



NEW HAMPSHIRE
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

THE NEIL AND LOUISE TILLOTSON FUND

2017 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

The Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund was created 11 years ago at the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation. Championed by Louise Tillotson after the death of her husband, Neil, the fund is one of the largest permanent rural philanthropies in the country. Since 2006, the fund has invested \$41 million in people, communities and landscapes in northern New Hampshire and bordering communities in the United States and southern Québec.

The fund is advised by a committee of volunteers, all of whom understand the needs and opportunities of the region, and many of whom knew the Tillotsons well. The advisory committee meets quarterly to review and approve grant proposals.

The Tillotson Fund supports many of the basic needs and services essential to struggling families in the region. In addition, after a careful year-long planning process, advisors to the fund have decided to look for additional ways to deploy resources dedicated to economic development to achieve an even greater

impact than the fund has had to date. We have identified two sectors with great potential where we will focus that work: human-powered recreation and energy efficiency. We will dedicate resources over the next five years on improving wages, growing local wealth and fostering a healthy natural environment.

The Tillotson Fund's goal has always been to improve the quality of life for all citizens in Coös and surrounding communities. We are proud of the ways in which the Tillotson Fund has served as a catalyst for the region to move toward sustainable community and economic development. It has been my honor to serve as chair for the last five years, and now welcome Ben Gayman into that role. All of the fund's advisors look forward to working with you to help make the communities in Coös and surrounding regions even better places to live and work and play.

Robert Wells
Chair, Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund Advisory Committee

This report is dedicated to Everett Pearson (1933-2017), who was a quintessential entrepreneur, a longtime business partner and friend of Neil Tillotson and an advisor to the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund from 2006 to 2015.

The Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation was established in 2006 with a bold vision:
To serve as a catalyst for the region to move toward sustainable community and economic development in Coös County and surrounding communities in the United States and Canada.

To learn more about the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund or to apply for a grant or scholarship, visit www.nhcf.org/tillotson.

HIGHLIGHTS

A small sampling of accomplishments made possible by the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund in 2017.



2017 BY THE NUMBERS

70 GRANTS TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TOTALING \$3,138,059

9 SCHOLARSHIPS TO COÖS COUNTY STUDENTS TOTALING \$40,500

Courtesy Photo



Photo by Cheryl Senter

IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR COÖS KIDS

Representatives from every school district and licensed early childhood education center in Coös County came together in November at the Coös Connections Summit. The gathering, organized by the Coös Coalition for Young Children and Families, helped educators build relationships with colleagues from around the region and explore strategies for improving social and emotional learning for young children. Experts on childhood brain development underscored the vital role educators play in helping children grow into resilient, confident adults. The Tillotson Fund supported this event as part of its strategy to improve outcomes for young children.



Photo by Cheryl Senter

FAMILIES TO HAVE MORE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Advocacy efforts by New Futures, supported by the Foundation and the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund, helped to secure an additional \$15 million state budget allocation for child care scholarships for struggling families, and to secure additional state funding for full-day kindergarten. This means that more kids from Coös and across New Hampshire will benefit from high-quality, licensed early childhood education and enhanced kindergarten programs.



Photo by Cheryl Senter

COÖS STUDENTS KICKSTART COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Coös County high school students have created the 2017 "Empower Coös Youth" campaign to foster community conversations about values, activities and resources that create positive experiences for young people. The campaign is the third in a series funded by the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund. Research shows that while youth in Coös are engaged in their communities, many feel their voices are muted, and their ideas or perspectives are not heard by adults. The campaign seeks to help young people's voices be heard. "Empower Coös Youth creates opportunity for kids to express how they feel about their community and school. It is a great program that gives Coös youth a meaningful and powerful voice," said Emily McCusker, a student at White Mountains Regional High School.

BUILDING THRIVING NORTH COUNTRY NEIGHBORHOODS

A \$67,975 grant to the New Hampshire Community Loan Fund will provide community leadership training for members of six "resident-owned communities" (ROCs) in Coös County, helping residents build thriving neighborhoods. The grant also helps to create a community center for members of two ROCs in Groveton to come together. Resident-owned communities provide affordable housing for 650 people in Coös County.



