

CONNECTIONS

Summer 2023

Celebrating Corky's Spark in Pender

LIKE THE OBSERVABLE UNIVERSE, CoraLynn "Corky" Malmberg's love for Pender continues to expand. But where astronomers measure cosmic expansion by studying the ever-increasing distance between galaxies, Pender residents measure Corky's impact by investigating the ways it brings the community together.

The cheers of 450 K–12 students indicated the community was closer than ever during the inaugural Corky Malmberg Annual Science Day, held March 31 in Pender. Each student wore a t-shirt bearing an outline of Corky's smiling face, a common sight during her 34 years of teaching science at Pender Public Schools. Organizers conceived the event as a celebration and continuation of her passion for teaching and learning, emphasizing activities for students of all ages.

It was "organized chaos," said Pender Public Schools Principal Kelly Ballinger. Corky wouldn't have had it any other way. She went above and beyond in her efforts to bring science to life. "If she could see today, she would know that her life was well lived," said Corky's daughter, Julie Grawe.

Julie and her brother, Sam Malmberg, traveled from Colorado to witness the day, made possible through the collaborative work of the school, volunteers, and Pender-Thurston Education and Community Foundation Fund (PTECFF), an affiliated fund of Nebraska Community Foundation. When Sam and Julie created the



Students created slime at one of the many hands-on stations during Pender Public Schools' Corky Malmberg Science Day. The event honored a beloved science teacher who left a significant impact on the community.

Corky Malmberg Science Education Endowment through PTECFF, they aimed to create opportunities to cultivate students' love for science.

Corky's children choosing the Pender-Thurston Education and Community Foundation Fund as a place to house the endowment made sense, said Katie Gutzmann, a member of the fund advisory committee (FAC). The endowment in her name, which was established using her life insurance policy, prioritizes flexibility, enabling volunteers to use funding for events, equipment, travel opportunities and much more.

"I really love how Sam and Julie didn't just want to do a traditional scholarship," Gutzmann said. "It was really meaningful for them to think about how they could make it a little more fluid, have a few more options so it wasn't so restricted."

Students rotated through multiple stations, learning about dinosaurs, crawling into an inflatable planetarium, learning their blood type, and mashing together homemade slime. One student said she had never been more excited about science.



Scan the code to watch!

That's what Corky cherished most about teaching—students finding their own spark, their own personal big bang introduction to the wonders of the universe. Through Corky's enthusiastic, ever-expanding tending, those sparks ignite lifelong passions for learning. ■

Inspiring Dreams, Making Progress

JUNE 30, 2023, not only marks the end of Nebraska Community Foundation's fiscal year, it is also the conclusion of a robust strategic framework that has served as NCF's compass for the past five years. The process of developing the framework—which included new vision and mission statements, organizational values, and goals to help us prioritize our work—was long, thoughtful, and involved countless discussions with staff, board members, partners, donors, and volunteers with both interest and investment in NCF's (and Greater Nebraska's) future.

Lucky for us, that intentionality paid off and NCF's statewide board of directors has determined that the framework still accurately represents our priorities and that there is still work to be done in their pursuit. Beginning July 1, 2023, NCF's existing strategic framework will be renewed, and we will spend the next five years focused on making further progress toward six goals that we believe will bring us closer to our vision that Nebraska is a place where our hometowns are achieving their dreams:

1. Affiliated funds have the capacity, competence, and confidence to inspire, lead, and support progress in their place.
2. Affiliated funds are using payout from their unrestricted endowment to create



Jeff Yost, NCF President and CEO

positive change that otherwise may not occur.

3. People attraction is occurring in Nebraska hometowns.
4. The NCF network is diverse and inclusive.
5. NCF is known for building an optimistic, confident brand for Greater Nebraska.
6. NCF has the institutional capacity and financial stability to carry out its mission.

