A synthesis of data associated with the impact of The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation

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Since 1962, The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation (TGKVF) has supported a multitude of community efforts in arts and culture, health and human services, community development, education, and recreation. Today, TGKVF acts as an intersection for public, private, and nonprofit organizations that promote the well-being of Kanawha, Lincoln, Putnam, Fayette, Boone, and Clay County residents. TGKVF, one of the largest community foundations in the nation, with over 500 funds and $221 million in assets, is the biggest community foundation in West Virginia and all of Central Appalachia.

This report uses county-level indicators as well as quantitative and qualitative information from grantees to create profiles of the communities served and to assess TGKVF’s impact on them.

The primary impacts of TGKVF include:

TGKVF and its donors have improved the quality of life for people in its service area.
Data from local and national sources clearly indicate the dire needs of the TGKVF catchment area. To address these needs, TGKVF grantees work to increase skills, improve health, provide basic needs assistance, and improve the quality of life for community residents. Despite these challenges, some national data suggest that TGKVF and other community partners are having a positive effect, with stories of success clearly indicating that such programs have a tremendous impact on people’s lives.

TGKVF has increased the effectiveness and impact of the programs and organizations it funds.
In addition to having a direct impact on participants, TGKVF grantees reported that the Foundation had an impact on their organizations and the ways in which they provided services by: 1) improving the organizational functioning of partners, 2) extending the capacity and increased the efficiency of programming efforts, and 3) by extending or leveraging resources from other sources.

Understanding Future Impact
As TGKVF moves forward with enabling grantees’ rigor in their data collection, logic models usage, and outcome measurement, the Foundation will gain an even better understanding of its partners’ direct impact in the six-county region. Through the collection of data, TGKVF is providing grantees the tools necessary to gauge their own efforts, and, in turn, the impact of TGKVF.

TGKVF and its donors have provided services and programs that have helped people who would not otherwise have had access to such services.
It is estimated that TGKVF grantees serve more than 70,000 people each year, in addition to conducting more than 1,500 presentations to more than 150,000 people annually. Over time TGKVF has indirectly touched the lives of most residents in the TGKVF service area. Through funding programs that provide critical services to vulnerable and at-risk populations, providing educational and developmental programming for children and youth, supporting programs that meet the basic needs of residents, and enhancing both the access to and the quality of healthcare, TGKVF demonstrates its commitment to serving area residents.
In 2016, The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation (TGKVF) contracted with Midwest Evaluation and Research (MER) as part of a quality improvement process to: 1) improve TGKVF evaluation processes and procedures, 2) increase the capacity of TGKVF’s grantees to understand, collect, and utilize data, and 3) to better understand the impact that TGKVF has had on focus communities (six-county region). A more rigorous evaluation-guided grant funding process should result in stronger individual grantee efforts, better participant outcomes, and larger regional improvements.

When trying to understand the impact that this Foundation has had, two fundamental questions arise: “How are the communities in which TGKVF works different than they would have been otherwise?” and “How have things been altered or influenced from their original course?” Answering such questions is difficult for several reasons. Programs or projects that operate in “real-world” community settings are subject to the influences of a variety of environmental factors, including the local economy, unemployment rates, the declining utilization of coal, local and regional influences, such as the prevalence of illegal drug usage, disease outbreaks, access to preventative healthcare, or regional/cultural food preferences. The ability of any single program, policy, or organization to significantly counteract such environmental trends is limited.

Indeed, programs that attempt to address issues of social importance in a community or region rarely work in isolation. Basic underlying social issues such as hunger, poverty, access to adequate housing, access to healthcare, disease prevention, social inequality, and the like are often the target of federal, state, and local governmental efforts, and are also directly addressed by a multitude of business, non-profit, and religious organizations.

The complexity of social and economic problems, and the difficulty of accurately defining and measuring them, often makes it difficult to gain a clear understanding of whether problems are getting better or worse. A multitude of service system actors and environmental influences can make understanding the direct impact of any one program or group of programs on such problems even more challenging. The direct measurement of the impact of such efforts requires a long term rigorous approach. TGKVF is at the beginning of such a process and has built a conceptual framework and the structural processes required for the identification and collection of consistent data across funded programs.

In the interim, while consistent and reliable data that directly relates to the impact of funding efforts to date may not exist, there are several sources of information that can indirectly indicate the impact that TGKVF has had. These proxy or secondary data sources can each provide approximations of TGKVF’s impact, and the convergence and consistent themes that emerge from these sources increase the validity and robustness of these findings. These approximate, qualitative, and secondary data sources form the basis of this report. When they are combined, they provide a picture of TGKVF’s historical impact, the impact it continues to have on the partners it works with, and the lives touched by the efforts that it funds. Finally, it is important to note that this analysis only looks at the impacts associated with grant funded projects and not the impact of the scholarship program that has also impacted so many lives. That analysis will be be completed by January 2018.
The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation was founded in 1962 thanks to the efforts of Robert Spilman, Ned Chilton, and Stanley Loewenstein, among others. When the Foundation began its operations with the establishment of the Frank A. Knight Memorial Fund, its assets were $45,000, belonging to the by-then-discontinued North-South Football Game. These funds were redirected by the Circuit Court of Kanawha County to the Foundation to benefit the Children’s Museum and Planetarium, now the Avampato Museum in the Clay Center.

