



**THE ROBERT & YVONNE KOOB
FUND FOR STUDENT COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

Impact Report 2018

One Opportunity Can Make The Difference

Investing in talented, passionate young people who are committed to changing the world can create a ripple effect in support of the common good. *One opportunity* early on can ignite a lifelong passion for advocacy. *One opportunity* can be a stepping stone to brighter future, not only for the individual but for the hundreds — if not thousands — they will impact in their lifetime. *One opportunity can make the difference.*

That's why the Robert and Yvonne Koob Fund for Student Community Engagement is so vital to the University of Northern Iowa's commitment to community engagement. Established in 2006 with an initial investment from the R.J. McElroy Trust and other donors, this endowed fund has since awarded over \$180,000 to 100 student interns working with nonprofit organizations throughout the Cedar Valley and across Iowa.

Without Koob Fund awards, many of these internships would be unpaid, forcing students to decide between a learning experience they are passionate about and another job or internship that is more financially feasible.

Each UNI student brings a unique, valuable skill set to their organization, taking on responsibilities and supporting executive directors and program coordinators to accomplish so much more. Thanks to the Koob Fund, nonprofits working within tight budget constraints are able to offer paid internships. To date, 70 nonprofit organizations have benefitted from Koob interns.

We have seen this fund both realize and go beyond the vision first conceived more than a decade ago. Please join us in celebrating the 100th Koob internship, a remarkable milestone representing the fund's sustained impact. This report highlights the difference the fund has made in the lives of UNI students, the role their internships played in setting them up for success post-graduation, and the value-added support the Koob Fund has lent to Iowa nonprofit organizations and their communities.

On behalf of the University of Northern Iowa and our local nonprofit organizations, we thank you for your interest in the Koob Fund for Student Community Engagement. We hope you'll be an advocate as we look to grow the fund and provide assistance to more UNI students pursuing real-world learning opportunities in the nonprofit sector.



Dr. Julianne Gassman
Director of Community Engagement,
University of Northern Iowa &
Chair of the Koob Fund Committee



Dr. Stacy Van Gorp
Executive Director,
R.J. McElroy Trust &
Founding Chair of the Koob
Fund Committee

HISTORY

The Robert and Yvonne Koob Fund for Student Community Engagement was established in 2006 with an initial investment from the R.J McElroy Trust. More than 100 donors — including the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust, a number of corporations and many individuals — have contributed to the Koob Fund.

The fund was named in honor of Robert Koob, UNI's eight president, and his wife, Yvonne. President Koob was widely known throughout UNI and the Cedar Valley for his dedication to community service and university outreach.

The endowment supports students who are completing internships at nonprofit organizations in Iowa, many of which would otherwise be unpaid positions. Studies indicate the nonprofit sector offers unpaid internships at greater levels than government or the for-profit sector, with the majority of nonprofit internships being unpaid.

