



# 2023 Impact Report

JULY 1, 2022 – JUNE 30, 2023





# Welcome

**THE COMMUNITY OF MISSOULA IS REMARKABLE. PERIOD.**

During our 2023 fiscal year, the board of The Converge Foundation (TCF) had the pleasure of visiting with fellow Missoulians to share in conversation the goals and aspirations of the Currents Center for Recreation and Creativity (CCRC) project and the role of The Converge Foundation. With each interaction, we leave inspired about the possibilities, but more importantly, grateful for how much Missoulians do for Missoula. Do for each other. Through this Impact Report we hope to offer at least a glimpse into our past year and invite you to continue to join us on this journey.

## With Joy and Gratitude

Bottomline, the efforts of The Converge Foundation to build a better future for Missoula would not be possible without the generosity of our donors. We continue to build the ship as we are sailing it. That ship is now floating higher and moving with a little more grace. We are an all-volunteer organization, but success is very much a product of those who unwaveringly believe in what we are trying to accomplish for the community of Missoula and demonstrate that through their financial support. We are and will be forever grateful.



# Strategic Initiatives

- Marketing and Brand Awareness
- Partnerships
- Operations
- Governance
- Fundraising



IN DECEMBER 2022, THE CONVERGE FOUNDATION FORMULATED A THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN TO GUIDE OUR DEVELOPMENT. WE HAVE MET OR MADE PROGRESS ON MOST ALL OBJECTIVES UNDER OUR STRATEGIC PLAN.

# Forward Progress

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THE FULL STORY CAN'T BE TOLD SIMPLY WITH BULLET POINTS ON STRATEGIC INITIATIVES.

THROUGH CONVERSATIONS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY THE CONVERGE FOUNDATION HAS DEVELOPED A STRONGER UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEEDS.

ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES WE SHARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR PAST YEAR.

## OUTREACH

As of the close of this fiscal year, the Converge Foundation has met in one-to-two-hour conversations with 187 individuals representing 99 different organizations. We have engaged with Missoulians in the realms of arts, sports, social services, and education to share the vision for the CCRC and illuminate TCF's role in providing private philanthropic support.



## OUTREACH: A Breakdown

With each engaging discussion we learn of others in the community of Missoula that may have a need or interest. TCF has a list of 107 individuals representing an additional 81 organizations that we need to meet with. Obviously, the list grows by the week.

Of the 187 individuals we have engaged with:

- 40% individuals (artists, community leaders, etc.)
- 34% nonprofits
- 16% government
- 7% business
- 3% institutions (education)

Of the 107 individuals with pending requests to meet:

- 51% nonprofits
- 24% individuals
- 11% government
- 8% institutions
- 6% business

## OUTREACH: The Need



The response to both the CCRC and TCF has been overwhelmingly enthusiastic and the growing pool of ideas for the facility's use both inspiring and daunting. As one enthusiast said, "the 85,000 sq. foot footprint isn't aspirational enough." It has become clear that the need for affordable, accessible space (gyms, pools, performing and rehearsal space for local artists, meeting, and event space) is enormous.





## OUTREACH: Provide value. Invest.

Missoulians have expressed:

- A recognition that the CCRC can provide a community gathering space and make a significant contribution to shared experiences as well as be a space where programs can reach a more diverse and inclusive audience.
- A need to invest in the care and feeding of Missoula's "sense of community" through easy, congenial ways for all of us to come together.
- A recognition of the role TCF can play in helping to ensure access to all Missoulians and support the enhancement of existing programs or development of new programs to meet diverse needs.

## OUTREACH: Brainstorming

TCF held the first 3 of 7 brainstorming sessions planned with potential user groups to generate ideas for programs that could be offered in the CCRC, once the City identifies funding. The first three sessions focused on the arts, sports, and social services. Upcoming sessions will focus on wellness, intergenerational programming, and mental health. TCF will also host a session with current space providers who may have limited capacity. Let us know if you, or someone you can recommend, would be interested in attending any of these four sessions.