We believe firmly that this strategic planning and framework process has been critical to NCF's growth and success over the past five years. It has helped provide new specificity and focus to the work we have been doing for decades. In fact, we have since helped

multiple affiliated funds develop their own strategic frameworks and learned that this is an experience and evolution we all share—a greater focus on what is true mission fulfillment and ultimately, the ability to make a greater impact.

November 9 is another important date on the NCF calendar—our 2023 Annual Celebration and Training, this year themed “Dreams Inspire Dreams.” The NCF network is built on dreams. Each year, those dreams grow, evolve, and get more ambitious. They inspire new dreams in hometowns across Greater Nebraska. Please join us at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney for Nebraska Community Foundation's biggest event of the year. An opportunity for Nebraskans who love their communities and have bold ideas for the future to convene under one roof, learn from each other, and get inspired to achieve their dreams.

Watch for event details, session descriptions, and registration on our social media channels and at www.nebcommfound.org/celebrate.

As always, we thank you for all you do to build stronger communities and a Greater Nebraska. ■

Together a Greater Nebraska!
Jeff Yost, President and CEO



2023 ANNUAL CELEBRATION AND TRAINING
Kearney, Nebraska | November 9



Welcome, 2023 Hometown Interns!



BACK (L-R): Jillian Grovijohn, Chloe Hintz, Rachel Orth, Trinity Schardt, Aleah Williams, Takaylynn Hergott, Paiton Nash MIDDLE: Kalli Kroeker, Cassidy Hoffman, Mariah Sliva, Cameryn Brandt, Jillian Buell, Lauren Behn, Sam Otte, Kerigan Karr, Jenna Schott FRONT: Jady Schultis, Allison Engelman, Michaela Dukes, Hannah Goltl, Gracie Wenzel

FOR THE FIFTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR, NCF Hometown Internships are helping young people discover the abundance of their communities. Hometown Interns work with NCF affiliated funds on a variety of projects tailored to their community and the interests and skillsets of the interns. While the specific tasks and projects will vary from one Hometown Internship to another, NCF provides opportunities for interns to connect throughout the summer to give them space to learn from each other, share ideas, and foster appreciation for their hometowns. For many students, the experience led to the realization that they can do the work they love in the places they call home, with many saying they see their communities in a new light. ■

Janny Crotty Promoted



NEBRASKA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION is proud to announce the promotion of Janny Crotty to Director of Advancement. Crotty will lead NCF staff and the board of directors in developing and executing a fund development plan to advance the mission of NCF. Crotty will also help individuals, families, and their businesses make major gifts for the benefit of NCF and NCF affiliated funds.

"I am a fierce advocate for the NCF mission because I live it every day," Crotty said. "Sharing the joy I find in this mission with others and inspiring hopefulness for the future is a strength of mine and will undoubtedly be put to good use in the Director of Advancement role."

Crotty joined NCF in 2016 as an Affiliated Fund Development Coordinator and was promoted to Assistant Director of Advancement in 2018. She splits her time between her home office in Auburn, Nebraska and NCF's headquarters in Lincoln. ■

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Find a full list of our honorary members at www.necommfound.org/about/board-of-directors



KC Belitz Appointed DED Director

On June 5, NCF Chief Operating Officer KC Belitz was appointed by Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen as the next Director of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. He will begin his new role on July 5. Belitz's contributions to the NCF network—as an affiliated fund leader, board member, and staff member—are innumerable. NCF looks forward to working with KC in his new role and continuing our shared efforts to build stronger communities and a Greater Nebraska. ■

CONNECT TO IMPACT



NEBRASKA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION was proud to be invited on the Rural Radio Network's statewide forum which discussed the transfer of wealth, Five to Thrive campaign, charitable gift planning, and how endowments are catalyzing progress across the state.



Scan the code to listen!

