafeCenter	\$81,100	Perry Public Schools - FFA Greenhouse	\$12,000
Catholic Charities of Shiawassee	\$81,000		
Shiawassee Regional Chamber of Commerce	\$65,200	Environment	\$177,672
Shiawassee Food Access to 7 food pantries	\$49,350	Recycling Workgroup	\$78,485
Lebowsky Center for Performing Arts	\$48,350	Shiawassee Regional Chamber of Commerce Foundation	\$25,000
Voices for Children	\$40,500	Shiawassee Health & Wellness	\$25,000
Shiawassee Arts Center	\$40,450	Ducks Unlimited - Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge - Butch's Marsh	\$25,000
United Way of Genesee Serving Shiawassee	\$35,000	Blue Heron Headwaters Conservancy	\$10,000
Shiawassee Humane Society	\$20,500	Chesaning - handicap accessible launch	\$6,000
Shiawassee Health Department	\$20,174	Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy	\$4,000
Serenity House	\$20,000	GLR - Greater Laingsburg Recyclers	\$3,000
Respite Volunteers of Shiawassee	\$15,400	Other Environment	\$1,187
Giving Paws	\$15,000	Additional Financials	
The ARC Mid-Michigan	\$14,550	Administration & Associated Costs	\$427,672
Durand Union Station, Inc.	\$12,625	Office Expenses and Memberships	\$82,657
Friends of the Shiawassee River	\$10,100	Professional Services & Fees	\$11,419
Big Brothers Big Sisters Michigan	\$10,000	Other Grants	\$30,318
Ovid Public Library	\$9,100	Communications	\$10,101
Shiawassee Hope	\$6,500		
Refugee Development Center	\$5,000	TOTAL Disbursements	\$2,877,679
Shiawassee Council on Aging	\$2,350		
Steam Railroading Institute	\$2,050		
University of Michigan	\$307,827		
Scholarships - Ann Arbor	\$94,763		
Scholarships - Flint	\$87,000		
Scholarship Support	\$80,510		
Shiawassee Area Interns	\$45,554		

Learn more...

Go to www.cookfamilyfoundation.org to find out more about:

- Scholarship Information
- Grant Criteria & Application
- Nonprofit Capacity Building Program
- Collaboration Initiatives
- Fellows Internship Program
- Events



In the last five years, the Foundation has made grants totaling in excess of \$5 million dollars in four primary areas.




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Look for Us
on Facebook
and Instagram!

A Fresh Take on Collaboration

In 2025, the Foundation collaborated with community organizations, volunteers, churches, and public agencies that strive to reduce food insecurity – pairing them with a local fresh food source to help residents in need.

It was truly a win-win-win collaboration:

- **Local food pantries** were able to obtain fresh food from a local grower. The food was delivered directly to the pantries.
- **Local food grower** was paid for their services, helping subsidize their very valuable contributions.
- **Local residents** had the opportunity to receive healthy food, along with classes on how to prepare it, to supplement canned/dried food sources available at the pantries.

Throughout the summer, pantries received tomatoes, summer squash, greens, beans, eggplant, cabbage, and more. Over 2,000 pounds of produce were made available over five months. Owosso Organics owner, Pooh Stevenson, was the grower who participated in this pilot project, offering local organic produce to the pantries.

“Providing food for our local food pantries has been a deeply rewarding experience for all of us at Owosso Organics,” said Stevenson. “We feel we are making a positive impact in our community and the pantry organizers are very grateful for each delivery.”



“Fresh produce is one thing our clients have always wanted, but we were never able to obtain enough to serve our 100+ families due to its perishable nature and cost,” said Diane Pelky of the St. Mary’s Outreach Food Pantry in Durand. “Our clients have been thrilled when we were able to add the beautiful fresh produce to their food choices. Their faces literally lit up!”

“This is not a faceless crisis,” said Rachel Osmer, Associate Director of the Cook Family Foundation. “These are our friends and neighbors. The Foundation is committed to addressing this county-wide need and to help facilitate efforts among our many partners so that our entire community is stronger – together.”