



Michael W. Frerichs
ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

Treasurer's Note

January 22, 2024

Charitable Trust Grants: A Helping Hand for Nonprofit Groups that Help People, Communities

In [my last Treasurer's Note](#), I mentioned a nursing home. I think I ought to tell you a little more about Country Health Nursing Home in Gifford, Illinois.

Country Health is an 89-room skilled nursing facility in my hometown. My dad's father went there for rehabilitation services and spent his last few months there receiving care before passing from Type II diabetes complications. My mom's mother lived her last several years in the attached senior living facility, Pleasant View Manor.

Both of my grandparents received excellent care from the nurses, and my family felt fortunate to have such a facility in our town of about 900 people. Later, I was asked to serve on the nonprofit board that governed the nursing home, and I gladly agreed.

I have volunteered with charities and briefly did some work for the United Way of Champaign County. I have seen time and again how much of an impact some of these nonprofit organizations can have on the lives of people and in communities. I have great respect for those who choose to work in this field.

It's why I was so shocked and appalled to learn that a program in the Treasurer's Office that had been started in 2007 to award grants to small nonprofits had not issued a single one when I took office in 2015.

One of the first things I did was conduct an audit of the office to see where we could find efficiencies and savings. The audit discovered that the Charitable Trust Stabilization Board had never been established, nor had its fund dispersed a dime of the over \$2 million that had been collected.

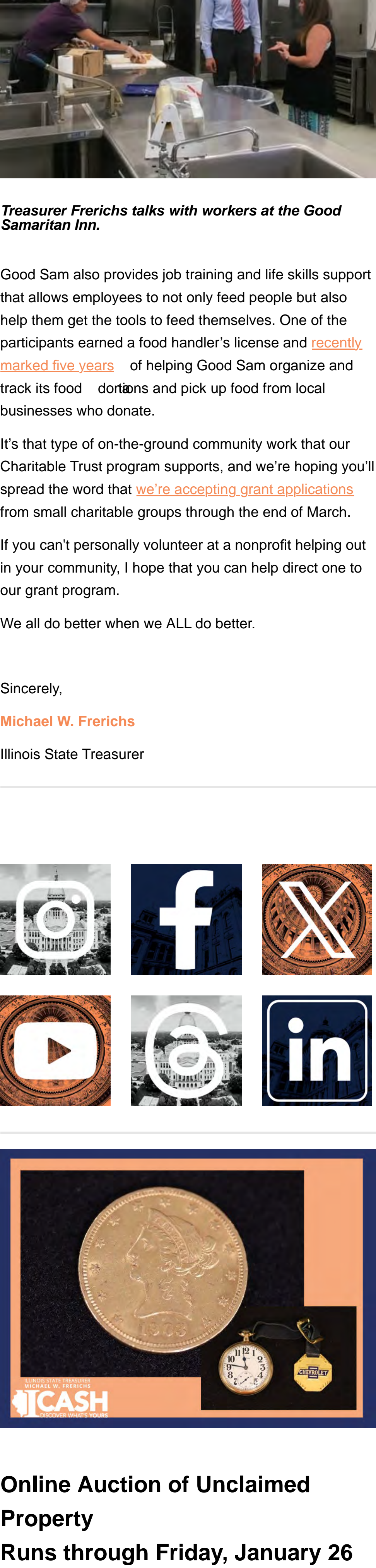
We appointed a board to decide what nonprofits receive grants and started awarding them. Since taking office, we have now awarded nearly \$4.3 million to nonprofits who help Illinois residents with food, housing, and job training.

This money doesn't come from tax dollars, but from filing fees paid to the Illinois Attorney General's Office by larger nonprofit groups. Larger nonprofits came up with the idea to help smaller counterparts with annual budgets of less than \$1 million.

We are in the middle of an application process that runs through the end of March. If you work for a nonprofit that could qualify, or you know one that could, they can begin the process [here](#).

To date, we have given 211 grants to charities throughout the state to 183 nonprofit organizations that have helped tens of thousands of people.

I have visited many of these groups and am always impressed by how far they stretch our dollars. They do their own fundraising and have strong corps of volunteers to provide services.



Treasurer Michael Frerichs visits the Good Samaritan Inn.

