

The Curtis Fund
General Education Fund Inc.
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FALL 2019

the mission
Provide Educational
Scholarships

the commitment
Help Vermont
Students

the goal
Secure Brighter
Futures



**SHOW YOUR
SUPPORT**
Donate today!

LEGACY OF HOPE

Supporting Future Curtis Fund Scholars

By remembering the Curtis Fund in your will, you leave a legacy of hope that supports the next generations of Curtis Fund scholars.

You don't have to be wealthy to make a bequest to the Curtis Fund—even people of modest means can make an incredible difference!

For more information, please contact Joyce Cellars, Director of Advancement, at joyce@thecurtisfund.org or (408) 500-5304.

*Welcome to all of our new and former
CURTIS FUND SCHOLARS, FRIENDS, & FAMILY!*

Your Contribution Makes a Difference!

Would you consider making a donation to The Curtis Fund today? You can help change the lives of deserving and motivated Vermonters. Please consider making a gift today, in whatever amount feels right to you.

All contributions are tax deductible to the limit of the law. Please donate online at thecurtisfund.org/donate or send your check in the enclosed envelope. Thank you!

IF YOU HAVEN'T VISITED
OUR WEBSITE IN AWHILE,
TAKE A LOOK!
thecurtisfund.org



DREAMS REALIZED. SUCCESS ACHIEVED.



Gail Trede

**JOHNSON STATE COLLEGE 2016,
BA PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

"With the recession, in 2010, my husband joined the thousands of Americans who lost their jobs. Sadly, my marriage failed, and I was suddenly alone, raising two young sons on my own without any formal education or ability to gain substantial employment, financial security, or independence," Gail remembered.

"My story is similar to many women who may have left their work and educational pursuits in order to stay home

to support their families while their husbands were in the workforce, strengthening their earning power. My sudden 'independence' was perhaps the most frightening experience of my life. My two young sons were my greatest motivation to stand up, forge ahead, and succeed. I wanted them to know that I am a woman, I am strong, I am capable and more than anything I AM WORTHY."

Gail had been out of the workforce for more than ten years and was financially insecure. "The Curtis Fund grant not only made it possible to 'afford' the tuition, but it also validated my self-worth and ability to succeed. It was like having someone on my side. This financial help gave me a sense of security and encouraged me to continue...I would not fail, I owed it to the Curtis Fund if not myself."

"I am forever grateful to the Curtis Fund for giving me the financial strength to move forward in my life and succeed in reaching my goals. Nothing and no one can ever take this from me. I was able to keep a stable home for myself and my children, secure my employment, and I am now working under a provisional license while attending UVM to secure my professional teaching license and library endorsement. I could never have afforded any of this if it were not for financial aid."

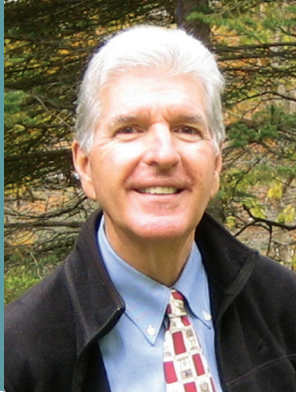
Gail's oldest son graduated from college soon after she did.

**"This financial help gave me a sense of security and encouraged me to continue...
I would not fail, I owed it to the Curtis Fund if not myself."**

—GAIL TREDE

BOARD CHAIR'S LETTER

Narrowing the Opportunity Gap



I spent my high school years in Washington, DC. One of my jobs was an internship in 1965 in the US Senate. A landmark piece of legislation, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, was passed as part of President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society." He believed, and so did many of us, that this legislation could someday end poverty for millions of Americans. Addressing education inequality was the Act's cornerstone focusing on narrowing the achievement gap between high- and low-performing schools. Unfortunately, that gap, fifty years later, still persists today.

There are many reasons why—many are big, daunting and politically charged, but I won't go into that today. Suffice it to say there are cultural and structural reasons that make it very difficult to make changes. On a micro level, small incremental changes can be made when resources are more equitably allocated, such as quality teachers, teacher aids, and rich engaging curriculum.

I believe the more pressing problem, and one the Curtis Fund, as a supporting organization of the Vermont Community Foundation, can help address is the Opportunity Gap, defined as the economic/social impediments to educational opportunities and thriving livelihoods. The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation, one of our partners, strives to address this problem by working with students and adult learners as early as the seventh grade, encouraging them to pursue an education that will lead to a good paying job. We have provided grants to many of these students who have gone on to college, with excellent results.

