



# Shaping a Stronger Future

2025 Annual Report



Your Generosity. Amplified.

Dear Friends,

Over the past year, we witnessed countless acts of generosity and collaboration across MetroWest, with neighbors helping neighbors, nonprofits supporting families, and civic leaders tackling challenges together. Across our cities and towns, people worked together to meet urgent needs while continuing to invest in solutions that strengthen our communities today and for years to come.

At the Community Foundation for MetroWest, we bring people, resources, and ideas together to move our region forward. In 2025, we supported nonprofits working across several critical areas, addressing hunger, improving housing stability, expanding access to education, growing economic opportunity, and sustaining the arts and culture that make MetroWest vibrant. We also strengthen the partnerships and local data that help guide better decisions for our communities.

With the help of our donors, we directed \$4.2 million to more than 450 organizations across MetroWest and beyond. Through Action Projects, donor advised funds, and community leadership initiatives, these investments supported organizations working every day to meet basic needs and expand opportunity.

Our work also positions us to respond when urgent challenges arise. When changes to SNAP threatened to increase food insecurity in our region, the Community Foundation quickly convened nonprofit partners and funders to coordinate a response and mobilize support for local food programs. It was one example of how community can act quickly and effectively when we work together.

The same spirit of collaboration informs our broader efforts to bring people together to understand and address regional challenges. Through Impact MetroWest and our community convenings, we helped ensure that regional conversations are informed by both data and lived experience and grounded in practical solutions.

None of this work would be possible without you. To our donors, nonprofit partners, volunteers, Board of Trustees, and staff, thank you for your commitment to MetroWest and for the trust you place in the Community Foundation.

As we look ahead, the opportunities to strengthen our region are as great as the challenges we face. We invite you to stay engaged by supporting the organizations that are improving lives across MetroWest, participating in the conversations shaping our region, and partnering with us to expand opportunity for all who call this community home. Together, we can build on this momentum and continue creating a MetroWest where everyone can thrive.

With gratitude,



**Jay Kim**  
Executive Director



**Roland Hoch**  
Board Chair

# We created an impact in 2025

Continuing to build a stronger, more inclusive MetroWest

**\$42M**

in grants since 1995

**\$20M**

in grants over the last 5 years

**\$4.2M**

in grants made in 2025

**450+**

nonprofits received grants in 2025



# Where Creativity Builds Community

In Lexington and throughout MetroWest, LexArt is a vibrant hub where community members gather to learn, create, and connect.

**From ceramics and painting to woodworking and metal arts, it offers an inclusive space where creativity strengthens bonds and nurtures well-being.**

In 2025, a grant from the Community Foundation for MetroWest, made possible by the generous support of the Barr Foundation, gave LexArt something invaluable: the time and capacity to listen. Rather than expanding quickly, the organization paused to engage students, families, artists, and partners in meaningful conversation about what the community needed most.

The message was clear; more youth programming, greater accessibility for individuals with disabilities, and expanded opportunities for those facing financial barriers.

Because of donor investment, LexArt was able to turn that feedback into action.



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A new pre-teen open studio pilot, created in response to requests for more screen-free activities, launched this year and quickly filled, an early sign of strong demand. What began as a single offering is already shaping future plans.

At the same time, LexArt strengthened partnerships with organizations serving individuals with disabilities and families experiencing financial hardship, expanding access to free and reduced-cost classes. Accessibility upgrades, including automatic door openers and adaptive studio equipment, are now underway to ensure the space grows more inclusive as programs expand.

Young people are also helping shape what comes next. A newly formed teen advisory council is contributing ideas for exhibitions and programming, building leadership skills while keeping youth voices central. In parallel, young adults in a transition program for individuals with special needs are gaining hands-on studio experience, developing job skills, and creating handmade items that support local housing initiatives.



These are early but meaningful steps. This grant did more than fund programs; it strengthened LexArt’s foundation and aligned its growth with community voice.

In a time of rising costs and increasing demand, philanthropic partnership makes this intentional progress possible. Donor support allows LexArt to expand access, invest in inclusive infrastructure, and keep creative opportunity within reach for all.

Walk through the building on a weekday evening, and the impact is visible: pre-teens shaping clay, teens discussing exhibit ideas, neighbors greeting one another in studios designed for broader access. Each creative act reflects a community strengthened through thoughtful investment.

With continued support, LexArt is poised to deepen youth programming, complete accessibility enhancements, and broaden scholarship opportunities in the year ahead. What began with listening is becoming lasting change powered by philanthropy and rooted in community.





# Not a Dynasty, but a Destiny

There is a moment in every strong community when generosity becomes more than an idea; it becomes something lived, shared, and multiplied. For the Community Foundation for MetroWest, that moment happens every day through people like John Donovan and Donna Hale.



John Donovan and Donna Hale (left), the honorees at the Foundation's 2026 Annual Spring Inspiration Breakfast, are pictured with speaker Holly Fogle, Jay Kim, Executive Director of the Community Foundation for MetroWest, and co-chair Mary Beth Mahoney.

