

Charitable Investments Boost Student-Run Business

You may have never heard of School House Graphics Products in Arnold, Nebraska, but the people of Custer County, educators across the state and a growing national clientele are well-aware of this innovative 21st Century learning program.

It all started in 2002 when art, industrial technology and business classes joined forces to launch a student-run graphics sign business. In 2007, an education grant enabled School House Graphics

Products to expand beyond the school year to a summer internship program.

The business is the brain child of teachers Julie and Clay Mohr, who have created a place where “students learn how to learn and learn how to work.”

High school students hold positions in design, production, promotion, business or technology support. Second-year students become foremen who train accepted applicants (first-year students) for a position in the company.

Products include signs for businesses, banners and race car numbers for the Sandhills Open Road Challenge, customized wraps for laptops, plaques and awards for athletic events, all of the 911 road identification signs in four counties, and 18,000 trophies for National American Miss Beauty Pageants. All profits are reinvested in the business.

Senior Mariah Strasburg has been with the program three years and is now

general manager. “During the summer there is a lot of work and sometimes I have felt the weight of responsibility. This experience has prepared me for the real world when I get a job,” she said. Mariah will pursue a career in nursing.

Early this year, with the help of charitable contributions and grants, including those from the Arnold Community Foundation Fund, School House Graphics Products purchased a new 3-axis CNC router, which has expanded the students’ capacity to produce three-

dimensional products such as furniture. To their knowledge, this \$45,000 machine can’t be found in any other high school in America.

Senior Taylor Hyde oversees production on the new router, which can cut hardwoods and plastics with incredible detail. “The best part of this program is that you get to do a real job every day. You’re not just sitting in class,” Taylor said. He plans to study mechanical

engineering at Chadron State College.

According to Julie Mohr, “All the knowledge and skills that kids are learning in other classes transfer over, whether it’s art, math or how to manage time.”

Charlie Blowers, student business manager, said that as a freshman he was extremely shy. “Now I am comfortable talking to anyone.” He plans to study agronomy at UNL next year.

Students are expected to be their own problem solvers, and students can be fired. “Expectations are really high,” said Clay Mohr. “Good is not good enough. It has to be perfect.”

These high expectations have not dampened student enthusiasm. More than half of the high school student body is involved in the enterprise, and 75 percent have been involved at one time or another.

To appreciate the value of this remarkable program, view the award-winning student video at <http://bit.ly/YdOm25>.

Also check out the video produced for the *Nebraska Loves Our Public Schools* project at <http://bit.ly/YJ2Nd1>. It is definitely a story worth watching and sharing. ■



Senior Alex Weinman teaches freshman Tristan Johnson how to apply a custom-designed laptop wrap.



Taylor Hyde and Clay Mohr discuss the day's work schedule for the school's 3-D router.



Terry Bellew shows off a headboard manufactured by the new 3-D router.

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Young Nebraskans: A Good Investment

It's good to be living in Nebraska. Our economy is strong. Our outlook is positive. Our people are enthusiastic about investing in the future. In the last five years, the Nebraska Community Foundation and its affiliated funds have reinvested more \$97 million in our hometowns, our environment and most importantly, in our people and our children.



Jeff Yost,
NCF President and CEO

The impact of charitable giving is reflected in this newsletter. You'll read about significant gifts that will keep on giving for generations. And you will see how charitable dollars are creating opportunities for young people to excel here at home.

We are pleased to welcome to our staff two native Nebraskans whose talent, skills and energy are putting philanthropy to work in our communities. ■

Welcome New NCF Staff

Greta Leach is NCF's new affiliated fund development coordinator-eastern Nebraska. Greta, a native of Aurora, Nebraska, previously directed fundraising and development programs in Denver, Colorado. She also has served as associate pastor for the First United Methodist Church in North Platte and as a senior auditor for a major accounting firm in Denver. Greta received her BA degree in business administration from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and an MA from the Iliff School of Theology. Greta enjoys camping, hiking and spending time with friends and family. She says the best thing about working at NCF is meeting so many interesting people across Nebraska and seeing people come together to make a difference in the communities they love. Contact Greta at (402) 323-7343 or glead@nebcommfound.org.



