

PRESS RELEASE

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YorkCounts to Combine with York County Community Foundation to Create a More Cohesive Force for Community Improvement

York, PA — YorkCounts and York County Community Foundation have signed a Memorandum of Understanding indicating their intent to combine and create a stronger, more cohesive force for community improvement in York County. The two organizations will function as a combined entity effective immediately. The announcement was made jointly by Loren H. Kroh, Chairman of the Board of YorkCounts, and R. Eric Menzer, Chairman of the Board of York County Community Foundation.

“Combining these important organizations with increasingly similar missions creates a stronger, more cohesive and credible force for enhancing the quality of life in York County,” said Kroh. Added Menzer, “Integrating community needs assessment, grantmaking, and resource mobilization will leverage the assets of both organizations to have a greater impact on community improvement.”

For more than a decade, YorkCounts has worked to spotlight challenges, foster partnerships, and advance initiatives to improve education, strengthen the economy, and develop regional solutions to long-term sustainability. Likewise, for 50 years, York County Community Foundation has been a leader in addressing critical community needs such as early childhood education, downtown development, and strengthening the community’s nonprofit structure through workshops and strategic alliances. The Foundation will continue to engage donors in meeting their charitable objectives with an increased emphasis on community improvement.

In the new structure, YorkCounts will become *YorkCounts, an initiative of York County Community Foundation*. The YorkCounts Board of Directors becomes the YorkCounts committee of the Foundation and will continue to set the agenda and priorities of the initiative.

The work begun at the April YorkCounts Education Summit and the update of the YorkCounts Indicators will continue. The committee will also continue oversight of the recently announced regional policing study. Moving forward, the YorkCounts Committee of the Foundation will continue to guide these and other YorkCounts initiatives.

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The timing is right for these two organizations to join forces. Community Foundations across the country have become increasingly proactive in community improvement initiatives as an opportunity to leverage greater impact from their grantmaking. The York County Community Foundation's Board of Directors recently charted a course to more proactively lead the community toward a vibrant future. During this same time, the YorkCounts Board completed a strategic plan that highlighted the need for long-term financial sustainability to continue the crucial work of YorkCounts. Given the challenging economic environment, many nonprofits are reinventing themselves to sustain their work and better meet the needs of a dynamic community. Both YorkCounts and York County Community Foundation have been vocal advocates for strategic alliances among nonprofits and municipalities, and the consolidation reflects their own commitment to operating effectively and cost efficiently.

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YorkCounts: YorkCounts was organized in 1999 and is a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is a public charity. It is a community-based non-partisan coalition working to assess, sustain, and enhance the quality of life in York County by assessing needs, confronting critical issues and driving for results. It fosters partnerships among existing public and private organizations, implements uniquely regional solutions and spotlights challenges and successes in education, economic development, health and safety, diversity, culture and more. YorkCounts identifies community needs and develops initiatives to address them by focusing directly on the root causes of the community's challenges. Its most important contributions include the Community Indicators Project, the MetroYork recommendations that led to the establishment of York Academy, an International Baccalaureate School, the Office of Workforce Development, and the Regional Police Study. In its 2010 strategic planning process, YorkCounts strengthened its commitment to take action to address priority community indicators that result in meaningful improvements.

YorkCounts draws its primary financial support through annual contributions from eight leading community entities: Better York, PeoplesBank, The United Way of York County, WellSpan Health, the County of York, York County Community Foundation, York County Economic Development Corporation, and the Glatfelter Insurance Company.

York County Community Foundation: York County Community Foundation was founded in 1961 as a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is a public charity. The Foundation grew slowly during its first 30 years, having an endowment of approximately \$1 million in 1991 and growing to more than \$60 million in 2011. Its grants to charitable organizations grew over the same period of time from approximately \$65,000 in 1991 to more than \$8 million in 2006.

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The mission of the Foundation is to create a vibrant York County by engaging donors, providing community leadership, and investing in high impact initiatives while building endowment for future generations. Through the course of its existence, the Foundation has met the charitable wishes of its donors through the use of its various types of endowments vehicles, more specifically its donor advised funds, donor designated funds, Field of Interest funds, and scholarship funds.

In 2009, after re-examining its strategic plan based on community input, the Foundation decided to play a more active role in the improvement of the York community by addressing the County's most pressing community needs. The spending policy from the Fund for York County (a discretionary fund of the Foundation) is utilized by the Board of Directors of the Foundation to address these needs of the community as they change from year to year. The Foundation will continue to meet the objectives of its donors through its various endowment vehicles, and will also encourage its current and future donors to contribute a portion of their charitable dollars to the Fund for York County, either through lifetime gifts and/or bequests, so the community's most pressing critical needs can be addressed.

Founded in 1961, York County Community Foundation creates a vibrant York County by engaging donors, providing community leadership, and investing in high impact initiatives while building endowment for future generations. York County Community Foundation granted \$2.5 million in 2010.