Children and families strengthened in communities with higher needs and larger disparity gaps and with committed leadership and a desire for change.

We will initiate a deep dive into three targeted communities with high poverty rates and disparity gaps to help strengthen children and families through improved family supports. We will promote and facilitate the Collective Impact structured framework to organize community-led, community-driven “coming together” for a shared vision and action. The Collective Impact framework recognizes that no single organization can address the type of social change that is needed for children and families.

Contact Karen White  karenw@nwmf.org

Grow capacity of quality child care in the region.

We lead and support collaborative efforts in communities to find innovative, sustainable solutions to their unique child care needs. We incentivize child care providers to improve the quality of their care and embrace the Parent Aware rating system. We assist child care providers and communities with financial and capital needs through flexible lending and grant products. Better lives are built when our children are provided quality care and families can enter the workforce on their terms and not be hindered by the lack of available child care in their community.

Contact Missy Okeson  missyo@nwmf.org

Invest resources to help communities thrive.

We work with three targeted communities to help identify the communities’ needs and provide a mix of flexible lending and grant products to help communities meet those needs. Whether it is downtown revitalization, an industrial park with tenants, a new senior living facility, a community wellness center, or improved parks and recreation (as examples), we help with capital needs to make the community’s vision a reality. Ultimately, we hope to help communities capitalize on the current “Brain Gain” trend in the ways that best fit their unique community. Better lives are built because of our investments into our region’s communities.

Contact Nate Dorr  nated@nwmf.org

Support and develop the region’s entrepreneurs and small businesses.

We foster an entrepreneurial spirit and encourage economic self-sufficiency through the growth of small business and self-employment opportunities in our region. We serve small business owners and entrepreneurs in need of funding by providing business technical assistance and loans. Through our involvement with the Northwest Small Business Development Center (NWSBDC), we provide one-on-one counseling, technical assistance services, and specific business-related trainings to entrepreneurs and small business owners and employees. We coordinate and support the IDEA Competition annually, adding to the entrepreneurial culture and vitality in the region. We build better lives by helping entrepreneurs and small businesses succeed, impacting the owners, the employees and their families, and the economic vibrancy of the communities in our region where they do business.

Contact Diane Morey  dianem@nwmf.org

Lead regional efforts and community solutions focused on current critical economic issues—first priority is housing.

We lead and support collaborative efforts to add housing capacity in the region and we provide a mix of lending and grant products to assist housing efforts in our region’s communities. Activities and products are designed to address workforce, affordable and transitional housing needs. We build better lives by ensuring that our region has sufficient housing availability and lack of housing is no longer an obstacle to shelter and jobs.

Contact Rob Maher  robertm@nwmf.org

Contact Diane Morey  dianem@nwmf.org
Our purpose, building better lives, shows through in all that we do—starting with the principles we act by. These guiding principles are our commitments to how we will conduct our work and are the standard for our actions.

- We commit to equity for all in our region. We seek to ensure that all programming and work involving the foundation has been designed to be culturally supportive and effective for all.

- We build relationships with organizations that share our goals, seeking mutual understandings and solutions to shared challenges.

- We develop community leaders through our partners who offer world-class leadership-development programs. We recognize that real change will be led at the community level, and we commit to helping connect our community leaders to opportunities, to grow their leadership capacity.

- We value our natural assets for the quality of life and economic resources they bring to the region, and we commit to promoting stewardship of the region’s natural assets.