



Strengthening Nonprofits and Communities

Nonprofits are the heart of our communities. In Monterey County they offer vital support and build connections that strengthen us all. Yet many local organizations are facing unprecedented challenges due to Federal policy and funding changes.

The Community Foundation for Monterey County (CFMC) is walking alongside them, through strategic grants as well as the work of the Center for Nonprofit Excellence (CNE). The new Supporting Our Neighbors Fund assists nonprofit organizations that help individuals facing immigration and policy-related concerns. Grants will fund community outreach, legal assistance, community education about immigrant and LGBTQ+ rights, basic needs and access to mental and physical health services. The THRIVE Grants Program eliminates barriers to success in four key focus areas for local residents (see below).



CNE and Nonprofit Alliance of Monterey County host nonprofit gathering

Guided by survey data and community feedback, CNE's nonprofit programs are designed to meet evolving needs. Recent efforts include a nonprofit gathering of 50 leaders, fostering dialogue and collaboration, as well as ongoing peer learning sessions, consulting and trainings. Topics range from building staff, strengthening fundraising and exploring tools like AI.

As more people ask how they can make a difference, many discover that serving on a nonprofit board is one of the most impactful ways to give back. CNE's Board Ready Training (November 7, 2025) and BoardConnect Program (January 2026) are designed to prepare and connect community members with local organizations ready to partner with them. Together, we can ensure that Monterey County's nonprofits remain resilient, responsive and impactful — today and in the future.



Creating Opportunities for All **THRIVE Grants**

The THRIVE Grant Program was created to address some of Monterey County's most pressing challenges and invest in meaningful, lasting solutions. Rooted in data and shaped by community voices, THRIVE is about removing barriers and creating pathways to success for all residents. In 2024, the CFMC engaged nearly 100 residents in listening sessions, interviewed 25 community leaders and analyzed 15 community reports.

Through this collaborative process, four key focus areas emerged: Housing Stability, Educational Attainment,

Workforce Development and Mental Health Support. By directing funding to these priorities, the CFMC and its funded partners are working to address systemic challenges and create lasting impact.

The first round of THRIVE grants, totaling \$1,332,000 was awarded to 17 local nonprofits tackling these issues. Donors are invited to co-invest in one or more focus areas—or support the broader THRIVE Fund. Together, we can strengthen opportunity and well-being for all who call Monterey County home. Learn more or give: cfmco.org/Thrive.

President's Message

A New Season

I wish I could say there is a slow time of year at the CFMC. If the calendar was divided into thirds, they would be labeled busy, busier and busiest. We've entered busiest.

We were thrilled to honor Tonya Antle as the 2025 Distinguished Trustee at the Celebration of Philanthropy. Tonya was instrumental in growing the Women's Fund into a force for women and girls in Monterey County. She oversaw the transition of a lightly attended breakfast to a luncheon that attracts 600 attendees. She led the effort to grow a \$2 million Women's Fund endowment. She connected the Women's Fund Scholarship program to Girls' Health in Girls' Hands, the annual awardee of which steals the show with their personal story at the luncheon. As for the Celebration of Philanthropy, it is thrilling to have such an enthusiastic and large gathering of friends and partners in philanthropy.

We are on the cusp of Monterey County Gives! 2025 (in partnership with the Monterey County Weekly and the Monterey Peninsula Foundation). MC Gives raised \$14.2 million in 2024 through 8,000 donors. This support allowed more than 200 nonprofits to deliver on their missions in Monterey County. Gives 2025 will have 217 participants, and potentially a record matching pool. The Challenge Gift phase is underway.



Dan Baldwin shares CFMC's accomplishments at the Celebration of Philanthropy

“The CFMC has been the highlight of my career. Great staff. Great board. Wonderful mission in a wonderful county.”

— Dan Baldwin, President/CEO

Participating nonprofits are securing gifts ahead of the campaign launch, bringing major donors into the campaign to inspire other giving. This is a huge lift for the CFMC, but our entire staff mobilizes to ensure the success of Gives.