Numerous community success stories across the NCF network were featured in the program including Boone County, Bertrand, Leigh, Pender, Atkinson, and Stuart. The program also featured accounts of generous Nebraskans opting to leave charitable planned gifts to benefit both NCF and their local affiliated funds, inspired by NCF's Five to Thrive campaign which asks you to consider leaving just five percent of your assets to your favorite Nebraska hometown or to Nebraska Community Foundation to benefit all our communities. According to NCF's most recent Transfer of Wealth Study, this collective act would result in \$5 billion in the next decade—and \$47.5 billion over the next half-century—that could be used to further community and economic development and pursue the dreams of the future we can't even imagine in 2023.

You can catch segments of the forum on your local Rural Radio Network station July through October! ■

COLUMBUS AREA FUTURE FUND

awarded \$50,000 to the Columbus Area Children's Museum effort to bring a world-class learning experience to the community. Museum planners initially requested \$25,000 from CAFF, but the fund advisory committee identified the project as a major amenity to support opportunities for young families and doubled their pledge. The museum will be incorporated into the community's new library, one of Columbus' four new Quality of Life projects alongside the local hospital, YMCA, and health district.

Volunteers cited their recent completion of NCF's Impact Planning training as essential in helping them approach grantmaking with a more forward-thinking lens. ■

The Columbus Area Future Fund Advisory Committee pledged \$50,000 to sponsor the outdoor playground at the future children's museum.



Sidney and Greater Area Fund leadership includes (L-R) Clint Norman, treasurer; Liz Borgmann, marketing; Melissa Norgard, chair; Madi Wilkinson, secretary; and Megan Price, vice chair.

SIDNEY AND GREATER AREA FUND

(SAGA) joined the NCF network earlier this year. The Sidney Community Donor-Advised Fund provided the initial funding to kickstart SAGA.

"The SAGA Fund Advisory Committee is excited to have the opportunity to create a community-based affiliated fund with NCF and grant funding to projects that will make a difference in Sidney and surrounding areas," said Melissa Norgard, elected chair of the SAGA FAC.

The FAC will review information gathered at a visioning session held last August to determine projects and programs for grantmaking. ■



Guests and hosts of the Urban Rural Connections Tour pose for a photo in front of a mural at Imperial's Art Park, one of the many stops on their two-day journey.

GREATER WAVERLY AREA FOUNDATION FUND awarded an \$820,000 grant to the City of Waverly—a significant development in GWAFF’s quest to bring a new aquatic center to the Lancaster County city. The Fund has also received a \$562,000 grant from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

“Although GWAFF has had and continues to have other funds, this was the first project we could call our own,” said FAC member Kris Bohac. “The grant was important not only to the Aquatic Center Project, but also to raise awareness of what we can do. GWAFF’s involvement went beyond the grant as well. We also worked to get the bond passed and get approval from the Waverly City Council for the project.” ■

Greater Waverly Area Foundation Fund members present a check for \$820,000 to the City of Waverly for the new Waverly Aquatic Center.



Sandhills historian R.H. Etinger gave generously to his community during and after his life. A planned gift made in three parts will benefit the Thedford community for the next decade and beyond.

THEDFORD AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FUND benefited from the generosity of local Sandhills historian R.H. Etinger throughout his life. Etinger also ensured that his legacy would be felt long after his passing in May 2022 through a multifaceted planned gift to benefit his community. Etinger’s legacy gift took three forms: a life insurance policy, a substantial estate gift, and a plan to make further gifts to benefit area charities including the historical society and Thedford Area Community Foundation Fund, paid out over the next decade.

“He loved his family, and the rest went to local organizations that were important to him,” said longtime friend Jay Jones. ■

Affiliated funds in **MCCOOK, IMPERIAL, AND KEITH COUNTY** hosted guests from North Omaha and Lincoln as part of the Urban Rural Connections Tour. The two-day trip offered residents from both sides of the state a chance to build relationships founded on newfound understanding of shared challenges, hopes, and dreams.

