



## News Release

---

**Media Contact:** Paul Freeman, Vice President of Development & Marketing  
Erie County Community Foundation  
135 E. Washington Row  
Sandusky, OH 44780  
419.621.9690 / paulf@eriefoundation.org

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

#### ERIE COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CELEBRATES THIRTY YEARS OF MAKING MAGIC TOGETHER

**Sandusky, Ohio, October 3, 2025** — On September 25, 2025, Erie County Community Foundation (ECCF) marked its 30th anniversary with a night of inspiration, gratitude, and celebration at the Sandusky Yacht Club. Nearly 300 community members, donors, and partners gathered under the theme “Magical Impact: 30 Years of Transforming Lives, Together” to honor the Foundation’s three decades of turning generosity into lasting community change.

Guests enjoyed live music by Chad Hoffman, signature “Magic Mule” cocktails, and dazzling performances by magician Michael Mage, creating an atmosphere of joy and wonder that reflected the evening’s theme. The celebration featured a special “Big Reveal” moment highlighting ECCF’s impact since its founding in 1995, including stories of transformation and testimonials of lives touched by donor generosity.

ECCF leaders recognized past and present board members, emeritus members, and event sponsors whose dedication has fueled the Foundation’s growth. President and CEO Beth Maiden announced the creation of several 30th Anniversary Challenge Funds, welcoming four new organizations—the Berlin Heights Historical Society, Erie County Economic Development Corporation, Erie County CASA, and Harbortown Fine Arts Center—into the ECCF family.

In a moving tribute to ECCF’s earliest partners, original grantees including Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio, the Firelands Symphony Orchestra, BGSU Firelands, Edison Birthplace Association, and the Youth Advisory Council received special recognition and “big check” presentations totaling \$30,000.

The evening concluded with a champagne toast led by John Bacon, ECCF Founding and Emeritus Director and Past Chairman, celebrating ECCF’s enduring commitment to community philanthropy. Guests then gathered for a grand finale illusion by Mage, a fitting reminder of the “real magic” that generosity creates.

“For 30 years, our donors, partners, and community have been the magicians—turning visions into reality and creating brighter futures for Erie County,” said Maiden. “Tonight’s celebration honored not only our history but the boundless possibilities that lie ahead. The Community Foundation remains dedicated to ensuring that the power of giving continues to create miracles for generations to come.”



## News Release

---

### **About Erie County Community Foundation**

Celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2025, Erie County Community Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to building a thriving and vibrant Erie County, Ohio. Erie County Community Foundation inspires philanthropy and strengthens our community by connecting donors to causes that matter. Through endowments, grants, and partnerships, ECCF turns generosity into impact—forever. The organization's primary purpose is to provide a means for people to make permanent gifts of assets to enhance the quality of life in Erie County and Sandusky, Ohio—today, tomorrow, and forever.

Erie County Community Foundation is governed by an independent Board of Directors and Officers, comprised of Erie County business, civic, and non-profit leaders. The Board of Directors employs Foundation staff, establishes policies and priorities, and directs final grantmaking decisions. The Board's strength lies in the diverse range of knowledge and expertise of its members, and in their shared commitment to improving the quality of life in Erie County, Ohio.

Since Erie County Community Foundation's founding in 1995, the Foundation has grown from assets totaling \$1.8 million to more than \$44.5 million in 2024. During this time, the Foundation has distributed over \$24.4 million to area non-profits and students for local projects, programs, scholarships, services, and initiatives to improve the quality of life in Erie County, Ohio.



*In a moving tribute to ECCF's earliest partners, original grantees including Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio, the Firelands Symphony Orchestra, BGSU Firelands, Edison Birthplace Association, and the Youth Advisory Council received special recognition and "big check" presentations totaling \$30,000.*



**SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK:** (L to R) Erie County Community Foundation President & CEO Beth Maiden, Second Harvest Food Bank President & CEO Julie Chase-Morefield, Second Harvest Food Bank Director of Program & Partner Services Samantha Flores



**FIRELANDS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA:** (L to R) Erie County Community Foundation President & CEO Beth Maiden, FSO Board President Lisa Felter, FSO Executive Director Ron Brooker, FSO Director of Operations Mindi Bishop





**BGSU FIRELANDS: (L to R) Erie County Community Foundation President & CEO Beth Maiden, BGSU Firelands Dean Dr. Allia L. Carter, Director of IT Julie Hamann, Associate Dean Dr. Stephanie Walls, Assistant Dean PJ Mays, Director of Teaching and Learning Center Brigitte Green-Churchwell**



*EDISON BIRTHPLACE ASSOCIATION: (L to R) Erie County Community Foundation President & CEO Beth Maiden, Edison Birthplace Association Development Director Kaitlyn Brulia, Edison Birthplace Association Board President Robert Wheeler*



**YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL:** (L to R) Huron High School YAC Representative Sierra Nunn, Erie County Community Foundation President & CEO Beth Maiden, Perkins High School YAC Representative Lillyan Ryerson, Perkins High School YAC Representative Rocco Speer, Huron High School YAC Representative Hayden Holmes, Edison High School YAC Representative Weston Gfell, YAC Founding Director Judy Pflieger

###