


THE PITTSBURGH FOUNDATION

community

FORUM

SPRING 2015



THE QUEST TO CURE ALZHEIMER'S

A community foundation has
researchers' backs

SEE PAGE 10

WELCOME

AS A FORMER NEWSPAPER EDITOR, I am probably acting on journalistic instinct when I search for trends, shared themes and back stories written between the lines of the day's news. And there's probably some eye rolling among The Pittsburgh Foundation staff when I look for these same things in grant reports, research studies and the stories we tell about our donors and grantees.

But sometimes the many streams of information lead to a remarkable confluence of individual passion and organizational intent, and that's a place where a community foundation can play a significant role. I am learning that we at The Pittsburgh Foundation are at our best when we identify disparate efforts and marshal them to solve a significant problem or explore a new opportunity.

In reading through this issue of Forum, I noticed a common thread running through several stories—a recognition on the part of donors, grantees and the Foundation itself that engaging younger generations in local philanthropy and the work funded by it is essential to the Pittsburgh region's long-term progress. That's especially instructive for a significant initiative we're beginning this year that sets a goal of ensuring quality-of-life improvements extend to groups that so often are left out of such benefits.

In one story in this issue, John and Lisa Gismondi of Churchill discuss setting up a fund at the Foundation last year to support their philanthropic preference of meeting basic needs, but also engaging their three children to develop individual philosophies of giving. The varying donations are all directed from a core family value: "If we are in a position to help, then we need to do so," says John.

In another story on the Foundation's multiple efforts to fund medical research that will hasten development of treatments to cure or prevent Alzheimer's disease, the generational crisscrossing is impressive. Funds from donors well into their senior years or those long deceased are being used to keep young talent in the field instead of leaving for grant-rich research projects connected to other diseases.

And a third story on Revitalizing Westmoreland, the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County's grant-making program benefiting seven economically struggling communities, points out the significant influence of younger generations on proposing projects that stand to renew and enliven aging communities.

In one, Jarod Trunzo, the 33-year-old executive director of the Latrobe Community Revitalization Program, proposed turning a vacant lot in a blighted section of downtown Latrobe into a community parklet offering residents a green space with benches, solar lighting and even an interactive kiosk. In another, New Kensington High School senior Leonardo Capone is moving toward becoming an Eagle Scout with a project to construct a memorial wall honoring all armed services members from the city who lost their lives in combat. Leo's inspiration is his 92-year-old grandfather and the stories he has told him of his service in World War II.

What impresses me the most about these examples of multi-generational involvement in local philanthropy is that the money is often secondary to the passion and creativity. The generational mix offers more assurance for a community foundation such as ours that the life-improvement benefits will be broader and last longer.



Maxwell King, president and CEO, The Pittsburgh Foundation

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CONTINUED STRONG GROWTH

in foundation asset base.
Numbers reflect donor trust and commitment.

By Douglas Root

GIFTS TO THE PITTSBURGH FOUNDATION'S individual and family donors' funds nearly doubled last year, setting a record and opening up the prospect of more robust giving to a broad range of charitable organizations this year.

The leap from \$11.6 million to \$21.3 million in individual gifts is the latest in a series of record-breaking achievements going back several years that have greatly enhanced the Foundation's reputation as a trusted steward of donor funds, as well as a philanthropic force on its own for improving quality of life in Pittsburgh and the surrounding region.

"This very positive year-end report tells us that donors, philanthropic partners and the general public continue to value The Pittsburgh Foundation for its special role in the community's philanthropy," said President and CEO Maxwell King. "We take this as a sign of confidence from donors that their experience with us gives them greater power in their giving, and that the Foundation itself has greater credibility in its institutional grant making."

Also last year, eight donors established funds worth more than \$1 million each, while in 2013 four were started with that valuation. Those were among 92 new funds created in 2014, a number second only to the record-setting 105 funds established the year before.

And 2014 was the fifth consecutive year that the Foundation raised over \$50 million for existing funds and establishment of new funds. King attributed last year's increase to an improved economy, especially in the performance of the stock market, and donors taking advantage of the appreciation in securities to enable their charitable giving. "But a lot of credit has to go to the tremendous work of this foundation's staff in meeting the needs of donors and using resources wisely in meeting needs in the community."

King said the increases in fundraising come at the same time that Pittsburgh is experiencing a revitalized economy. "What our donors are mindful of in adding to their funds is the reality that there are many groups not sharing in the new prosperity. We in the foundation community know that we must seize opportunities to get the whole community engaged in the momentum of the new Pittsburgh."

