

ORANGE COUNTY
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION, INC.

112 West Water Street
Paoli, IN 47454

Phone: 812.723.4150
Fax: 812.723.7304
www.orangecountycommunityfoundation.org

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Paoli, IN
47454

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OCCF Youth Council Update

OCCF Youth Council members have been busy since the new school year started. In October, their annual training session was held at the Mineral Springs to kick off another year of activity and volunteer work. Ten new members attended the training session for orientation, with "old veterans" joining for updates and planning projects. The group is now 25 members strong.

Also in October, the group participated in the Springs Valley Pumpkin Festival parade. With the coming of November, they assisted with the annual Holiday Market, staged a fund-raising roadblock on the Paoli Square, and began their ongoing education series.

This month, the YC members have played Santa by ringing the bell at Paoli Walmart to raise funds for the Salvation Army, as well as continued the education series program. After a brief holiday respite, activities begin anew in January. Thanks,



Season's Greetings to All!

Winter 2009

Giving Increases Despite Uncertain Economy!

In these uncertain economic times, you might think that everyone would put charitable giving on the back-burner. Instead, generous and caring donors have found ways in which to enrich and enliven their community through charitable giving, despite a struggling market and low rates of return on investments.

During the 2008-2009 fiscal year—a year of economic turmoil and significant financial losses—nearly \$1,218,300 in contributions was received for funds held with the Orange County Community Foundation. That figure represents a 3.5% increase over the previous year. Grants in the amount of \$494,935 were made, and scholarships were paid out at the amount of \$174,135.

Grants decreased 21.9% from the previous year, only because funds from the Orange County Commissioners Supporting Organization that normally would have been granted in the Spring of 2009 were provided instead for a scholarship program. That program made \$1,000 available to each Orange County graduating senior pursuing further education at any accredited institution, or any enlisted in U.S. military service. The single program raised the level of scholarships paid more than 600% over the previous year, and has provided a total of \$153,000 to Orange County students to date.

"Connecting people who care with causes that matter to Orange County" was recently adopted as the Orange County Community Foundation's mission statement. This year's giving has proven that there are many people who care about Orange County, and we are very pleased to serve them and to help our donors to advance the causes that matter here.

Are You Connected?

Members of the OCCF staff recently attended a workshop centered around the importance of social media. And what exactly IS social media, you might ask? Ask your teenager, because they have no doubt already discovered the value of such online resources as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, MySpace, and more.

In our ongoing mission to provide broader and more efficient services—both traditional and updated—to our donors, OCCF will be joining the rest of the world in connecting through the various areas of social media. Keep your eyes open and your electronic devices prepared. In the meantime, visit our website at www.orangecountycommunityfoundation.org, then let us know how you think we might improve it.

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COLUMNS

A publication of the
ORANGE COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

2009 Annual Meeting at French Lick Resort

The Windsor Ballroom of the French Lick Resort once again served as venue for the Foundation's annual meeting and donor appreciation dinner on December 8, with more than 100 attending.

Many valued donors and other guests were on hand, along with members of the OCCF Board of Directors, directors of the three supporting organizations, and the Orange County Development Commission. Special guests included Rich Robinson, CPA with Rodefer Moss & Co., and Janet Sweet, an investment advisor with Capital Cities. Each gave a brief report on the status of the Foundation from their own area of expertise.

Highlights of the evening were recognition of 2009 Female Philanthropist of the Year Debbie Turner, Emerging Philanthropist of the Year Christina Turner, and announcement of James A. Babcock as 2009 Male Philanthropist of the Year. Each was presented a lovely gift and acknowledged by the State of Indiana by State Representative Sandy Blanton for their many contributions to Orange County.

Also on the agenda were reports from Frank Hall, President of the Orange County Commissioners Supporting Organization; Terry Cornwell of Saving Historic Orange County; and Ray Walker, Chairman of the Orange County Development Commission.

Presiding over the meeting was Imojean Dedrick, the Foundation's Executive Director. Welcome was given by President of the Board of Directors, Doug Pittman. Entertainment was provided by Louisville harpist, Roseanna Thompson.



2009 Male Philanthropist



Congratulations to James A. Babcock, the 2009 Male Philanthropist of the Year. Mr. Babcock was bestowed the honor at this year's annual meeting, and presented with a lovely clock which commemorated the giving of his time, talent and treasure to Orange County.

Mr. Babcock has been an asset to Orange County in a number of ways.

He served the Paoli School system as teacher, guidance counselor and principal—influencing lives and making lifelong friends along the way.

He was instrumental in the formation of the Orange County Child Care Co-Op and served on the Board of Directors for Southern Hills Counseling.

Currently a pastor, this year's honoree will forever be known as Mr. Babcock to show the respect that those who have known him—and those he has yet to meet—will always hold for him in their hearts.

Community Foundations Week Celebrated

To Americans, November is arguably one of the most important months of the year, as we celebrate Thanksgiving and our nation's brave beginnings. But another event that is equally American in spirit and deserving of attention—although less universally recognized—also takes place in November. That event is Community Foundations Week, a week that is celebrated by more than 700 community foundations in the United States and marks charitable giving as the backbone of American Society.

Community foundations identify and address problems that afflict the community, support activities of non-profit organizations, and improve the lives of community residents through targeted programming, grants and scholarships. Like the communities they serve, community foundations are varied and diverse, focusing on such areas as health and human services, the environment, the arts, education, and disaster relief, just to name a few.

Over the past three years alone, the generosity of donors who care about Orange County have made possible more than \$1.3 million in grants and nearly \$246,000 in community scholarship programs. "Community foundations are catalysts for positive change within both urban and rural areas," said Steve Gunderson, president and CEO of Council on Foundations. "Donors of all income levels and from all geographic regions are finding community foundations to be an ideal way for them to easily give back to their community in a meaningful way."

Across the nation, community foundations help create stronger hometowns where families want to establish roots, with recreational parks, social service programs and scholarship opportunities for promising local students. Thank you to everyone who has given generously to make the existence of the Orange County Community Foundation and the fulfilling of its mission possible.

"The beauty of a community foundation is that virtually no one is excluded from contributing to the community's betterment."

Textbooks Once Again Free to Orange County Students

At its November meeting, the Orange County Commissioners Supporting Organization approved payout of nearly \$177,000 for textbooks for the 2009-2010 school year. The payout was for all three county school systems, with \$75,429 going to Paoli, \$54,959 to Springs Valley, and \$46,306 for Orleans.

Now in its third year, the schoolbook project has significantly lessened the cost of education for parents of Orange County school children by providing textbooks free of charge for the entire school year. To date, the Supporting Organization has provided a total of nearly \$573,000 to cover the cost of textbooks throughout Orange County, and has pledged to continue the program for as long as funding is available.

