

CONNECTIONS

Spring 2024

Powerful and Transformative: Unrestricted Endowments are a Tool for the Future

AN UNRESTRICTED ENDOWMENT

could be a gamechanger for your hometown. This is proving true for dozens of communities in the NCF network.

NCF affiliated funds, namely community-based affiliated funds (CBAFs), use investment income from endowments to award grants locally. Because the principal remains untouched, it grows with every gift—and so does the annual payout.

Unrestricted endowments held by CBAFs now total \$67 million, double the total five years ago. Today, 50 CBAFs have payout of at least \$10,000 per year—a milestone at which affiliated funds can really be catalysts for growth. Sixteen CBAFs now have payout of at least \$50,000 per year.

Unrestricted endowments are used for a variety of purposes whether it's building something new, saving something important, or adapting to the future. Many NCF communities are investing in unique community-building opportunities or helping fill in a gap. Endowments are also being used as "margin of excellence" capital to help Greater Nebraska communities amp up their people attraction efforts.

For places like Boone County, that means investing in early childhood education and after school learning. In Diller they've created a Youth Serviceship Camp aimed at developing future leaders. Dozens of NCF communities are hosting paid college interns who return to their



Nebraska Community Foundation's Annual Celebration and Training provides the time and space for hundreds of passionate volunteers to share ideas on how to successfully build unrestricted endowments and make the greatest impact with annual investment earnings.

hometowns for the summer with fresh eyes and big ambitions.

Others are focused on adults and seniors. Nebraska City's CBAF has long supported non-traditional scholarships. Brown County has made a multi-year commitment to help fund its local nursing home. Perkins County is supporting English language learners who are new to the area.

For so many NCF communities, it's about investing in the unique assets that define their place. Butler County made significant investments in the Bone Creek Museum of Agrarian Art. Red Cloud is supporting heritage tourism related to Willa Cather. Valley County is nurturing a thriving local arts community. Columbus helped catalyze a state-of-the-art children's museum that will draw visitors from miles around.

Challenge grants are one of the most effective tools for growing unrestricted endowments. Fifty-six CBAFs have leveraged one or more. Currently, ten CBAFs are raising funds to match challenge grants issued by local donors.

McCook has completed four challenge grants to grow their endowment, which now totals over \$4.2 million. In Shickley, the fund is shooting for 100% participation among its 309 residents to raise \$300,000 and receive a \$150,000 challenge grant issued by a generous couple. If successful, Shickley's endowment will grow to \$2.7 million, providing \$121,500 of payout every year forever. ■

CONNECT TO NCF

NCF Board of Directors

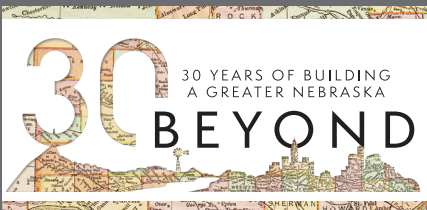
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Find a full list of our honorary members at www.necommfound.org/about/board-of-directors



ANNUAL CELEBRATION

LINCOLN, NE | NOVEMBER 14, 2024

Nebraska Community Foundation honors the past, engages the present, and, most importantly, looks beyond the now to build a Greater Nebraska that future generations will be proud to call home.

Join us to celebrate NCF's 30th anniversary and the remarkable achievements of thousands of ambitious Nebraskans fueled by their love of community and fervent commitment to the big dreams of tomorrow and beyond. ■

Watch our social media channels and website for event details!

Jobs are Seeking People. Now What?



Jeff Yost, NCF President and CEO

COUNTLESS YOUNG NEBRASKANS

have expressed a willingness, even a desire, to return to their hometowns and build a life. Yet Nebraska is now at or near

the top of states in the net loss of college graduates. What should we do?

To reverse the brain drain we need to evolve our conventional wisdom. For so long, the prevailing narrative was that people seek jobs—that's no longer the case. Jobs are now seeking people. Communities are seeking people. With the rise of remote work, a community's quality of life matters more than ever. Exceptional schools (including early childhood development); quality health care; recreational and outdoor amenities; ample and affordable housing; and trusting relationships are all now at least as important as the right job. Employees expect all these assets to be in place.

To adapt, we must think differently. We must understand that people live in or move to communities, not states or regions. Dozens of NCF affiliated funds are already focused on a three-pronged strategy to make a difference:

1. Building local endowments. We co-own what we help to co-create. Endowments built collectively by the

community for the community help all of us feel a greater sense of ownership and pride in our homeplace. The graphic below and cover story illustrate just how much local endowment building efforts have grown over the last three decades.