Greta Leach

Karl Shaddock returned to his hometown of McCook to join NCF as affiliated fund development coordinator-southwest Nebraska and coordinator of the McCook Community Foundation Fund. Karl recently served as a community coordinator and program manager with the Telluride Foundation in Colorado. He is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame with a BA in political science, and he has earned certificates in community-based development from Colorado State University and from Tata Institute of Social Service, Mumbai, India. In his free time Karl enjoys reading, running, cooking and baking. He is happy about returning to western Nebraska and giving back to the communities that have given him so much. Karl can be reached at (308) 344-9363 or kshaddock@nebcommfound.org. ■



Karl Shaddock

Annual Events Educate and Inspire

NCF's goal is to grow prosperous communities where young families can thrive. To help prepare volunteers with the skills to make this happen, NCF offered a full day of training sessions on leadership, fundraising and community engagement during its annual events in Kearney in November.

That evening more than 200 volunteer community leaders and banquet guests heard encouraging news about the future of Nebraska: Young adults are returning home to live, work and raise their families.

"This doesn't just happen," said Jane Moreland, a Fund Advisory Committee member of the Imperial Community Foundation Fund. "It takes everyone working together to make our community the kind of place that young people want to return to. And it requires patience."

"I believe in the approach that the Nebraska Community Foundation is taking to help build strong communities. The future of Nebraska depends on the strength of our communities all across the state,"
 – NCF Board member
 Doug Bereuter

Gavin Harsh, a high school senior, explained how young people are supported in McCook. "More and more young adults are getting involved in McCook. One of the highlights for me is that we are having real input into planning for downtown revitalization," Harsh said.

See how NCF's affiliated fund, Holt County Economic Development, is putting philanthropy to work by helping young families return to the area at www.YouTube.com/nebcommfound. ■



Gavin Harsh of McCook describes how philanthropy is engaging young adults in McCook.



Outgoing NCF chair Shannon Harner congratulates Pete Peterson of Brule, who completed his third three-year term on NCF's Board. Peterson served as NCF treasurer during his tenure and continues to volunteer as an Honorary Board member.

New Board Members

The NCF Board elected two new members at its annual meeting in November.

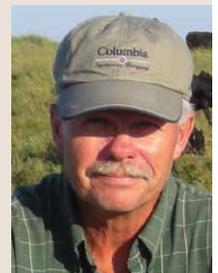
Lora Damme is a native of Talmage. After practicing law in Nebraska for several years, Damme returned to her family-owned Bank of Talmage as president and CEO.



Lora Damme

In 2009 she sold the bank in order to devote her time to management of the family's farming and mineral interests. She continues to serve on the board and committees of a bank she and her husband, Jay Longinaker, own in Randolph, Iowa. Lora's family has been in the Talmage area for nearly a century and a half. Lora has served on or been a member of several organizations including a regional economic development group, the Talmage Public Library and the Nebraska LEAD program.

Al Steuter of Johnstown is a rancher and environmental consultant. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps, including a tour in Vietnam. Steuter worked for The Nature Conservancy for more than 20 years,



Al Steuter

focusing on managing and conducting research on large native grassland preserves. He also has held several university adjunct faculty appointments. Al and his wife, Lois, operate a cow/calf, yearling and grass-finishing cattle operation in the Nebraska Sandhills. Currently, Steuter provides leadership for several nonprofits. He is the chair of the Brown County Community Foundation Fund and a consultant with businesses in the U.S. and internationally. ■

2012 Annual Events Sponsors

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Affiliated Fund Updates



Jim and Lanita Recob of Laurel have created a \$200,000 endowment within the **Laurel Community Foundation Fund**. The couple used proceeds from the sale of their local John Deere implement dealership to make the gift back to their community. Earnings from the endowment will support entrepreneurship, people attraction and youth engagement in the Laurel community. LCFF now has more than \$400,000 in endowed assets to benefit this community of 964 people.

Plattsmouth Community Foundation Fund received a bequest of more than \$330,000 from the estate of Neil Lancaster, a longtime resident and community volunteer. The bequest established an unrestricted endowment and an endowed scholarship fund for Plattsmouth High School graduates pursuing a career in education. The bequest will enable the Fund to provide more than \$12,000 in grants from unrestricted endowments next year.

Creighton Community Foundation Fund will provide up to \$3,000 for training new certified nursing assistants to work at the Avera Creighton Care Centre. Two new employees have been approved for the program. With the increasing need for long-term care in rural areas, there is also an increasing need for qualified care givers. CCFF chair Amy Salmen-Thomas said, "This takes everyone working together to make our community the kind of place people want to live and feel supported."