## A JOURNEY OF CONNECTION

Donna's story with the Foundation didn't begin with an investment, but with an invitation. In 2010, she was serving as board chair of Bethany Hill Place, facing the challenges that many nonprofits experience, doing more with less. An invitation from the Foundation offered something rare, not just support, but connection, and yes, there was focaccia bread, and wine involved.

"What I found was a catalyst," Donna recalls. Convenings and expert guidance gave nonprofit leaders the tools to build capacity, strengthen strategy, and expand their impact. These gatherings created space to learn from one another and lead more effectively, a gift that continues to inspire her today.

## FROM LEADERSHIP TO PHILANTHROPY

Years later, Donna's service on the Foundation's Distribution Committee deepened her understanding of community needs. She met what she calls "the unassuming best people," individuals who saw a need and chose to act. She also witnessed the Foundation's remarkable growth while remaining grounded in local knowledge and trusted relationships.

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For Donna and John, that trust is at the heart of their giving. As annual fund donors, they partner with the Foundation not only to give, but to give with intention. Their philanthropy supports the Foundation in responding to evolving community needs of people and organizations making a meaningful difference across MetroWest.

**A PHILOSOPHY OF PURPOSE**

Often, philanthropy is not a solo endeavor; it is a family commitment. Donna's husband, John, shares her dedication to giving back, and together they have instilled those values in their children. John challenges the idea that philanthropy is reserved for the few. "It's everyday people and families making thoughtful choices who drive meaningful change," he says. For him and for Donna, this is a call to action.

Through their philanthropy, Donna and John have turned their values into action, helping build a stronger MetroWest and demonstrating how generosity can connect communities, create opportunity, and enrich the lives of others.

Giving is not separate from living well; it is part of it. It connects us, strengthens us, and reminds us of our responsibility to one another.

**IMPACT THAT LASTS**

At a time when local needs continue to grow, Donna and John's approach reflects the vital role of community philanthropy in building a more responsive, resilient, and connected region. Their story demonstrates what happens when individuals encounter a trusted institution at the right moment and choose to stay engaged.

Through their partnership with the Community Foundation for MetroWest, Donna and John have shown that philanthropy is defined not by scale, but by intention.

"Someone once said that service is the rent we pay for our time here on earth. We don't know if we can fully live up to this honor, but we plan to make sure our rent is fully paid."



"It begins with showing up. And grows into something enduring."

"We don't want to leave our children a dynasty. We want to leave them a destiny."



**PARTNERSHIPS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

**“Giving back isn’t just what we do; it’s part of who we are.”**

– Geoff Stanton, President of Stanton Insurance



Geoff & Shikena Stanton attend the Waltham Boys & Girls Club Gala & Auction

**“When you invest your time, talent, and resources, you don’t just support change; you become a part of it.”**



“At Stanton Insurance, giving back isn’t just something we do; it’s part of who we are. Inspired by my grandfather and father – I’ve seen how local giving can transform lives. For me, this is personal.”

When we support nonprofits, impact matters most. That’s why our partnership with the Community Foundation for MetroWest is so important. Their knowledge of local needs ensures our contributions go where they can do the most good. I’ve seen this guidance turn our giving into real change.

**CORPORATE GIVING BEYOND DOLLARS**

Corporate philanthropy is more than checks; it’s investing time, talent, and resources. Working with the Foundation amplifies our impact, strengthens community resilience, and helps create lasting change.

**STRATEGIC GIVING WITH OUR CORPORATE DONOR ADVISED FUND**

Our company’s donor advised fund with the Foundation lets us give thoughtfully now while planning for the future. With the Foundation’s guidance, our philanthropy is intentional, strategic, and meaningful. I also have the opportunity to engage my team in giving back, all while supporting the Community Foundation’s work as well. It’s an absolute win-win.

**SUPPORTING YOUTH: WALTHAM BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**

For over 40 years, Stanton Insurance has proudly supported the Waltham Boys & Girls Club, a partnership that reflects our approach to helping young people grow and thrive. This long-term commitment isn’t just about writing a check; it’s about being part of a meaningful change in the community, aligning perfectly with our focus on strategic, impactful giving.

**ADVICE TO FELLOW BUSINESSES**

Don’t just give money. Give your time and your talents. Engage directly, see the impact, and become part of the change. That’s where the true rewards lie.

Editor’s Note: This article was provided by Geoff Stanton.

# The making of CHANGE MAKERS



Alex Lo (top) & Charlotte Elwy (below)

## How Youth in Philanthropy inspires leadership that endures far beyond the classroom

Nearly three decades ago, the Community Foundation for MetroWest launched Youth in Philanthropy (YIP), a pioneering program that empowers young people to lead with purpose and make a meaningful difference in their communities.

Today, that vision continues to grow: more than 2,500 alumni have participated in YIP, carrying its lessons into their schools, careers, and communities.

YIP does more than introduce students to philanthropy; it cultivates confident leaders and lifelong changemakers. This impact is reflected in the experiences of alumni Alex Lo and Charlotte Elwy, whose stories illustrate how YIP shapes leadership journeys long after graduation.

