



# COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR THE ALLEGHENIES

SERVING BEDFORD, CAMBRIA, SOMERSET, AND INDIANA COUNTIES

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For Immediate Release

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## **\$1.3 Million in CFA Community Initiatives Grants Announced**

JOHNSTOWN—On Thursday, Community Foundation for the Alleghenies (CFA) announced a total of \$1,334,500 in grants from the Foundation’s Community Initiatives Fund. The fund targets projects with potential to create lasting positive change for the region by expanding economic and recreational opportunities for current and future generations.

This year’s Community Initiatives grants will support 23 projects in Cambria and Somerset counties. A full list of grant awards and recipients is attached.

“Change is happening now, all around us,” CFA President Mike Kane said. “The good work our donors have accomplished through the Community Initiatives Fund continues to make a difference, and we are proud to be able to continue to support change-making work through this fund. We have seen more and more people recognizing the potential of our region’s people, natural resources, and quality of life.”

To demonstrate the breadth and impact of the projects, CFA highlighted the work of seven grant recipients, with stops at five project sites:

### **Johnstown Train Station**

Johnstown Area Heritage Association received \$28,600 for a project to develop a national home for the Artist Blacksmith Association of North America (ABANA) at the historic Johnstown Train Station. The 1916 structure currently houses daily stops by the Amtrak Pennsylvanian line and will become the first formal headquarters for ABANA, which represents 4,000 blacksmiths across the country. The organization’s plans for the location include hosting more national events, inviting members from around the nation to visit the headquarters space, and setting up a gallery of blacksmith art. ABANA’s move was prompted by Johnstown’s heritage of metalworking and the development of the Center for Metal Arts. They have already scheduled a conference in Johnstown in April 2021, and JAHA booked a traveling international blacksmith art show for the Train Station next summer. A 2017 PennDOT-funded feasibility and reuse study envisioned upgrading the Train Station with specific components tied to retail/tourism development. In 2016-17, PennDOT, Amtrak, and CFA invested

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\$2,900,000 in the Train Station for ADA compliance, roof replacement, and masonry upgrades, and Amtrak is now engineering further investment in platform and tunnel improvements. However, the Johnstown Train Station needs interior and exterior upgrades to make the reuse of the building possible. A Community Initiatives grant of \$28,600 will replace the flooring, install new electrical service, and provide new HVAC equipment for the former ticket office. The renovation work should be complete by the end of 2020.

### **Blacklick Township Playground**

Blacklick Township Supervisors received \$14,500 to purchase playground equipment to install near the baseball fields that area residents now enjoy. The playground would add to growing recreational opportunities for residents of the rural township, which has three smaller parks with outdated swings. The ballpark, currently used by Little League and Pony League teams, is located five miles from Duman Lake and Park and also close to local trail systems.

Representatives from two trail projects in northern Cambria County also spoke about funding their organizations received:

The **Firefighters' Memorial Trail** received a boost with a \$5,000 grant to the Northern Cambria Community Development Corporation. That funding will support the first phase of a project to create a trail to honor first responders—the Firefighters' Memorial Trail—which would link Patton Borough Park with the Cambria Heights High School.

The award-winning **Ghost Town Trail** received a \$100,000 grant for the trail's loop extension efforts, implemented by the Cambria County Conservation & Recreation Authority. This project supports the construction of a portion of the trail from Beulah Road (Ebensburg) to Nanty Glo. It will add a six-inch base aggregate and a four-inch limestone top coat in accordance with ADA requirements for storm drainage and access, trail signage, and related site improvements. It also includes a section that may need a small bridge, plus embankment excavation of the west side to create an at-grade crossing of Beulah Road. When the extension is completed, users of the Ghost Town Trail (now 44 miles) will enjoy nearly 46 miles of off-road travel. The trail is just 5.5 miles short of becoming the first Rail Trail Loop in the eastern United States.

### **Quemahoning Family Recreation Area**

The Cambria and Somerset Counties Conservancy received a \$135,000 grant to expand recreational facilities at the increasingly popular Quemahoning Family Recreation Area. The grant will allow for the purchase and installation of additional RV sites with electric hook-ups; additional parking at the Family Rec Area and other parking areas used for access to the Que Trail; new showers and restrooms; a small pavilion; two rustic cabins; an expanded swim beach; and additional playground equipment. The recent addition of 17 miles of mountain bike/hiking trails (with another 13 miles under construction) has brought in new visitors and increased demand for this local hub for outdoor recreation.

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### **Uptown Somerset Borough**

Somerset, Inc., which acts as the “Main Street Manager” for the borough, received a \$25,000 grant to provide emergency help to business properties that have fallen into unattractive and, in some cases, potentially dangerous disrepair. Somerset Inc. is working to create a mini-grant program that would assist private building owners and incentivize emergency repairs of historic commercial buildings in the borough’s downtown area.

### **Flood City Boxing Academy**

Flood City Boxing Academy, which works with the Greater Johnstown School District as a safe haven site, received \$10,000 in grant funding to enhance a Safe Haven Playground at the facility. The outdoor play area, which includes swing sets, basketball hoops, and a fenced perimeter, would be available for youth who participate in summer and after-school programs. The facility has provided programming and support for Johnstown-area young people since 2001.

## Community Initiatives Grant Awards Announced:

Grantee	Project	Amount
Johnstown Redevelopment Authority	Blight Reduction in Five Johnstown Neighborhoods	\$500,000
Cambria and Somerset Counties Conservancy	Quemahoning Family Recreation Area Expansion Project	\$135,000
Cambria County Conservation & Recreation Authority	Ghost Town Trail Loop Extension	\$100,000
Visit Johnstown	Cambria County Destination Recovery Marketing Program	\$100,000
JARI	Vision Together 2025 Programs and Operations	\$65,000
Alleghenies United Cerebral Palsy	Human Services Response Hub	\$60,000
City of Johnstown	Sargents Stadium Improvement Project	\$55,000
Conemaugh Valley Conservancy	Inclined Plane Riverside Park Broad Plan & Design	\$50,000
JARI	Supporting Youth Education and Employment	\$40,000
Historical and Genealogical Society of Somerset County, Inc.	Mobile Sanitary Restroom Facilities	\$35,000
Johnstown Area Heritage Association	ABANA Relocation Project	\$28,600
Somerset, Inc.	Emergency Preservation Mini-Grants	\$25,000
Visit Johnstown	Unified Branding Initiative/Destination Assessment	\$25,000
Goodwill of the Southern Alleghenies	Johnstown Youth Corps	\$22,000
Pennsylvania Environmental Council	Regional Trail and Recreation Project Development	\$20,000
Blacklick Township Supervisors	Blacklick Township Playground Improvement Phase 1	\$14,500
Cambria Regional Chamber	Marketing U & Branding U	\$14,000
Cambria Regional Chamber	The Bosler Academy	\$12,000
Flood City Boxing Academy	Safe Haven Playground	\$10,000
Johnstown Symphony Orchestra	Music Mentorship Program	\$7,400
Coaches 4 Kids	Dale Municipal Recreation Site	\$6,000
Alternative Community Resources Program, Inc.	Cambria City Splash Park	\$5,000
Northern Cambria Community Development Corporation	Firefighters' Memorial Trail	\$5,000

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