“These new relationships have the potential of going beyond the learning process and possibly extend to mutual initiatives,” said Omaha’s Preston Love Jr. “Together our communities can benefit and assist each other toward mutual growth and enrichment.” ■



KEITH COUNTY FOUNDATION FUND welcomed the Energizing Entrepreneurial Ecosystems (E3) cohort for a peer learning session this April. The E3 program focuses on building communities that support local entrepreneurs who in turn give back to community. The current cohort includes teams from Red Cloud, Valley County, Keith County, Holt County, and Sidney.

In Keith County, the E3 group toured businesses in Paxton and Ogallala, learning how local entrepreneurs found their role in their communities and uncovering how the community supports its businesses. Participants presented community updates at the Kenfield Gallery, sharing successes and challenges with each other. The conversations sparked inspiration and new ideas.

Boxcar hosted the E3 cohort for dinner, which featured a talk by Valley County E3 member and business coach Caleb Pollard, who also co-owns Scratchtown Brewing Company in Ord. The day ended at Second Chapter Brewing, Ogallala’s new brewery housed in the former public library building. ■

Members of the Keith County E3 team discuss their plans to build a vibrant local economy during a peer learning session at Kenfield Gallery in Ogallala.



Got a great story? Contact:

MICHAEL WUNDER, *Community Storyteller*
402.323.7338 | mwunder@nebcommfound.org

CONNECT TO LEGACY

What is a Charitable IRA Rollover?

A Charitable IRA Rollover is a simple, tax-wise method for fulfilling your charitable goals. At your direction, the custodian of your IRA can transfer money from your IRA directly to a qualified public charity, like Nebraska Community Foundation for the benefit of the affiliated fund of your choosing or to Nebraska Community Foundation. To make a Charitable IRA Rollover gift, also known as a Qualified Charitable Distribution or QCD, you must be at least age 70½, your gift must be made from a traditional IRA, and you can give up to \$100,000 per year.

OTHER BENEFITS:

- Your Charitable IRA Rollover may count as your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)
- It may prevent you from being pushed into a higher tax bracket
- You can reduce your taxable income, even if you do not itemize deductions
- It minimizes the effect on your cash flow; the gift is from your assets, not your checkbook
- It allows you to make a significant gift to support your community and/or NCF's mission

Remember, you should always consult your professional advisor to assess your specific circumstances, but Nebraska Community Foundation is happy to join the conversation and discuss the many ways to leave your legacy. ■

Blended Gifts Make an Impact and Leave a Legacy



Greg Vasek and his late wife, Marcia, have invested in the future of their hometown of Leigh, and made planned gifts to Nebraska Community Foundation to benefit Greater Nebraska.

DURING AND FOLLOWING a 35-year career as Controller, CFO, and COO/President at Linweld Inc., a Nebraska-based manufacturing and distribution company, Greg Vasek served on numerous boards in Lincoln and statewide—including Nebraska Community Foundation's.

Vasek brought decades of financial savvy to the NCF board so you can believe him when he says Greater Nebraska, and especially his beloved hometown of Leigh (population 431), are worthy of investment.

"They have so many good things going for them right now in Leigh—the lake, the new high school, the golf course—they're building community. They just needed one other step, to build a permanent endowment."

During his time on the NCF Board of Directors, Vasek made it his personal mission to get an NCF affiliated fund established in his hometown. Leigh Legacy Fund, an NCF affiliated fund, launched in January 2020, months before a global pandemic hit. Despite that, local leaders have made tremendous progress. Through his NCF experience, Vasek knew challenge grants were the way other hometowns were growing their unrestricted endowments.

Vasek got ahold of a Leigh alumni list and, with the help of a friend, identified 24 prospects that might help them issue a challenge grant to the community. Of 24 letters sent, 14 responded, "Yes."

All told, the "Distinguished Leigh Alumni" pledged \$200,000 to build Leigh's unrestricted endowment. An NCF anonymous donor and the board of directors also recognized the momentum building in Leigh and offered to further capitalize the opportunity through a Homegrown Challenge Grant of \$50,000. Now it is up to the Leigh community to raise \$500,000 to match the challenge and grow the unrestricted endowment by \$750,000.

