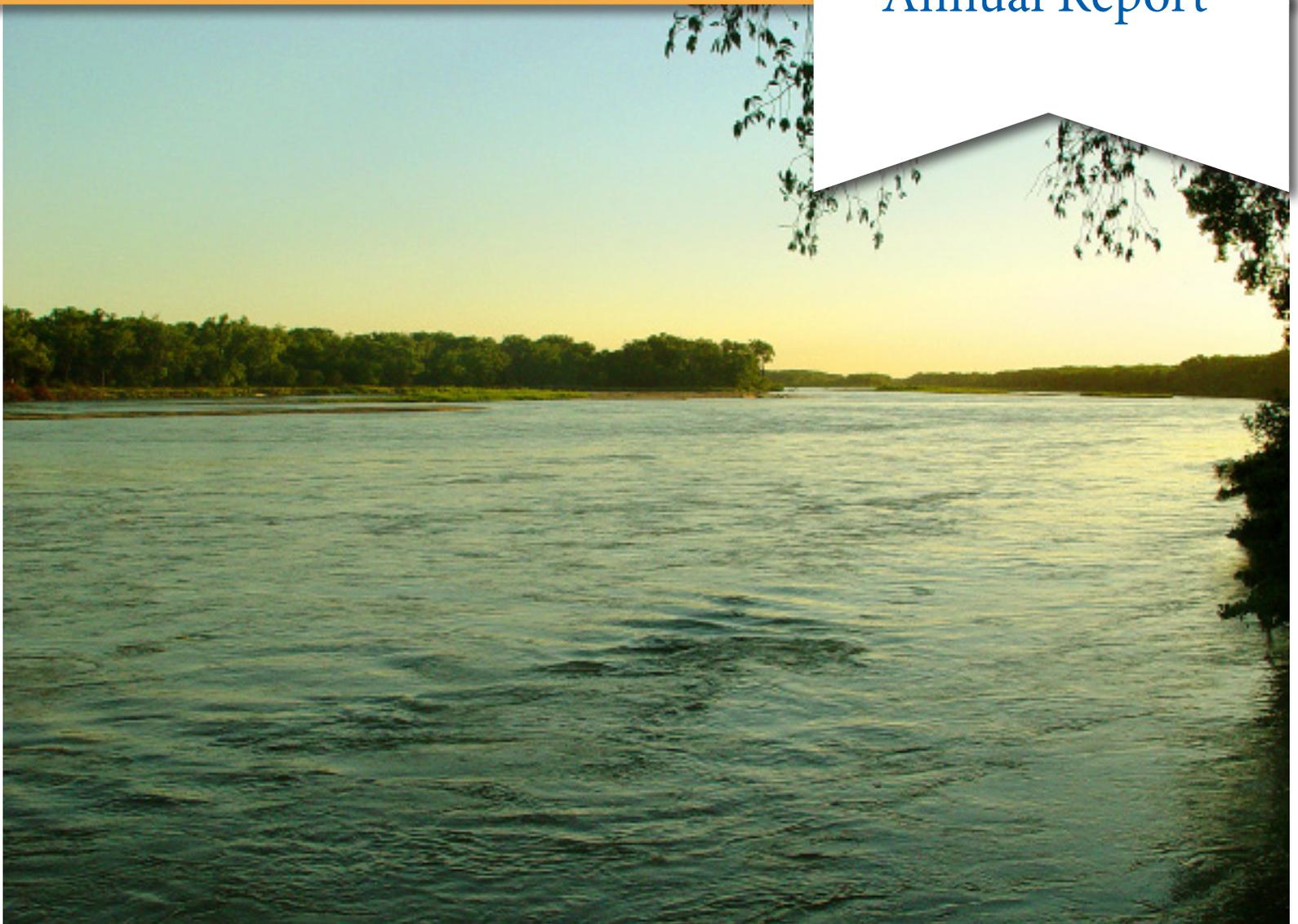


# Toward a Bold Future.



**Columbus Area**  
Future Fund

2017- 2018  
Annual Report



[columbusareafuturefund.org](http://columbusareafuturefund.org)



@ColumbusAreaFutureFund



@CAFutureFund

PO Box 1734; 402-606-6783; [director@columbusareafuturefund.org](mailto:director@columbusareafuturefund.org)