2. Improving quality of life. Funds are using their endowment payout to create communities of choice for people with options. Grants can provide a margin of excellence to make our schools, medical services, libraries, and community and recreational amenities top notch.

3. Issuing authentic invitations to build community with us. No matter your age, community development is rooted in trusting relationships. It is through those connections that positive change happens.

We need to customize our people attraction work for each young person, not a generation writ large. NCF's Hometown Internship program is one version of that customized approach, encouraging young Nebraskans to see their homeplace with fresh eyes and use established relationships to ask bold questions about what's possible. This work opens the door to intergenerational co-creation, which is the secret sauce for any community to thrive and prosper.

There is no simple way to reverse the brain drain, but we can start by asking young Nebraskans this simple question: will you help us build a Greater Nebraska? ■

Community-Based Affiliated Fund Endowment Growth

CBAF UNRESTRICTED ENDOWMENT	2023	2018	2012
\$1,000,000+	18	11	2
\$500,000+	33	20	6
\$250,000+	50	33	14

NCF Team Updates



BECKY BOESEN of Lincoln joined NCF as Community and Cultural Impact Specialist where she will put to use her skills and experience in arts and culture, community engagement, welcoming and belonging, and asset-based community development. Boesen has worked with NCF in the past as a consultant to the Hometown Internship program as well as co-writing “The Dream Switch” song cycle.



BECKY RIES of Ord joined NCF as the Affiliated Fund Development Coordinator for North Central Nebraska, where she has extensive nonprofit and fundraising experience. She served as the Executive Director for the Valley County Health System Foundation for a cumulative 12 years. Most recently, she was the Executive Director of Valley County Economic Development and the Ord Chamber of Commerce.



SHAWN RYBA joined NCF as the Affiliated Fund Development Coordinator for Southeast Nebraska. Immediately before joining NCF, he served as the Executive Director for Big Brothers Big Sisters Lincoln. From 2017 through 2022, he helped establish the South of Downtown Community Development Organization, which used asset-based community development to strengthen historic Lincoln neighborhoods.



ELIZABETH TROYER-MILLER of Wood River joined NCF as the Affiliated Fund Development Coordinator for Central Nebraska, bringing a bevy of nonprofit, community-building, and mediation expertise. Before joining NCF, she served as Director of Community Impact for Heartland United Way. Prior to that, she worked for Nebraska Mediation Association and Central Mediation Center.



KACIE WISE was promoted to NCF’s Database Specialist, a role in which she will ensure a seamless flow of database information throughout the organization, effectively capturing information and generating accurate reports. Wise joined NCF in 2022 as the Office and Gift Processing Assistant. Prior to joining NCF, she served in various roles at Nelnet followed by nearly six years at Concordia University-Nebraska.

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

TYLER PRIBBENO is the City Administrator and Community Development Director for his hometown of Imperial. After obtaining his undergraduate degree from Chadron State College, PribbENO earned a law degree from the NU College of Law. He has been a member of the Imperial Community Foundation Fund since 2011.



SARAH SINNETT, a Sidney native, gained a diverse background after working in various roles at Cabela’s, Bass Pro, G.L. Huyett, and her current position as an agent for Plummer Insurance. She received her master’s degree in industrial-organizational psychology from UNO before returning to Sidney with her family in 2014.



JIM WELNIAK grew up in Valley County. After earning a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from UNL, Welniak embarked on a 36-year engineering career that took him to Kansas City and later Omaha. Welniak and his wife, Kathy, live near Taylor and are active members of the Calamus Area Community Fund.



CONNECT TO IMPACT



Affiliated funds in **SHICKLEY, RED CLOUD, MCCOOK, KEITH COUNTY, LOUP COUNTY, GARFIELD COUNTY, VALLEY COUNTY,** and **BOONE COUNTY** hosted 17 guests representing the Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism (GMIST), a non-governmental organization located in Rocky Harbour, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. The visitors, who focus on supporting quality, sustainable tourism experiences across Canada through education, training, and by implementing strong community development principles, wanted to see the NCF network's asset-based community development practices in action.

Jonathan Foster, GMIST's Executive Director, said the group experienced how community development practices have led to NCF's tremendous growth and thriving hometowns across the state of Nebraska. The tour helped them understand they have what they need in their own communities to build a more resilient future. "We're the ones who are going to be our own saviors," Foster said. "We're going to do what is needed." ■

Visitors from Atlantic Canada enjoy a tour of Shickley led by members of the local NCF affiliated fund.

