

2020 Annual Report

Circles of Community

We support our circle, and it supports us

A healthy community is a circle.

It's a group of people who are connected in health, help, hope and purpose. When one part of our circle falters or hurts, other parts come together to support.

When the circle is complete, it is strong, resilient—and often unbreakable.

Perhaps never in recent times has our community circle been tested as it has over the last nearly two years. The COVID-19 pandemic challenged us in ways we could not have imagined just a short time ago. At the same time, serious issues of racial reckoning finally are being seen, demanding our attention, action and commitment to be better. All the while, our region, nation and world wrestle with political and social division not seen in generations.

It's been a tough time. But when we look at community in the Northland, our circle remains unbroken.

That's testament to the strength of our people, who commit to living together in healthy community—and who show up to put in the work needed to keep it that way.

In this report, you'll read stories of how the partners, donors, staff and volunteers of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation have done incredible work to keep our circle strong during these difficult times.

You'll read about work that keeps us connected, wraps community around education and returns us to the healing power of nature. You'll learn how young leaders are encouraged, basic human services delivered and mental health and substance abuse issues addressed directly.



The stories began in 2020, the year of this annual report. But the work and impact are ongoing. Our community is strong because of these efforts and dozens more that continue today.

It has been a wild time to come aboard at the Community Foundation. But in challenging times we become more aware of what matters and makes a difference. I am deeply grateful to be part of this amazing work.

The last two years have shown that our community circle can take any challenge thrown at it. We have reinforced. We have joined to fill gaps. We have recognized that we're resilient when we believe in each other as neighbors.

Ours is a healthy community circle. We're honored to strive to keep it that way by working together with all of you.

Shaun Floerke is president and CEO of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation. You can reach him at sfloerke@dsacommunityfoundation.com or 218-726-0232.

About Us

The Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation encourages generosity and strengthens our region through a community endowment built by gifts from thousands of individuals and organizations.

We make grants to nonprofits and to individuals for scholarships. Since 1983 we have distributed more than \$63 million through more than 450 funds. Giving partners include: the Apostle Islands and Chequamegon Bay Area Community Funds, the Cook County Community Fund, the Eveleth Community Foundation Fund and the Two Harbors Area Fund.

Our major initiatives include:



We want to thank our generous donors. See the list of contributors in 2020 at donors.dsacommunityfoundation.org

Contact Us

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Grant provides help for young adults

Life as a young adult is hard enough, with worries about school, work, relationships and futures still coming together.

But COVID-19 took those worries off the charts for some young people, leading to concerns about mental health and substance abuse. In the Twin Ports, a gap emerged for help for young adults in Superior. Years of declining Wisconsin health care reimbursements had resulted in a loss of providers. But now young adults needed those services more than ever.

The Miller-Dwan Foundation stepped forward, supported by a grant from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation. On the lower level of Essentia Health St. Mary's-Superior Clinic, Miller-Dwan and Essentia created the Superior Partial Hospitalization Program, an intensive program to help adults with mental health and substance abuse issues. The grant helped direct young adults to the program.

"We tried to figure out the best support we could provide in the community," Miller-Dwan President Traci Marciniak says. "Essentia has always done partial hospitalization in Duluth for adolescents and adults. We needed that here. It's very intensive, though it's not an overnight program. It's a three-week program on average. One of our therapists describes it as getting a year's worth of therapy in those three weeks."

Complicating the loss of providers in Douglas County are the barriers of traveling over the bridge for care in Duluth. It's another state where systems and financial support don't always match up.

"Having that loss of providers a few years ago put that community at significant risk," Marciniak says. "At the time, the estimate was Douglas County had well over 6,000 people with mental illness so severe that they needed some level of care to manage it."

The new program offers group therapy, peer interaction, animal-assisted therapy and other services. Treatment went virtual at the start of the pandemic, which was a challenge. But services are back in person.

While the program is available to all ages, the team knows how to make services most effective for young people.

