

Nancy Kopp receives Freedom From Selfishness Award

By KRISTI SCHWEITZER T-G Staff Writer Published: September 15, 2016 4:00 AM



Photo courtesy of T-G | Dr. Lucille Ford, president emerita of the Ashland County Community Foundation, speaks about Nancy Kopp, left, winner of the Dr. Lucille G. Ford Freedom From Selfishness Award during an annual meeting of the Womens Fund of the Ashland County Community Foundation at Ashland University on Tuesday. (Times-Gazette photo/Liz A. Hosfeld)

More than 50 women gathered Tuesday evening at Ashland University's John C. Myers Convocation Center to recognize the grants given by the Women's Fund, a chapter in the Ashland County Community Foundation, as well as the third recipient of the Lucille G. Ford Freedom From Selfishness Award.

Last year's recipient Janet Archer announced this year's awardee as Nancy Kopp for her constant giving to the community.

Kopp has volunteered as an usher for Ashland Symphony Orchestra for 20 years, with 10 years as the house manager, recruiting and training ushers. She donates an abundance of groceries to Associated Charities each month and volunteers once a month in the gift shop of University Hospitals Samaritan Medical Center.

Within her church, Trinity Lutheran, she serves as a lector, plays in the hand bell choir and is a member of a prayer shawl ministry in which she helps make shawls and blankets for high school graduates and newly baptized babies.

She contributes as a distinguished member of the Ashland County Historical Society as first co-chair of its auction and now chair for the past 10 years, helping with other events.

She also has established four funds for the foundation: a scholarship fund for students majoring in education, an endowment fund for Ashland Symphony Orchestra and endowment funds for the Christian Health Center and Appleseed Rape Crisis Domestic Violence Safe Haven.

"I can only say that I have been truly blessed in my life with everything I have been able to do, but I haven't been able to do it by myself," Kopp said. "I have behind me a great support system that keeps me going and they do their jobs, yet somehow I get the credit. Thank you so much for this."

Then she added, "I feel that you cast your bread on the waters and it returns one hundredfold. Thank you."

The award, named for Ford's definition of philanthropy, "freedom from selfishness," was presented to Kopp by Ford.

Before the award was presented, Ford described her definition and encouraged the audience to "take the wilderness road" and to keep going every day. "As you go forward and you live that life of freedom from selfishness, you will know the joy and the glory that is yours," she said.

Earlier in the evening's program, steering committee vice chair Connie Marble recognized the 2016 grant recipients and how funds will be used.

This year's grants were given to eight out of the 14 reviewed applications. Based on need, the grants of different amounts were awarded in June.

- Ashland Care Center was awarded a grant that provided Pack 'n Play portable cribs for clients who completed the center's parenting classes.
- Ashland Parenting Plus used its grant to fund summer programming for at-risk girls to provide outings to historical sites and art-rich related experiences.
- Fostering Family Ministries, a new recipient this year, will use funds to certify mentor couples and professionals involved in foster care.
- Rape Crisis Domestic Violence Safe Haven was awarded a grant to update the shelter's playground area in partnership with Leadership Ashland.
- Ashland County Cancer Association received a grant to fund a one-day retreat for women with cancer or experiencing grief due to the loss of a loved one from cancer.
- Ashland Symphony Orchestra will use its received funds to engage student choirs to perform with the orchestra's Family Holiday Pops and January Pops concerts.
- Kno-Ho-Co Ashland Community Action Commission's awarded grant updated colposcopy instruments to conduct women's reproductive health screenings.
- Women in Action will use its grant money in program development for women in need of support in learning life skills.

Since 2004, 43 grants have been awarded, totaling \$80,990, with an impact on 5,531 women and children.

Also during the program, steering committee chair Annette Shaw announced the Women's Fund's annual Mother's Day Card Initiative, which offers ACCF donors and community members the opportunity to honor or remember the beloved women in their lives on Mother's

Day. Designed cards are sent to the honoree the week of Mother's Day or if in remembrance, a card expressing sympathy is sent to her family. Since its start in 2008, 2,395 women have been honored or memorialized with \$105,529 contributed to the fund.

Shaw also announced the Norma E. McKinley Citizenship Education endowment fund, which is "for the development and implementation of citizenship and education with the focus on character building in any of the Ashland County public schools" was launched in June at Taft Intermediate School. The fund was started by Judge Michael McKinley to honor his late wife.

Kristi Schweitzer can be reached at 419-281-0581, ext. 237, or at kschweitzer@times-gazette.com. Follow her on Twitter @krschweitzer.