

FUND HIGHLIGHT

MICHAEL & NANCY PIA FOUNDATION EST. 2019

Born and raised in Chester County, Michael and Nancy Pia, their four children, Kristin Hayman, Lisa Reed, Amy Clark and Michael Pia Jr., and their seven grandchildren, have always been dedicated to helping others in the community. Their philanthropic efforts have been focused on **enhancing the lives of children and making a positive impact on families.**



Nancy, who was a teacher for most of her career, is also an accomplished artist and published author. She was instrumental in starting the YMCA's Kennett Montessori School, and she also created the Living Kindness program that was implemented in several local schools.

Michael has spent his entire career in the family mushroom farming business, South Mill Champs, one of the top 3 mushroom producers in North America.

Michael and Nancy established a private charitable foundation in 2002. As their philanthropy grew, it became more of a challenge finding causes consistent with their giving platform. After exploring options with several trusted community-minded friends and advisors, in 2019 they converted their private Michael & Nancy Pia Foundation to a separately managed medallion fund at the Chester County Community Foundation.

A guiding belief of the Michael and Nancy Pia Foundation is that all children deserve a life of physical and emotional wellbeing. Education, poverty alleviation, healthy food, safe affordable housing, and holistic health care are key.

The Pia's motto is simple: **"Lead with your heart."** "The love and appreciation that people give in return, and knowing I've made a difference in their lives, is more than enough to motivate me to continue to help," Nancy enthuses. Mike adds, "Time is as valuable as financial resources. Giving time and/or money to do something for the community goes a long way."

The Pia's intentional, generous gifts of time and money can be felt regionally by the organizations and causes they've supported in Southern Chester County and Northern Delaware.

Their four children are also community-minded, financially supporting local causes, serving on non-profit boards, and volunteering for charitable organizations. Their young grandchildren are learning about philanthropy by having food drives, running



lemonade stands with proceeds going to charity, and holiday gifting to underserved children.

Integrating physical health with mental health and making it accessible to low-income families is very important to the Pias. In 2022, their funding created the Pia Center for Behavioral Health at LCH Community & Health Services. Behavioral health focuses on managing the daily challenges and stresses of life. Now, the LCH Pia Center provides telehealth appointments and in-person services in Oxford, Kennett Square and West Grove.

"Knowing we have dedicated resources to help children and families in the Kennett area access high quality physical and behavioral health services is a source of great satisfaction in our philanthropic journey," Nancy says wholeheartedly.

In 2024, the Pias provided lead funding for Kennett Area Community Service to build a new, expanded site on 6 acres of land donated by the Pias. Bordering Kennett and New Garden Townships, KACS' new location will be more accessible for the 5,000+ neighbors who this year alone have obtained 820,841 pounds of food. It will also have more space for deliveries, inventory, volunteers, staff and community engagement. The site will be large enough for other nonprofit satellite locations, so that people can access a fuller circle of care.

The capital campaign is now underway, and donations are greatly desired. **"It's a community effort. All hands and hearts are needed for the campaign's success,"** urge Mike and Nancy.

The Pia's are continually scanning the community for new philanthropic projects and are eager to see what the future holds for their foundation. So is the community.

For Good. Forever.