"When you think about an issue that a 22-yearold guy has, it's vastly different from what a 55-year-old woman may be experiencing," Marciniak says. "To really tailor the care is important. What we've heard over and over is that this has transformed, and in some cases saved, lives."



Innovation keeps schools connected to community

The Duluth Community School Collaborative has proven that wrapping community around education makes learning better.

Students know they are connected to caring adults. They have opportunities and support. But the connection went away when schools closed because of COVID-19.

"As soon as the schools shut down, our staff began looking at how we connect with children and families in meaningful ways," collaborative Executive Director Kelsey Gantzer says. "How do we let kids know we are here for them and thinking about them?"

Collaborative leaders working with students at Myers-Wilkins Elementary School, Lincoln Park Middle School and Denfeld High School—the three schools supported by the collaborative—got busy. A grant from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation helped.

"Our middle school coordinator developed a campaign in which teachers and community members created handwritten messages and mailed them to students saying, 'We're thinking about you, even though we're not in the building together."

She adds: "For the elementary school students, we dropped off activity kits at their homes so they would still have a caring adult stopping by. And at the high school level, we held our Denfeld After School Happenings program at Life House when the schools were closed. Students could come in and get help with homework or just talk outside of their homes."

The work didn't stop there.



"We also were able to work on our website and increase social media engagement," Gantzer says. "That has been exciting for us, to have more connections in that digital space."

Years of experience about how support helps children learn didn't stop because of a pandemic.

"The schools we serve are some of the lowestincome in Duluth," Gantzer says. "There is a focus on needs. But we also get to look at the assets, the wonderful things happening in the community. One of the best parts for us is being the connector between the schools and the community."

Caregivers discover they need care, too

At the time, no one had heard of COVID-19.

But Care Partners of Cook County saw a need. The nonprofit supports family members and volunteers who help older adults in their homes. The people helping those with dementia, physical limitations and a lack of transportation need care, too.

A grant from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation allowed Care Partners to create an eight-week education and support program for caregivers, with instruction from Twin Cities-based expert Michelle Barclay.

"She taught us about understanding stress and especially our own stress levels," Care Partners Executive Director Kay Grindland says. "She taught us how to be more in the moment and mindful of even simple things we need to do, like eating.

"She taught us little practices. You stop before you go into the caregiving encounter. You breathe and ground yourself. You think of what your intention is. You say, 'May I be patient. May I be compassionate.' And then you turn it around and say, 'May I be patient and compassionate with myself."





Self-care for caregivers has always been important. But it would quickly become even more so. Days after the program concluded with a retreat in Grand Marais, COVID-19 hit, changing the world—and making at-home care even more challenging.

The world still isn't fully back to normal. But the learning caregivers received through the grant has helped support an important group that supports others. Lessons learned have kept them going through the pandemic.

"Supporting caregivers is a big deal," Grindland says. "They have a huge role. With this touch, we could tell we made a difference."



Young leaders emerge in a pandemic

ChaQuana McEntyre didn't see enough examples of great leadership in the Twin Ports.

"We all are leaders as well as followers," she says. "It takes someone being a great leader and a great follower before you can turn around and say to others, 'This is how I did it. This is how you can do it, too."

So McEntyre and her Duluth-based nonprofit, Family Rise Together, created Leaders Growing Leaders, a program for young people in the Black, Indigenous and People of Color community of the Twin Ports. But as the team created it, they didn't know how much the program would be needed.

Within weeks of receiving a grant from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation to finance the training, COVID-19 hit, driving people apart. Now, the 10 young participants would proceed on their leadership journey with an added degree of difficulty: Through a pandemic.

"COVID did to us exactly what it did in all situations—it shined a light and exposed the problems already there," McEntyre says. "It made us realize that we'd better work faster and harder because families were falling apart at the seams. We needed to support our young people as leaders, especially when they were watching so many older adults lose hope. We needed to be part of the solution. We needed to add hope to the formula."