In addition, we have now expanded our programs to broaden our reach to many of our learners who wish to pursue an education, but not necessarily in a two- to four-year college. These grantees want to learn a trade or gain experience in a field that will lead to a livable wage. Early results from this program have been encouraging, as you have read about in this issue.

We are committed to expanding the program and, over the next five years, hope to raise \$15 million to narrow the opportunity. Combined with our other programs, we hope to have more than 800 learners each year working toward a better life, joining over 11,000 others we have helped since The Curtis Fund was founded 109 years ago. We hope you will consider joining our effort.

Joseph Boutin,
Chair, The Curtis Fund Board of Trustees



Samantha Mills

**CHAMPLAIN COLLEGE 2019,
MAGNA CUM LAUDE, CRIMINAL JUSTICE
WITH A MINOR IN LAW**

"As a first-generation college student, finances were tight. The Curtis Fund essentially made my number one school a reality and not a pipe dream," Samantha recounted. Samantha attended Champlain College to study Criminal Justice with a minor in Law and graduated Magna Cum Laude in 2019.

Like many Curtis Fund recipients, Samantha had a vision for her future. "Going to college was never not in my plan. From when I was in fifth grade and began working with counselors from VSAC (Vermont Student Assistance Corporation) helping me to figure out which school was best for me, college was always the goal. My biggest motivation were my parents who always wanted more for me than they had themselves, as neither of them attended college."


"The education I received at Champlain was life changing and only happened because of the Curtis Fund grant."
—SAMANTHA MILLS

"By receiving the Curtis Fund grant, I was able to go to Champlain College. I was on the Dean's List all but one semester. I had classes with retired judges, police officers, lawyers, and even the Attorney General of Vermont! During my time in school, I interned with the Vermont State Police, as well as Prevent Child Abuse Vermont. In addition, I volunteered at the Sara Holbrook Community Center. The education I received at Champlain was life changing and only happened because of the Curtis Fund grant."

Curtis Fund By the Numbers:

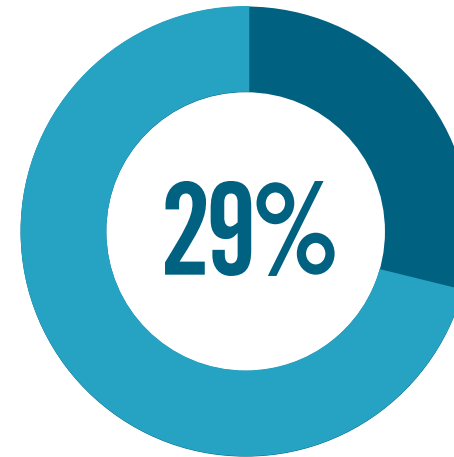

Fund size:
\$30 million

Annually grant around
\$1.5 million in scholarships
to around 500
Vermonters


85% of recipients are
first in their families to
pursue postsecondary
education

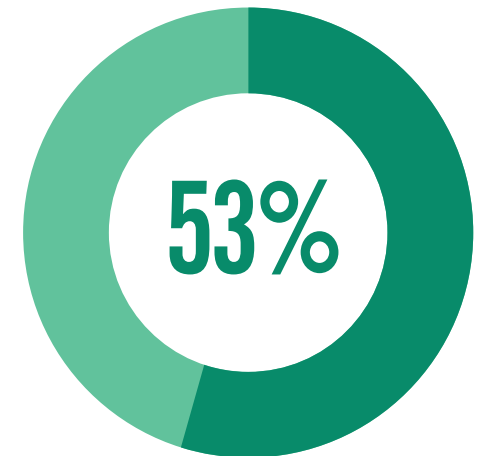
100% of Curtis
Fund learners have
**financial
barriers**
to pursuing college
or career training


Curtis Fund scholarships
are granted to learners
from every county
in Vermont



**THE FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE
COMPLETION RATE FOR
INCOME-COMPARABLE
VERMONTERS IS AROUND 29%.**

**53% of Curtis Fund learners who received
the scholarship as high school students
COMPLETED A TWO- OR FOUR-YEAR
DEGREE IN FOUR YEARS OR UNDER**



**78% Curtis Fund ADULT LEARNERS
completed a two- or four-year
degree in four years even though
ADULTS FACE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE
BARRIERS TO ATTAINING A DEGREE**