Yvonne Maher, vice president for Development and Donor Services, pointed to continued growth of the larger funds in the Foundation's Center for Philanthropy, where donors receive customized services that enable them to be more effective in their charitable giving.

"Many families are choosing our Family Foundation Funds over establishing a private foundation because of the Center, which offers expert guidance in multi-generational philanthropic planning, opportunities to work closely with our experienced program officers, and advice on crafting charitable giving plans that can lead to grant making that is more informed and has greater impact."

The Foundation also reported growth in the number of participants in its Third Party Manager Program, which offers donors establishing funds of \$250,000 or higher the opportunity to continue using their personal financial managers as investment advisors. Last year, nine professionals joined the program, bringing the total to 34 active managers.

One fundraising area experiencing a downturn last year was bequests. Gifts realized from estates were \$10.3 million, the lowest in five years.

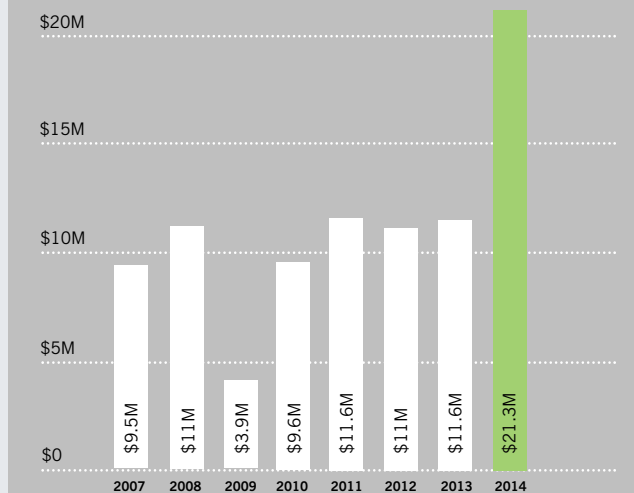
But overall, the Foundation continues to build beyond its 2013 record-setting leap to \$1 billion in total assets, a financial milestone in its 70-year history. Foundation officials cited continued strong growth in annual fundraising, a record creation of new charitable funds by families and individuals, and results of a disciplined investment strategy.

The Foundation, including its affiliate organizations, ended 2014 with assets of about \$1.13 billion, up from its 2013 total assets of \$1.07 billion. This is a 40-percent growth compared to the \$785 million asset total at the end of 2007 when markets were at their peak prior to the onset of the economic recession.

"2014 was the year in which the U.S. economy demonstrated that it had found its footing," said Jonathan Brelsford, the Foundation's vice president for investments. "U.S. financial markets performed well and the country benefited from a healthy investment environment supported by quantitative easing," Brelsford said, "but most of the world economies did not reflect that."

In recent years, the Foundation has also developed a new and diversified investment strategy focusing on a portfolio of stocks, bonds and alternative investments that favor equity risk. Last year, investment returns averaged 4.88 percent. Over the past three years, investment returns were 10.15 percent.

DONOR GIFTS TO EXISTING FUNDS





Above: Ron Peless of Homestead participates in a candlelight vigil in Downtown Pittsburgh in December to memorialize homeless people who died on the streets last year. Mr. Peless, who was homeless from 1999 to 2014, joined several hundred people at the event hosted by several organizations benefitting from The Pittsburgh Foundation's Critical Needs campaign.

**\$900,000 Goes to Homeless in
Second Critical Needs Alert
Record Public Support in
Record Time**

By Christopher Whitlatch

HOME LESS NESS

ANDREA LOCKHART is one of the new faces of homelessness. She fled a domestic violence situation with her three children, living out of her car for a time as she sought to create a new life for her family. She finally faced the decision that she had to find a shelter.

"I pulled up across the street from the Salvation Army shelter, and the staff came out and greeted us," she said. "I just cried because we were going to be able to stay together as a family and would get the help we needed."

"RITA WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY PLEASED THAT THE COMMUNITY HAS RALLIED AROUND THIS CAUSE SO QUICKLY AND SO GENEROUSLY, ESPECIALLY AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR. WE ARE PROUD TO MAKE THIS CONTRIBUTION IN HER MEMORY AND TO HELP THESE ORGANIZATIONS."

Jack McGinley, Jr., *nephew of Rita McGinley*
The grant from the Rita M. McGinley Foundation is in memory of Ms. McGinley, a long-time advocate and contributor to organizations supporting vulnerable populations.

“PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY OFTEN VIEW THE HOMELESS AS ONLY THOSE WHO SLEEP UNDER BRIDGES. THE REALITY IS THAT SUCH STEREOTYPES ARE OUTDATED AND INACCURATE. IT COULD BE A CHILD THAT IS ATTENDING SCHOOL EACH DAY BUT THEN GOING TO A FRIEND’S HOUSE EACH EVENING AND SLEEPING ON A COUCH.”

Maxwell King, president and CEO
The Pittsburgh Foundation

The Pittsburgh Foundation 2014 Critical Needs Alert program to aid individuals and families experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity set new records in amount and time as the public responded with contributions of \$450,000 through its PittsburghGives donation portal.

The Foundation launched the public campaign to address homelessness in Allegheny County on Dec. 8 and had anticipated it lasting for a three-week period, similar to last year’s campaign to address food insecurity, but a flood of donations quickly exhausted the \$450,000 in matching funds.

Donations at PittsburghGives.org of \$25 or more were matched dollar for dollar from the pool that began at \$100,000 and rose several times throughout the day to finish at \$450,000. This was due to key donors who were inspired to help specific organizations that offer various services to those facing housing insecurity. With the additional match, a total of \$900,000 was raised to assist those without housing.

Last year’s campaign raised \$617,804 to help food banks in Allegheny and Westmoreland counties meet an unprecedented rise in demand. This year’s community-wide effort surpassed that amount in just six hours, setting a new mark for generosity and providing much-needed funds to 36 organizations that provide emergency and temporary housing to the homeless.

In addition to the matching funds provided by The Pittsburgh Foundation for the match pool, two other match pool gifts were received: \$50,000 from the Rita M. McGinley Foundation and \$100,000 from a Pittsburgh Foundation donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

“Everyone deserves a safe, warm place to call home,” said Maxwell King, president and CEO of The Pittsburgh Foundation. “My heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all who have generously supported this appeal, and to those who provided additional matching funds to double the generosity shown by our remarkable community.”

The grant from the Rita M. McGinley Foundation is in memory of Ms. McGinley, a longtime advocate and contributor to organizations supporting vulnerable populations. In addition to being an educator and a community leader, she was one of the original supporters of Operation Safety Net, which provides help and health care to homeless people on the streets, beginning in the 1980s. “Rita would have been very pleased that the community has rallied around this cause so quickly and so generously, especially at this time of the year,” said Jack McGinley, Jr., Ms. McGinley’s nephew. “We are proud to make this contribution in her memory and to help these organizations.”

The anonymous donor stated: “Even though budgets are stretched at this time of the year, I am amazed how people dig deeply into their pockets to help those less fortunate. If this gift will encourage others to give, then I think we have done our part.”

King said that people in the community often view the homeless as “only those who sleep under bridges. The reality is that such stereotypes are outdated and inaccurate. It could be a child that is attending school each day but then going to a friend’s house each evening and sleeping on a couch.”

Joe Caldwell’s family business closed during the recession. That loss forced him to move in with his mother. When she, too, lost her job, spiraled out of control and he found himself searching for a place to live. “When I got to the point of being homeless, I had lost my job, my car and my home,” he said. “The biggest thing was I lost respect for myself and that was very scary.” Mr. Caldwell was able to find employment and housing with the help of the Light of Light Rescue Mission.

King said Pittsburgh’s economy is looking brighter, and there is a renewed sense of momentum, “but we are still seeing the impact of the Great Recession in our region, with many residents facing financial pressures that can lead quickly to a loss of housing.”

The Pittsburgh Foundation worked with participating organizations to produce a video series featuring the personal stories of those impacted by homelessness in our community. The series can be viewed at:

pittsburghfoundation.org/new_faces_of_homelessness.

ADVISOR PROFILE: KAREN AND PETER GREB

GENERATIONS TOGETHER

A financial advising family knows the importance of common ground in giving

By Douglas Heuck

OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS, Karen Greb has become very familiar with The Pittsburgh Foundation’s efforts and abilities to help build philanthropy in southwestern Pennsylvania.

As senior vice president for wealth management at Merrill Lynch, she has referred five charitable-minded clients to the Foundation who have set up their own donor advised funds. And the experience worked out so well for them that, three years ago, she and her family set up their own fund.

“If you want to be charitable in Pittsburgh, [The Pittsburgh Foundation staff] are the go-to people,” Karen said. “They really introduce you to the region’s charitable organizations. They let you know what the organizations do and what their missions are. The Foundation has just been a huge, great resource to me and also to our clients. For the clients, it’s been a very enjoyable experience.”