The training, based on the lessons of international leadership expert John Maxwell, went fully online. Family Rise Together



supplemented the curriculum with facilitation from local leaders who could create a bond with the young participants.

"We had two facilitators, both African-American women and both mothers," McEntyre says. "One had been a mom at 12 years old. It wasn't just her leadership but her personal experience that made a difference. The young folks could see themselves in these two women. And it wasn't just stories about where they are now. We talked about teen pregnancy and what that looks like."

The program led to new opportunities for the students, some of whom have gone on to additional leadership and business development training as they have worked through the pandemic.

"We want to show them," McEntyre says. "There is greatness on the other side."

Seeds of healing blow across Northland



The healing powers of the land have always been magical for Regina Laroche.

Descended from families that raised their own food in South Carolina and Haiti, Laroche has used gardening, plants, seeds, dance and song to heal and bring people together at her Diaspora Gardens on Madeline Island.

But when COVID-19 hit, Laroche couldn't gather people in traditional ways. A grant from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation helped her create video programming to carry her "Seeds of Connection, Seeds of Healing" program to parents, children, teachers and others on the island and along the Bayfield peninsula.

The program also extended to Duluth, where families, children, churches and community groups saw the video messages and eventually worked with Laroche outside to cultivate gardens and swap plants and seeds with her garden on Madeline Island.

Seeds of connection and healing found fertile soil in residents looking for human contact, hope and understanding following the twin jolts of the pandemic and the racial and social reckoning that followed George Floyd's murder in Minneapolis.

"When COVID struck, it became clear that that drive to connect people to their birthright of health, food, themselves and community were needed more than ever," Laroche says. "Our response to the pandemic was to isolate. It was necessary. But it meant we lost a lot of the connection we had. And when isolation happens, families and children of color get more isolated, get less outdoor time. They get less connected time than families in the mainstream and families that have more advantages and resources."

Her video programming for "Seeds of Connection, Seeds of Healing" connected people in the one way they could, though that connection later deepened with safe, outdoors in-person gardening on Duluth's hillside.

"I was able to collect seeds and share them with families at the Steve O'Neil apartments," Laroche says. "And they collected seeds and shared them with me. When everyone was isolated in their apartments, we were able to share pieces of earth and garden together."

She adds: "So many fingers and threads have come from this and the opportunity granted through the COVID response funding. It has created a really beautiful footing for this work to continue and expand."



Food becomes a focus — and changes everything

A pandemic has forever changed Duluth's American Indian Community Housing Organization.

Since 1993, AICHO has provided housing to Native American community members. But when COVID-19 hit, the community needed much more.



Nearly two years later, an organization that wasn't focused on food has spent more than \$673,000 distributing food. A grant from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation provided some of the funds.

"It has been an overwhelming new project," AICHO Executive Director Michelle LeBeau says. "But every single staff person who works on the food distribution project—we have curbside and food bags for unsheltered people—says it is so inspirational. And our community is so grateful."

As part of the work, AICHO purchased the shuttered Fourth Street market, re-opening it as a food distribution center. Now, the store is undergoing a transformation to become an

Indigenous market that will meet community need by selling fresh, affordable foods.

"Relationships through this pandemic have grown and strengthened. That has brought us together as a staff and with our community," AICHO Program Director Daryl Olson says. "We had to quickly mobilize. But if there is a silver lining in COVID, it's that it has brought us together and brought more opportunity to our community."

It started with a phone call asking if AICHO would consider expanding to food distribution.

"If we hadn't had that call, we wouldn't have gone down this road," LeBeau says. "It was so far outside our normal operation. But once we started it, we realized we couldn't stop. This is such an obvious need in our community, a real gap in our community."

Olson adds, "Part of what we did was look at the barriers for people needing food support. We have not required identification or filling out a form. Sometimes in the pandemic, food was just left outside on the ground or on tables. That wasn't the way we wanted to do it. We wanted to do it authentically and right because this pandemic has affected all of us."