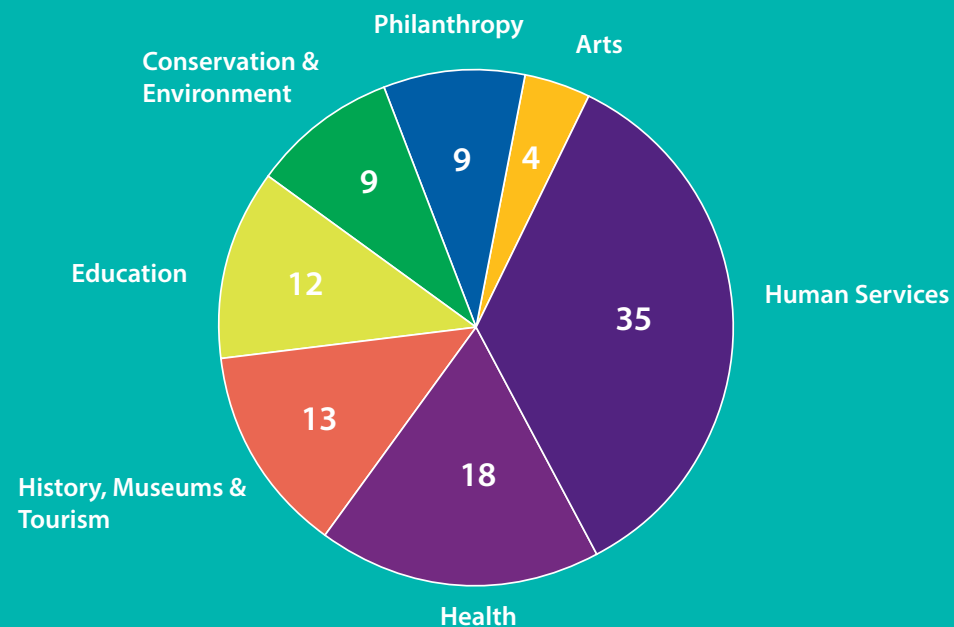
Approximately \$12,000 is awarded annually, up to \$2,000 for undergraduate students and up to \$3,000 for graduate students.

100
Internships
Supported

\$180,000
Total Funding Awarded
to Koob Interns

70
Nonprofits
Served

100 Koob Interns... Across Many Nonprofit Subsectors



Voice FOR THE VOICELESS



Vanessa McNeal ('17) believes survivors of sexual violence need to be heard. As a filmmaker and national speaker, she has made it her mission to create social change through the art of storytelling.

"It's really like macro-level social work," McNeal said of speaking and making films. "I'm able to touch so many people instead of doing individual-type work."

"And it's really fun, too," she's quick to add. "It doesn't feel like work."

McNeal herself is a survivor, having experiencing sexual abuse and neglect as a child. But she overcame adversity, becoming the first in her family to graduate from high school before going on to obtain a bachelor's degree from Iowa State. She graduated last spring from UNI with her Master's in social work.

While at UNI she released three documentary films on sexual assault. Her first, "I Am," told her personal story; "We Are Survivors," her first short film, detailed the stories of eight survivors; and her third, "The Voiceless," won awards for its blunt portrayal of the experiences of five male survivors of sexual assault.

Her next film, "Gridshock," will take on the topic of human trafficking in Iowa.

"[It's] honest. And [it's] raw," she said. "They're really tough topics, but they need talked about. And I won't sugar coat any of the truth about it."

While she was making films, she also participated in an internship, funded in part by the Robert and Yvonne Koob Fund for Student Community Engagement, with Allen Hospital's Women's Health Clinic in Waterloo. She worked on Together for Youth, the clinic's sexual education program for area middle and high schools.

McNeal sees a strong link between her work now and the experience she gained while an intern with Allen Hospital.

"I think there is a really big connection between sexual violence and sexual education, especially when we're talking about children," she said. McNeal said the education provided by the Together for Youth program would have helped her understand the abuse she was subjected to as a child.

"So they are doing really transformative work," she said.

Koob funding made the difference in McNeal's decision to take the internship.

"It meant so much because I know they invested in my work and what I care about," she said.



Passion FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

The experience **Emily Hanson ('13)** gained in her internship while a UNI student launched her path to success post-graduation.

Nearly three years ago, Hanson became the executive director for the Waterloo Schools Foundation, her first position out of graduate school. She accepted the job because she believes in the power of public education.

"[Waterloo Schools] is doing some amazing things," Hanson said. "The graduation rate is on the rise; we have the highest early childhood literacy rate in the state of Iowa, which is amazing considering the poverty rate."

Hanson says the seven-year-old Foundation has established its role as a catalyst for academic excellence. The Foundation recently awarded its millionth dollar to the Waterloo School District.

"To be at this point so early is incredible," said Hanson of the milestone. "It shows that people support us but also that there's a need in the community that we're fulfilling."

