

IOSCO COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Update

Spring 2025

Scholarship Helps a Young Artist Focus on Talents and Experiences



Scholarships can have an incredible impact on the lives of those who receive them. Some awards have the potential to open a world of possibilities and turn dreams into reality. Such is the case for Tawas Area graduate, Addison Cota – a talented and driven young artist. As a recipient of ICCF's Michael Wentworth Scholarship, she received a total of $43,000 in the past three years, as well as several other ICCF awards.

For Addison, these scholarships allow her to focus on experiences, like being featured in Grand Rapids' ArtPrize (pictured: Addison on the right, and her sister Shaylin at ArtPrize); growing as an artist; and sharing her artistic abilities with the world. With her talents and the support of scholarship funding, she's headed for big things on the art scene!

"Any scholarship can be helpful to students, but awards like these have the ability to shift the trajectory of a student's education and career plans, allowing them to chase their goals and see a future for themselves they may have left behind otherwise," says Community Foundation Executive Director, Patrick Heraghty. "This is part of the legacy that is created with every fund, and every life affected by the individuals who created them."

After graduating from Tawas Area High School in 2022, Addison has spent her first years of post-secondary study at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, honing her artistic skills. She explored downtown Grand Rapids, particularly during ArtPrize, a free, open international art competition and cultural event held there each autumn. She dreamed of entering a piece of her own artwork someday.

In the summer of 2024, she traveled with her sister and fellow artist, Shaylin Cota, to Spain and Rome where they explored museums, monuments, and art galleries together. Addison says the experience created so many wonderful memories that they decided to team up to create a collaborative piece of art that combined the sisters' respective skills to create a one-of-a-kind piece.

- Story continues on next page -

"The fact that we would experience this together made it an unforgettable venture," says Addison. "Our piece, 'La Vita è Un Viaggio" is a 12x4 foot collage incorporating many mementos from our travels, our hometown of Tawas, and our current home of Grand Rapids," says Addison. "The name means 'life is a journey'. It is a testament to our collective journey and experiences."

For Addison, receiving her scholarships not only helped her family with the financial burden of college expenses and allowed her to focus on her passions; but also offered the feeling that others believe in her and her work - a feeling that excites her about the future's possibilities. This spring she begins her junior year at Central Michigan University where she will major in Art History with a minor in Museum Studies and Studio Art.

The Michael Wentworth Scholarship Fund was established in Michael's memory by his friends and family. Michael was a lifelong summer resident of Iosco County who had a passion for art that spilled over into his education and career, where he was a curator at the Boston Athenaeum at the time of his passing in 2002. In 2011, the fund received a large, planned gift. This legacy donation increased the fund's assets to the point that Iosco County individuals majoring in specific areas of visual arts, or wanting to participate in apprenticeships or camps, could have a significant resource to help them achieve their goals.

In addition to the Michael Wentworth Scholarship, Addison was also the recipient of the Carl and Christine Huebner Scholarship, and the Tawas Area Education Foundation's Elmer and Eliza Werth and Coyle Scholarships.



Urgent Needs Fund Reactivated Following Ice Storm

In response to the devastating ice storm that has affected much of northeast Michigan, the Urgent Needs Fund held through our lead foundation, Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan was reactivated on April 1 to those impacted by the disaster. The Fund is providing immediate assistance to nonprofits serving people facing hardship due to the storm's aftermath.

Many in these communities are still without power, facing unsafe conditions, and restoration efforts are still in progress. Urgent Needs Fund donations will help our northern neighbors impacted by this natural disaster.

Grants will be directed to nonprofit organizations providing vital services such as access to food and basic hygiene, care for senior citizens, and assistance with other essential needs.

Scan here to give online or visit cfnem.org.

Amy Peterman Joins ICCF Board



We are pleased to welcome Amy Peterman, of East Tawas, to our Board of Directors.

Peterman is currently Senior Vice President, Head of Retail Banking at Huron Community Bank (HCB), providing oversight of HCB's eight branches. Originally from Rockford, Mich., she was recruited to work for HCB in 2016, moving to East Tawas with her husband, Jason, and two children.

Peterman says she loves the spirit of volunteerism in Iosco County, and the strong leadership and nonprofit organizations she sees working to make Iosco's communities a better place to live, work, and play. After attending some ICCF events, it seemed a natural fit for her to begin serving Iosco County through the Community Foundation.



Grant Provides Boots for "Tiny Trailblazers"

Palomino Hope Equine Therapy provides a supportive environment for children who have experienced trauma or poverty to heal through their equine-based programs, offering opportunities to learn responsibility and build confidence through therapeutic interactions with horses, other kids, and caring adults.

A $1,500 grant from the Community Foundation's Iosco County Youth Advisory Council (YAC) supported Palomino Hope in providing participants with their own pair of cowboy boots, ensuring the children wear proper footwear and are safe during equine activities. The children are so proud of their boots that they were seen wearing them at school! Members of our local YAC got to visit the organization's ranch and be part of distributing the new boots and see their grant in action.

Grant Supports Healthy Birdwatching and Feeding Program



Bring on the binoculars for some bird watching as our feathered friends migrate to their summer spots! Tawas State Park is an excellent place for the activity, and with the help of an Iosco County Community Foundation Community Improvement Grant, AuSable Valley Audubon embarked on a project to make bird watching and feeding safer for both watchers and the birds. Funds supported the construction of new benches that double as secure bird feed storage at the park, new feeders along the birding trail, and community presentations on how to safely feed backyard birds. Heads up though – Tawas State Park is under construction in 2025, so check park updates if you plan to head into the park for independent bird watching.



Tawas Wellness Warriors Promote Health for the Whole Family

With the help of an Iosco County Community Foundation Community Improvement Grant, along with additional community support, Tawas Wellness Warriors are helping families become more active and healthier together. The grant provided funds for a "Family Healthy Weight Program" that offered fun fitness classes for children and helpful health information for parents.

The success of the program helped it evolve into a nine-week summer program in support of Clara Bolen Elementary School's Summer Boost program, with weekly sessions focused on health and wellness.

Project organizers say they received wonderful feedback from parents, kids, and facilitators about the positive changes in the children's attitudes. "We made movement so fun that by the end of the series, kids were facilitating and creating their own obstacle courses and fitness challenges for each other!"

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Knowledge Corner

Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) as a Smart Giving Tool

A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) is a tax-advantaged way for individuals aged 70½ or older to donate directly from their Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to a qualified charity. By making a QCD, the distribution is excluded from taxable income, which can reduce overall tax liability.

In 2025, an individual can donate up to $108,000 from an IRA to a charity, including any fund at the Community Foundation. And it's a good idea to consider a QCD earlier in the year to allow your distribution to count toward your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), which you must take once you turn 73.

In short, QCDs are a great tool for giving back to your community if you don't need the funds. To support an ICCF fund, let your financial advisor know and get in touch!

2024 Annual Report

The 2024 Iosco County Community Foundation Annual Report can be viewed on our website at iccf-online.org under "Resources" and "Annual Reports"; or scan the QR code here to view it online.

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ICCF is an affiliate of the Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan.

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