But Vasek and his late wife, Marcia, haven't just invested in Leigh's future. A generous gift using a Charitable IRA Rollover to NCF has further established their impact. Vasek has also made a planned gift to benefit NCF's endowment.

The giving method used by the Vaseks has come to be known in the philanthropy world as a blended gift—a giving strategy that pairs the impact and instant gratification of a current gift with the long-lasting legacy of a charitable planned gift. Combining a gift in this fashion ensures that a donor has both the opportunity to enjoy witnessing their gift at work and make the maximum charitable impact through legacy giving. ■

Five to Thrive Inspires Sindelar to Make Plans for Atkinson's Future

AS ATKINSON'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, Amanda Sindelar was understandably thrilled when she learned about Nebraska Community Foundation's Five to Thrive campaign, which asks Nebraskans to leave just 5% of their estate to the community they call home. A small request, but one that could secure billions of dollars for Greater Nebraska's future.



Amanda Sindelar, Atkinson's Economic Development Director, took the "5 to Thrive" campaign to heart and made a planned gift to Atkinson Community Foundation Fund in the form of a designation on her retirement plan.

"I was so excited when this campaign launched, not only as a giver but as an asker," Sindelar said. "My mind just spins with so many ways this could help our hometown thrive."

Sindelara made a planned gift to Atkinson Community Foundation Fund in the form of a designation on her retirement plan. This type of gift is among the easiest to make, as donors can make a charitable gift using the beneficiary designation of their IRA, 401(k), or other retirement plan. These kinds of gifts avoid estate and income taxation on the assets accumulated tax-free during the plan holder's lifetime.

The amount of wealth transferring between generations is staggering and could trigger a monumental shift in the future of Greater Nebraska. Gifts like Sindelar's help Atkinson reach greater heights by giving ACFF more grantmaking power. The Fund's capacity is already strong thanks to a successful campaign to raise \$300,000 for its unrestricted endowment.

Sindelara is excited to spread the word about the Five to Thrive campaign and get more residents involved in Atkinson's future. In the next decade, \$1 billion is expected to transfer in Holt County—just 5% amounts to \$50 million. "This campaign will become a normal part of my conversations," she said. "The possibilities for growth are just endless for our communities." ■

We're Here to Help

Nebraska Community Foundation is here to help you create the legacy you envision. Contact us to learn more.

TODD MEKELBURG, *Director of Gift Planning*
402.323.7343 | tmekelburg@nebcommfound.org

And if you already have a planned gift in place that benefits NCF or your community, let us know—we want to celebrate you!



WAYS TO LEAVE FIVE Retirement Assets

Nebraska Community Foundation's Five to Thrive campaign asks you to consider leaving just five percent of your assets to your favorite hometown or to NCF to benefit all of our communities. If we all left five, that's well over \$5 billion that could be reinvested in our communities over the next 10 years. When we all leave five, our hometowns thrive!

Most people will not use all of their retirement assets during their lifetimes. You can make a gift of your unused retirement assets, such as your IRA, 401(k), 403(b), pension or other tax-deferred plan, to help further progress in your community and relieve your heirs of the heavy tax implications that come with inheriting a retirement account.

To leave your retirement assets to NCF or one of our affiliated funds, you will need to complete a simple beneficiary designation form provided by your retirement plan custodian. If you designate NCF or an affiliated fund as beneficiary, we will benefit from the full value of your gift because as a charity, we are not taxed upon receiving an IRA or other retirement plan assets. ■

Learn how to join the Five to Thrive movement at www.fivetothrivene.org

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CONNECTIONS

Summer 2023

Inside this issue:

- Celebrating a beloved teacher
- Reaffirming our strategic framework
- Leigh alumni challenge
- Five to Thrive inspires gift in Atkinson

Decatur residents can enjoy fun in the sun this summer thanks to a new splash pad at Beck Memorial Park, made possible by an estate gift from Jeanette Major-Nix to the Future of Decatur Foundation Fund.