Hanson said an internship with the R.J. McElroy Trust while an undergraduate at UNI set her on her path to where she is today. The internship was funded in part through the Koob Fund for Student Community Engagement.

"I actually do not think I would have the job that I have today had it not been for the internship ... I'm very confident in that," she said.

As an intern, Hanson coordinated the Trust's Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching program, which recognizes 10 local teachers annually. The internship provided Hanson a toolbox of skills useful to an executive director: budget management, event planning and the ability to communicate with teachers, principals and superintendents.

Having witnessed firsthand the positive impact an intern can have on nonprofits, Hanson has employed her own Koob-funded interns at the Waterloo Schools Foundation. She says interns free up local nonprofits to accomplish so much more.

"Especially in the Cedar Valley with smaller organizations, if you are willing to trust that a student is able to take on that responsibility ... they can extend your reach in ways you don't even imagine," Hanson said.

Growing the Koob Fund would mean more students experiencing real-world learning in the nonprofit sector.

"Having the Koob Fund is incredibly important for students looking at nonprofit internships because not all of them are paid. And they shouldn't have to miss out on an amazing learning opportunity because of finances," she said.

Feeding America

FORMER KOOB INTERN FIGHTS FOOD INSECURITY

"Daddy, why can't you give me any food?"

It's a question **Jordan Vernoy ('07)** was asked by his two-year-old son in a busy hospital waiting room years ago. Having gone more than 12 hours without food due to both an injury and the mandated wait period prior to surgery, Vernoy's son was hungry, and there was little Vernoy could do about it.

"It just broke my heart," Vernoy said.

He was heartbroken for his son but also for the fact that, statistically, another parent in that waiting room had been asked that same question in a much different context: food insecurity. In America, 1 in 6 children may not know where they will get their next meal.

"So whenever I feel a bit disconnected or feel a little bit like I don't know why I'm in this work ... I think back to that story and think about how I can do something to make sure that's not a question a child has to ask" and a parent might not be able to answer, Vernoy said.

Vernoy is Managing Director of Network Development with Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization. He's worked his way up through the organization over the past five years, serving previously as Vice President for National Programs.



In his current role, Vernoy works to build capacity for entirety of the Feeding America network, which not only includes 200 food banks across the country but also 60,000 member agencies such as food pantries, soup kitchens and homeless shelters.

"I focus on understanding all the different parts of the network ... [and] how they all fit together better as a network to move towards our vision of a hunger-free America," Vernoy said.

Vernoy's passion for helping others was kindled during his time at UNI. He transferred to UNI from the University of Iowa to enroll in the leisure, youth and human services program.

He picked up connections to local nonprofits through the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance, ultimately pursuing an internship with the Volunteer Center for the Cedar Valley. Vernoy was one of the first four students to benefit from the Koob Fund for Student Community Engagement

The internship provided Vernoy his first entry point into understanding how

volunteering can fortify a community. Outside of his career role, Vernoy chairs Volunteer Iowa, the Governor-appointed commission promoting service across the state.

Upon graduating, Vernoy worked for the Northeast Iowa Food Bank, then became the founding state director for the Iowa Food Bank Association before landing at Feeding America.

He said the first internship experience can "set the tone" for a student to feel supported in deciding to enter the nonprofit sector.

"The opportunity to take an internship that I was really passionate about, but really couldn't afford, because of the Koob Fund made it an amazing opportunity that I maybe wouldn't have accepted otherwise," Vernoy said. "And then that did lead me down the path to where I am now."

KOOB FUND FOR STUDENT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2006-2018

To date, 100 UNI students have received Koob funding for nonprofit internships in Iowa. Koob interns have partnered with many Cedar Valley organizations, such as: the Waterloo Commission on Human Rights, the Grout Museum, Junior Achievement and several of the Cedar Valley's schools and hospitals. The impact of Koob internships extends across Iowa, stretching as far east as Scott County and as far west as Montgomery County.