For Karen and her family, getting involved with the Foundation has been a satisfying and fascinating experience. The goal for Karen and husband, James, a retired paramedic, was to include their son, Peter.

Working together is something they’ve been doing for a long time. When Peter was young, Karen would often bring him along with James on out-of-town client trips. And after school, Peter would spend time at the Merrill Lynch office. He grew up understanding the business and wanting to be part of it. Now 27, Peter is following his mother’s career path, working for the past two years in her section at Merrill Lynch.

Now, the Greb family has followed the path of many of their clients by starting a fund at the Foundation.

Early in that process, Karen, James, and Peter attended a special meeting at the Foundation that involved breakout sessions dealing with generational differences in approaching philanthropy. They learned that young people who experience the same significant world-changing events as their parents

react differently and carry lasting impressions that affect how they manage personal finances and their choices in charitable giving. “It was really an eye-opening experience for us to go through that session,” Karen said. “It helped us even more to figure out how we wanted to work together and find common ground.”

Family consensus on giving is the main goal they all share in working through their fund. “James and Peter and I each have our own ideas of what charities we’d like to get involved with. But we’re searching for something the three of us can come together on. A family with unity of purpose can be very powerful. We hope to get to the point where the three of us can say, ‘Yes, let’s pick that one thing.’”

“As it is, we can go to the Foundation and tell [Philanthropic Relations Officer] Hilary Brown what we’re interested in, and she’ll come up with a list of organizations in that field, detailing what projects they’ve been involved with, who’s on their board—enough information to make a decision on whether to donate to that particular organization.”

For Karen, seeing the different ideas and approaches her son Peter—based on his own life experiences—has brought back a key memory from her childhood. “My mother would always tell me, ‘You’ll learn as much from your children as they will learn from you.’ And that’s what makes this so much fun—working together to find that common ground with our family’s donor-advised fund. It’s a great thing.

“We’d like to see more families engage in this way. I believe each generation has an obligation to help the next generation to be the best it can be—with the understanding that their sense of ‘best’ won’t necessarily be the same as yours—because the world keeps changing. But the underlying principles can remain the same.”



THE GISMONDI FAMILY:

FORWARD > THINKING PHILANTHROPY

By Douglas Root

“EVERYTHING STARTS AND ENDS WITH FAMILY. THE PURPOSE OF HAVING THE CHILDREN DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN FAMILY PHILANTHROPY IS TO GIVE THEM AN UNDERSTANDING THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE DON’T HAVE THE ADVANTAGES THEY’VE HAD, AND IF WE ARE IN A POSITION TO HELP, THEN WE NEED TO DO SO.” John Gismondi

ONE WAY TO UNDERSTAND what leading a productive life means to John Gismondi and his wife, Lisa, is to look at the highly-respected Pittsburgh law firm that John has spent 30 years building. As the leader of a practice specializing in wrongful death and personal injury litigation, John has earned a reputation among his peers as one of the country’s best courtroom attorneys while maintaining high personal character.

Another measure can be taken from the civic and charitable aspects of John and Lisa’s life. For John, a former president of the Allegheny County Bar Association, it has involved years of educating young lawyers and funding summer employment programs, active philanthropy at the University of Pittsburgh, and community building through Habitat for Humanity and the creation of a children’s learning center in honor of his father in his hometown of Uniontown. For Lisa, it is volunteering at what she and John refer to as “the retail level”—neighbor-to-neighbor and church-to-community projects.

But the Gismondis say that if you really want to understand what living a good life means to them, then you need to sit at the kitchen table of their well-kept home in Churchill and listen as they talk to their three children about the virtue of helping those in need. “For us, a key part of a good life is to pass along core values to our children,” says John.

Last year, the couple started a donor advised fund at The Pittsburgh Foundation with the intention of involving 24-year-old Maria, 20-year-old Tory and 16-year-old J.J. in decision making on grants to local nonprofits that align with causes they care about. The fund is a reflection of John and Lisa’s family values, and when the grant making includes next-generation involvement, they say, those values are perpetuated.

Both John and Lisa cite the influence of their parents in helping instill a desire to help those in need. “Everything starts and ends with family,” says John. The purpose of having the children directly involved in family philanthropy is, he says, “to give them an understanding that a lot of people don’t have the advantages they’ve had, and if we are in a position to help, then we need to do so.”