## New Faces - Bigger Mission!



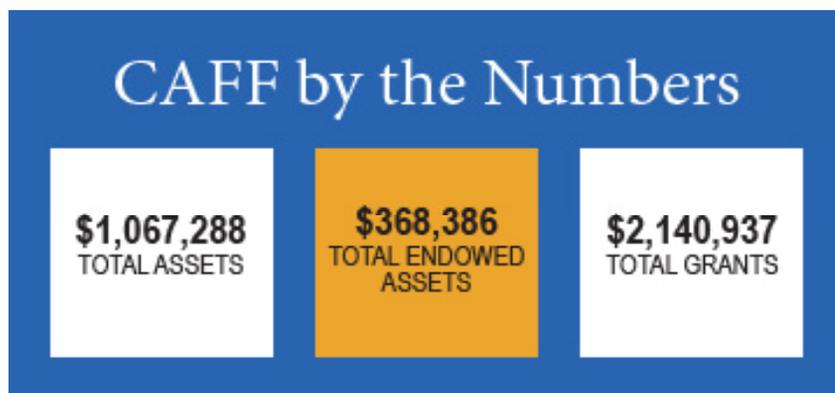
Rick Chochon,  
Current Chair

This past year the Columbus Area Future Fund, an affiliated fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation, made grants to the Columbus Public and Lakeview School's STEM program, Scotus Central's STEAM program, Lost Creek's All-Inclusive Playground, Oasis Counseling International's Befriend Mentoring Program, Boys Town's Common Sense Program and NeighborWorks Northeast Nebraska.

The CAFF will be kicking off a major Endowment Campaign in 2018. The Sherwood Foundation has challenged the CAFF to raise \$500,000. They will match 50 cents to every dollar we raise up to \$250,000. This will put our fund over a million dollars and help us make more of an impact for the Columbus area.

I look forward to this next year to expand our community's Endowed Fund for the betterment of the Columbus area in our future needs.

Thank you to all the Fund Advisory Committee members and the Campaign Committee for all their hard work this past year.



2017-2018  
Fund Advisory  
Committee:  
Nicole Anderson  
K.C. Belitz  
Rick Chochon  
Jan Curry  
Bud Fleischer  
Bill Flint  
Karen Gomez  
Matt Gotschall  
Dee Hanson  
Dennis  
Hirschbrunner  
Wendy Jackson  
Jordan Mueller  
Amanda Polacek  
Molly Reinecke  
Adam Urkoski

2018-2019  
Fund Advisory  
Committee:  
Nicole Anderson  
Kara Asmus  
K.C. Belitz  
Rick Chochon  
Bud Fleischer  
Bill Flint  
Dee Hanson  
Dennis  
Hirschbrunner  
Kim Kwapnioski  
Jason Mielak  
Jordan Mueller  
Renee Mueller  
Grant Otten  
Adam Urkoski

Coordinator:  
Eve Ortmeier

Honorary  
Members:  
Jim Fehringer,  
Tom Maul,  
Whitey Walgren  
and John & Mary  
Kay Peck

## STEM/STEAM Up and Going

The Columbus Area Future Fund provided grants to three different STEM/STEAM projects in three area schools. Each program at Columbus Public, Lakeview and Scotus is up and running as of the school year of 2018-2019. Here is a layout of the three programs and their choices of direction:

### CPS Stem on the Go

\$30,000 two-part matching gift to establish a mobile learning lab.

The STEM on the Go mobile learning lab is packed with activities and able to travel anywhere in the community. This is a pilot program aiming to connect younger students with the opportunities available in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The goal is to advance STEM education by integrating its concepts and careers into academics at all levels, including elementary and middle school grades in addition to the high school.

### Lakeview Get STEM Growing

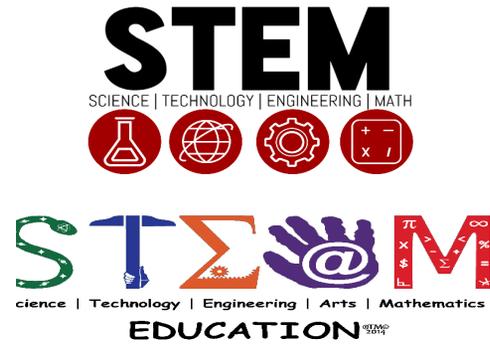
\$30,000 three-year grant to establish an indoor/outdoor garden, classroom area and chicken coop.

This program provides educational experiences for students to connect STEM learning to agriculture, increase community awareness and interest in purchasing local foods, and strengthen school/community relationships and collaboration. It will also provide students with real-life learning experiences, while also improving student nutrition and their ability to make informed choices and build healthy habits.