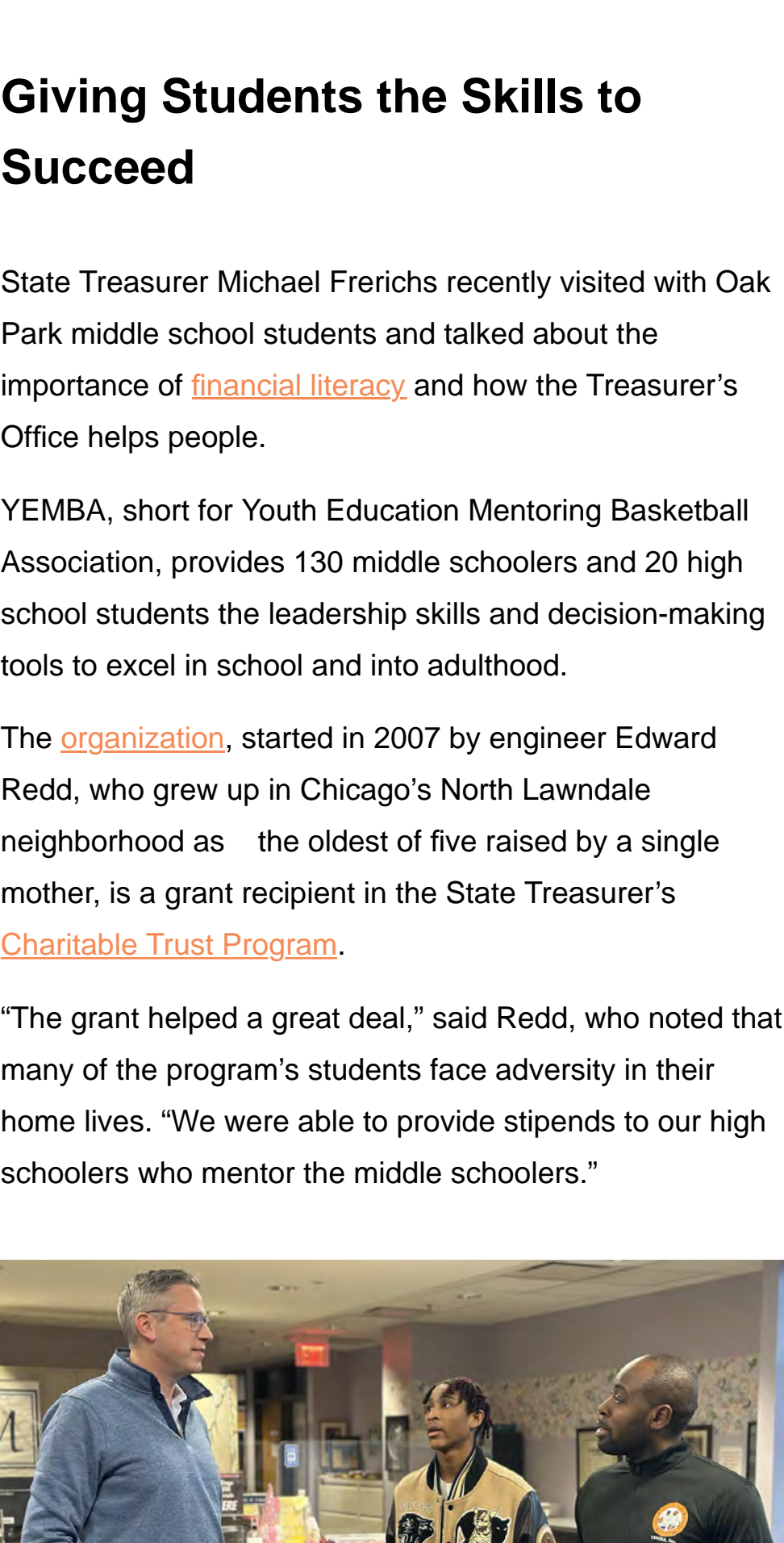
One organization I'll spotlight here is the [Good Samaritan Inn](#). For more than 40 years, Good Sam has served a hot meal to food-insecure adults and children in Decatur. As many as 300 volunteers from businesses, churches, schools, and other organizations team up with Good Sam to help prepare and serve the meals to as many as 250 food-insecure individuals each day, 365 days a year. In 2023, Good Sam served more than 63,000 meals to those in need with more than 8,750 hours volunteered.

The Noon Meal Program is rooted in the value that every person deserves a warm meal without any cost, membership, or questions asked.