Courtesy Photo

BUILDING A BUSINESS, AND A COMMUNITY'S HEARTH

Magda Randall is every inch the baker — grinning under a flour-splashed cap, forearms nicked with oven scars. When Magda was a girl, in 1980s Poland, she dreamt of fancy pastries and fruit tarts. When she moved to New Hampshire, she started making bread in her kitchen. She would drive it around to North Country farmers' markets and sell out every time. Her dreams of fancy pastries mingled with dreams of running her own business. Stewart Gates, North Country business advisor with the Small Business Development Center, helped her craft a business plan and apply for loans for the basics — like a proper bread oven. **The Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund supports the position of North Country business advisor at the SBDC, as well as other economic development initiatives in the North Country.** Now, the Polish Princess Bakery is Lancaster's own hearth — a warm place to gather and eat. Three "Best of NH" awards hang on the wall. Four people, including Magda, work here full-time. Magda hopes the bakery's success will entice more customers and entrepreneurs to Lancaster's up-and-coming Main Street. Her dream means more to this community than great bread alone.



Photo by Cheryl Senter



Courtesy Photo

GROWING TWO KEY SECTORS OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

In addition to ongoing funding to strengthen communities and the region's economy, the fund is taking a systemic approach to **supporting two industries with significant potential for growth: energy efficiency and non-motorized outdoor recreation (from hunting and fishing to hiking, biking and skiing).** We are working with an array of partners — from government, business, nonprofits and philanthropy — to help grow these two sectors of the local economy. Grants to The Conservation Fund and Appalachian Mountain Club are supporting in-depth analyses of demand for outdoor recreation, barriers to industry growth and opportunities for inspiring entrepreneurship and strengthening this sector; and a grant to the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation will help residents and businesses improve energy efficiency, stimulate renewable energy use and identify solutions for serving those not reached by traditional utility and state energy assistance programs.



Courtesy Photo

BOOSTING SUSTAINABLE USE IN NULHEGAN BASIN

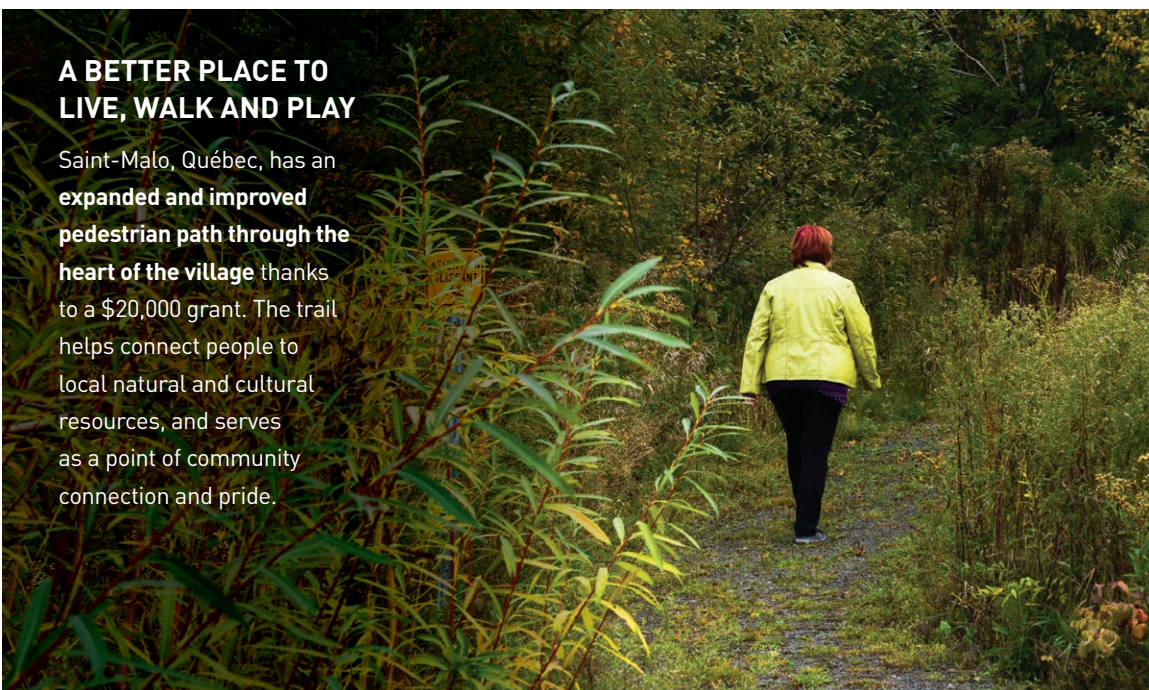
With help from the Tillotson Fund, the Vermont River Conservancy is **constructing a timber frame hut to be used by paddlers, campers and hikers, and is conducting a feasibility study for further expansion of the trail and hut systems in the Nulhegan Basin region.** New trails, river access points and campsites abound in recently conserved land in the area, making it a prime area for growth of nature-based tourism.



