Serving More, Together
Much of our Foundation’s work addresses priority health issues for western Montanans. Particularly, priority health issues that affect children, families, and vulnerable populations. For western Montana children, unintentional injury is an often-overlooked priority health issue. Yet, more Montana youth die from unintentional injury — specifically, those sustained in motor vehicle crashes — than any other cause. Thankfully, Montana has more than 250 Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians to help educate families about proper car seat and seat belt use. However, we knew that not every technician had the supplies necessary to conduct this education. With support from Buckle Up for Life, a program from Toyota and Cincinnati Children’s, our Foundation assembled and distributed 13 Car Seat Checkup Kits and 50 car seats to support education for families across Montana. Partners throughout the state came together to help us identify underserved areas and transport kits to their new homes. This project was a shining example of how our Foundation, its donors, and its partners work together to address health needs.

Another way our Foundation works together with donors and partners to address health needs is through our Health Grants Program. Established in 2016, our Health Grants Program partners our Foundation with western Montana nonprofit organizations and educational institutions to deliver on the donor intent of permanently endowed funds. Through focused support of health-related projects, donor gifts support critical services addressing the health needs of western Montanans. Last year, our Foundation supported organizations such as Missoula Aging Services, Montana Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate, St. Luke Community Healthcare Foundation, and Riding on Insulin to provide health services and education to individuals across western Montana. Grant-supported initiatives included retreats for cancer survivors and thrivers, education for diabetes patients and community members, care management for senior citizens, therapeutic care for young families and children, and the purchase of equipment and compression garments for rehabilitative therapies, among others.

“Our funding from Foundation for Community Health, Missoula Aging Services was able to address the health and wellness needs of vulnerable at-risk older adults by addressing the social determinants of health through the Care Management Program.”

Through these and all our efforts, we are working collaboratively to ensure as many western Montanans as possible have access to health and safety education, support, and resources. Collaboration allows us to leverage resources to reach more individuals and reach individuals we may not have been able to on our own. We look forward to growing our partnership network to serve more western Montanans, together.

Our Mission
Our Foundation for Community Health engages western Montanans in health education and support to advance healthy lives through the gifts of donors, partners, and volunteers. Through collaborative, action-based prevention education, grant-making, and outreach, we provide and promote access to health and safety resources to improve health outcomes for western Montanans. Efforts of our Foundation include high school and professional development healthcare scholarships, leadership of the Safe Kids Missoula Coalition and the Safe Kids Montana state office, care and comfort support, Be Sun Smart skin cancer and melanoma awareness, and a health grants program.

Letter from the Executive Director
The idea of togetherness is at the heart of our Foundation’s work. Since before our official founding date in 1988, we have worked together with donors, partners, and volunteers to deliver on our mission to advance healthy lives. This togetherness has built a strong foundation and network of support from which we have brought many dreams to fruition, and from which we can now grow and explore opportunities. Our new strategic plan focuses on thoughtful, purposeful growth to better serve western Montanans. Increasing organizational awareness, cultivating donors, and expanding programming are central to our new strategic plan, which will carry us through the next three years as we begin our journey to grow together. We are excited to highlight ways we have worked together this past year—and ways we plan to in the future—to provide health and safety education and support for western Montanans.

As you read through this year’s annual report, know that your support is essential for the accomplishments and goals we have chosen to share. It is always humbling to reflect on all that your gifts of time, talent, and treasure have made possible for the health of western Montanans. Thank you for choosing to walk alongside us.

Ramona Holt
FY22 Board Chair

Kira Huck
Executive Director
Taking on growth step-by-step

Reflecting and Visioning

Last year, more than $500,000 in donor gifts, in-kind contributions, and earnings were disbursed or used to advance healthy lives in western Montana. Future providers are now pursuing education toward a health-related career, community members are better informed about priority health issues, health services and organizations are financially supported, and western Montanans are surrounded on their health journey. So much good has come from these contributions, and we know even more is possible. Growing our initiatives will ensure all western Montanans can access our vital health and safety education, support, and resources. We are grateful to the donors, volunteers, and partners like you who make it possible.

Future Providers Encouraged

High School Healthcare Scholarships totaling $25,000 encouraged 18 future healthcare providers on their educational journey. Students represented nine high schools in Missoula and Ravalli County. Seventeen of our recipients chose to attend a Montana institution.

Children & Families Educated

Nearly 1,500 children, parents, and caregivers received hands-on health and safety education through our Be Sun Smart and Safe Kids injury prevention efforts. Thousands more were reached through community outreach and the provision of 250 need-based safety devices.

Western Montanans Supported

More than $77,000 was granted through our patient assistance funds and Health Grants Program. Thirty-two patients received financial support for care-related costs, and the health-related projects of 12 grant recipient organizations served an additional 2,250 western Montanans.

Planning and Growing

The goals above are part of our growth-focused strategic plan that tasks us with expanding programming into surrounding counties to reach more individuals with health education and support. Opening our High School Healthcare Scholarships to additional counties, finding innovative opportunities to offer education in neighboring communities, and increasing our collaborative partnership network will ultimately allow us to serve more and serve better. Successful growth will require increased visibility and continued financial sustainability—two goals also outlined in our strategic plan involving supporters like you. We welcome your continued support and engagement as we work to advance healthy lives. Learn more about getting involved at fchwmt.org.

Increase Meaningful Partnerships

Partnerships are at the core of our work and allow us to share and leverage resources. To support expansion plans and increase awareness and accessibility of our programs, our Foundation will establish new partnerships in Missoula and surrounding counties.

Expand High School Healthcare Scholarships

Scholarships have been offered to high school seniors in Missoula County since 1990 and Ravalli County since 2018. We will begin offering scholarships in Lake County in 2023, with plans to expand to additional counties to encourage aspiring health professionals.

Reach Surrounding Counties

Much of our hands-on health and safety education takes place in Missoula County. To better serve western Montana, we are exploring ways to effectively reach surrounding counties with education and resources through strategic opportunities such as train-the-trainer programs.
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