Since then, with multiple donors creating funds to benefit the community, TGKVF has supported numerous projects in the arts, culture, health, human services, community development, education, and recreation. It supported numerous pioneering projects including the Morris Harvey College (now the University of Charleston) nursing program in 1965, the Arthur B. Hodges Center for the Elderly in 1978, the Samaritan Inn in 1988, the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences in 1996, the Schoenbaum Family Enrichment Center in 2002, and the CAMC Cancer Center in 2012. Over ____ proposals and special initiatives have been funded since _____.

Between 2011 and 2013, TGKVF took substantial steps to refocus its community investment strategy in order to deepen its impact in the greater Kanawha Valley area. By adopting a shared vision to build multiple forms of wealth, TGKVF trained grantees to improve projects and measure success, revised program evaluation tools, and developed a grantmaking framework to guide its investment strategy. The diagram below describes each step TGKVF took throughout the strategic planning process.

Today, TGKVF works to bring together public, private, and nonprofit organizations with the purpose of promoting the well-being of Kanawha, Lincoln, Putnam, Fayette, Boone, and Clay Counties. One of the largest community foundations in the nation, and the biggest foundation in West Virginia, TGKVF manages over 500 philanthropic funds that amount to more than $215 million in resources. This money, in combination with the skill and guidance of the Foundation’s staff, board, and volunteers, is utilized to invest in the community, develop socially and economically beneficial programs, and create community wealth.

TGKVF supports the communities in its service area closer to its vision of a forward-thinking and closely connected community that fearlessly works together to promote the prosperity of all.
Community Wealth is the framework by which TGKVF conceptualizes its work with grantees and intends to create an impact on the community. By working to grow multiple forms of community wealth, TGKVF believes its grantee partners can have substantial and lasting impact on the root-cause issues that continually undermine good outcomes in the areas of education, health, and community economic development throughout the six-county region it serves. An emphasis on leadership and civic engagement is included in each of these priority areas.

By concentrating on education, TGKVF’s vision is that the Kanawha Valley region can be a place where students, from early childhood to postsecondary, build the skills, knowledge, and credentials to become more productive and successful. By supporting awareness of health issues, TGKVF empowers the region’s citizens to make healthy choices. And, because the Kanawha Valley community is full of strong, innovative, and effective individuals and groups who work to create shared visions and cross-cultural relationships, by focusing on civic engagement and community building TGKVF strengthens the community’s capacity to foster positive change.

Over the last few years, TGKVF has focused on the seven forms of community wealth when selecting projects to fund, guiding grantee proposals, and determining what to require in grantee reports. These forms of community wealth are described below:

**Individual Community Wealth – Skills, Health, Confidence, and Income**
Individual wealth is the capacity to get things done. When someone in the community has a great idea, do they or someone else around them have the skills to bring it to fruition? Do they have the physical ability? Are they empowered and confident enough to make it happen? Improved individual capital gives people and communities more capacity to create positive changes in their lives.

**Intellectual Community Wealth – Shared Knowledge, Innovation, and Technology**
Intellectual wealth is the knowledge and creativity available to people within a community. It is not just about one person’s knowledge, but how that knowledge is shared with others who might need it or benefit from it. Improved intellectual capital gives people and communities better access to the information that they need in order to create positive changes.

**Social Community Wealth – Trust, Relationships, and Mutual Support**
Social wealth is the trust and relationships that exist within a community or group of people. Can people within the community rely on each other for mutual support? Social capital is very closely connected to cultural capital, which helps to create strong bonds and trust among communities. Improved social capital helps people and communities work together, or to work with new or outside partners, in order to create positive changes in their lives.

“TGKVF funding has provided experiential STEM education to youth in the six-county area during the summer months, a time often lacking in learning opportunities. The six counties had extra staff to send to the community partners and provide quality hands-on learning to youths. This support has strengthened partnerships and increased opportunities for youths, nonprofits and WVU Extension.”
Financial Community Wealth – Community Investments and Household Savings
Financial wealth is money that can be invested in the region or in the work being done there. Household savings, grants, and endowments at business and community foundations are good examples of money that can be invested. Income does not count as financial capital because it may be needed to cover debts and expenses. It may not be available to invest. Improved financial capital provides the investment that is necessary for people and communities to create positive changes in their lives.

Built Community Wealth – Community Infrastructure
Built wealth is the infrastructure that supports a highly functioning community — good roads, safe spaces for people to meet and work, and internet access, as well as infrastructure specific to particular sectors or industries. Improved built capital, makes it easier for people and communities to participate in activities that lead to positive changes in their lives.