Year-end also brings the CFMC's Here for Good campaign. Here for Good supports our ability to deliver programs through the Center for Nonprofit Excellence, nimbly respond to disasters, engage in leadership work on a variety of initiatives and provide a high level of service to our donors and grantees. Your support will not only be greatly appreciated, but it will help us help all of Monterey County.

Not long ago we announced my plan to retire in 2026. I expect to remain in the job until the search is completed and my replacement is on board. That will likely take us into the middle of next year, or even longer.

I came to the CFMC in 2010, succeeding Todd Lueders and his successful 29-year tenure. The CFMC has been the highlight of my career. Great staff. Great board. Wonderful mission in a wonderful county. There will be plenty of time for good-byes between now and my departure, but know that I will cherish the friendships and philanthropic spirit that are hallmarks of this great community.

2025 Here for Good CAMPAIGN



Together, We're *Here for Good*.

Here for Good Campaign

We are proud to be *Here for Good*—for every community, every challenge and every opportunity to create meaningful change. At the heart of this work is the Here for Good Fund, powering our ability to respond swiftly to urgent needs and invest in community solutions. By giving to the 2025 Here for Good Campaign, you help us:

- Strengthen local nonprofits through strategic grants, impact investments and resources
- Empower community leadership and collaboration to address important issues

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Tonya Antle Honored at Celebration of Philanthropy

The Board of Directors of the CFMC was proud to present the 2025 Distinguished Trustee Award to Tonya Antle at the annual Celebration of Philanthropy on October 1, 2025. Board Chair Elsa Mendoza Jimenez began the program by thanking outgoing Board members Kirk Gafill, Francine Rodd and Joe Pezzini.



(l to r) Dan Baldwin, Elsa Mendoza Jimenez, Tonya Antle, Kayla Crocker

President/CEO Dan Baldwin spoke about Foundation accomplishments and Girls' Health in Girls' Hands (GHGH) scholarship recipient Kayla Crocker shared her journey. She currently leads the GHGH program, which was initially created by the Women's Fund. GHGH grew from 25 girls to now serving hundreds of girls annually.

Tonya was recognized for the passion and commitment she brings to everything she does, particularly for building powerful philanthropic resources for causes close to her heart. She is a long-time member of the Women's Fund Advisory Council, chaired the endowment campaign and has supported the GHGH program for the past 15 years. She served on the CFMC board from 2011-2016, became a generous donor advised fund holder, along with her late husband, Rick, and is now a CFMC Legacy Society Member.

Tonya's impact extends far beyond the CFMC and her leadership has been recognized both locally and nationally. She believes in women helping women and also invests her time helping college students and young women professionals navigate their career paths. Hundreds of young women are grateful that she shares her energy, wisdom, resources and power with them.

“Tonya has a gift of casting a bold vision and inspiring others to join her to create greater good.”

— Elsa Mendoza Jimenez

Our community is better off for the joy she brings to her philanthropy and giving spirit. Read more: cfmco.org/Celebration2025.

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Carmel Gives, Creative Planning, Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss, Leach & Walker, Liza Horvath and Monterey Trust Management

- Create opportunity in education, mental health, food security, the arts, housing and more
- Build disaster resilience through our COAD network and disaster relief efforts

Your gift supports everything from wildfire relief to scholarships, nonprofit training to grassroots initiatives—reaching every corner of Monterey County.

Join former CFMC Board Chair Bertie Elliott in making a lasting impact. Her generous \$100,000 gift means your donation goes even further to support our mission. Together, we'll continue to be here when it matters most, and always “Here for Good.”

Join Us!

Donate before December 31, 2025 at:
give.cfmco.org/HereforGood2025.



MONTEREY COUNTY **GiVES!**

Joining Together for Big Ideas



Nov. 13 - Dec. 31, 2025



montereycountygives.com

MC Gives! Season

The Monterey County Gives! campaign ignites philanthropy by providing participating local nonprofits a platform to share their mission and leverage end-of-year giving. In 2024, Monterey County Gives! raised a record \$14.2 million thanks to the extraordinary generosity of donors.