Program connects across faiths, politics

It was a program designed to address the troubling rise of Islamophobia. But COVID-19 presented additional challenges for those seeking to bring together Muslims and non-Muslims in the Twin Ports.

The Duluth Superior Area Community
Foundation provided a grant to help the Muslim
American Society of Minnesota, based in the
Twin Cities, work with Twin Ports residents
using the society's long-running Taking Heart
program. For 16 years, Taking Heart has brought
together people across faiths and the political
spectrum for an understanding of Islam.

But just as the Twin Ports program was about to start, the pandemic halted in-person gatherings. That presented a special challenge to Taking Heart, which has relied on in-person meetings at mosques and conversations around meals.

"We give people an immersive experience into Muslim life," says Imam Asad Zaman, society executive director. "Participants get a chance to tour a mosque, watch Muslims break the fast with dates and milk, and observe Muslims pray their fourth prayer of the day. The event ends with dinner and small table conversations between participants and their hosts."

But none of that was possible with COVID-19. So, the society worked to translate Taking Heart to Zoom. The online event included participants from the Islamic Center of the Twin Ports and two Twin Cities mosques as well as non-Muslims from both communities.

It was a challenge—but necessary to persist through the difficulties that COVID-19 presented.

"The value of Taking Heart comes from the conversations people have," Zaman says. "We consider it a success if people are able to bond with each other. It's not about the global balance of power or the theology of Islam and Christianity. It's about Ahmad and Barb getting along and finding something they care about together, be it baseball or Star Trek."

Zaman says the Taking Heart session over Zoom helped. He and the society are interested in furthering the work when COVID-19 restrictions fully lift.

"With this program, people are building community relationships," he says. "They're building human connections. And that's what really matters."



Even at a distance, art heals

Art has always been a healer. Near the start of the pandemic, the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa learned how art could still do its healing work, even when people were separated by COVID-19.

Artful Healing is a painting program for the band and its Noojimo'iwewin Center for mental health and substance abuse recovery.

"The goal is to have people express things that maybe they aren't able to fully understand or talk about—or don't want to talk about directly," says Ed Metelica, a certified peer specialist at the center, part of the Red Cliff Community Health Center near Bayfield.

"You can be focusing on the technique and looking at the paper and creating," he says. "But at the same time, your subconscious is settling in, allowing you to express thoughts."

When COVID-19 threatened to interrupt an Artful Healing program financed with a grant from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation, the band improvised and delivered the program by Zoom.

"We said, 'Yeah, we can do that. It will be different. It may be better in some ways," Metelica says. "It was different, of course. One way it was better is that it made us interact with the people more than just once."

Participants picked up information about the program as well as watercolor paper, paints and brushes. Those who attended the Zoom session could paint from photos of nearby Little Frog Bay, a vase and flowers set up on a table—or anything they wanted.

Participants painted, shared their work and discussed it. A raffle with prizes that had been

planned for an in-person session also went online, with later in-person delivery of the prizes. More follow-up included opportunities for participants to meet and connect with center staff afterwards.

The program accomplished its goals in a new way and at a time when healing was vital.

"The thing is, whether you're in person or on Zoom, you stay centered and focused on things you might not be able to express without the art," Metelica says. "Based on what we saw, people felt really comfortable doing that with a brush in their hand."



Food sovereignty rises on Madeline Island

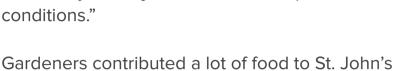
Food sovereignty is a system in which people produce, distribute and consume their own food.

It's a practice becoming more common on Mooningwaanikaaning, or Madeline Island, with the help of grants from the Apostle Islands Area Community Fund and other funds of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation. Two food projects finished strong years recently despite the drought: the Madeline Island Community Garden and Island resident Marty Curry's garden, called Akiing 8th Fire.



"We've had more plots rented than ever," says Janet Moore, leader of the community garden project. "We've also added a Wednesday night volunteer night for the community garden and as well as volunteer nights for Akiing on Thursdays."