The Charitable Trust Grant from our office provided more than 15,000 sack lunches to Good Sam patrons unable to dine-in during our Noon Meal.

"These may be workers on their lunch break, patrons with weakened immune systems, those suffering from anxiety, or even for those who would otherwise pose a safety risk," said Nicky Besser, Good Sam's executive director. "This was an incredible gift and has allowed us to increase access to a nutritious meal."

The organization also runs "Mercy Gardens," which farms 1.25 acres to increase access to fresh, local produce. This produce enhances Good Sam's Noon Meal, as well as supplies food pantries run by the Northeast Community Fund, Catholic Charities, and the Salvation Army. In 2023, Mercy Gardens grew more than 10,500 pounds of produce, providing 59,630 servings of fruits, vegetables, and herbs to the community.



Treasurer Frerichs talks with workers at the Good Samaritan Inn.

Good Sam also provides job training and life skills support that allows employees to not only feed people but also help them get the tools to feed themselves. One of the participants earned a food handler's license and [recently marked five years](#) of helping Good Sam organize and track its food portions and pick up food from local businesses who donate.

It's that type of on-the-ground community work that our Charitable Trust program supports, and we're hoping you'll spread the word that [we're accepting grant applications](#) from small charitable groups through the end of March.

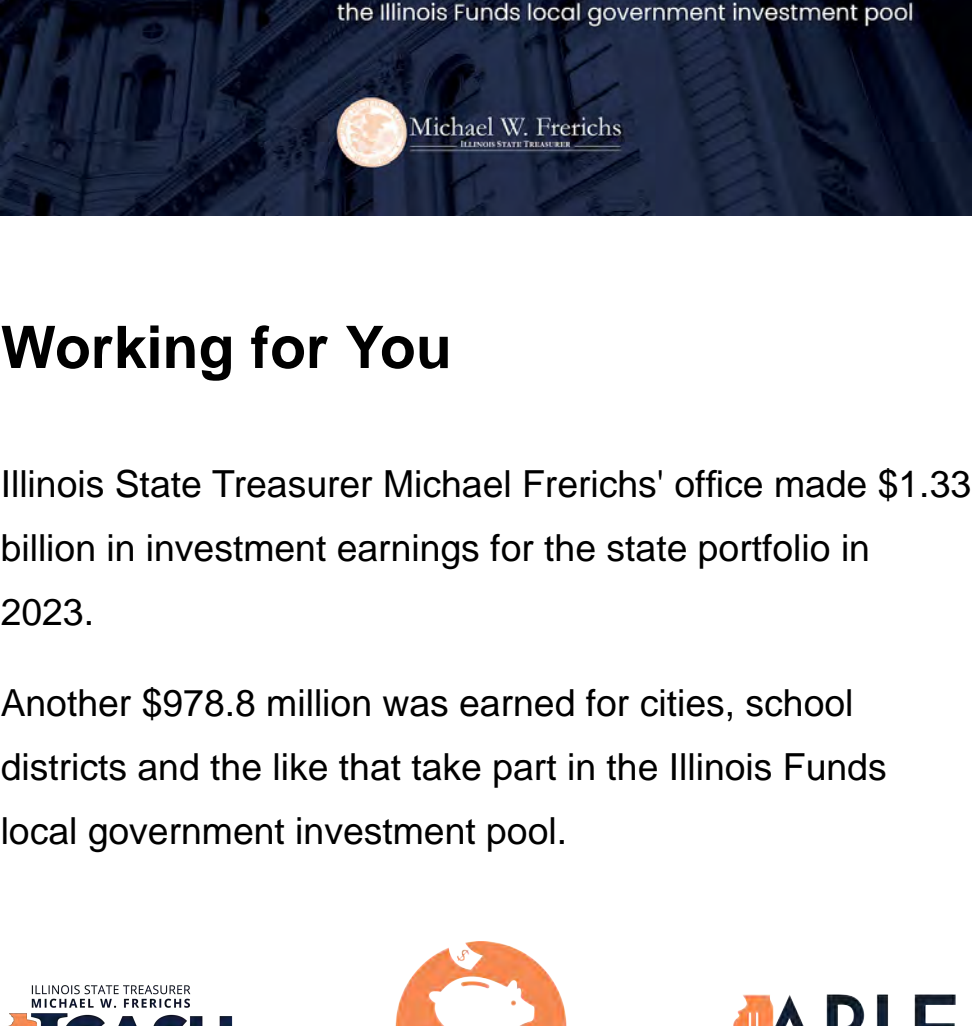
If you can't personally volunteer at a nonprofit helping out in your community, I hope that you can help direct one to our grant program.

