



Forever Clifton-Fine

Connecting our communities of Fine, Oswegatchie, Star Lake, Newton Falls, Wanakena and Cranberry Lake to enhance quality of life for all



"The Clifton-Fine Community Fund enables us to support vital projects in our Clifton-Fine community such as improved nutrition for school children, upgraded first-responder life support equipment, and other programs that help make our community a great place to live."

— Neil & Holly Woodworth,
Wanakena



ESTABLISHED 2013

MISSION

The Clifton-Fine Community Fund supports programs, projects and activities that enhance the quality of life for our communities in perpetuity.

OUR STORY

The Clifton-Fine Community Fund was established in 2013 as a geographic-specific fund to support efforts that strengthen the quality of life in the southeast St. Lawrence County towns and hamlets of Fine, Oswegatchie, Star Lake, Newton Falls, Wanakena and Cranberry Lake. The Northern New York Community Foundation stewards this charitable fund. To build initial support, the Foundation awarded a \$50,000 challenge grant to donors interested in giving to this philanthropic resource. By the end of 2014, people from across the region came together to create a \$100,000 community fund. It awards grants to support local projects and non-profit organizations that serve the region in perpetuity. Families from across the region can now give to support the places they love and call home, forever.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Halsey Bagg, Cranberry Lake
Dave Daut, Wanakena
Mary Hooven, Cranberry Lake
Neil Woodworth, Wanakena



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Feature photography by Kara Dry

YOUR GIFTS STRENGTHEN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



Clifton-Fine Central School recently implemented a variety of after-school programs that provide activities and opportunities for students.

The range of offerings includes gymnastics, clubs for cooking, art, gardening and science, martial arts classes and more. These activities present an important outlet for students and their families outside of the school day.

Gymnastics and martial arts are the two most popular programs among students. Up to 40 students participate in martial arts and are excited to progress through the ranks, earning different belts as they mas-

COMMUNITY FUND / IMPACT

■ \$61,100 in grant awards to support 52 community projects and initiatives across communities in the Clifton-Fine region

■ First grants awarded in 2014; 10 years of grants

ter new skills. The program teaches students discipline and respect for others.

A \$2,000 Clifton-Fine Community Fund grant was awarded in October to help sustain this critical programming at the district.

"The Clifton-Fine Community Fund has been instrumental in expanding our after-school programs

and enriching the lives of our students beyond the classroom and traditional school day. These programs during the latchkey hours have opened doors to experiences that many of our children might not otherwise have access to — experiences that spark curiosity, build confidence, and foster a love of learning," Clifton-Fine Central School District Superintendent **Matthew W. Southwick** said.

"We are deeply grateful for this partnership and the shared commitment to provide transformative opportunities for the youth of our community," Mr. Southwick added.



AFTER-SCHOOL SUCCESS:

Top photo, from left: The **Student Garden Club** is one of many successful after-school programs at **Clifton-Fine Central School**. The district noted that it is one of the best hands-on science experiences for students. The program is led by **Alison Frizzell**. Clifton-Fine Community Fund Committee member **Neil Woodworth** is pictured at far left. Left photo, from left: Gymnastics Program Instructor **Jessica Peabody**, **Bryleigh Todd**, **Jessa Kirkpatrick**, **Jauzlynn Kirkpatrick**, and **Marissa Daniels**.

YOUR GIFTS HELP BUILD COMMUNITY

The Mervin Eno American Legion Post 1539 was formed in 1946 to support veterans in the Clifton-Fine area.

Led by its board of directors and volunteers, significant upgrades have been made to the Legion's building to host family events, community gatherings, blood drives and more.

Year-round activities are offered to keep veterans engaged and give back to the community.

As part of a recent kitchen upgrade, the **Clifton-Fine Community Fund** awarded a grant to help the organization purchase new pots and pans, which will enhance ongoing veterans' activities and support for community gatherings. The Legion partnered with the **Clifton-Fine Economic Development Fund** to receive the community fund grant award.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES: Mervin Eno American Legion Post 1539 president **Lisa Langevin**.



Donors support vital community organizations

The Clifton-Fine Community Fund has supported more than two-dozen community organizations across the region to help strengthen the quality of life for all residents. Organizations below have been awarded one or more Community Fund grants since grantmaking began in 2014.

Clifton Community Library
Clifton-Fine Central School Food Pantry
Clifton-Fine Central School District
Clifton-Fine Economic Development Corporation
Clifton-Fine Lions Club
Cranberry Lake Boat Club
Cranberry Lake Fire & Rescue Department
Cranberry Lake Mountaineers Snowmobile Club
Cranberry Lake North Shore Hub
Cultural Arts Committee
Fine Volunteer Fire Department
Friends of Clifton Community Library

Mervin Eno American Legion Post 1539
Newton Falls Fire Volunteer Department
Save Our Schoolhouse
Star Lake Fire & Rescue Department
The Arc Jefferson-St. Lawrence Foundation
Town of Clifton
Town of Fine
Volunteer Transportation Center
Wanakana Historical Association
Wilderness Healthcare Foundation of
Clifton-Fine Hospital
Woodland Cemetery

IN MEMORY & APPRECIATION

CHARLES R. 'CHUCK' HOOVEN

Chuck Hooven truly loved and cared for the Town of Clifton. He took office as Town Supervisor in 1980, at the age of 26 and he never stopped serving his community until his death in January 2025.