Natural Community Wealth – Resilient Natural Resources
Natural wealth includes the natural resources that contribute to the well-being of communities. Do the region's natural resources contribute to people’s health, happiness, and their ability to make a living? If the resources are polluted or misused to the point where they have a negative impact on the community, they are considered as a depleted stock of natural capital. Improved natural capital protects or restores natural resources that allow people and communities to make positive changes in their lives.

Political Community Wealth – Influence and Voice
Political wealth is the power that people have to influence decision-makers in the community or region. When resources are being earmarked, does the community have a voice in the way they are distributed? Political capital goes beyond government. Organizations, institutions, and businesses all have policies that determine the use of their resources. Improved political capital allows people and communities to make positive changes in the policies and procedures that impact their lives.
Methods for Assessing TGKVF’s Impact

As described in the Forward section of this report, the direct measurement of the effect of TGKVF efforts to date has not been possible for both methodological and financial reasons. Such an evaluation requires the ongoing collection of consistent data and necessitates high-quality evaluations of the specific projects and activities funded by TGKVF. Up to this point, TGKVF has not required such consistency in data collection from funded partners (grantees). Similarly, well-designed and resourced program evaluations of major TGKVF initiatives have not been conducted. As such, it is not currently possible to aggregate consistent data and information about the impact of funded programs to determine the impact of TGKVF efforts. While it is technically possible to collect such information retroactively, it would be an extremely expensive process. It should be noted that such consistent data collection efforts are currently beginning and will facilitate the ability to talk more directly about TGKVF impact over the long term.

While direct measurement of impact is currently problematic, useful information about the impact that TGKVF has had can still be obtained from more indirect methods. This report uses three sources of data. Two of these sources indirectly describe the impact of TGKVF by looking at the Foundation’s activities and by examining the changes in local/regional issues of concern. The third source of data asks current and former grantees to describe the impact that TGKVF funding has had on their organizations and on the people with whom they work.

Review of TGKVF Grantee Documents
As part of its work with TGKVF, Midwest Evaluation and Research conducted a review of 2013 and 2014 grantee documents (i.e., proposals and final reports) to identify areas of strength and weakness in the current performance measurement and self-evaluation process utilized by TGKVF grantees. The 2013-2014 TGKVF funding applications required applicants to identify how their proposed projects would grow multiple forms of community wealth with a long-term focus on impacting education, health, and civic engagement and community building. In reviewing the 2013-2014 grantee reports, MER paid particular attention to grantee goals, processes, and reported outcomes as they worked to increase the various forms of community wealth. Attention also was paid to the way these reported goals, measurement processes, and reported impacts changed over time for each of the areas of community wealth. These reports provide a clearer picture of TGKVF grantees, what they are trying to achieve, and what the immediate results of these efforts have been.

Community Level Indicators from Third Party Data Sources
In 2016, as part of its ongoing work with TGKVF, MER undertook the development of a Dashboard Report that identified third party (i.e., US Census Bureau, US Centers for Disease Control, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, etc.) data sources and indicators for which there was readily available county, regional, state, and national data. Using this information MER prepared a report focusing primarily on 2013–2015 data as a baseline from which to measure the impact of TGKVF’s grant-funded efforts to moving forward. This data was framed within the structure of the Community Wealth framework through which TGKVF conceptualizes its work with grantees to create a positive impact on the community. This data indicates the effectiveness of overall community efforts, including TGKVF efforts, and the similarity/dissimilarity of local trends to national and state trends.

Qualitative Information Provided by Current and Past TGKVF Grantees
As part of a survey with current and past grantees undertaken to identify needs for training and the capacity for building efforts, MER included the following question: “Please provide a brief narrative description of what kind of impact TGKVF, its funding, programs, and leadership have had on your organization, the people you serve, and your community.” The responses to this question were analyzed using quantitative research methods to look for common themes and issues. Quotations from respondents appear throughout this report, providing a tangible first-hand account of TGKVF’s impact on its partners, the people with whom they work, and the greater community.
To understand TGKVF’s impact, we must first understand how and where it occurs. TGKVF is a grantmaking organization and its impact can be measured by the effectiveness of the organizations and projects it supports. By examining the grant documents submitted to TGKVF by grantees we can begin to get a picture of the individual applicant organizations, their proposed projects, and the intended outcomes.

**Location of Grantee Organizations:** The map below shows the zip codes of grantee organizations funded by TGKVF in 2013-2014. Most grantee organizations are in or near Charleston, West Virginia.

![Map of Charleston area with zip code markers](image)

**Age of Grantee Organization:** As part of the application process, grantees were asked to report the year their organization was founded. On average, grantee organizations had been in operation for approximately 30 years (i.e., since 1986), with the range of grantee agency foundings dating back as far as 1888 (for a local government grantee) and as recently as 2012.

**Faith-based Status:** While all grantees were nonprofit organizations, (including governmental entities) only about 10% were faith-based organizations; the remainder were secular nonprofits.
TGKVF funding has sustained our arts programming for over 30 years. Traditional arts programming and community dances generate wealth in the sense of the place and history of our culture; they are self-sustaining but growth always requires the little extra that TGKVF has so generously provided over the years.

