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### **“Celebrating Expanding Staff & Services: Greater Poweshiek turns 20”**

The Greater Poweshiek Community Foundation turns 20 this year. Newly re-elected president Tom Marshall, who has served the foundation in many capacities during those two decades, including helping to establish the organization, looks back over those 20 years and forward as he welcomes two part-timers to the foundation staff. Nicole Brua-Behrens has joined the foundation as coordinator of programs, and Delphina Baumann has arrived as gift planning coordinator.

Marshall helped bring the foundation into being with several goals in mind. “One of our original objectives was eliminated duplication,” he says. “There are lots of nonprofits in the area. Just in the last three years with the help of the Ahrens Foundation, we’ve been able to help nonprofits by providing the ‘back room’ for their operations. This frees up the executive directors of the nonprofits to be able to focus on their programs and projects and not have to worry about keeping the books, maintaining the membership rolls—those administrative details that have to get done by someone. There are 11 different affiliates or agencies that are now under our umbrella.”

Another goal for the foundation Marshall points to is providing support for community fundraising efforts, again freeing volunteers from the task of bookwork. He cites the fundraising campaigns for the high school addition, the new library and the aquatic center, for all of which the foundation handled the bookkeeping, depositing and dispersing of funds raised. He notes that in 2007 which is the most recent year for which an audit is available, the foundation’s assets closed at \$5,834,851 which includes contributions for those three large community projects.

The third objective Marshall says the foundation pursues are unrestricted gifts that can be used over time to initiate or help community projects not currently on the horizon and discovered over time. “We’re interested in raising unrestricted money for an endowment so we can be in a position where we’re able to make grants directly to organizations,” Marshall explains. “Up until now, most of the money we have received has been designated for specific purposes, so we carry out those specific purposes, providing that service to the donors. One of our goals from the beginning has been and still is to build that unrestricted endowment which is money that we can then turn around and use to support projects in the future that need a start, that need seed money. At this point, we don’t have that kind of resources.

New gift coordinator, Delphina Baumann echoes Marshall’s emphasis on donor choice. “A community foundation is able to address both current, and future needs of the community,” she says. “That’s one of my goals—to raise endowment so we can start giving more grants and, by doing that, improve the lives of everyone here in the greater Poweshiek community. We have different types of funds like a donor advised fund in which the donor advises where that fund goes and the community Endowment fund. It will be up to the board of directors to decide what to do with the community endowment funds.”

“I think different people give for different reasons. There are some who will say ‘I have a very specific wish. This is what I want to do with my contribution.’ There are others who say ‘I want to give back to this community for the future, and I don’t know what’s necessarily coming down the road, but I see my

gift more as community savings account.’ It’s what I would call more visionary giving, looking ahead and problem-solving for the present while preparing for the future with a permanent endowment.”

Baumann says a donor can designate a gift to the unrestricted endowment, an administrative endowment, a field-of-interest fund, a designated fund, a donor-advised fund, any of the Foundation’s existing endowment funds or to the general operating fund. She points to a recent study estimating \$64 million of wealth is transferred annually in Poweshiek County, noting that 5% of that amount in one year would be over \$3 million which would create a fund generating over \$150,000 a year in community grants.

New coordinator of programs Nicole Brua-Behrens is serving as a liaison between the affiliated organizations, the Claude W. and Dolly Ahrens Foundation and the Greater Poweshiek Community Foundation. Meeting with the boards of directors of the 11 affiliated organizations, Behrens says her job is to insure that the affiliates get services each needs. She points to the financial services provided to each organization as key to allowing executive director and volunteers to focus on organizational goals, saying it’s her job to be sure those services are delivered. Behrens adds she asks affiliates if there are other services that would help them grow and succeed such as grant writing or help with writing letters. Behrens will also be building community awareness, administering board policies, and providing day-to-day management of the Foundation.

Affiliates currently include Kids Against Hunger, Imagine Grinnell, Dollars for Scholars, Communities for Literate Iowa Kids (CLIK), Grinnell Newburg Educational Excellence, the Community Educational Excellence, the Iowa Transportation Museum, and the GHS Alumni Association.

Behrens in addition to her part-time foundation job, also serves two other organizations in part-time capacities, Communities for Literate Iowa Kids (CLIK) and Poweshiek County Empowerment.

Marshall says the new part-time positions are funded by contributions from foundation board members. Baumann and Behrens bring skills complimentary to those provided by Ahrens Foundation staff, he says, which is “what makes it all work.”

For more information, contact the Foundation at 236-5518 or [www.greaterpcf.org](http://www.greaterpcf.org).