ACCF honors donors, departing trustee at reception

Ashland County Community Foundation trustee John Miller, left, is honored for his time as the chairman of the Hess Loan Fund Committee by CEO Jim Cutright during the organization’s annual donor reception at the John C. Myers Convocation Center on Tuesday.

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John Miller says there are only three women in his life he could never say “no” to — his mother, his wife and Lucille Ford.

But during the Ashland County Community Foundation’s annual donor reception, Miller made a point of thanking Ford, the founding president of ACCF, for asking him to become a part of the Board of Trustees eight years ago.

The ACCF executive director and CEO Jim Cutright honored Miller, who has completed his service as a trustee for the ACCF, on Tuesday at Ashland University’s John C. Myers Convocation Center.

Miller served as the chairman of the Hess Loan Fund Committee, bringing a unique perspective due to his experience as the former superintendent of the Loudonville-Perrysville Exempted Village Schools, Cutright said.

For over 90 years, the Hess Loan Fund has provided scholarships to college-bound students, thanks to Dr. Gilbert Hess, the co-founder of Hess & Clark Inc.

When Hess died in 1923, he bequeathed $100,000 for Ashland County students to further their education.

“We’re within a stone’s throw of 100 years since his passing — 100 years of scholarships because he left that money to the foundation for generations to come,” Miller said. “I think that speaks well of our mission.”

Miller also worked on the scholarship, marketing, advancement and community grants committees.

As per tradition, the departing trustee is given a silver piggy bank, engraved with the ACCF logo and trustee’s name, as a parting token.

“It symbolizes the fact that the ACCF represents the charitable bank in the community, with all the individual charitable savings accounts that we call endowments,” Cutright said.
During the past year, 36 new endowment funds were created.

“As we look back at our past year, our 24th year, we’ve enjoyed some amazing successes,” Cutright said.

The total liabilities and net assets for this year totaled $57,148,448, up from $50,893,707 in 2018, according to the annual report, which was distributed after the reception.

The annual report, printed by the Ashland Times-Gazette, covers the period between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2019. The report is also included as an insert in today’s print edition of the newspaper.

This year’s report was given the theme “Advancing Philanthropy.”

“When I look around the room, we have other agency leaders here — their boards, their staffs — these are all the things we love to do,” Cutright said. “And for which each of our donors, who support our work, made possible. And for that, on this night, on behalf of those with needs, with whom you share a voice, I say ‘Thank you.’”

During the reception, Cutright also recognized the ACCF’s core staff members: office administrator Mindy Howman; educational programs director Lanie Hartge; chief program officer Kristin Aspin; chief financial officer Brittaney Reep; and newcomer Courtney McNaull, who will serve as the ACCF’s first communications director, starting in December.

The ACCF supports charitable activities in the community to advance philanthropy in Ashland County. It acts as the administrator of scholarships and individual and organizational funds for specific charities.

The ACCF has been around for 24 years, and plans to celebrate its silver anniversary on Aug. 20, said Peggy Yoder, vice chair and past president.