In addition to understanding the organizations that are the intermediary actors between TGKVF and the targeted groups, it is necessary to understand the activities that produce change. These outputs, or counts of activities, are the most basic level of data that can describe the scope of the work and the number of lives affected by TGKVF-funded projects.

The most fundamental TGKVF outcome that emerged from this review is that services, programs, and projects that would have never been possible without TGKVF funding happened as a result of the Foundation’s support. Lives were enriched, people were helped, and community wealth was built in ways that would not have happened without TGKVF and its donor’s involvement.

Services/Activities Provided and Reported: Not all programs funded by TGKVF directly serve individuals/families; some focus on community improvement activities (e.g., building a trail, rehabilitating a building, etc.). Most funded projects involve direct interaction with the community, as well as service provision to it. The percentage of projects reporting a key outcome/output as the number of people that they served was 75%. Another common service activity involved presentations, providing information, or providing cultural entertainment/enrichment opportunities to individuals and groups. Some examples of these service activities include: informational or educational sessions (e.g., community fairs, plays, musical events, museum tours, and similar activities), with more than 34% of grantees reporting the number of such presentations that their programs made. More than a quarter of all programs also reported that their projects involved providing physical/tangible items (e.g. books, meals, homes) to participants or community members.

“TGKVF funding has sustained our arts programming for over 30 years. Traditional arts programming and community dances generate wealth in the sense of the place and history of our culture; they are self-sustaining but growth always requires the little extra that TGKVF has so generously provided over the years.”
Geographical Service Area: The review of the 2013-2014 program documents identified the counties that the TGKVF-sponsored projects served. Over 40% of the grantees provided grant-funded services in all the TGKVF six-county service area, over 35% in Kanawha County alone, and the remaining 25% was spread almost evenly among Boone, Putnam, Clay, Lincoln, and Fayette counties. The chart below provides the percentage distribution by county of grantee activity.

Project Partners: Grantees listed the partners they engaged for each project. MER classified the partners into various types of organizations in order to understand the variety and number of partners involved in TGKVF-funded programs. It is clear that partners play an important role in the success of a project by providing access to participants, by providing needed services and supports, and by providing critical resources. The 2013-2014 TGKVF grantees had an average of over twelve (12.4) partners per project, ranging from zero to more than 200 partners. The most common types of partners were other non-profit organizations, followed by businesses and local government organizations. The diagram below displays the variety of partners listed in grantee applications.
“We are very appreciative of the support we have received from TGKVF over the years, as it has enabled us to help many, many people and increase capacity in our community.”

**Project Cost and Funding:** Grantees indicated the total cost of the project for which they were seeking funding and the amount of that total cost that they were requesting from TGKVF. Final reports included information on the total grant amount awarded to a project by TGKVF. On average TGKVF funded about 17% of the total proposed/described project costs (e.g., funding on average $24,000 of project costs that totaled $145,000) and that this funding amount was close to the requested amount in most cases.

There is a consistent message from grantees and this data that TGKVF has a significant ability to maximize dollars. TGKVF funds are used to expand services, to fill gaps in other programs, and to leverage additional dollars as a required match. This targeted and judicious use of funds increases the impact of every dollar spent, far beyond the actual resources provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Proposed Project Cost</th>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>Amount Funded (n=86,***)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range – $3,179 to $30,261,242</td>
<td>Range – $2,000 to $83,500</td>
<td>Range – $2,000 to $162,000***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Project (*) = $145,448</td>
<td>Average Request = $24,338</td>
<td>Average Award = $23,797</td>
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* = outlier removed
** = includes multiyear grantee awards
Project Sustainability: Another aspect of financial impact relates to the ability of programs, services, and projects to be sustained after TGKVF funding ends. When examining the data, three factors became clear. Some projects would simply not exist or continue without the support of TGKVF or some other funding source. For other projects, particularly those involving natural, built, or political forms of wealth, the impact of the grant-funded program would be ongoing as parks and trails would continue to be used after being built, and policy changes endure after being made. Most grantees indicated that they would conduct some type of fundraising activity from public or individual donors, seek other foundation funding, or use program income or fees to continue programming services. The graph below outlines the variety of funding sources on which grantees planned to rely in order to sustain their services.

“TGKVF provided support and encouragement as our organization was maturing, allowing us to establish our roots in the community. Since our opening, we have provided more than $7 million in product to the community.”
In addition to understanding the service provided and the agency providing these services, it is critical to understand the beneficiaries of TGKVF efforts, and ultimately how they were affected. Understanding who has been affected provides an indication of how well TGKVF is meeting its objectives and adhering to its mission.

**Number of People to be Served:** The 2012-2013 grant documents were examined to discover the number of people who were directly served or affected each year by funded projects. The average count was approximately 700 persons. The data indicated that some projects served as few as 20 people while other projects served the entire population of the six-county service area.