### Scotus S.T.E.A.M.

\$30,000 grant to establish a lab to teach topics such as graphic design, robotics, cybersecurity and much more.

This program allows for exploration in science, technology, engineering and math while also involving the arts, such as graphic design, music editing, video products, robotics and 3-D printing. The creation of this lab helps build and foster relationships with businesses in our community. The students have the opportunity to learn from these community leaders and apply that knowledge to their work.



## Columbus Ice

For her Girl Scout Gold Award, Elizabeth Blaser wanted to take on a project that would provide the community with another option for a safe and entertaining recreational activity for people of all ages. Beginning with the support of Columbus Public Schools in providing the land and the City in providing an old press box to be used as the warming shelter, Elizabeth created a plan that covered everything from the building materials to the marketing needed to turn her dream into reality.

Currently, Platte County residents need to travel an hour or more to ice skate. According to Blaser, “The availability of recreational facilities and programs such as Columbus Ice will help bring people together and preserve the sense of community and small town charm that is vital to Columbus’ success.”

The design of the warming shelter features viewing windows, electrical heat, benches, a fully functional restroom and concessions.

Elizabeth Blaser continues to actively fundraise for the project. The warming shelter cost of construction is currently estimated at roughly \$95,000, and she has raised close to 1/6th of that total in cash, not including in-kind material and labor donations from our community.

Thus far, including cash plus value of in-kind materials and labor donated, close to \$62,000 has been raised.

Soon, Blaser will be launching a new community-wide campaign specific to cash donations through sponsorship levels to raise the remaining \$33,000, with the goal to begin construction yet this fall.

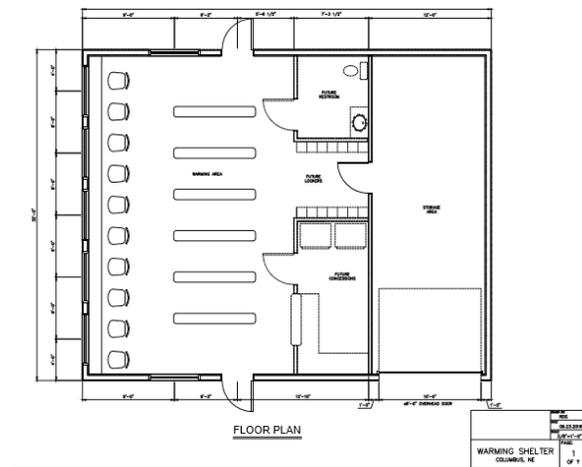
### Donor Spotlight: Neal and Jo Suess

Neal and Jo Suess decided early on they wanted to support Columbus, the community that became their home.

“Although neither one of us is originally from Columbus, we both consider Columbus our home.

Our kids grew up here and we have lived the majority of our life in this community. Therefore, we felt it was important to give back what we have received.

The Columbus Area Future Fund was a natural way to help ensure that Columbus continues to grow in the future and will help benefit others in the way we feel the community has helped us.



*Blaser worked closely with key stakeholders to draft the initial design of the warming shelter*



We would not be who we are without Columbus and the future looks bright for the community as a whole.”

Thank you Neal and Jo for investing in our community’s future!

## INVESTING IN THE FUTURE: **A MATCHING GRANT FROM SHERWOOD FOUNDATION!**

Today, young families are choosing to put down roots in the Columbus area and raise their children. Jobs are abundant and quality of life is high. Our economies - including agriculture, manufacturing, service and healthcare - are diverse and strong. Together, we're moving forward with a shared vision - to leave our community an even better place than we found it.

What will the next bold vision for our community be? Whatever it is, Columbus Area Future Fund will be there to see that it is realized.

As an affiliated fund of Nebraska Community Foundation - a statewide nonprofit that works with over 250 communities across Greater Nebraska - Columbus Area Future Fund benefits from the highest standards for financial management and accountability as well as training and networking with peers in other communities. This empowered the Fund to successfully compete for an incredible opportunity.

Support for the Fund comes from friends of all ages, from longtime residents to newcomers and from people who no longer live in the area but care deeply about our hometowns.

