



# VIEW*S*&VISIONS

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## Philanthropy Comes Alive in Morgantown

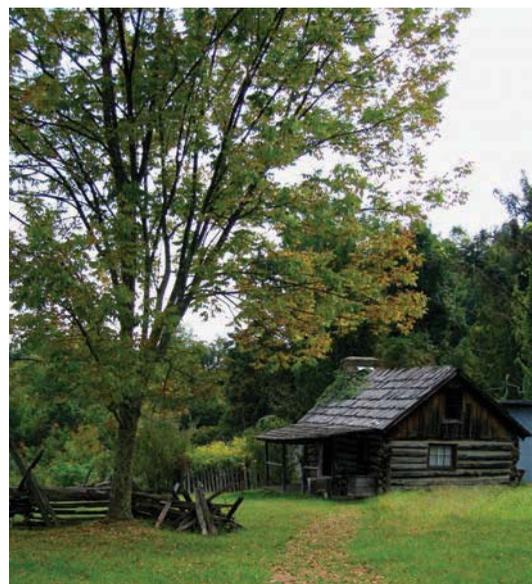
Elizabeth Fuller, President  
Your Community Foundation

Elizabeth (Beth) Fuller became president of Your Community Foundation after serving as executive director of the Greater Morgantown Community Trust and the Community Foundation of North Central West Virginia. As president, she administers and develops all aspects of foundation management, while working closely with business professionals, community leaders and volunteers. Her other responsibilities include strategic operations and program planning, fiscal oversight of endowment and grant funds and property management.

Mrs. Fuller holds a bachelor of science degree in accounting from West Virginia University and gained valuable sales and asset management experience over nine years in the investment and banking industries, where she held her Series 7 Securities License and Series 63 State Securities License.

As President of Your Community Foundation (YCF), I begin each day reviewing gifts from the generosity of passionate individuals, families, and businesses to strengthen our North Central West Virginia region. During my tenure, I've learned that every story is unique and that every donor strives to make a difference in the causes they support. When I reflect upon what philanthropy (or a philanthropist) truly is, a few synonyms that come to mind are Good Samaritan, contributor, volunteer, donor and humanitarian.

For me, all of these words come alive as faces of people in our community. We have those who give of their talents and those who give from their blessings, each equally important in making a difference in our community. Having lived in the north central West Virginia region for more than 20 years, I have seen a quality of change and transformation in our downtown areas; rail trails constructed, new recreational facilities, health initiatives, theatres restored to enjoy arts and



*Established with a donation from the Clarksburg Harrison Cultural Foundation, the fund supports the ongoing development of Fort New Salem, a frontier log house settlement representative of 19th century Appalachian life*



entertainment, new sports complexes and new technology... all through the generosity of donors in our community.

Although we have seen a great impact in our region, there is always so much more to do. Each day there is a need to be addressed or an opportunity to strengthen the community and it is our duty to be good stewards of our gifts in creating a better quality of life for this generation and the next. YCF connects donors with smart, effective philanthropy, whether it's donating to an immediate need in the community or leaving a permanent legacy through a will and estate plan. It is with these extraordinary gifts, from people in our community who have cared so much to leave a legacy, that our lives are enriched and their memories will never be extinguished.

YCF is not an exclusive club for the wealthy. Just as a community is made of members of all walks of life, each of us has different causes and interests that are dear to us, and our foundation offers a unique opportunity for all to participate and make our community a true reflection of all. Creating endowment that will continue for many years is our goal, and one of our core



*Events such as The Empty Bowls Luncheon (top), Arts Alive (middle) and the Cecil Jarvis Greater Clarksburg 10K are all supported by funds through Your Community Foundation*

strengths is professional investment management of the funds individual and corporate donors entrust to us to achieve this goal. Unlike financial management companies, we offer expert guidance on the art and passion of giving. We use our expertise to make giving easy and effective, helping donors achieve their philanthropic goals.

In times of economic uncertainty, the north central region of West Virginia has risen above the nation and we continue to grow to improve the quality of life, adding vitality to our area. I believe it is the vision and collaborative spirit of our citizens that will lead us in directions yet unimagined. It is with this collaborative spirit that YCF was formed in the successful merger of The Greater Morgantown Community Trust, Inc. and The Community Foundation of North Central West Virginia, Inc. As West Virginians, we are hard workers, visionaries, and proud of our state.

We celebrate the accomplishments of each fund established through the community foundation. In 2011, YCF distributed over \$750,000 to many programs, organizations, scholarships and community development projects as the foundation continued to build endowment. Over 13 programs that feed our hungry and provide shelters to the homeless were greatly assisted; preschool to college age students were provided educational and athletic opportunities; a garden for our senior citizens was constructed; funds were raised for the construction of a market place pavilion; and arts organizations were provided valuable funding to continue to bring culture to our region. The list goes on, as we strive to improve our quality of life and where there is a vision, the YCF can help.

When I think of a community, I think of the history, stories and remembrances that have shaped it and provided its character. These all begin with its people. Just as we remember those who have given our communities their flavor, you can allow these memories to live on by including the foundation in your estate planning and wills. A community foundation allows you to join with others to contribute to what you care about the most, whether it is education, community development, arts, sports, animal care, the environment or human welfare. By honoring a lost loved one or giving back to a person or place that has given so much to you, there is no end to what can be accomplished.

Are you passionate enough about something to want to make a lasting difference? If so, YCF can help you make those dreams a reality. ▽