- Calculations were made from data supplied by 89 grantees
- Range from 20 people to total population of six county area
- Average number impacted: 700 people

**Target Population, Ethnic Breakdown:**
In grant proposal documents, grantees indicated the ethnic groups that their proposed projects would benefit. Most grantees (83.2%) indicated that their program was intended to benefit persons from all ethnic groups. A minority of programs indicated a single specific ethnic target population.

Grant applicants could select up to three.
Target Population, Age Breakdown: Grantees were also asked to indicate the age groups that would be targeted by their proposed projects. Over 40% of grantees indicated that all age groups would be served by their projects. Of those grantees indicating that they would not serve the whole population, most programs were aimed at assisting school-aged children. The graph below shows the distribution of the age ranges that grantees proposed serving, with “All Ages” selected most often. Grantees could indicate single or multiple age ranges that applied to their program services.

Target Population, Gender Breakdown: Grantees were asked to indicate the gender group(s) targeted by their proposed program. The majority (90.5%) proposed serving both males and females.
One important aspect of the impact of TGKVF efforts is the effect that grantees have had on participants and on the community at large. The detailed review of the 2013-2014 grant documents provided a sense of the outcomes, including changes in participants that grantees hoped to accomplish with their TGKVF-funded project. By using the framework of the seven forms of community wealth on which TGKVF and its grantees focused on (i.e., individual, intellectual, social, financial, built, natural, and political), the kinds of benefits that each program was intended to provide can be clarified.

**Individual Community Wealth**: Individual Community Wealth was the most common form of wealth that grantees chose to impact. The most common outcomes that grantees wanted for program participants are listed below, with the most common outcomes listed first.

- Increased academic, creative, technical, and social skills
- Improved physical and mental health
- Provision of basic needs including food, shelter, utilities, and housing
- Improvement in the quality of life
- Improved attitudes, knowledge, or awareness on a variety of topics
- Satisfaction with services provided
- Empowerment
- Improved employment outcomes

**Intellectual Community Wealth**: A commonly referenced form of wealth, the outcomes that grantees were aiming for, were similar to those listed for individual community wealth.

- Increased knowledge
- Increased skills
- Improved attitudes and awareness
- Increased community and program engagement
- Improved job readiness

**Social Community Wealth**: Another commonly sought type of outcome referenced

"Mingo County crew member, Wilburn Jude, was laid off from the coal mines a few years ago. He is now working in our 33-6-3 program. Every week he spends 33 hours in on-the-job training where he and his crew are repurposing a former surface mine into a sustainable agriculture and forestry operation, for six hours each week Wilburn attends college, and three hours are dedicated to personal development.

The first in his family to attend college, Wilburn had just finished his first week of class at Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College. His first assignment was to present and discuss three objects that exemplify his past, present, and future.

We believe that courage, creativity, and community are the keys for building a bright future in Central Appalachia. And we are proud to work with and for people like Wilburn — people who embody these qualities every day.”

– Refresh Appalachia
by grantees was related to social community wealth. Many programs that worked directly with individuals utilizing the other forms of wealth also sought to build feelings of support and community engagement among participants. In other programs, such engagement was a primary goal of the funded efforts. The most commonly listed outcomes included:

- Increased community engagement of and collaboration with participants
- Strengthened personal, family, and organizational social bonds
- Increased feelings of support and trust
- Improved teamwork and collaborations among organizations
- Improved social/collaborative skills
- Improved perceptions of self and others (self-esteem, confidence and efficacy, reduced stigma)

**Financial Community Wealth:** Prior to the inclusion of community economic development as a priority funding area, financial community wealth was not selected as frequently as other listed forms of wealth. However, some grantees did try to achieve outcomes in this area, including:

- Decrease in the financial assistance required by participants or community members
- Increase in financial literacy skills or knowledge
- Improved economic development environment in the community
- Increased savings, or improved spending habits

**Built Community Wealth:** The most common outcomes that grantees aimed for under the built wealth framework included the following:

- Improvements to existing structures
- New construction activities
- Improved access to or safety of buildings or natural spaces

**Natural Community Wealth:** A less frequently used form of community wealth, grantees attempted to improve natural wealth by targeting the following outcomes:

- Improving attitudes towards nature and the natural environment
- Increasing knowledge of nature, or developing the skills required in a natural environment
- Increasing exercise via utilization of parks and outdoor spaces
- Increasing usage of specific natural spaces

**Political Community Wealth:** Political community wealth was the least commonly utilized form of wealth among the 2013-2014 grant documents reviewed; however, among those trying to influence this form of wealth the following outcomes were identified:

- Increasing the ability to self-advocate
- Increasing civic engagement
- Increasing public support for a program or issue
- Changing policies or practices
One way of examining the effects of TGKVF’s efforts is to try and understand how community level indicators that relate to the forms of wealth have changed over time. At this point it is impossible to determine the extent that changes have come as a result of TGKVF and funded grantee efforts; however, the changes—or lack of them—can indicate the overall effectiveness of such efforts. TGKVF has identified long-term outcomes which will be used to assess the effects of their efforts to improve lives within the six counties comprising the Kanawha Valley region over the coming decades. A historical examination of this data can provide the reader with a sense of the challenges and level of effort required to influence community-wide trends, and how such trends have aligned with statewide and national trends. Samples of these indicators are presented below.