ARNOLD COMMUNITY FUND

granted \$6,000 for a youth-directed project at the Arnold Recreation Area Lake. Ethan Furne, an Arnold High School junior, applied for grant funds in connection with his Rotary Interact project, "Arnold Revitalizing Fountains." This project involved purchasing three fountains and algacide for the lake. Over a ten-month period, Ethan consulted experts, worked with the Arnold Village Board, researched the products and steps necessary, acquired funding through grantwriting, and physically helped assemble and install the new fountains. ■

Arnold High School student Ethan Furne poses in front of one of the fountains he helped install in Arnold Lake.



Members of the Nebraska Development Network tour Ravenna's hike and bike trail during a visit last fall.

RAVENNA AREA VISION FUND

(RAV) oversaw the completion of the community's new hike and bike trail last summer, which added a 1.68-mile loop on the east end of town. Volunteers helped the community raise \$350,000 to fund the new amenity. The crushed limestone trail is one of RAV's many recent accomplishments, including supporting the community library's renovation and working with Buffalo County officials to add additional camping spots to a nearby recreation area.

"Our community's new hike and bike trail is a wonderful recreational addition to our community," said RAV member Julie Chramosta. "It's a great testament to what can be accomplished by fund advisory committees when a vision is identified and acted on." ■





Howells Community Fund members pose in front of the community's new welcome sign, installed last year along Highway 91.

HOWELLS COMMUNITY FUND

members are beaming with pride about a new addition to their community: an updated sign welcoming residents and visitors alike to the Colfax County town. The Fund used payout from its unrestricted endowment to design and have the new sign built along the entrance to Howells along Highway 91. The former sign will be placed at the community's northern entrance after repairs.

"The importance of building a new entrance sign for the community is that it's more than just a sign," said HCF member Trent Mastny. "It is pride of the continued growth and development of the community that can be seen by anyone traveling in the area. It is a symbol of why I love to call Howells home." ■

WAYNE AREA LEGACY FUND is focused on increasing planned giving and it's paying off. Siblings Bill and Julie Claybaugh, who both serve on the local fund advisory committee, recently made it personal when they updated their own estate plans leaving 5% of their assets to WALF's unrestricted endowment, which has supported the Wayne Kids Club After School Program, senior center, FFA chapter, Boy Scouts, and mental health services for Wayne Community Schools.

WALF Advisory Committee members maximize NCF resources including trainings, marketing support, funding opportunities including Hometown Internships and Youth Engagement Grants, and above all, peer learning. ■

Siblings Bill and Julie Claybaugh recently joined NCF's Five to Thrive movement pledging 5% of their estates to their hometown.



WYMORE-BLUE SPRINGS AREA FUND celebrated the opening of a new inclusive playground in Wymore's McCandless Park last fall. The playground, built for children between the ages of 5 and 12, was made possible thanks to a \$103,000 grant from WBSAF as well as contributions from other area foundations and endowments. "It is wonderful seeing our children entertain themselves on this state-of-the-art playground," volunteers said in their own newsletter earlier this year. ■

Inclusive playgrounds, like the one in Wymore, are designed with children of all abilities in mind and are becoming increasingly common in NCF communities.



Got a great story? Contact:

MICHAEL WUNDER, Community Storyteller
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CALAMUS AREA COMMUNITY FUND

prioritized lasting impact and forward-thinking grantmaking with a \$100,000 pledge to help rebuild storm damage at Nebraska's Big Rodeo (NBR) in Burwell. The event is a massive tourism draw and an essential economic development driver for the region every year. The grant from CACF went toward matching a \$250,000 challenge grant. To make the pledge, CACF used its 2024 unrestricted endowment payout, along with other sources of funding.

"Over the years, CACF has developed a great relationship with Garfield County Frontier Fair Association, the nonprofit organization that operates the Nebraska's Big Rodeo and Garfield County Fair," said Jim Welniak, a member of both CACF and NCF's Board of Directors. "Realizing the historical significance and huge economic importance that NBR brings to our communities of Burwell and Taylor and surrounding areas, CACF was proud to make an impactful donation toward NBR's Grandstand Rebuild Project which will include community center space and facilities beneath the new grandstand." ■

Calamus Area Community Fund granted \$100,000 to help Garfield County Frontier Fair Association meet a \$250,000 challenge grant to rebuild storm-damaged portions of Nebraska's Big Rodeo grounds.