A study released last year by a national financial firm, which manages donor advised funds, reported that children’s involvement in their families’ philanthropic giving is on the upswing. Among the clients with donor advised funds, 94 percent said they were encouraging their children to participate in donation decisions.

At the Gismondis’ family meeting facilitated by The Pittsburgh Foundation in August, the next-gen influence was strong when individual and family values were matched with potential areas of giving.

Maria, who has both undergraduate and nursing degrees from Pitt and has just started her first job in the Emergency Department of UPMC St. Margaret, said she was motivated in her career choice by an opportunity to help others. During the Christmas season, as the family went through the Foundation’s Grant A Wish program’s Wish Book, she thought about what the family fund might do in health care. “We need more community outreach for health education,” she said. “That’s the key to improving the lives of large numbers of people.”


Tory, a sophomore public relations major at Penn State’s main campus, where she also serves as president of the Gamma Phi Beta sorority, named compassion, family support and tolerance as the three touchstones in her giving. She described how angry she was when a lifelong friend, who is Muslim, talked about discrimination directed toward her. That experience has led to an interest in programs “that help people look at issues through the eyes of another individual.”

For J.J., a sophomore at Central Catholic High School, service projects and class discussions have fueled a passion for working to achieve greater social justice. “It’s really offensive to me when I see other people’s rights being violated,” he said at the orientation meeting. As decisions are made on donations, J.J. is hoping to have the same feeling of fulfillment he experienced years ago when the family was able to help a stranger whose car broke down during a winter storm.

Perhaps it is a generational difference, but for Lisa and John, the philanthropic instinct focuses closer to the ground. They share a deep interest in helping area families meet basic quality-of-life needs such as food, shelter, clothing, health care and education. “My style of giving is low-key,” says Lisa. “I’m guided by my heart as much as my head.”

Clearly, the variety of perspectives for family giving is exactly what Lisa and John celebrate in starting a fund at the Foundation, but there is a legacy aspect as well. “Lisa and I are not going to be here forever,” says John, “and we want our kids to carry on the tradition of helping others.” Their children’s involvement in the fund promises continuity and also assures a richer life for them. “You have lived a much fuller life when you share your good fortune with those around you who are in need,” he says.

Left to right: John, Tory, J.J., Maria, Lisa and Halo



“THIS IS A CRITICAL CENTURY FOR MANKIND. WE’VE GONE FROM ALMOST NO ALZHEIMER’S TO HAVING SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF PEOPLE WITH THE DISEASE. IT’S A HUGE PROBLEM.”

Oscar Lopez, MD
professor of neurology and director of
the Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center,
University of Pittsburgh

IN THE QUEST TO CURE ALZHEIMER’S, A COMMUNITY FOUNDATION HAS RESEARCHERS’ BACKS

By Jeffery Fraser

AMERICANS WHO ARE 65 YEARS OLD today have an average life expectancy of 19 more years. Never in the history of the nation have we lived so long.

But tied to that are darker firsts: Never have so many Americans been diagnosed with age-related dementia disorders, and never have so many been pressed into backbreaking and heartbreaking service caring for loved ones with the diseases, especially those diagnosed with the most common and most debilitating of them—Alzheimer’s.

William Klunk, MD, Ph.D. (left) and Oscar Lopez, MD (right).

“This is a critical century for mankind,” says Oscar Lopez, MD, professor of neurology and director of the Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center at the University of Pittsburgh. “We’ve gone from almost no Alzheimer’s to having substantial numbers of people with the disease. It’s a huge problem.” Dr. Lopez is referring not just to the effects on the nation’s health care system but also to the social and economic damage that will increase as baby boomers age into the largest septuagenarian and octogenarian population in history.

Hope of taming the disease lies with the work of researchers like Dr. Lopez and his colleague, William Klunk, MD, Ph.D., whose labs at Pitt are secured by two new endowed chairs supported through a total of \$1.4 million medical research funds that were created by donors at The Pittsburgh Foundation and \$2.6 million from the University of Pittsburgh.

The Foundation’s effort to supply more brainpower against the disease on the science front locally has strong precedents from others in its donor base. More than a decade ago, Jeffrey Morby, retired vice chairman of the former Mellon Bank, and wife, Jacqueline, former managing director

and now senior advisor with TA Associates, a private equity investment firm, used the Foundation to create their Alzheimer’s Disease Research Foundation, a precursor to the now phenomenally successful Cure Alzheimer’s Fund.

“The Pittsburgh Foundation was a great help in giving us the credibility and the guidance so that we could raise funds from day one,” says Morby. Cure Alzheimer’s Fund has now become a national force in direct funding of research. The Morbys and other members of the board have committed to funding all overhead expenses so that each donation goes directly to research.