Increased high school and post-secondary graduation rates

**High School Graduation:** The good news is that high school graduation rates have increased over time. In 2005 the overall West Virginia high school graduation rate was 70.4%, which was below the national average. In 2015, just 10 years later, the overall graduation rate was 86.5%, which is higher than the national average. By comparison the, overall graduation rate for the TGKVF six-county area has risen less over this period, starting at a relatively high 77.4% in 2005 to 84.9% in 2015. The US average went up 9% during this time, compared to 16% for West Virginia, and 7.5% for the six-county area. This would suggest that overall changes in the high school graduation rate for this six-county area has had more to do with statewide and national influences than local influences. The years between 2013 and 2015 have shown an increasing rate of improvement for the six-county area, and time will tell if this improvement rate continues.

![High School Graduation - Percentage of Ninth-Grade Cohort that Graduates in Four Years](image)

**High School Graduation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>6-Counties</th>
<th>Boone</th>
<th>Clay</th>
<th>Fayette</th>
<th>Kanawha</th>
<th>Lincoln</th>
<th>Putnam</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>70.4%</td>
<td>77.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>81.4%</td>
<td>79.4%</td>
<td>79.8%</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
<td>79.1%</td>
<td>70.9%</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td>86.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
<td>82.6%</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
<td>80.2%</td>
<td>75.5%</td>
<td>80.7%</td>
<td>90.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
<td>86.4%</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
<td>91.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [https://zoomwv.k12.wv.us/Dashboard/portalHome.jsp](https://zoomwv.k12.wv.us/Dashboard/portalHome.jsp)
This indicator provides an overview of the percentage of ninth-grade cohort that graduates in four years. Graduation rates in West Virginia are important for examining student success and readiness for education, or careers after high school. A high school graduate is defined as a student who has received a regular diploma in either four years or five years as part of the four-year adjusted cohort or the five-year adjusted cohort. Students earning high school credentials by obtaining a high school equivalency diploma or a modified diploma are not considered graduates for the purpose of the graduation data. It is important to note that graduation rates are certified during the October following graduation to ensure that both spring and summer graduates are included in the rate. For accountability purposes, the graduation rates were included in the school year during which they were certified.

The 2015 West Virginia high school graduation average was 4.5% higher than the national average with the six-county region averaging 2.9% higher than the national high school graduation average.

This indicator provides an overview of the percentage of the population aged 25–44 with some post-secondary education, such as enrollment in vocational/technical schools, junior colleges, or four-year colleges. It includes individuals who pursued education following high school but did not receive a degree. The relationship between higher education and improved health outcomes is well known, with years of formal education correlating strongly with improved work and economic opportunities, reduced psychosocial stress, and healthier lifestyles. Source: http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/west-virginia/2016/compare/snapshot?counties=54_005%2B54_015%2B54_019%2B54_039%2B54_043%2B54_079 http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/sites/default/files/state/downloads/CHR2016_WV.pdf

The 2016 West Virginia adults with a post-secondary education average was 3.0% lower than the national average, with the six-county region averaging 7.8% lower than national adults who have a post-secondary education average.
There are many ways in to define and assess equality, diversity, and inclusiveness. One aspect of this concept is how involved or invested people are in their community. The more included people feel, the more they are a part of the community, and the more they will participate. One yardstick of participation is voting. The more people feel that they have a voice or a stake in what happens in elections, the higher voting participation. While such election numbers are affected by the extent that the high profile national and state elections in contrasted with national and state averages, they can show the degree to which people are involved compared to the average American community. General voter election participation records demonstrate a lower participation rate of West Virginia and the six-county TGKVF area compared to the national. However, the six-county area has improved from 2006 when it was about half of the national average and identical to the West Virginia average, with the 2014 results indicating that the six-county area percentage was greater than the state average and had nearly closed the gap with the national average. Such a trend suggests that local factors may be influencing voter participation more than national factors, and, perhaps state-wide factors.
Understanding Community Level Impact

General Election Voter Participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>6-Counties</th>
<th>Boone</th>
<th>Clay</th>
<th>Fayette</th>
<th>Kanawha</th>
<th>Lincoln</th>
<th>Putnam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006 General</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>25.2%</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 General</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 General</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 General</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This indicator provides an overview of the percentage of Americans aged 18 years and older who participated in general elections. Voting is a fundamental right as well as a civic duty. Voter turnout is the percentage of eligible voters who cast a ballot in an election.

While the average percentage of national voter participation in both the 2012 and 2014 general elections averaged higher than the West Virginia average percentage of state voter participation, in both elections the six-county average percentage of voter participation surpassed the West Virginia state average (2012: 47.8% versus 46.6% and 2014: 34.1% versus 30.8%), with Putnam county nearly matching the national average percentage of voter participation (2012: 55.3% versus 56.5% and 2014: 37.0% versus 38.5%).