Valley County Community Foundation Fund continues to prepare young people for future business ownership. The Fund co-sponsored a Youth Entrepreneur Showcase during the Ord High School wrestling invitational. Nine youth entrepreneurs marketed their products and services. Each business was judged, and the top two were awarded a free one-year Ord Area Chamber of Commerce Youth Membership with an online selling option, \$150 to enhance skills and business expansion, and the opportunity to market products in two local businesses.



Y.E.S. participants (l-r) are: Lilly Lewis, Amanda Baker, Britan Blair, Adrienne Meckel, Shelby Kittle, Jenna Wulf, Timothy White, Zach Flessner and Logan Reiss.

Diller Community Foundation Fund received \$15,000 in prize money, thanks to friends and family of DCF chair Beth Roelfs. Beth was one of three top candidates to receive online votes in the national *Harlequin More Than Words* contest. Whether investing in youth programs, restoring the opera house, saving the post office or building a new fire hall, DCF has played an important role in supporting this ambitious community of 260.



Beth Roelfs (left) presents a grant to Junior Girl Scout troop member Brianna Weers and leader Kendra K. Weers at a recent community celebration.

With NCF's emphasis on planning gifts for the future, NCF presented its third Community Legacy Award to the **Nebraska City Community Foundation Fund**. The award recognizes affiliated funds in which all Fund Advisory Committee members have made a provision in their estate plan to benefit their community. ■



(Back, l-r) Erv Friesen, Dave Partsch, Dave LeGrand, Paul Madison, Colin Albers, Doug Friedli, Scott VanderVeen. (Front, l-r) Joyce Turner, Shawna Silvius, Sharon Hersemann, Kathy Nelson.

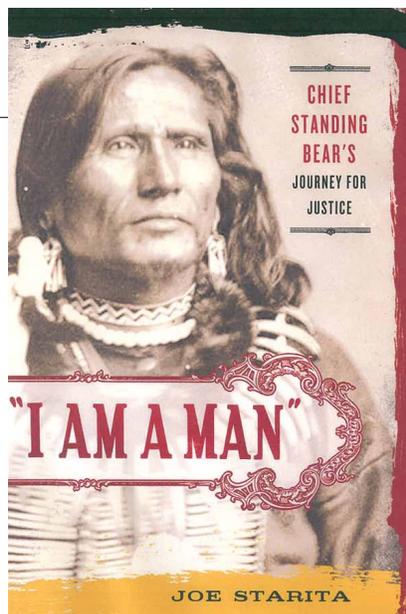


Getting a Head Start was named one of the winning projects in the Youth Philanthropy Contest. These fourth graders will create literacy boxes with educational supplies to help preschoolers retain what they have learned during the school year over the summer.

The Philanthropy Council of Northeast Nebraska, an account within the **Norfolk Area Community Foundation Fund**, held its second annual *Youth Philanthropy Contest* and community-wide *Celebrate Giving* event in February. The contest had 20 entries this year and 16 received the go-ahead with grants of up to \$1,000. “Young people are excited to share their ideas and to have someone support their efforts at giving back. We are grateful for all the community support of the youth contest and we look forward to many more years of creating a culture of giving through these efforts,” said Tammy Day, chairwoman of the council. For more information visit www.philanthropycouncilne.org.

The Chief Standing Bear Journey for Justice Scholarship Fund honors a Ponca chief who walked 600 miles through snow and cold to bury his only son. His landmark court victory established that Native Americans have civil rights as “persons within the meaning of the law.” This new NCF affiliated fund addresses the alarming shortage of Natives engaged in post-high school education. The Fund invites everyone to help Native American students achieve their educational goals. To learn more or to donate, visit www.nebcommfound.org/fund/standing-bear. ■

Kreutz Bennett Donor-Advised Fund was established by a lifelong educator to improve libraries in communities with populations under 3,000. This year a Fund Advisory Committee of Shirley Kreutz Bennett’s nieces and nephews awarded grants totaling more than \$94,000 to eight libraries for planning, program enhancement and facilities improvements: Albion, Ashland, Hildreth, Mitchell, Osmond, Valley, Walthill and Wausa.



SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL EVENTS IN NEBRASKA CITY Thursday, November 7, 2013

Plan now to join us at the Lied Lodge and Conference Center for a full day of affiliated fund training and our evening Affiliated Fund Expo and Annual Banquet.

Watch for more information, mark your calendar, and make plans to have as many of your Fund Advisory Committee members as possible participating.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK!



Find out what other affiliated funds are doing.

Get help, advice and new ideas. Share your thoughts and keep in touch.

[Facebook.com/nebraskacommunityfoundation](https://www.facebook.com/nebraskacommunityfoundation)

WATCH US ON YOUTUBE



[YouTube.com/nebcommfound](https://www.youtube.com/nebcommfound)

See how NCF’s affiliated fund, Holt County Economic Development, is using philanthropy to fund programs that encourage entrepreneurs and young people to return to their rural roots. If your fund has a video that you’d like to have on our channel, contact Reggi Carlson at (402) 323-7331 or rcarlson@nebcommfound.org.

SEND US YOUR FAC EMAIL ADDRESSES

NCF is moving to a new contact information management system. Without an email address on record, Fund Advisory Committee members are missing out on our bi-monthly e-newsletter and important information on training, resources and networking opportunities. Please gather the names and email addresses of all your committee members and send them to **Angie Parrish** at aparrish@nebcommfound.org.



Confirmed in Compliance with National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations
The Nebraska Community Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, was established in 1993 to serve communities, organizations and donors throughout Nebraska.

Charitable Giving

Charitable IRA Rollover: Reinvestment in Community

Dale Zadina has lived and farmed in Valley County all of his life. Dale's grandfather homesteaded in the area, and the land has been in the family for more than 100 years.

"My vision for the future is that Ord is a hub for the larger surrounding area. And I think we're on the road to getting there," said Dale.

He and his wife, Janie, have a deep commitment to their community. Janie worked for many years with the Ord Chamber of Commerce, Valley County Economic Development and the Valley County Health System Nursing Home. Dale serves on the Fund Advisory Committee of the Valley County Community Foundation Fund.

Recently, Dale made a significant gift to the Fund's unrestricted endowment using a Charitable IRA Rollover.

"I am lucky enough to be in a position where I can transfer a portion of my IRA, and 100 percent of the value will be guided toward the endowment," Dale said.

"Many people don't stop to realize that they have accumulated savings in their retirement plans tax-free. But when taken out there is a tax liability. For example, a \$10,000 IRA distribution may only be worth \$7,000 after taxes. I'd rather give \$10,000 than \$7,000.

"The tax-free Charitable IRA Rollover is a terrific way to increase the value of your gift to a worthy cause," Dale said.

"And the process is very easy. I just notified my broker, said how much I wanted to transfer, signed the paper and it was done."

Dale and Janie are part of a growing number of

Nebraskans who, thanks to decades of deliberate saving, are able to use the Charitable IRA Rollover as a tax-wise tool to give back to their community.

"Our new school and new hospital are anchors in our community. The original, beautiful courthouse is being renovated. A water park and a new ballpark

would draw a lot of people to Ord. These are the kinds of projects that need to be funded with contributions to help lower the tax load," Dale said.

These days Dale just "plays at farming a few hundred acres." Janie continues to volunteer at the Chamber and Economic Development Office and is also a member of the Valley County Community Foundation Fund Advisory Committee.

Dale and Janie believe that there comes a time when focusing on what really matters – family and community – is the most important thing to do. "If you don't do it today, it might be too late." ■



Dale and Janie Zadina

CHARITABLE IRA ROLLOVER

The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 extends the Charitable IRA Rollover through December 31, 2013.

HOW IT WORKS

- The law allows those age 70½ and older to transfer up to \$100,000 from an IRA to a qualified charity—tax free. If married, each spouse can transfer up to \$100,000 from his or her IRA.
- You may direct gifts from your IRA to a qualified charitable organization in any amount up to \$100,000 throughout 2013.
- The gift must be made directly from the custodian of your IRA to the Nebraska Community Foundation for the benefit of your community's or organization's affiliated fund.
- Your tax-free rollover gift will be excluded from your gross income.
- Your gift can count toward your required minimum distribution.
- Gifts to life income plans, donor-advised funds, supporting organizations and most private foundations do not qualify.

For more information contact **Jim Gustafson**, Gift Planning Director for the Nebraska Community Foundation at **(402) 323-7341** or jgustafson@nebcommfound.org.

