Dear NAF clients and community partners:

As we reflect on 2022, we are inspired by your generosity and have seen once again how coming together for the greater good is the best way to move forward.

This past year, the Niagara Area Foundation went through a strategic planning process to identify the evolving needs of Niagara County and reprioritize its goals. As a result, for the 2022 grant process, we considered applications with maximum positive impact in Niagara County that align with one of the Council’s two goals:

**Youth Enrichment:** To build stronger communities through the enrichment of youth, positive youth development, and equity and inclusion.

**Environment:** To support and enhance education and awareness about the importance and creation of a healthy, vibrant, and safe ecosystem for Niagara County residents.

Since its inception, the NAF has awarded more than $4.5 million in grants to numerous organizations located in – and support – the Niagara region. NAF has also grown its assets to more than $8 million with more than 35 funds under its umbrella.

We hope you enjoy some other stories about our work in this newsletter. Thank you for your ongoing support as we strengthen the Niagara region by addressing critical needs to improve lives.

With gratitude,

Molly (Anderson) Oliver, Chair

Niagara Area Foundation Strengthens Niagara County with a Focus on Youth and the Environment

For more than two decades, dozens of leaders with deep roots in Niagara County have served on the NAF’s Council and guided the mission forward. The current members are:

**Officers**

Molly (Anderson) Oliver, **Chair**
Jennifer Pauly, **Vice Chair**
Margaret Nucci, **Secretary**
Jane Killewald, **Treasurer**

**Council**

Julie R. Berrigan, MS
Dorothy Kelley
Marianne E. Koenig
Michelle Vanstrom
Michael Williamson
Patricia Wrobel
Richard Zucco

In September, the NAF Council met in Lewiston for a facilitated book discussion about “The Sum of Us” by Heather McGhee. Pictured here are NAF Council members, from left: Richard Zucco, Dorothy Kelley, Margaret Nucci - Secretary, Michael Williamson, Molly (Anderson) Oliver - Chair, Jennifer Pauly – Vice Chair, Patricia Wrobel, Julie R. Berrigan, Marianne E. Koenig.
The Niagara Area Foundation is ever growing and seeks to provide its community with more grants each year. For more information, visit TheNiagaraAreaFoundation.org.
The Wilson Community Library, located in Wilson, New York, has a long and storied history. Early in the 1900s, libraries were only found in large cities. At that time, the Western Federation of Women’s Clubs started a campaign to bring public libraries to rural communities and in 1911, a library association was formed and issued a provisional charter for a new library in Wilson, then called the Wilson Free Library. The library was first opened in a room in the home of its first librarian, moving to its permanent and current location in 1929.

In 2006, as the Wilson Community Library looked ahead to the next chapter, it turned to the Niagara Area Foundation to establish the Wilson Free Library Forever Friends Endowment Fund.

“The Endowment fund helped our library to be eligible for three different NYS construction grants applied and awarded in three different years,” explained Meghan Brauer, Wilson Community Library Director. The grants allowed the library to update its siding and roof, replace two apartments on the second floor of the library with a meeting space, study rooms and a craft room, and completely update the first floor of the library with everything from a new furnace/AC units, to a new teen room.

“Our library has been completely renovated and is such a beautiful space for our community and patrons to utilize in so many different ways,” Meghan said.

Through the fund, the library will ensure a perpetual source of funding, ensuring the community will continue to benefit from its services for many years to come.
Established in 1975, Horizon Health Services, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that provides hope and healing for individuals and their families dealing with substance use and/or mental health disorders.

“Since the onset of the COVID pandemic, the need for mental health treatment in our community has grown exponentially,” explained Christina Pearl, Corporate Director of Communication, Horizon Health Services.

To expand its reach, Horizon received a grant from the Niagara Area Foundation that allowed for schools to provide the necessary presentations and resources to students, faculty and staff by educating around mental health and substance use. Virtual and-person options were made available throughout the school year and in the summer prior to the new year kicking off, and programs were customized based on the school needs.

“Through this grant from the Niagara Area Foundation, Horizon has been able to strengthen our messaging, education and impact by continuing to expand and build our outreach efforts to schools within Niagara County,” said Christina.