It has turned out to be an effective fundraising and programmatic strategy. Since the fund spun off from The Pittsburgh Foundation, more than \$27 million has been raised to fund research. One of the ground-breaking achievements resulting from that support occurred in October when Rudolph Tanzi, a leading Alzheimer’s disease researcher at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, announced that he and colleagues had been able to grow Alzheimer’s cells in a petri dish, which for the first time opens a pathway to testing drugs that can treat the disease.

“I DON’T WANT ONE MORE SOUL TO GET THIS. IT WILL BECOME AN EPIDEMIC UNLESS WE DO SOMETHING.”

Carol Massaro
shown with health aide assisting husband Joe, who has Alzheimer’s disease.



Another Pittsburgh Foundation donor, the Massaro family, created the Joseph A. Massaro Alzheimer’s Research Fund two years ago, in honor of patriarch Joe, the founder of a successful construction firm, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease several years ago.

The fund is dedicated to the same medical research purpose as the others. Joe’s wife, Carol, says the effort had a grass-roots start: she asked 100 of her friends to each donate \$1,000. A series of fundraisers have helped the fund grow to nearly \$350,000. “I don’t want one more soul to get this,” she told a Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reporter in the summer. “It will become an epidemic unless we do something.”

The importance of having such fervent supporters who provide stable funding is magnified by the fact that Alzheimer’s disease research receives a fraction of the federal dollars spent on studying cancer and heart disease, which limits the scope of investigation and makes it difficult to attract and retain the researchers vital to solving the mysteries of dementia disorders. In 2015, the Foundation will bring additional donors together through a Center for Philanthropy giving circle that will devote additional resources towards fighting the disease.

Alzheimer’s disease, a form of dementia, accounts for an estimated 60–80 percent of all dementia cases. There is no known cure for the disease, but the attention span given to it has been short: research began in earnest only three decades ago. A lot has been learned in that relatively short time, but no one can yet claim to fully understand it.

What is known is that it progressively damages and kills brain cells and leaves fewer connections among surviving cells, all resulting in diminished memory and other basic life-management skills.

Many Americans know someone with Alzheimer’s and many more will in the future unless the disease is harnessed. A small percentage of patients carry genes that almost guarantee they will get Alzheimer’s disease—sometimes as early as their 20s. Much more often, though, it occurs later in life, with the risk increasing as people grow older: 15 percent of Americans aged 65–74 years have Alzheimer’s or other forms of dementia, and 44 percent of 75-to-84-year-olds are afflicted.

Work done in Pittsburgh has led to important advancements in understanding the complexities. The Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center at the University of Pittsburgh was one of the first funded by the National Institute on Aging to advance and coordinate study.

And the Center’s researchers achieved a major breakthrough 15 years ago when Dr. Klunk and colleagues created Pittsburgh Compound B, a dye that when used with a positron emission tomography (PET) scan reveals disease material in the living brain. The discovery has provided a measure to better gauge the effectiveness of drugs developed to stop it.

But drug therapies have yet to arrest Alzheimer’s in patients with symptoms. “We’ve been talking about this in the field for years—symptomatic Alzheimer’s, even in its mildest form, is too late,” said Dr. Klunk, co-director of the Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center and Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry and Neurology at the University of Pittsburgh.

Demographic projections show a storm gathering on the horizon. In Allegheny County, the number of residents aged 65 or older is expected to jump from 16.7 percent to 21 percent by 2050. And a study by Pitt’s Center for Social and Urban Research has determined that the ratio of caregivers to residents requiring care is projected to fall from 6 caregivers for every person in need to 3.6.

“These are devastating disorders,” says Dr. Jeanne Pearlman, senior vice president for Program and Policy at The Pittsburgh Foundation. “They’re very costly; they can bankrupt a family. The health of caregivers is an issue, and it’s a public policy issue.”

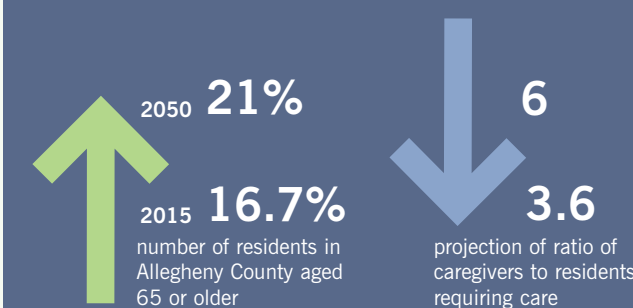
With the clock ticking, researchers have broadened their investigations, exploring evidence that other medical conditions and certain lifestyle factors play a role in the disease and could be new targets of intervention.