Since 2010, the campaign has raised and granted more than \$82 million for hundreds of Monterey County nonprofits. The cumulative impact of gifts large and small helps nonprofits stretch every donation further. Join the movement and make your gift November 13 through December 31, 2025 at montereycountygives.com.

MC Gives! is a special project of the Community Foundation for Monterey County, the Monterey County Weekly and the Monterey Peninsula Foundation. Thank you to Taylor Farms, Neumeier Poma Investment Counsel, Colburn and Alana Jones Foundation of the CFMC, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Cannery Row Company, Harden Foundation, Nancy Eccles and Homer M. Hayward Family Foundation, Post Ranch Inn, CortCo, Montage Health Foundation, anonymous donors, CFMC fundholders and individual donors for their support of the matching fund.



A Lifelong Journey of Giving David & Marylu Mesa



Marylu and David Mesa partner with the CFMC

For David and Marylu Mesa, philanthropy is a way of life. "We've always been givers," says David, who grew up in San Juan Bautista and enjoyed a long finance career in local government, including the Counties of Monterey, San Benito and Napa. Marylu, originally from Palo Alto, was an ESL instructor at Gonzales High School and Hartnell College, where the two met at a community wine tasting class.

Inspired by parents who modeled generosity, David and Marylu began their giving journey through volunteer service. David served on the Board of Directors of the Pajaro Valley Community Health Trust and volunteered with the United Way Tax Assistance program. In 2012, David was one of six individuals nominated for the Jefferson Award for his community service.

“Giving is part of who we are. When you see the impact it makes, it just feels good.”

— Marylu Mesa

Marylu volunteered her talents with the boards of Soroptimist International of Salinas and the Arts Council for Monterey County and has served as an officer for Delta Kappa Gamma Society, a professional society of women educators, at the local, regional and state levels. The couple both served on the Girls, Inc. Board of Directors and were honored for their impact. They currently support the Read to Me Project.

As their financial capacity to give grew, they established a donor advised fund in 2011, allowing them to simplify giving and support causes they care about—especially education and youth—using both appreciated stock and cash donations. They receive tax deductions at the time of the gift, and the ease of giving over time. It was also at this time they learned the benefits of giving through the Monterey County Gives! campaign. Marylu stated, "MC Gives! is a great way to facilitate our year-end giving."

When Marylu took her first Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) at age 70 ½, they paid taxes before donating a portion to various local nonprofits. The next year, they began taking advantage of IRA Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs), a tax-wise strategy that maximizes charitable impact by donating directly to their favorite nonprofits.

Today, they use their IRA to both support individual nonprofits and Monterey County Gives!, allocating gifts to their favorite organizations, which receive a partial match through the campaign. David and Marylu are thoughtful, engaged philanthropists who model the power of careful gift planning.



Caring for Community – Post Ranch Inn

At the iconic Post Ranch Inn in Big Sur, community is more than a concept—it's a way of life. For co-founder Mike Freed and Vice President of Operations Mike Higgins, hospitality isn't just about creating a world-class experience for guests—it's about cultivating a deep sense of belonging and giving back.

"The instinct at the Ranch has always been to care—for the land, for our staff and for the community," says Freed (who refers to himself and Higgins by last names to differentiate among the many Mikes on property). Both men speak glowingly of the Post Ranch culture rooted in connection, stewardship and purpose.

"Community is critical to what we do," says Freed. Both he and Higgins helped open the Ranch in 1992, and describe the Ranch as a large family—one where staff, guests and community members are all greatly valued.

Post Ranch Inn's leadership exemplifies and encourages staff volunteerism, from trail-building to serving in the



(l to r) Mike Higgins and Mike Freed team up to give back through the Post Ranch Inn

“There are three keys to sustainability: nature, culture and community. Giving back in these areas goes hand in hand with hospitality.”