Drought brought challenges, but the Town of La Pointe Fire Department filled the community garden's irrigation pond.



"Growing food was harder but not impossible,"
Moore says. "We just learned to adapt to certain

Gardeners contributed a lot of food to St. John's United Church of Christ, the island's only year-round church, which operates a food shelf. "It's important to us that the community garden exists," says Rev. Rachel Bauman, pastor at St. John's.

Gardeners also provided food for the Mooningwaanikaaning Treaty Day event. "We were able to feed well over 100 people for Treaty Day, which was really pretty unprecedented," Moore says. "I'm proud of the community. Despite the drought, we pulled through a really good harvest, and we pulled through great volunteer days."

This story was written by Robin Armagost as part of her internship with the Apostle Islands and Chequamegon Bay Area Community Funds.





Local giving keeps Two Harbors strong

The spirit of philanthropy is strong in Two Harbors.

"I have always loved this area," says Marlys Wisch, a volunteer and organizer of a recent legacy giving event at the local Moose Lodge. Two Harbors, she says, "has the small-town community feel of people caring and sharing."



In 1998, the Two Harbors Area Fund started with support from local business leaders, a private donor and seed money from the Iron Range Resources Board. It was the first affiliate of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation and provided a blueprint for others that followed.

"The foresight of local leaders to pool resources and invest in the future of Two Harbors is a powerful example," says Shaun Floerke, president and CEO of the Community Foundation.

From an initial endowment of \$250,000 from local donors, the Two Harbors Area Fund has grown to more than \$1.3 million. When combined with other Two Harbors-affiliated funds at the Community Foundation, the total exceeds \$2.3 million.

Since inception, the Two Harbors Area Fund has provided more than \$600,000 to projects large and small. It has received nearly 2,000 contributions.

"We've begun to do major projects," says Mark Johnson, a former Two Harbors resident and one of the fund's originators.

The first was a trail connecting the community. A \$50,000 grant helped leverage city funds to complete the project. Other grants are in the works for projects that build on the community's dreams.

The Two Harbors Area Fund is a permanent endowment, meaning gifts and donations are held and invested, with the fund's earnings awarded to community organizations annually through grants.

"I work with Two Harbors Area Fund," Wisch says, "because I want to ensure a good quality of life for all people in our Two Harbors and surrounding area."



Staff

A dedicated staff of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation carries out daily operations and achieves strategic and tactical objectives of the organization.



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A volunteer Board of Trustees guides the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation, setting strategic policy and providing broad oversight as well as community connections.

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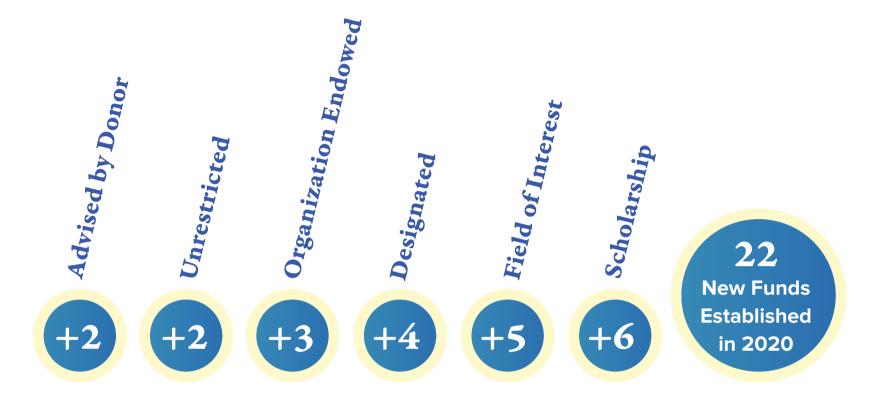
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Financial statement

Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation

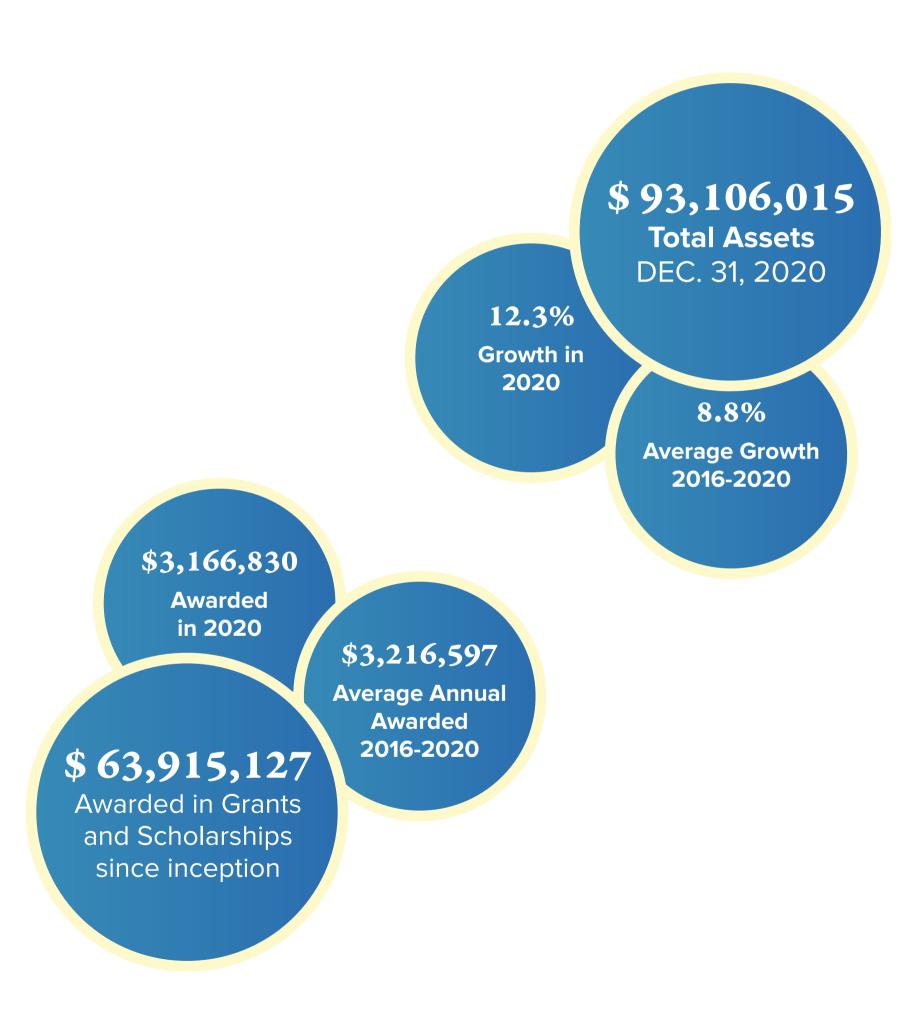
Financial Status	2020	2019
TOTAL ASSETS	\$93,106,016	\$ 82,887,562
Public Support and Revenue		
Contributions	\$ 3,360,875	\$ 3,335,008
Donated services	\$ 18,672	\$ 76,358
Interest and dividends	\$ 1,615,577	\$ 1,847,112
Net realized and unrealized gain(loss) less investment management fees	\$ 8,632,062	\$ 11,021,985
Refunds of grants	\$ 19,372	\$ 13,094
Miscellaneous	\$0	\$ 1,500
Total Public Support and Revenue	\$ 13,646,558	\$ 16,295,057
Grants, Fees, and Operating Expenses		
Grants and scholarships*	\$ 2,633,048	\$ 2,005,113
Miscellaneous	\$ 20,219	\$ 19,097
Functional expenses		
Program	\$ 607,788	\$ 670,450
Fund-raising	\$ 140,804	\$ 116,140
Public education	\$ 299,174	\$ 325,700
Management and general	\$ 287,656	\$ 249,459
Total functional expenses	1,335,422	\$ 1,361,749
Total Grants, Fees, and Operating Expenses	\$ 3,988,689	\$ 3,385,959
Change in net assets	\$ 8,677,565	\$ 11,738,522
Agency contributions/change of value	\$ 801,322	\$ 984,729
Agency grants	\$ 178,982	\$ 185,847
Net Assets, beginning of year	\$ 77,083,335	\$ 64,174,237
Net Assets, end of year	\$ 86,741,204	\$ 77,083,335