[http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/state.php?year=2006&fips=54&f=0&off=3&elect=0&class=1](http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/state.php?year=2006&fips=54&f=0&off=3&elect=0&class=1)

Decreased Premature Mortality

There is perhaps no more important indicator of the well-being of a community and its members than their life spans. An examination of this outcome again demonstrates a dramatic need in the area served by TGKVF; rates of premature death are much higher than national and state averages. However, trends suggest that things are moving in the right direction for this area. The national average for premature mortality has shown a steady but very small decrease from 2013-2015. (It should be noted that changes in how that number is calculated, and the possible difference between preliminary 2016 data which is reported and final numbers still to be determined, at the national level account for the significant drop for 2016 and it will take some time for researchers to adjust the similar metrics for historical and local data sources.) The West Virginia overall rate for premature mortality, while lower than the rate for the six-county area, has risen over this time period. Conversely, while starting at the highest levels shown, the data for the six-country TGKVF area served has shown a steady and significant drop in the number of premature deaths during this time. Such a steady and significant drop, when compared to flat or rising national and state data, indicates that local effort or influences are having a real positive impact on the number of people who die prematurely.
Premature Age-Adjusted Mortality
Number of deaths among residents under age 75 per 100,000 population (age-adjusted)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>6-Counties</th>
<th>Boone</th>
<th>Clay</th>
<th>Fayette</th>
<th>Kanawha</th>
<th>Lincoln</th>
<th>Putnam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>453.6</td>
<td>458.5</td>
<td>524.3</td>
<td>620.1</td>
<td>496.3</td>
<td>584.5</td>
<td>484.2</td>
<td>593.1</td>
<td>367.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>452.3</td>
<td>458.5</td>
<td>524.3</td>
<td>620.1</td>
<td>496.3</td>
<td>584.5</td>
<td>484.2</td>
<td>593.1</td>
<td>367.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>448.7</td>
<td>462.5</td>
<td>510.7</td>
<td>648.9</td>
<td>460.8</td>
<td>539.2</td>
<td>477.5</td>
<td>578.2</td>
<td>359.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>376.0</td>
<td>470.0</td>
<td>506.7</td>
<td>610.0</td>
<td>480.0</td>
<td>560.0</td>
<td>480.0</td>
<td>540.0</td>
<td>370.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This indicator provides an overview of the number of deaths among residents under the age of 75 per 100,000 population (age-adjusted). Premature death means the years of potential life lost before the age of 75. Every death occurring before the age of 75 contributes to the total number of years of potential life lost. For example, a person dying at age 25 contributes 50 years of life lost, whereas a person who dies at age 65 contributes 10 years of life lost to a county’s years of potential life lost. The years of potential life lost measure is presented as a rate per 100,000 population and is age-adjusted to the 2000 US population. Measuring years of potential life lost allows communities to target resources at high-risk areas and to investigate the causes of premature death. Source: [http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/west-virginia/2016/compare/snapshot?counties=54_005%2B54_015%2B54_019%2B54_039%2B54_043%2B54_079](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/west-virginia/2016/compare/snapshot?counties=54_005%2B54_015%2B54_019%2B54_039%2B54_043%2B54_079)

The 2016 West Virginia premature age-adjusted mortality rates average 94.0 higher than the national average with the six-county region averaging 130.7 higher than the national premature age-adjusted mortality average.
The preceding sections have described various types of information relevant to understanding the challenges, successes, and possibilities of the six-county region and the impact. However, to best understand the impact that TGKVF has had, it is necessary to examine and interpret consistent themes that emerge from the multiple data sources. In many regards the most direct evidence is the statements and responses of current and prior grantees about the effect TGKVF has had on them and the people that they serve. When these repeated themes are then further supported by alternative data sources we can increase our confidence that these impacts, detected from multiple sources and perspectives are indeed the result of TGKVF. The following discussion highlights the three repeated themes that most clearly describe the significant impacts that TGKVF has had on the communities it serves.

1) TGKVF and its donors have provided services and programs that have helped people who would not otherwise have had access to such services.

One grantee clearly expressed this impact when saying, “Our organization has been able to make a huge difference in the lives of residents in the TGKVF service area, thanks to TGKVF funding. Our programming serves students and teachers, providing important educational opportunities in low-income areas and under-served schools. Without TGKVF funding, these learning opportunities would not be possible.”

Another grantee stated, “TGKVF provided us the opportunity to serve approximately 3,500 additional children and families in the Foundation’s service area.”

It is estimated, based on data from the review of 2013-2014 grant documents, that TGKVF grantees served more than 70,000 people in each of the two years in addition to conducting more than 1,500 presentations to more than 150,000 people each year. Extrapolating from this data, over time TGKVF has touched the lives of most residents in the TGKVF service area in one way or another. This includes providing funding for programs that provide critical services to vulnerable and at-risk populations, providing educational and developmental programming for youth, supporting programs that meet the basic needs of residents, and enhancing both the access to and the quality of health care.

2) TGKVF and its donors have improved the quality of life for people in its service area.