— Mike Higgins

Big Sur Fire Brigade and local schools. The team also provides subsidized housing for 70 staff and families.

To consolidate their giving, the Ranch established the Post Ranch Inn Big Sur Community Fund at the CFMC (the “Big Sur Fund”) in 2023. Post Ranch contributes \$25 per occupied room per day throughout the year (plus owner contributions).

Grants support local nonprofits like the Big Sur Health Center, Ventana Wildlife Society, Big Sur Volunteer Fire Brigade, the Fire Wise Safety program, Community Association of Big Sur, the Big Share and disaster relief. Post Ranch also

contributes to the overall match and individual nonprofits through Monterey County Gives!.

“Philanthropy is not just giving money to nonprofits. It's volunteerism and how businesses engage with the community to make it better,” says Freed. Read more: cfmco.org/PostRanch.



Niña Magsaysay Rosete partnered with the CMFC to create the Corvus Benedictus Foundation Fund

New Funds Established*

The Community Foundation holds more than 800 charitable funds created by individuals, families and businesses. To create a fund or explore other ways to give, please contact Director of Gift Planning Anna Faith at 831.375.9712 x126.

AGENCY

Center for Community Advocacy
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Cold Case Project of Monterey County
The Marina Foundation Stewardship Fund

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Bill and Cheryl Kampe Charitable Fund
Richard and Barbara Warren Fund

FIELD OF INTEREST

Women's Fund Non-Endowed
(Grantmaking)

SCHOLARSHIP

Clyde and Anita Becker Foundation
Scholarship Fund
Alexis de Tocqueville Society Award for
Early Educators Fund
The Voice for Justice Scholarship Fund

SPECIAL PURPOSE

The Carmel Art Association
Dolores Street Building Fund

*Since April 2025

The Legacy Society New Members

The Legacy Society is a group of visionary people who will create enduring impact by partnering with the Foundation in their estate plans. We thank these new members (since April 2025) for making this meaningful decision. To view the full list or learn more, visit cfmco.org/Legacy.

Anonymous

Paul and Elizabeth Ferguson

David G. Huey* & Carla S. Hudson

Family Trust

Susan Orlikoff Simon

*In Memoriam



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Women's Fund Inspires

The 18th Annual Women's Fund Luncheon on May 16, 2025 was true to its theme of "Hope, Resilience and Strength." The event brought together nearly 600 supporters for an inspiring program to benefit the CFMC's Women's Fund, dedicated to changing lives for local women and girls.



(l to r) Erin Clark, Stephanie Martinez Flores, René Romero Schuler, Esmeralda Owen and Christine Dawson energized attendees

“When young women are empowered to lead, they don't just strengthen themselves they uplift their entire community.” — Stephanie Martinez Flores

Christine Dawson reflected on the Women's Fund transformational impact, and power of collective giving, with over \$2.7 million granted including \$500,000 in scholarships. René Romero Schuler, an acclaimed local artist and author, shared her powerful story of overcoming adversity through creativity and resilience. MPC student Stephanie Martinez Flores spoke about her scholarship journey. More than \$100,000 was raised to support future grants and scholarships. Learn more or give: cfmco.org/WomensFund.



Community Fund for Carmel Valley Advisory Council with guest speaker, Ashley Solano (right)

Celebrating the Power of Community in Carmel Valley

On Thursday, August 28, 2025, friends, neighbors and supporters gathered at Hidden Valley Music Seminars to celebrate the growing impact of the Community Fund for Carmel Valley (CFCV). Peter Meckel, CFCV Advisory Council member and the Founder and General Director of Hidden Valley Music Seminars, spoke about the importance of investing in community well-being.

Ashley Solano, a young Carmel Valley resident whose life has been touched by the CFCV, shared her story of

resilience and opportunity. She is a Cachagua Fire Protection District volunteer who is pursuing a career in emergency and anesthesiologist nursing, while attending college classes and volunteering at CHOMP. Her path illustrates how donor support empowers young people to pursue their education, enables nonprofits to expand their impact and helps the entire community thrive.