Another approach being studied is using some drugs earlier to prevent or slow the disease before older adults develop symptoms.

Investigations led by Dr. Lopez, for example, are defining the role of vascular disease in the progression of Alzheimer’s. As with much of the Alzheimer’s research, such studies require years of observing patients to reach a conclusion. “We are starting to understand these factors,” he says, “but we have to be patient. We need to follow people for at least 10 years to understand the connection between amyloid and vascular disease.”

Endowed chairs help sustain top researchers and their work over such long periods. An endowed chair in neurology held by Dr. Lopez and one in psychiatry held by Dr. Klunk are each supported through 18 Pittsburgh Foundation-administered Field of Interest and Medical Research funds. The chairs support each investigator’s lab and offer a degree of stability in a volatile funding environment.

A STORM GATHERS ON THE HORIZON



University of Pittsburgh Center for Social and Urban Research

Such funds, and the flexibility that come with them, help keep top researchers working in the field and young talent from leaving it as National Institutes of Health support gets harder to come by. “We see many people with enthusiasm who are ready and willing to spend their lives doing this research, and then they hit these walls,” Dr. Lopez says. “You then see their enthusiasm disappear and they go in another direction.”

Clearly, attracting top talent for the long term in a field of research relatively short on federal dollars is difficult. The NIH directs \$480 million a year to Alzheimer’s research. Cancer research receives more than \$6 billion; heart disease, more than \$4 billion; and HIV/AIDS, more than \$3 billion.

“In no way are we at a phase with Alzheimer’s disease where we can shut down, take what we’ve found, do a few trials and we’re done,” Dr. Klunk says. “We need new avenues, new targets to attack in this disease.”

If you would like to join the Alzheimer’s disease giving circle, please contact Kelly Uranker at 412-394-2604 or uranker@pghfdn.org.

**FOCUS ON
WESTMORELAND**

REVITALIZING WESTMORELAND

By Allie Fetchko

The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County will award \$150,000 in grants per year for the next three years to projects designed to revitalize seven hard-hit communities in Westmoreland County.

The Revitalizing Westmoreland community initiative is a city-based program designed to encourage creative ways to improve the lives of residents of Arnold, Jeanette, Greensburg, Latrobe, Lower Burrell, Monessen and New Kensington.

Forum went to each project's site to capture the "before" photos as these projects kick off in 2015 and will return to the areas to show our readers the transformations that take place as part of the Revitalizing Westmoreland program at the end of the year.



- 1 New Kensington
- 2 Arnold
- 3 Lower Burrell
- 4 Monessen
- 5 Jeanette
- 6 Greensburg
- 7 Latrobe



**Lower Burrell: Playground Updates
Grant Amount: \$8,900**

The plan for Lower Burrell Park is to level the enclosed play area, which will increase safety for children using the equipment, and reduce wear and tear on the surface caused by excess runoff. The park's renovations will begin this spring, with the goal of having the projects completed by summer to aid in continuing to make the park a focal point for its citizens and a point of pride for their community.

Above, top: Councilman Christopher Farby and City Clerk Kelly Cook discuss the next steps in renovating Burrell Lake Park.

Greensburg: "Bridging the Gap"

Grant Amount: \$10,000

"Bridging the Gap" is a project devoted to bringing art to two of Greensburg's bridges that currently provide a path to the Westmoreland Museum of American Art. This project will provide an interactive experience for pedestrians that will instill community pride, improve the visual landscape, and present a unique and beautiful gateway on their walk to the museum.



A unique and beautiful green gateway to the Westmoreland Museum of American Art.

FOCUS ON WESTMORELAND

Latrobe: Parklet Project

Grant Amount: \$25,000

Situated at the intersection of Main and Ligonier Streets in downtown Latrobe, a vacant lot will be transformed into a “parklet” where citizens can enjoy a green space complete with benches, trash cans, solar lighting and an interactive kiosk.



Above: Jarod Trunzo, executive director of the Latrobe Community Revitalization Program, is spearheading the parklet project to improve surrounding property values.

New Kensington/Arnold: Memorial Park Renovations

Grant Amount: \$40,000

The cities of New Kensington and Arnold attract residents from across the Allegheny-Kiski valley to Memorial Park for recreational use, graduation parties and outdoor concerts. “The advantage of incorporating a deck hockey rink is to encourage and engage the younger generation to detach from electronics and experience the importance of being outside with friends and family,” said Mayor Guzzo.