Fund trends

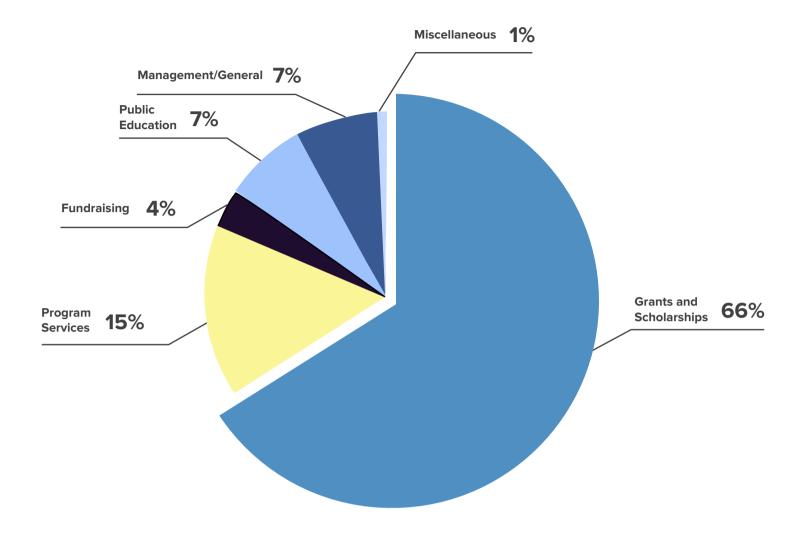


	Total Number of Funds	Total Assets
Unrestricted	44	\$ 28,169,341
Flexible resources to address changing community needs		
Field of Interest	98	\$ 19,704,451
Address needs of donors' general area of interest		
Scholarship	90	\$ 12,643,295
Provide means for students to help access education		
Designated	72	\$ 10,883,857
Provides resources to one or more specific organization		
Advised by Donor	34	\$ 10,794,097
Donors actively participate in grantmaking process		
Organization Endowed	62	\$ 10,432,428
For a single organization; usually created by that organizatio	n	
Other	5	\$ 478,546
Total Funds:	405	\$ 93,106,015

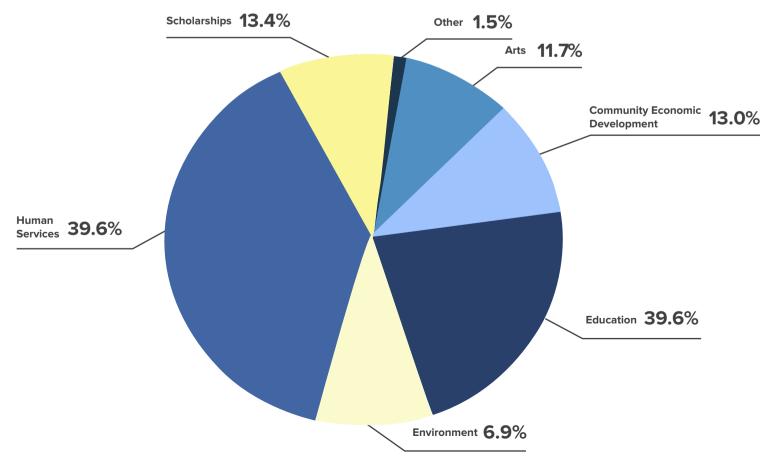
Financial trends



2020 Total Expenses



Grants and Scholarships Detail





Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation

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