NCF Friends Receive Top Honors

For the second year in a row, two NCF nominees were recognized with awards presented by the Association of Fundraising Professionals – Nebraska Chapter at a celebration of National Philanthropy Day in November.

Consolidated Companies, a longtime NCF supporter, was honored with the 2012 Outstanding Corporation Award. This award recognizes a business that, through direct financial support, has demonstrated exceptional civic and charitable responsibility and has motivated others to take leadership roles in philanthropy and community involvement.

Consolidated Companies, a family-owned business, is a telecommunications provider for communities in central and western Nebraska. The company has invested charitable resources in economic development, infrastructure, schools, and



Brian Thompson, Chuck Fast, Wendy Fast, Rod Thompson, Sally Thompson and Kelli Thompson.

young people because, as the company slogan explains, “It’s our home, too.”

Brian Thompson, vice president for external relations, accepted the award on behalf of his family and company employees.

“While it’s important that our communities are connected to the world through telecommunications

networks, it’s just as important that they are connected with one another through networks that promote leadership development. We appreciate the help we’ve received through the Nebraska Community Foundation to make philanthropic investments in our communities,” Thompson said. ■

The Philanthropy Council of Northeast Nebraska

accepted the 2012 Outstanding Youth Philanthropy Award for its efforts to involve young people in charitable programs and volunteerism in their community.

The Council launched its first Youth Philanthropy Contest in February 2012 for individuals and groups, ages kindergarten through 25, for the design and implementation of charitable projects in their communities.

The Council received proposals from 33 contestants and selected eight winners. Following the contest, the Council hosted its first “Celebrate Giving!” banquet. Many in the audience were moved to make contributions so that more youth projects could be funded. The result: six additional projects were funded for a total of 14 youth philanthropy projects



Lesley Hanson, Betty Froehlich, Tammy Day, Kara Weander-Gaster and Sarah Dittmer.

involving dozens of area youths.

“We estimate that at least 1,000 people were directly and positively impacted by these 14 projects, said Council chairwoman Tammy Day. “Just as important, we believe that there

will be a long-lasting effect. Kids will remember this experience and what their community meant to them. As Ella Smith, a third grader said, ‘It doesn’t matter how old or young you are. Everyone can make a difference.’ ■

Volunteers

Best Practices

Action Planning

“Starting by creating the vision for the community informs the rest of the action planning process. It helps affiliated fund leaders answer the question ‘endowment for what?’ and it drives grantmaking – funding projects that move the community closer to that vision,” said Jeff Yost, NCF President and CEO.

Twenty-one community-based affiliated funds have completed or are in the process of completing action planning. It is a serious endeavor that can take several months from introduction



Fund Advisory Committee members (l-r) Austin Schneider, Gary Blevins and Carolyn Bauer work to develop a vision statement for the Arnold community.

Combined, these 21 communities have set endowment-building goals of raising more than \$85 million in current or estate gifts over the next 10 years.

Arnold	Deshler	Nebraska City	Shickley
Atkinson	Diller	Norfolk	Stuart
Boone County	Eustis	O'Neill	Valley County
Brown County	Imperial	Pender-Thurston	
Butler County	Keith County	Plattsmouth	
Columbus	McCook	Red Cloud	

to implementation. NCF staff members facilitate up to three formal planning sessions with homework in between. But as one participant stated, “It takes time to save time.”

Action planning begins after the Fund Advisory Committee (FAC) has met several prerequisites which include developing articles of operation, job descriptions and a leadership succession plan.

The FAC then develops a vision for the community, a mission statement and the values which will guide activities and decision-making. Using NCF’s Transfer of Wealth analysis, they set 3-, 10- and 20-year goals for endowment-building.

Finally, the FAC creates project plans for building affiliated fund capacity around leadership, marketing, donor development and grantmaking.

The vision, mission, values and endowment goals are intended to serve the affiliated fund for many years; project planning can be used whenever a new project arises.

The action planning process was piloted in four communities. When surveyed, 100% of respondents from those communities said they thought the process has made or would make their Fund Advisory Committee more successful or effective.

“We were an engaged and well intentioned group, but we lacked focus and momentum. Action planning reined us in, provided direction and fueled that spark we so desperately needed!”

– Rori Erickson,
Boone County Area
Foundation Fund