Student	Nonprofit Organization	Funding
2006 Recipients		
Cheryl Lyon	United Community Health Center - Storm Lake	\$690
Tawanna Moore	McKinstry Elementary School	\$5,030
Theresa Thompson	Crisis Intervention Center - Oskaloosa	\$1,120
Jordan Vernoy	Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley	\$2,520
2007 Recipients		
Sarah Bergene	Allen Women's Health Clinic: Together for Youth	\$1,680
Sarah Brown	House of Hope	\$1,500
Sarah Greiner	Veterans Health Administration - Veterans Affairs	\$2,520
Kathryn Kelly	Hearst Center for the Arts	\$3,860
Lori Ann Pedersen	Family & Children's Council of Black Hawk County	\$1,680
Amy Seubert	Aspire Therapeutic Riding Program	\$1,680
Cynthia Schell	Cedar Falls Historical Society	\$2,250
Brook Adams	Social Security Administration	\$1,000
Valerie Noble	Mercy Medical Center	\$3,000
Megan Schell	Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa	\$1,500
Aaron McNally	Cedar Falls Public Library	\$2,000
Taylor Schaa	Over the Rainbow Health and Education Services	\$2,000

Student	Nonprofit Organization	Funding
2008 Recipients		
Cheryl Lyon	Alzheimer's Association	\$2,000
Amanda Marine	Covenant Medical Center	\$3,000
Judi Faas	Heartland Acres Agribition Center	\$2,000
Isaiah Messery	Black Hawk County Conservation Board	\$3,000
Amy Clemen	Lutheran Services in Iowa	\$2,000
Anna Schrad	Iowa Interfaith Power and Light	\$1,500
Whitney Burger	West Des Moines Dept of Parks & Recreation	\$2,000
2009 Recipients		
Anne Reiter	R. J. McElroy Trust	\$2,000
Bobbie Jo Sheridan	Allen Women's Health Clinic: Together for Youth	\$2,000
Anna Schrad	UNI Recycling Reuse & Technology Transfer Center	\$1,800
Brittney Byrnes	Mercy Medical Center	\$2,000
Kellie Evers	Friends of Hartman Reserve	\$1,680
Kaylan Hamerlinck	Rosewood Estate - Waterloo	\$2,000
Abubakarr Jalloh	Iowa Center on Health Disparities	\$1,800
Kimberly Weber	Covenant Medical Center	\$2,000
Kelsey Wegner	Cedar Valley Make-a-Wish Foundation	\$2,000
Kari McCann	Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley	\$1,440
2010 Recipients		
Kelly Eckhart	Ames Parks and Recreation	\$2,000
Kari McCann	Over the Rainbow Health and Education Services	\$1,440
Kristen Reihle	Northeast Iowa Food Bank	\$2,000
Mary Cox	Black Hawk County Conservation Board	\$3,000
Sean Lenihan	Family & Children's Council of Black Hawk County	\$3,000
Alexandra Thompson	Northeast Iowa Food Bank	\$2,000
Jennifer Sickles,	Helping Services for Northeast Iowa	\$2,000
Paige Nagle	Gilda's Club Quad Cities	\$2,000
Kelsey Mueller	Junior Achievement of Eastern Iowa	\$2,000
2011 Recipients		
Sheri Sigler	Cedar Falls Luthern Home	\$2,000
Kari Dirksen	American Red Cross	\$1,500
Michelle Mahoney	Black Hawk Soil and Water Conservation District	\$3,000
Kari Dirksen	Iowa Food Bank Association	\$2,000