We all do better when we ALL do better.

Sincerely,

Michael W. Frerichs

Illinois State Treasurer



Online Auction of Unclaimed Property Runs through Friday, January 26

An Illinois Bunn Special 21-jewel pocket watch and a 1903 U.S. \$10 Liberty Head gold coin (shown above) are among the hundreds of unclaimed property items being auctioned online through Friday, January 26.

"The online auction features a wide range of distinctive items that will appeal to anyone who is looking to add to a personal collection or anyone who's searching for the perfect gift," said Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs, whose office oversees unclaimed property in Illinois.

Additional items available at the online auction include an 1880-S PCGS MS66 Morgan silver dollar, a 1929 U.S. \$5 national currency note from the Mutual National Bank of Chicago, other collectible coins and currency, and a variety of gold jewelry. A total of 100 lots will be auctioned, with each lot consisting of a single item or multiple items.

To view auction items, go to [ibid.illinois.gov/](#) and select the tab labeled "Storefronts." Scroll down to the Illinois State Treasurer Unclaimed Property Auction, select it and then click on the tab labeled "Upcoming Store Items."

To be eligible to participate in the auction, prospective bidders must register with iBid if they haven't previously done so. The registration process is simple: Go to [ibid.illinois.gov/](#) and select the tab labeled "Register now." For questions, call 217.557.8567.

The Treasurer's Office is the custodian of unclaimed property, including lost bank accounts, insurance policy proceeds, and safe deposit boxes. Items are surrendered to the Treasurer's Office after private entities have tried for several years to locate the owner. Items considered for auction typically have not been touched by their owners for 10 years. All auction proceeds will be held for the rightful owners, no matter how long it takes.

An estimated one-in-four adults in Illinois who search the state's unclaimed property website, also known as I-Cash, find missing money that should be returned to them. The average claim is \$1,000. Make sure to visit the I-Cash website at [www.illinoistreasurer.gov/ICASH](#) regularly to find out if any missing money is waiting for you.

Giving Students the Skills to Succeed

State Treasurer Michael Frerichs recently visited with Oak Park middle school students and talked about the importance of [financial literacy](#) and how the Treasurer's Office helps people.

YEMBA, short for Youth Education Mentoring Basketball Association, provides 130 middle schoolers and 20 high school students the leadership skills and decision-making tools to excel in school and into adulthood.

The [organization](#), started in 2007 by engineer Edward Redd, who grew up in Chicago's North Lawndale neighborhood as the oldest of five raised by a single mother, is a grant recipient in the State Treasurer's [Charitable Trust Program](#).

"The grant helped a great deal," said Redd, who noted that many of the program's students face adversity in their home lives. "We were able to provide stipends to our high schoolers who mentor the middle schoolers."

Treasurer Frerichs chats with Jeremy, a participant in the Youth Education Mentoring Basketball Association, and Edward Redd, who started the organization.

Last Wednesday, the students gathered after school to learn about conflict resolution. Instructors explained that students have several options when a conflict arises, and each option carries consequences. Avoid striking back with hurtful words and try to find a resolution through compromising, negotiating or collaborating, the instructors stressed.

The program also teaches students time management and stress management skills, as well as study habits, during the challenging years of middle school and high school.

Jeremy, an eighth grader at Gwendolyn Brooks, joined the program last summer because he wanted to play basketball with his friends. He quickly found it's about much more than just basketball.

"They help you with your mindset," Jeremy said. "I'm learning a lot."

Treasurer Frerichs explained the concept of earning interest on money, one of his office's primary duties. Students really wanted to know how tall he is, and the Treasurer offered a math lesson.

"I'm 80 inches tall," he said.

"You're 6'8," one student quickly calculated.

Treasurer Frerichs with students and staff at the Youth Education Mentoring Basketball Association in Oak Park.

Working for You

Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs' office made \$1.33 billion in investment earnings for the state portfolio in 2023.

Another \$978.8 million was earned for cities, school districts and the like that take part in the Illinois Funds local government investment pool.

Illinois State Treasurer Michael W. Frerichs

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