## PARTNERSHIPS

The board of The Converge Foundation provided over 2,250 hours of volunteer service, along with additional resources, to engage with the Missoula community and advance our vision. In meeting with almost 100 community organizations, TCF has built partnerships that will pay dividends in meeting future programming needs. TCF has had conversations touching on the needs and aspirations of marginalized groups, cultural organizations, persons with disabilities, as well as about growing social isolation, the mental health epidemic, the social effects of climate change and many other topics. It is apparent that the CCRC has the potential to touch the lives of a diverse community of Missoulians.

## PARTNERSHIPS: Community Challenges

In conversations held with Missoula individuals and organizations, citizens have expressed concerns over housing, climate change, mental health, transportation, and return on investment. TCF has identified individuals who have expertise in these areas and will pursue meetings in the coming months to better understand the value and challenges of the CCRC within this greater context. From conversations we have had to date, it is our belief that the CCRC is in a good position to serve as a catalyst in improving the quality of life in Missoula.



# OPERATIONS



TCF continues to invest in internal systems to support our day-to-day outreach as well as support campaigns. This includes:

- Investing in industry-standard office automation, accounting, and constituent management software.
- Engaging a local professional accounting and tax firm to meet our legal obligations.
- Establishing financial management procedures and budget to guide TCF operations.

We continually review and improve our procedures to ensure TCF is a good corporate citizen.

## OPERATIONS: Outcomes

- In collaboration with a local marketing firm TCF developed a professional logo and promotional materials to support future promotion and engagement.
- Produced a large-format four-page marketing brochure promoting The Converge Foundation and the Center for Recreation and Creativity.
- Improved our internal communications structure and conducted an extensive outreach and education effort.

Looking ahead, TCF will be adopting a Marketing and Brand Awareness Plan and modernizing our website under the direction of a local web development firm.

# GOVERNANCE



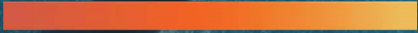
One of the more challenging aspects of building a new organization is building a board – more than that – building a team. At the close of the 2023 fiscal year, TCF expanded its board from 3 to 5. We are small, but we are mighty, as evidenced by the 2000+ hours of volunteer service. We have built a board matrix to ensure diversity in backgrounds, skills, and interests; identified potential candidates; and developed a recruitment process.



THE  
Converge  
FOUNDATION

Every Person. Healthy. Hopeful. Connected.

# On The Horizon – Land Ho!





## FUNDRAISING

TCF has been very grateful for the Missoula community's financial support, and we continue to build our philanthropic community. Our fundraising efforts since our inception in 2021 exceeded our goals and expectations. Through frugal management, along with the ongoing generosity of several donors, those funds have brought us far. Our supporters have enabled our extensive outreach and education efforts and the development of our organization so that we are positioned to manage a capital campaign once the CCRC is funded. Our ship is sailing. In the months ahead, we will be discussing funding needs for an extensive campaign to pull city officials and the community together around a Center for Recreation and Creativity.





## WHAT LIES AHEAD

Every day the TCF board works to remain true to our vision, mission, and values. As a City of Missoula asset, identifying funding for the construction of the CCRC is beyond our control. It's been over two years since the community brought a concept design forward, which was adopted by the City of Missoula. In the view of some, it has been much longer. The Currents pool was funded in 2004 as Phase 1. It's been 20 years of pursuit to complete Phase 2 and complete the facility. The year ahead will be our most challenging yet as a new mayor steps into their role and we formally ask the City of Missoula to identify a means to fund the construction of the CCRC on behalf of the community. There is both a community education and a political component to move the ball forward. It's a challenge we accept, and we hope the community will join us in this pursuit.

# Thank you.

## Board and Volunteers:

Mike Sweet – Chair/Director

Tarn Ream – Secretary/Director

Amy Ragsdale – Treasurer/Director

Ashley Zhinin – Director

Rosie Ayers – Director

Nancy Rittel - Volunteer

Please feel empowered to reach out to us if you have any thoughts or questions regarding the Currents Center for Recreation and Creativity or The Converge Foundation.

The Converge Foundation

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