Student	Nonprofit Organization	Funding
2011 Recipients (Cont.)		
Rhonda Greenway	The World Food Prize Foundation	\$2,000
Rachel Pike	Mason City Youth Task Force	\$1,540
Arryn Blomstedt	Wilson Performing Arts Center	\$2,000
Andrew Montgomery	UN Center for Energy & Environmental Education	\$1,200
Kendra Willey	Big Brothers Big Sisters	\$2,000
Nicole Streets	UNI Center for Energy & Environmental Education	\$1,440
2012 Recipients		
Zachariah Rhodes	American Red Cross	\$2,000
Stephanie Paulsen	West Liberty Community School District	\$3,000
Kendra Willey	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Iowa	\$1,450
Pagie Zeschke	Cedar Valley Make-a-Wish Foundation	\$1,450
Natalie Greve	Black Hawk County 4-H Program	\$2,000
Chelsea Hartman	Cedar Falls Tourism and Visitors Bureau	\$2,000
Vincent Chukwuemeka	Waterloo Commission on Human Rights	\$2,880
Kofi Sam	Iowa Heartland Habitat for Humanity	\$680
Kelsie Friichtenicht	Aspire Therapeutic Riding Program	\$1,500
2013 Recipients		
Tyler Adams	Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley	\$2,000
Emily Hanson	R. J. McElroy Trust	\$760
Clarissa McPherson	Cedar Falls Tourism and Visitors Bureau	\$2,000
2014 Recipients		
Sarah Zinnel	Junior Achievement of Eastern Iowa	\$1,440
Tircia Wisniewski	Friends of Iowa CASA and ICFRB	\$3,000
EmmaJo Cottrell	Grout Museum	\$2,000
Margaret Nervig	Salisbury House and Gardens	\$1,200
Riley Rozendaal	Jasper County Sheriff's Office	\$2,000
2015 Recipients		
Stanley Somtochukwu	Boys & Girls Club of the Cedar Valley	\$2,500
Michelle Wilke	UNI Center for Violence Prevention	\$2,500
Emily Kriegel	Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley	\$1,300
Courtney DeRocher	YWCA	\$1,500
Cory Gregg	Grout Museum	\$250
Emma Seehusen	Grout Museum	\$250
Rachel Cashman	Boys & Girls Club of the Cedar Valley	\$1,800
Katelyn Blake	Grout Museum	\$2,000

Student	Nonprofit Organization	Funding
2016 Recipients		
Sarah Hanson	R.J McElroy Trust	\$600
Melanie Bressler	Waterloo Center for the Arts	\$2,000
Sarah Stephany	Orchard Hill Church	\$2,000
Kelsey Umthun	Alternatives Pregnancy Center	\$2,000
Rebecca Dirks	Grout Museum	\$1,000
Chad Smith	Waterloo Schools Foundation	\$1,000
Jacilyn Valero	Cedar Falls Historical Society	\$1,000
Roger Pollock	Hansen Elementary School	\$2,000
Fallan Stark	Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony	\$500
Zijad Mahmutovic	Grout Museum	\$2,000
2017 Recipients		
Morgan Holzer	UNI Center of Violence and Prevention	\$1,000
Vanessa McNeal	Allen Women's Health Clinic: Together for Youth	\$1,000
Milica Njezic	Grout Museum	\$500
Brenna Oberbreckling	Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley	\$1,500
Maria Rosado Cupul	Black Hawk County Health Department	\$1,000
A. Cornett	Northeast Iowa Food Bank	\$2,000
L. Mysak	Black Hawk County Attorney's Office	\$1,000
K. Izer	Riverview Center	\$1,000
M. Miller	Hancock County Historical Society	\$1,000
K. Sauerbrei	Cedar Valley Friends of the Family	\$1,000
2018 Recipients		
S. Adam	UNI Center for Urban Education	\$2,000
E. Redington	Iowa Department of Human Services	\$2,000
G. Ruggiero	Iowa Legal Aid	\$1,080
		Total \$180,010

“The Koob funding was a source of motivation. It helped me to not stress about about having money to commute to my internship or worry about other small expenses. Instead, it pushed me to carry out my job more effectively.”

– Stanley Ebede

Graduate Research Assistant,

UNI Office of Community Engagement

2014 Koob Intern, Boys & Girls Club of the Cedar Valley



Thank you

