



Community Concerns

Local Giving Has Big Impact On Communities

(NAPSA)—People across the country are finding new ways to raise money to address difficult community problems—and their efforts are resulting in big changes.

For instance, a number of rural communities have been hurt by dwindling resources from the federal and state governments, as well as by declining populations. However, rural residents have reversed some of these troubling trends with what's known as rural philanthropy.

Rural philanthropy involves entire towns coming together (often crossing racial or socioeconomic divides) to achieve common goals. Towns have used their collective talents and creativity to establish local endowments, funds and other philanthropic assets that have helped improve their local health care, education and overall quality of life in the community.

For example, on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in Montana, community leaders turned to philanthropy to build a permanent endowment that addresses challenges related to poverty and unemployment. Tribal members capitalized on artistic assets and have raised more than \$300,000 to date through the sale of Native American art.

Similarly, the Pointe Coupée Enrichment Fund in Louisiana has crossed racial and ethnic lines, brought the community together, and raised \$200,000 to address common needs. Recently, the Enrichment Fund also became the center of Hurricane Katrina relief efforts in the community.

Experts say what makes such



Photo courtesy of Leslie Lilly, Foundation for Appalachian Ohio.

Communities across the country are using philanthropy to improve their quality of life.

efforts unique is that they turn the whole community into both a donor and a beneficiary. “Big cities have big donors that are largely separate from their community. Our average rural donor is a school teacher or cabinetmaker—professional or working class. They are people who are integrally involved in their communities and want to give back,” explains Peter Pennekamp of the Humboldt Area Foundation in California.

The following sites can help you get your community involved in rural philanthropy:

- The Forum’s New Ventures in Philanthropy Rural Knowledge Center at givingforum.org/rural;
- The Center for Rural Strategies’ Community Philanthropy Initiative at ruralstrategies.org/projects/cpi.html;
- The Philanthropy Index at philanthropyindex.org;
- The Aspen Institute’s Rural Development Philanthropy Learning Network at aspencsg.org/rdp.