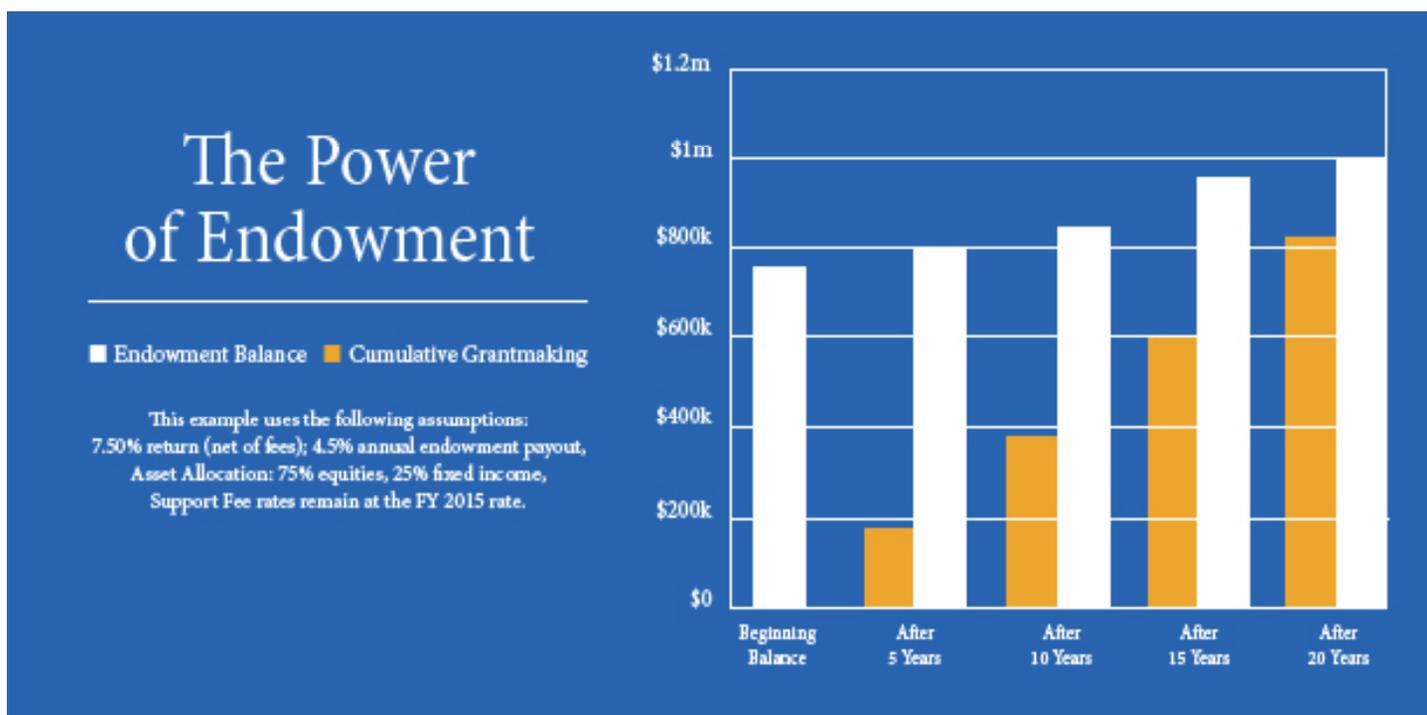
While none of us can predict what will be important to the next generation of business and civic leaders, the endowment will continue to grow, meeting needs and opportunities as they arise and providing the flexibility to respond to changing times. You can be confident your gift to the Fund - with its strong leadership, broadly defined community-wide goals and sound financial management - will benefit Columbus and the surrounding area long into the future.

Columbus Area Future Fund is one of only five affiliated funds selected for a \$250,000 challenge grant offered through the "Building Community Capacity in Rural Nebraska" initiative.

The challenge is to raise \$500,000 for our unrestricted endowment. Every \$2 in unrestricted contributions to the Columbus Area Future Fund's unrestricted endowment received by Dec. 31, 2020 will earn an additional \$1, up to a maximum grant of \$250,000.

We are truly fortunate to be offered the generous \$250,000 challenge grant. We cannot pass up this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to build our unrestricted endowment and provide for the bold dreams of the Columbus area's future generations.

To find out how you can help invest in the future of the Columbus area, please contact Eve Ortmeier, Columbus Area Future Fund Coordinator, at 402-606-6783.



## Unrestricted Endowment Campaign Committee



Ken Curry graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1983 with a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering, and then a master's Degree in Business Administration in M990. Mr. Curry was appointed to the position of Vice President of Customer Services in August, 2011, and in March, 2016 his role was expanded to include Corporate Services. Ken is currently serving on the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce Board, United Way Board, Habitat for Humanity Board, campaign committee for the Columbus Area Future Fund and a Rotarian.



