

# The Columbus Telegram

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## Fledgling foundation working to build fund

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COLUMBUS — Columbus Area Community Foundation (CACF) was created three years ago with a goal of enhancing the community's quality of life.

Now, the foundation is seeking annual donations from individuals to help continue this effort.

CACF has established a sustaining membership with the intention of getting at least 150 people to commit \$100 annually to the foundation's endowed fund.

Earnings from that fund are then reinvested in the community through grant allocations in four pillars outlined by the Hometown

### After initial founding, funding tops priorities

Competitiveness program: building local leadership, expanding community philanthropy, energizing entrepreneurship and engaging youths.

Essentially, CACF offers financial support to any organization or cause that helps the community or a group of people, explained Chairman Rich Chochon.

"We're basically the fundraising vehicle for whatever might come down the pipeline down the road," Chochon said. "So our main goal is going to be to keep increasing the amount of the endowed funds

so we can do more and more as it continues to grow."

The foundation now has about \$500,000, including \$100,000 in bequested funds. This restricts CACF allocations to a limited number of dollars each year.

In 2011, a total of \$2,200 was awarded to T4C, Central Community College-Columbus' E-ship program, Habitat for Humanity of Columbus and for a marketing speaker.

Through its affiliation with Nebraska Community Foundation, CACF has made larger, one-time

distributions in the past — including \$40,000 to Platte County Food Pantry, Simon House and Columbus Emergency Relief using money awarded to the foundation through a Peter Kiewit Foundation grant and \$33,000 to the New Americans grant using funds from the Ford Foundation.

CACF is financially backed by \$1,000 donations from 75 Founders' Club members, \$5,000 donations from five businesses and individuals, \$10,000 donations from two businesses and \$25,000 donations from three.

CACF also works with other Columbus foundations to secure donations for future projects.

Moving forward, Chochon said the foundation is hoping to expand its advisory committee and donations pool, while using its non-profit status to help raise funds for local projects — possibly including the proposed Quality of Life campuses.

"What's our main challenge right now?" Chochon said. "It's getting everyone to understand what our community foundation is, what it stands for and what it's going to do."

For more information on CACF, 764 33rd Ave., call 402-564-2769.