Courtesy Photo

PROVIDING CRITICAL LEGAL SERVICES TO NORTH COUNTRY RESIDENTS

A three-year \$300,000 grant is helping New Hampshire Legal Assistance to provide civil legal services to residents who otherwise could not afford it. The funding is **helping Legal Assistance to keep its only North Country office, in Berlin, open for business.** Hundreds of struggling families and elders in the North Country rely on Legal Assistance for help with legal issues including eviction defense, protection from domestic violence, foreclosure prevention and health care access.



Courtesy Photo

A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE, WALK AND PLAY

Saint-Malo, Québec, has an **expanded and improved pedestrian path through the heart of the village** thanks to a \$20,000 grant. The trail helps connect people to local natural and cultural resources, and serves as a point of community connection and pride.



**NEIL AND LOUISE TILLOTSON
SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

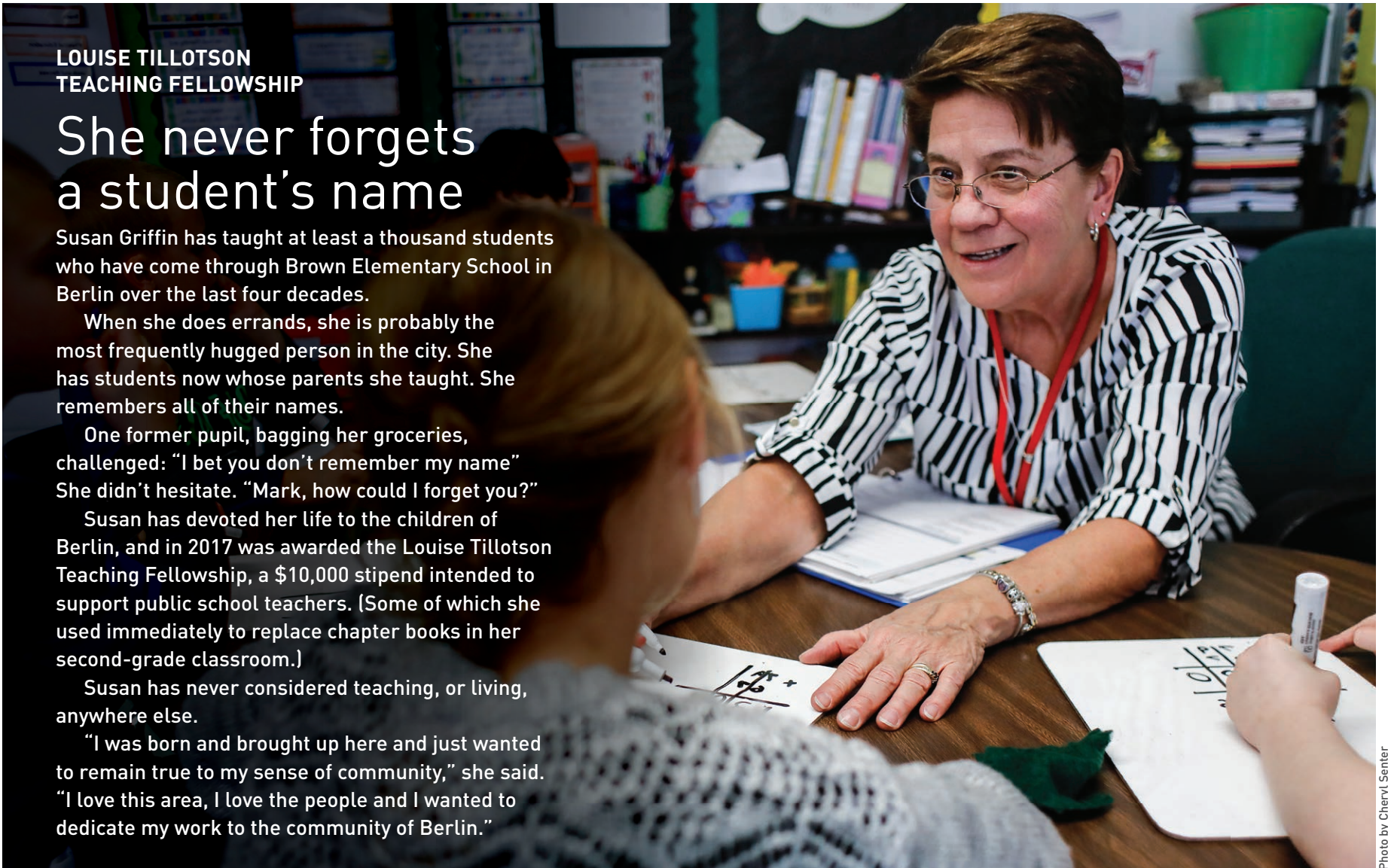
On the road to a degree and a career

Matt Faucher comes from a family of five in Berlin. He worked all through high school, and during summers. For a while, he thought college was probably out of financial reach. A scholarship from the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund helped put Matt on the road to a degree and a career.

This spring, he will earn his associate degree in information technology from White Mountains Community College — and then go on for a bachelor's. He is in a "dual admission" program, which means his credits from WMCC will transfer to a New Hampshire public college or university and count directly toward his bachelor's, which he will be able to complete in two years. He's leaning toward a career in cyber security.

"College was something I thought I would never really be able to do," Matt said, "but between the Pell Grant and New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and what I was able to save during high school, that made it possible. I really just want to say 'thank you.'"