When the Clifton-Fine Community Fund was developed, he was happy to contribute. Born in Star Lake in 1953, he graduated from Clifton-Fine Central School in 1972 and earned an associate degree in criminal justice from North Country Community College in 1974. He worked at J&L Mines before Newton Falls Paper Mill for more than 20 years, leaving as a supervisor. He proudly served as Clifton Town Supervisor for more than 35 years. Chuck married **Mary O'Brien** in 1980 in Star Lake. Together they raised a son, **William**. He was active in his community, volunteering and serving on the board of many local organizations, including the Clifton-Fine Community Fund Committee. We are grateful for having known Chuck and will miss his kindness and thoughtful insight into the region. We express our sincere condolences to his wife, **Mary**, son, **Will**, and extended family as we celebrate his legacy of a life well lived.

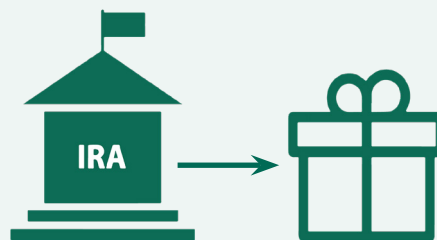


Make your RMD count for the Clifton-Fine region

If you're age 70½ or older, you can turn your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) into a tax-smart gift that strengthens the Clifton-Fine region without increasing your taxable income.

A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from your IRA to the **Clifton-Fine Community Fund** is a simple, meaningful way to give back and strengthen the place you love most.

With one easy authorization, your advisor can direct your RMD to the Clifton-Fine Community Fund through the Northern New York Community Foundation, a trusted public charity. This streamlined approach removes the hassle of multiple charitable disbursements and ensures your gift supports what matters most.



Your gift supports a wide range of local priorities — including youth development, the arts, outdoor recreation, historic preservation, and environmental programs — all focused on improving life in the Clifton-Fine area.

Why Give Through Your RMD? Simple: Easily directed by your advisor. **Tax-smart:** Avoid added taxable income with a QCD.

Impactful: Support a permanent fund serving Clifton-Fine's needs. **Enduring:** Your gift is responsibly stewarded to make a lasting impact.

The QCD limit this year is \$108,000, indexed for inflation, giving you more opportunity to create change.

You may also establish a named fund through the Community Foundation to support causes close to your heart. These funds grow tax-free and can benefit multiple organizations from one annual distribution.

Ready to get started? Contact **Max DelSignore**, Community Foundation vice president, **315-782-7110**, max@nnycf.org.

Your retirement assets can easily help shape the future of the Clifton-Fine region by making your RMD work for your community.

COMMUNITY FUND / GRANT IMPACT

"The Cranberry Lake North Shore Hub sidewalk that leads to our community boat docks was in dire need of repair. Thanks to a generous Clifton-Fine Community Fund grant, we removed the outdated structure and replaced it with a new sidewalk that will last for many years, providing safe access for Hub visitors. We are extremely grateful for the support. Thank you for being a partner. It is greatly appreciated."

— Scott McWharf, president
Cranberry Lake North Shore Hub



COMMUNITY FUND / COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY

■ The **Clifton-Fine Community Fund** and the **Northern New York Community Foundation** gratefully thank all donors who help support and strengthen the quality of life for all in the **Fine, Oswegatchie, Star Lake, Newton Falls, Wanakena, and Cranberry Lake** communities. **THANK YOU SO MUCH!**

Sustaining Gifts

The following supporters made gifts to the Clifton-Fine Community Fund from August 24, 2024, to July 15, 2025

| | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Steven Arquette Sr. | Max & Sara DelSignore | Herzer Family | Katherine Oser | Paul Spero |
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| | | | | Charles & Deborah Yartz |

Recent Tribute Gifts

Includes only gifts made to the Clifton-Fine Community Fund of the Northern New York Community Foundation in memory or in honor of a loved one from August 24, 2024, to July 15, 2025

In Memory of Given by

Jim Davenport
Peter V. O'Shea

Darlene "Dolly" Garno
Max & Sara DelSignore
Rande Richardson

Randall Gene Gearsbeck
Rande Richardson

Rhonda Lee Gearsbeck Phelps
Rande Richardson

Doris Jones Hall
Rande Richardson

Charles "Chuck" R. Hooven
Max & Sara DelSignore

William Nevil
Kathleen A. Nevil

John L. Rice
Max & Sara DelSignore

COMMUNITY FUND / HOW TO GIVE

- Mail gifts to: **Northern New York Community Foundation, ATTN: Clifton-Fine Community Fund, 131 Washington St., Watertown, NY 13601.**
- Access secure online giving at **nnycf.org/giving** and designate your gift to the **Clifton-Fine Community Fund.**
- To discuss additional giving options, contact **Max DelSignore**, Community Foundation vice president, **max@nnycf.org**, or **315-782-7110.**