Since its founding in 2020, the CFCV has become a trusted resource for local philanthropy. They have granted \$320,000 including \$188,000 for fire relief and recovery and \$27,000 for flood relief. They are also building an endowment exceeding \$150,000—a permanent fund dedicated to meeting community needs for generations to come. Through the CFCV, caring neighbors pool resources to ensure help is available when it is needed and together, help maintain the Valley's special quality of life. Read more: cfmco.org/CFCV.



Siembra Event Highlights Latino Leadership

The Siembra Latinos Fund (SLF) of the CFMC hosted its 8th Annual Celebration on September 20 at CRŪ Winery in Soledad. The evening united donors, nonprofit partners and community members to celebrate Latino leadership and opportunity in Monterey County.

“This journey is not just about funding; it’s about the relentless pursuit of equity, opportunity and empowerment for our Latino community.”

— Advisory Council Member, Dr. Ida Lopez Chan

The Alfred Diaz-Infante Award was presented by Alfred’s brother, sister and niece to María Elena Manzo, Founder and Executive Director of Mujeres en Acción. María Elena has dedicated more than three decades to empowering Latina and Indigenous women through leadership development, healthcare access and workforce opportunities.

Event proceeds support SLF’s grantmaking, empowering local organizations that advance economic mobility. The SLF has granted more than \$150,000 to local nonprofits. Read more at cfmco.org/Siembra.



SLF Advisory Council Members with María Elena Manzo (2nd from right) and Cecilia Romero (right)

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with Community
Foundations National
Standards



CFMC Director of Community Initiatives and Partnerships, Michael Castro with COAD Manager, Nick Zafiratos

Pajaro Grant Brochures Distributed

In December 2024, the CFMC launched the Pajaro Community Grants Program to strengthen the community’s ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and natural disasters. More than \$1.8 million was granted to 22 organizations dedicated to serving Pajaro residents. “These funds were meant for Pajaro, and the CFMC is proud to say the Pajaro community decided how they were used,” shared CFMC Director of Community Initiatives and Partnerships Michael Castro.

In August 2025 the Monterey County COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster) distributed bilingual informational booklets highlighting each grant recipient’s project and key contact information so Pajaro residents can easily access available support.



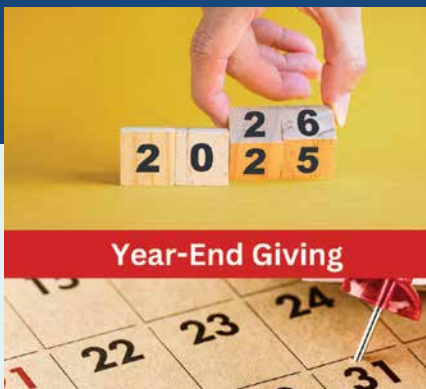
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Board Chair Elsa Mendoza Jimenez thanked outgoing Board members Joe Pezzini (l), Francine Rodd (r) and Kirk Gafill (not pictured) at the Celebration of Philanthropy on October 1.

Maximize Year-End Giving



As 2025 draws to a close, now is an ideal time to align your charitable giving with your financial goals.

The CFMC offers several tax-wise strategies—like Donor Advised Funds, IRA Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs), appreciated stock gifts and life-income gifts—that can support the causes you care about and deliver potential tax advantages.

To ensure your gifts count for the 2025 tax year, important deadlines apply. To recommend grants

from your Donor Advised Fund (DAF), the deadline is 9 a.m. on December 22. New DAFs can be established through December 31. IRA QCDs must clear your custodial account by December 31, but should be initiated by December 10 to ensure timely processing.

Remember, year-end gifts through Monterey County Gives! from November 13-December 31, 2025 receive a partial match (see page 4).

Philanthropy is most powerful when it's both heartfelt and strategic. Contact the CFMC team to ensure your year-end donations are aligned with your giving goals. Visit cfmco.org/YearEndGiving or call 831.375.9712 to learn more.