Two grantee impact statements help to illustrate specific ways in which TGKVF fund has impacted lives.

“[TGKVF] funding has allowed us to successfully transform an abandoned piece of property into an open green space for area events and community gatherings. We have also been able to plan and present events for families such as movies, holiday events, and sporting events which will further the feeling of community, and hopefully instill a sense of community in the next generation.”

“Over the years, funds from TGKVF have allowed us to upgrade diagnostic and operating equipment in all of our six clinics and add a full-time clinical hygienist to our staff. The monies have always given us the funds to help continue our treatment of uninsured patients. With the support and financial help of TGKVF, our nonprofit organization has continued to serve children of low income families by providing them with a dental home.”

The data from local and national sources clearly indicate the dire needs of the TGKVF area. When examining the outcomes that most grantees set out to accomplish for the people they serve (based on the 2013-2014 document review), it is easy to understand how the combined efforts of TGKVF might have a tremendous impact on people’s lives. These efforts include increased skills, improved health, provision of basic needs, and improved quality of life. Indeed, comparisons of local, state, and national data show indicators/problem areas in which the local trends are moving in a more positive direction than state or national trends, but the local problems are still more severe overall.
3) TGKVF has helped the programs and organizations it funds and works with to be more effective.

In addition to having a direct impact on participants, TGKVF grantees reported that the foundation had an impact on their organization and the way in which they provided services, to the extent that they could provide services beyond the resources provided by TGKVF.

**Improved organizational functioning:**

Many grantees reported that TGKVF had a direct and meaningful effect on the quality of the services they provided.

“TGKVF has offered financial as well as leadership support to our organization over the years. We welcome their challenges as well as their educational opportunities.”

“TGKVF has provided education and support to the community, specifically in the areas of substance abuse and professional training.”

“The program staff have been critical as we think through our programs and their impact in the community.”

“They help us with the business side of running a community theatre.”

**Extended the capacity and increased the impact of other efforts:**

In addition to the direct effects on grantee organizations, grantees reported that TGKVF has an exponential impact by extending or leveraging resources from other sources.

“Our funding runs out every year leaving us two months to operate without grant funding. We have one program, an adult day program for seniors diagnosed with Alzheimer’s Dementia, that when funding runs out we need to continue the programs out of pocket. The funding you sent to us allowed us to provide services to 25 seniors without having to take them home...we thank you.”

“It has allowed us to use our funds - matched with yours - to complete projects that might not otherwise be funded by us.”

“We have been strong partners over the years. A great impact with small funding levels due to collaborations.”
As discussed in the forward, TGKVF contracted with Midwest Evaluation and Research (MER) as part of a quality improvement process. This process has been driven by a clear understanding that implementing a more rigorous evaluation-guided grant funding process should result in stronger individual grantee efforts, better participant outcomes, and should create larger regional improvements.

The overall quality improvement effort seeks to improve TGKVF evaluation processes and procedures within TGKVF and those utilized by their grantees. A necessary part of this improvement in processes is a need to increase the capacity of TGKVF’s grantees to understand, collect, and utilize data. Such an increased capacity will allow better data to be collected by the grantees and the foundation and allow the grantees to make greater use of such information. Both types of improvement will inevitably lead to a greater ability for TGKVF to better understand the impact that it has had on focus communities (six-county region).

The fundamental bedrock of this approach moving forward is the newly refined TGKVF theory of change logic model, and the associated (parallel) grantee logic model framework. The TGKVF Grantee Theory of Change Logic Model provides a mechanism for the collection of consistent outputs and outcomes across different grantees doing different types of programs. It does this by specifying a group of outcomes, which grantees must align with and select at least some outcomes from, that are consistent with TGKVF vision, priority areas, and the seven forms of wealth.

For example, both an early education program for disadvantaged youth, and a program teaching welding to adults who may have lost their job are at the most basic level trying to teach specific skills to individuals. As such, both programs can report the number of individuals served and the number of these individuals who had improved skills as a result of the program being implemented. By aggregating this most basic type of information across all grantees TGKVF can begin to have a better understanding of the nature and scope of the impact its funded programs are having. In addition, the planned long term and consistent tracking of community level indicators associated with key objectives of TGKVF such as: increased educational attainment; increased household wealth, increased usage of the natural environment, ect., can provide a yardstick for the assessment of community efforts in these areas over time.

Together, the accurate measurement of short term project specific outcomes, the aggregation of project level data, and the long-term monitoring of community level indicators will provide strong evidence on the impact of TGKVF efforts. It should be noted in many regards that this is a huge advance in the approach and sophistication of TGKVF self-evaluation efforts - far beyond what is typical for a community foundation, or most foundations in general. Such efforts are more commonly associated with much larger and more topically specific national foundations. As TGKVF continues to refine this “state of the art” approach over time it will likely become a model for other community and medium sized foundations across the country.
Source Documents


Shepherd, M.D., “Community Indicators Dashboard Report” Internal TGKVF Report prepared by Midwest Evaluation and Research (February 2017)