Photo by Cheryl Senter



**LOUISE TILLOTSON
TEACHING FELLOWSHIP**

She never forgets a student's name

Susan Griffin has taught at least a thousand students who have come through Brown Elementary School in Berlin over the last four decades.

When she does errands, she is probably the most frequently hugged person in the city. She has students now whose parents she taught. She remembers all of their names.

One former pupil, bagging her groceries, challenged: "I bet you don't remember my name" She didn't hesitate. "Mark, how could I forget you?"

Susan has devoted her life to the children of Berlin, and in 2017 was awarded the Louise Tillotson Teaching Fellowship, a \$10,000 stipend intended to support public school teachers. (Some of which she used immediately to replace chapter books in her second-grade classroom.)

Susan has never considered teaching, or living, anywhere else.

"I was born and brought up here and just wanted to remain true to my sense of community," she said. "I love this area, I love the people and I wanted to dedicate my work to the community of Berlin."

Photo by Cheryl Senter



**NEW HAMPSHIRE
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION**

UP TO THE PROMISE

37 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH
800-464-6641 info@nhcf.org
www.nhcf.org

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation was created in 1962 by and for the people of New Hampshire, and is dedicated to strengthening communities across the Granite State. The Foundation manages a growing collection of 1,800 philanthropic funds created by generous families, individuals and businesses, and awards more than \$40 million in grants and scholarships every year. For more information, please visit www.nhcf.org or call 800-464-6641.

THE NEIL AND LOUISE TILLOTSON FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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