



CAUSE CONNECTION

Connecting people who care to causes that matter

David Torrey's Giving Begins with a Simple Question: Where Is Help Needed Most?



When **David Torrey** stood before friends, family, and fellow members of the Lehigh Valley Community Foundation community to accept the **2026 Vision in Philanthropy Award**, he did not begin with a list of accomplishments. He began with gratitude.

He thanked his family. He thanked his longtime friend **Barbara Lee** for her care and companionship. He remembered his late wife. He thanked his advisor who first connected him to LVCF. Then, in the plainspoken way that defines his philanthropy, he shifted the focus away

from himself and toward the people and places that need help most. That spirit guides the **Torrey Family Fund**.

The Lehigh Valley Community Foundation presented David Torrey and the Torrey Family Fund with the 2026 Vision in Philanthropy Award during its Board of Associates Spring Meeting and Awards Program on May 28 at Saucon Valley Country Club. The award recognizes fundholders whose generosity reflects a lasting commitment to the Lehigh Valley.

A Lifetime of Service

For David, that commitment begins with service. "David is a proud servant of the community," said **Erika Riddle Petrozelli, CPA, CAP**, President and CEO of LVCF, as she presented the award. She highlighted his decades of involvement with Asbury United Methodist Church, the Greenawalds Fire Company, and numerous local organizations. David served for many years as a volunteer firefighter, an experience that shaped his approach to philanthropy: respond when there is a need, show up when people are vulnerable, and help however you can.

Giving Where the Need Is Greatest

David came to LVCF through his financial advisor, **Geoff Boyer**. Although he already had a donor-advised fund with a national provider, he wanted a philanthropic partner with deeper knowledge of local needs. He transferred his fund to LVCF and established the Torrey Family Fund. "I find that the Lehigh Valley Community Foundation has a good knowledge of local charities," David said. He values meeting with LVCF staff to discuss emerging community needs and where his charitable dollars can have the greatest impact.



Collective Grantmaking Snapshot

For April and May 2026

This bi-monthly snapshot reflects the collective impact of donor-advised and other charitable funds at LVCF, supporting trusted organizations.

- \$824,000 awarded through 117 grants to 87 nonprofit organizations
- 11.3% of total grant dollars provided as general operating/flexible support

Top Issue Areas by Dollars Granted

- Human Services: \$213,000
- Education \$160,000
- Community and Economic Development: \$156,000

Top Issue Areas by Number of Grants

- Human Services: 34 grants
- Community & Economic Development: 30 grants
- Arts, Culture, and Creative Economy: 15 grants
- Community and Economic Development: 15 grants

Nearly 84% of grant dollars stayed local in the Lehigh Valley

“What I like about the Lehigh Valley Community Foundation is that you can give locally, as well as internationally,” he added. That flexibility reflects David’s priorities. Through his faith, he has supported disaster relief and humanitarian efforts abroad, including Ukraine and food programs in South Africa. Closer to home, his giving focuses on housing, homelessness, disaster relief, veterans, foster youth, and other basic needs. Organizations he supports include Sixth Street Shelter, the Salvation Army, Allentown Rescue Mission, Ripple Community Inc., and Victory House.

Looking Beyond the Headlines

“My really giving interests are based on housing and disaster relief,” he said. David saw disaster recovery firsthand while volunteering in Moss Point, Mississippi, after Hurricane Katrina, helping repair homes long after national attention had shifted elsewhere. “One of my concerns is that if it isn’t in the current news, everybody forgets,” he said. That concern also shapes his local giving. He spoke about homelessness not as an abstract issue but as a daily reality. What happens after an overnight warming shelter closes? Where does someone go during the day? “It’s a real concern of mine,” he said. “Where do they go?”

Everyone Can Do Something

David also encouraged attendees to look for sturdy suitcases and backpacks at church rummage sales and yard sales and donate them to Valley Youth House or similar organizations serving foster youth. Too often, he noted, children move

from home to home carrying their belongings in trash bags. The suggestion was simple but revealing. David notices needs others overlook, thinks practically, and believes everyone can make a difference.

A Legacy of Compassion

Eirka described David’s philanthropy as “thoughtful, consistent, and deeply compassionate.” She also shared a personal story from 2017, when David invited her young son, Max, to tour the Greenawalds Fire Company because he loved fire trucks. “David, you truly represent the very best of our community: generous, kind, and committed to making life better for others,” she said.

The **Vision in Philanthropy Award** honors generosity, but it also recognizes the ability to see a community’s needs and respond with purpose. Through the Torrey Family Fund, David Torrey has created a vehicle for thoughtful, locally informed philanthropy. Through his example, he reminds us that meaningful giving begins not with recognition, but with a simple question: Where is help needed most?

The Service to Philanthropy Award

David was honored alongside **Edward J. Lentz, Esq.**, of Fitzpatrick Lentz & Bubba, P.C., who received LVCF’s 2026 Service to Philanthropy Award. Together, the two awards celebrated the partnership between generous donors and trusted advisors that helps strengthen philanthropy throughout the Lehigh Valley.