Lo first learned about YIP through his older sister, inspired by how energized she was after each YIP session. “Something that stood out to me then was the idea of time, talent, and treasure,” Lo recalled.

**“I think philanthropy will stay with me for life; I know I can make a difference wherever I am.”**

– Alex Lo

Elwy also followed in her older sibling’s footsteps, joining as a ninth grader during the pandemic, seeking connection in a remote world. At a time of isolation, YIP offered not just engagement, but a sense of belonging and purpose.

Both quickly discovered that YIP offers far more than education; it builds leadership and confidence. Lo credits YIP with shaping his leadership approach, particularly the importance of listening and valuing others’ perspectives.

“YIP instills the idea of consensus from an early stage,” Lo said. “It taught me that, as a leader, it’s important to allow everyone to speak before the group decides. You won’t always reach consensus, but it’s very important that you acknowledge what the other side is saying.”

Elwy later returned to YIP as an instructor’s assistant; a full circle moment that deepened her confidence and leadership presence. “I was a pretty quiet kid,” she admitted, “Facilitating a group felt intimidating, but I did it, and I was proud I followed through.”

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In these roles, she not only strengthened her leadership skills but also helped shape the next generation of YIP participants. “The experience pushed me to grow into the leader I wanted to become, and YIP gave me that path.”

Reflecting on his time in YIP, as well as his goal to serve on a board after he graduates from Dartmouth College, Lo said, “I think philanthropy will stay with me for life, I know I can make a difference wherever I am.” His journey reflects that enduring mindset YIP instills; that leadership and service are lifelong commitments.

Elwy echoed Lo’s sentiment: “The opportunities I’ve had to keep applying what I learned through YIP have become some of the most meaningful and fulfilling parts of my life.” During a gap year from her studies at Harvard University, she volunteers extensively, supporting tax literacy at a local organization and with City Year, a nonprofit advancing academic outcomes for students in grades K-12.

“You would think I’d be tired,” she joked, “but when your work is doing so much good and bringing people happiness, it energizes you.” Her dedication exemplifies how YIP alumni translate values into sustained, real-world impact.

Stories like Lo’s and Elwy’s reflect the lasting power of Youth in Philanthropy. What begins as a learning experience becomes something much greater: a lifelong commitment to service, leadership, and community impact.



**“The experience pushed me to grow into the leader I wanted to become, and YIP gave me that path.”**

– Charlotte Elwy



**2,500+ Students Impacted**  
Through 25+ years of Youth in Philanthropy programming.



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## 2025 Financial Statement

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	2025	2024
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,031,105	1,417,252
Operating investments	16,337,277	12,188,829
Grants receivable		18,617
Prepaid expenses and other assets	29,436	32,528
Total current assets	17,397,818	13,657,226
<b>LONG-TERM ASSETS</b>		
Deposits	3,575	3,575
Property and equipment - net	2,326	9,551
Operating lease asset	386,155	437,402
Endowment promises to give	107,639	207,639
Endowment investments	20,542,597	18,597,779
Total long-term assets	21,042,292	19,255,946
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>38,440,110</b>	<b>32,913,172</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	15,646	4,789
Grants payable	157,250	73,867
Operating lease liability - current	50,338	48,247
Total current liabilities	223,234	126,903
<b>LONG-TERM LIABILITIES</b>		
Operating lease liability - long-term	346,567	396,905
Agency endowment funds	1,467,471	1,204,878
Long-term liabilities	1,814,038	1,601,783
Total liabilities	2,037,272	1,728,686
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Without donor restrictions		
Undesignated	13,595,216	10,822,685
Designated for operating reserves	850,000	850,000
Designated for endowment	15,832,819	14,414,126
Total net assets without donor restrictions	30,278,035	26,086,811
With donor restrictions		
Perpetual in nature	2,151,019	2,059,785
Purpose restrictions	3,866,145	2,830,251
Time restrictions	107,639	207,639
Total net assets with donor restrictions	6,124,803	5,097,675
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>36,402,838</b>	<b>31,184,486</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>38,440,110</b>	<b>32,913,172</b>

## 2025 Financial Statement

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES	2025	2024
<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>		
Contributions, grants and gifts	\$6,989,196	\$6,987,232
Government grants	-	\$246,939
Investment return	\$4,226,447	\$2,422,859
Program fees	\$15,072	\$13,607
Special events	\$492,306	\$424,778
Net assets released from restriction	-	-
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>	<b>\$11,723,021</b>	<b>\$10,095,415</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Grantmaking and other program expenses	\$5,062,780	\$4,256,499
Management and general	\$745,666	\$639,633
Fundraising and development	\$696,233	\$667,981
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$6,504,679</b>	<b>\$5,564,113</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$5,218,342</b>	<b>\$4,531,302</b>
<b>NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$31,184,486</b>	<b>\$26,653,183</b>
<b>NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$36,402,838</b>	<b>\$31,184,486</b>



Your Generosity. **Amplified.**



3 Eliot Street Natick, MA 01760 | 508-647-2260 | [communityfoundationmw.org](http://communityfoundationmw.org)

Back cover photos courtesy of Charles River Watershed Association (1) and LexArt (2)