Sarah Pillen grew up in Columbus Nebraska and graduated from Scotus Central Catholic. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Business and Biology from Nebraska Wesleyan, and graduated from Creighton University with her law degree. In 2011, Sarah returned to the area and partners with her brother and father at Pillen Family Farms and DNA Genetics. Sarah and her husband, Jerod Trouba, have 3 children – Will, Halle and Ava. Highlights of Sarah's community involvement include: Scotus, Chamber of Commerce, Columbus United Way and Columbus Community Hospital.



Ryan Loseke is a fifth generation farmer and cattle feeder in Platte county. He also owns and operates a veterinary practice with his wife and colleague, June. They have four children, Elisabeth, Erika, Carsten and Cort. He has served on multiple boards with Nebraska Cattlemen and is currently a board member of Lakeview Community Schools and Nebraska Cattlemen Foundation.



Mary Raimondo has been a member of the Columbus community since 1996. Mary is on the Board of Directors for Big Pals~Little Pals and she serves as the United Way Division Chair for the Youth Campaign. She is an active member of St. Isidore Church and PEO. Mary has also served on the Board of Directors for the Columbus Area Arts Council; the steering committee for the new library; Friends of Lied Board of Directors; and Co-chair for the Scotus Gala. Mary and her husband, Phil, have 5 adult children and one grandson.



Rick is President/CEO of Great Plains State Bank. He serves as the Chairman of the Columbus Area Future Fund, Chairman of the Petah La Shauro District ICC Campaign, member of the Scotus Endowment Board and a Nebraska Diplomat. He and his wife, Tracie, have 5 sons that are all Eagle Scouts, Bryan, David, Aaron, Chris and Eric; two daughters-in-law, Janae and Varda and two grandsons, Dominic and Aiden.



K.C. Belitz is President of the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Nebraska Community Foundation, Nebraska Chamber of Commerce Executives, Columbus Community Foundation, Columbus Development Corporation, and Columbus Public Schools Alumni Association. He is also an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church. K.C. is a graduate of Columbus High School and Truman University. He and his wife Colleen have one daughter Emerson, a student at UNL.



Hollie Olk is Vice President of Real Estate Lending for Pinnacle Bank. She serves on the Columbus Home Builders Association Board, is Columbus Kiwanis Club's President, Chairman of NorthStar Services, Inc & Region IV Board, serves on the Platte County Board of Supervisors and has been actively serving on the Platte County Lifestyle Coalition. She and her husband, Mike, are life-long residents of Columbus, have 3 sons and a granddaughter who also live in Columbus.



Don Heimes is a retired financial executive who is currently managing the Columbus Family Resource Center. He serves on the Columbus Community Foundation Board of Directors and is President of the Board of Directors of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Omaha. He also serves on several committees of the Columbus Area Chamber and the Elks Country Club. He is an active member of the St Bonaventure Church. He and his wife Pat have four grown sons and seven grandchildren.

## THANK YOU 2017-2018 DONORS!

Anderson, Jordon & Nicole	Vanheusen, Allison	J P Trucking Inc	Pillen, James & Suzanne
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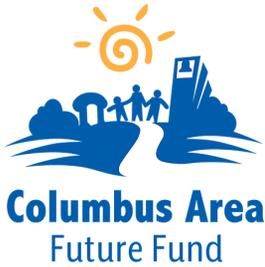
### LEAVE A LEGACY: DONATE TO CAFF

Clip out this card and mail to: Columbus Area Future Fund  
PO Box 1734 | Columbus, NE 68602 | OR donate online at [columbusareafuturefund.org](http://columbusareafuturefund.org)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  I would like to give \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 today  monthly  annually  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ for:  operations  endowment  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  I would like to become a Sustaining Member:  
 \$100/year annual gift to support CAFF.  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  I would like to include CAFF in my estate plan.

The Columbus Area Future Fund is an affiliated fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation. Your gift is tax-deductible and will help support worthwhile projects and programs addressing the emerging needs and future opportunities of our community. Thank you!



Columbus Area Future Fund  
PO Box 1734  
Columbus, NE 68602-1734

Toward a Bold Future

Join us on  
October 7th at 4:30 p.m.  
at Ramada - Columbus for



Proceeds to benefit



Check out auction items, vendors and pre-purchase your tickets today at  
<https://thecolumbuspage.com/events/tasteofcolumbus/>