



It's inevitable. The most notable, quotable things always wind up on T-shirts, and I could certainly fill a closet with neatly folded words to live by. I did a doubletake over this one:

**Dear Optimist, Pessimist, and Realist,
While you were busy arguing about the glass of water, I drank it.
--The Opportunist**

While opportunists usually get a bad rap; this one got the last laugh. And that got me thinking. There's nothing wrong with seizing opportunities. Carpe diem, so they say. It's what Foundation work is all about—in a more altruistic kind of way. Our mission is to bring resources to our community. Period. End of story. Well, not really. We just added a new chapter.

Earlier this year, we applied for a sizeable grant from a private charitable foundation that supports nonprofit organizations in Massachusetts. Long story short, we received \$90,000 to distribute as capital grants to those addressing hunger and homelessness on Cape Cod. Recently, eleven hardworking nonprofits received critical funds for furniture, appliances, equipment, and other essentials to help them continue to serve local people in need.

This isn't the first substantial opportunity we've seized from an outside source. In 2006, The Foundation, with funding and support from the Community Experience Partnership and The Atlantic Philanthropies, embarked on the HOPE (Helping Older People Engage) Initiative, a multi-year, community-wide project. Our objective was to better understand the opportunities, resources, and barriers for older adults to become civically engaged and *vital agents of change*.

Along the way, we enlisted many local partners, including the Cape & Islands United Way, Barnstable County, Cape Cod Community College, an active HOPE Advisory Committee, and over two hundred members of the community who participated in focus groups, surveys, and interviews.

The outcome was Cape Cod Volunteers, a centralized resource to connect volunteers of all ages with meaningful community engagement opportunities. The Foundation built a comprehensive plan and infrastructure for moving this initiative forward and continued to oversee it until 2010 when it spun off as a separate organization. Today, Cape Cod Volunteers is a vibrant and integral program of the Cape & Islands United Way.

In 1998, The Cape Cod Foundation applied for and received a start-up grant from the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership to establish the Gay and Lesbian Equity Fund (GALE) of The Cape Cod Foundation. It was one of the earliest funds of its kind in the nation.

At the time, many local groups were trying to meet the needs of the LGBTQ community and doing important work to end hate crimes and violence, enforce civil rights violations, improve access to healthcare, educate caregivers, and ensure a happy future for young people. However, the resources were not adequate to support these endeavors.

After securing the seed-funding, we cultivated a community advisory team, helped them raise additional funds to build an endowment, guided them through the grantmaking process, and watched them become the self-sufficient powerhouse they are today. To date, the fund has distributed more than \$260,000 to local organizations supporting issues facing the region's LGBTQ community.

This is your community foundation at work. Muscle and hustle. We know what the region's needs are; we look for resources to meet those needs; we allocate those resources for maximum impact.

Thirty years ago, six individuals—let's call them altruistic opportunists—shared a vision. They established The Cape Cod Foundation with a \$10,000 scholarship fund to build a permanent endowment for this community.

Since then, we've increased our assets to \$65 million. We've distributed more than \$70 million back into the community. And, we've increased our sphere of influence as an opportunistic community leader in the very best sense of the word. When you invest in us, you are investing in the full power of an established community foundation that will bring resources and opportunities to this region that would not exist otherwise. Year after year. And, when opportunities aren't knocking, we're going to build a door.