Plans for Memorial Park are to renovate two pavilions, rehab two tennis courts, and remove the remaining three tennis courts to construct a deck hockey rink that can be used year-round.



Above: Mayor Tom Guzzo and City Clerk Dennis Scarpiniti stand on the soon-to-be deck hockey rink.

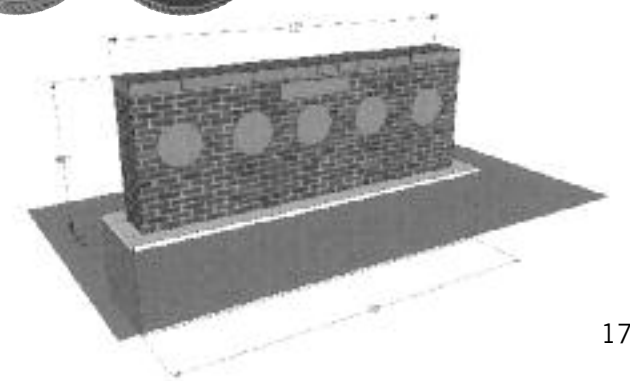


Left: Thomas Capone, Leo's father, Leo Capone, and Chief of Police Thomas Klawinski discuss ideas on where to place the Memorial Wall.

Armed Services Memorial Wall

Grant Amount: \$1,600

The park's additional project, proposed by Eagle Scout Leonardo Capone as his Eagle Scout project, is to construct an Armed Services Memorial Wall to honor the men and women in New Kensington who lost their lives fighting for America. The idea for the memorial was inspired by Leo's grandfather, a World War II veteran, who at 92 shares stories with Leo about his service. “I think this will be the greatest award my grandpa has ever received because this memorial is coming from me,” says Leo.



FOCUS ON WESTMORELAND

For more information on Revitalizing Westmoreland and for video interviews with project creators, please visit <http://cfwestmoreland.org/revitalization>.

Monessen: Beautification Project Grant Amount: \$30,000

The City of Monessen will embark on a major campaign to remove 20 blighted homes and replace a section of the razed buildings with a beautiful park in the Westgate North section of town.



Above: "Blight creates more blight," says the mayor of Monessen, Lou Mavrakis, in the Westgate North section of town.



Jeanette: Clay Avenue Grant Amount: \$30,000

A façade program for Clay Avenue in Jeanette will include repainting the building fronts and fitting them with awnings. Also, two murals will be added that will depict the rich history of the community.



Above: Tay Waltenbaugh, CEO (left) and Jack Brown, Housing Development Coordinator (right) of Westmorland Community Action. Historic Clay Avenue in downtown Jeanette will soon see major changes.



Left: Patrick Coulson stands proud in front of what will soon be New Kensington's revitalized Community Garden.

Community Garden Grant Amount: \$4,500

Downtown New Kensington, a city once on the forefront of commerce, now has significant blight, due, in part, to competition from big-box stores. However, thanks to Westmoreland County Community College's New Kensington Education Center, a Community Garden will be a resource for the city's center. The Community Garden will serve as an activity point and as a means of providing healthful, fresh foods to local food banks." The garden will also feature a mural, which will be commissioned to a local artist.



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DEVELOPMENT AND DONOR SERVICES STAFF

Yvonne Maher, vice president for Development and Donor Services
mahery@pghfdn.org, 412-394-2644

Lindsay Aroesty, director of Donor Services and Planned Giving
aroestyl@pghfdn.org, 412-394-2606

Hilary Brown, philanthropic relations officer
brownh@pghfdn.org, 412-394-2607

Caleb Crousey, development officer
The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County,
ccrousey@cfwestmoreland.org,
724-836-4400

Lacey Fetcko, business process manager
fetckol@pghfdn.org, 412-394-2622

Kate Gatto, senior development officer
gattok@pghfdn.org, 412-394-2627

Neil Straub, data analyst, administrative support
straubn@pghfdn.org, 412-394-2624

Kelly Uranker, director of Philanthropic Resources and Donor Education
uranker@pghfdn.org, 412-394-2604

Arlene Sample, administrative support
vukasa@pghfdn.org, 412-394-2640

Trista Yerks, administrative support
yerkst@pghfdn.org, 412-394-2653

Jennie Zioncheck, director of Development
zioncheckj@pghfdn.org, 412-394-2621