CONNECT TO LEGACY

Honoring Hometown Legacies

NEBRASKA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S Hometown Legacy Society is our way to celebrate and say thank you to donors with future gift provisions through estate plans that benefit our Nebraska communities. By making a gift in 2023, the following have joined the hundreds of generous Nebraskans who have made a planned gift to benefit their community. You can find a full listing of our Legacy Society members at <https://nebcommfound.giflegacy.com> ■

Jill Anding, *Albion*
Dennis Batterman, *Imperial*
Mike and Shelly Bodensteiner, *Girard, KS*
Eric and Mikayla Doht, *Pender*
Megan and Dan Helberg, *Taylor*
Ron and Nancy Hollman, *Ogallala*

Darwin Hunt, *Arcadia*
Ranae Kinney, *Bennet*
Ladd and Diane Krings Charitable
Remainder Unitrust, *Albion*
Patrick and Colleen Lentz, *Ainsworth*
Tom and Sue McNeil, *Taylor*

Cory Schlichtemeier, *Nebraska City*
Tate J. Schmaderer, *Stuart*
Cleveland "Jim" Scott, *Niobrara*
Sharon M. Scott, *Niobrara*
Steve and Sandi* Wendell, *Axtell*
* Donor is deceased

Estate Gifts are a Gesture of Trust

FOR YEARS, SUSAN UGAI had watched people leave her hometown to pursue careers and lives in other counties or states. A 2002 meeting with Nebraska Community Foundation helped her understand the impact of that migration.

During that meeting she learned about NCF's Transfer of Wealth Study, which detailed billions of dollars transferring from rural Nebraskans to heirs over the next 50 years. All those people leaving North Platte? That was wealth leaving the community, potentially forever. And it was happening across the state.

"That land, those assets were definitely going to be lost," she said. "So, I could visualize it really easily for myself."

Ugai herself had left North Platte after high school to study at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she earned her undergraduate degree in English and went on to obtain her law degree. After graduating, she served as North Platte's City Attorney for a handful of years before joining the Nebraska Department of Justice as an Assistant Attorney General in the mid-1980s.



She joined NCF's Board of Directors in 2002 after that initial meeting, eventually serving three full terms. Over the course of those nine years, she witnessed incredible growth in the NCF network as more affiliated funds

joined and more Nebraskans became aware of the nonprofit's mission to build upon existing assets to create an even Greater Nebraska.

Ugai trusts in the ability of affiliated funds and NCF staff to make the right decisions in the future. Her estate gift, in the form of a beneficiary designation on an IRA, is a financial gesture of that trust. She decided long ago that she would be leaving her assets to causes close to her heart, and NCF is among them.

"As NCF evolves, they will figure out what's the best way to spend that money for the organization," Ugai said. "So that's what it comes down to. I think you have to trust the organization that you're going to give it to." ■

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!

Planned Gifts a Predictor of Increased Lifetime Giving

NOT ONLY DO PLANNED GIFTS leave an incredible legacy, they can also serve as one of the greatest indicators of increased charitable giving during a donor's lifetime.

According to the research of Dr. Russell James, a nationally renowned expert on charitable planned giving, individuals who made a planned gift to benefit a charitable organization effectively doubled their current giving in the years following their commitment (see graphic below). It's a compelling case for why volunteers across the NCF network should focus on planned giving as a means for growing community endowments.

James also found that when donors give assets (like stocks, bonds, retirement accounts, or life insurance) to their favorite charitable organizations, it can have a transformational impact. Asset gifts remind us of our wealth, and people who feel wealthy tend to act more charitably.

Studies on the intergenerational transfer of wealth further underscore the critical nature of planned gifts to secure capital in our Nebraska hometowns. Cash constitutes only a tiny sliver of the transfer. Most American wealth is held in property and equity-rich assets, particularly in a place like Nebraska.

NCF's latest wealth transfer study estimates that \$100 billion will transfer over the next decade, and in 50 years, that number exceeds \$950 billion. In response, NCF volunteers across the state have mobilized a Five to Thrive campaign that aims to increase charitable planned giving for the benefit of NCF affiliated funds, especially their unrestricted endowments.

These data all serve as an important reminder: when wealth leaves our community, it is gone forever. When it's endowed in our community, it is here forever. The time to act is now—the opportunity will never be greater! ■



WAYS TO LEAVE FIVE Beneficiary Designation

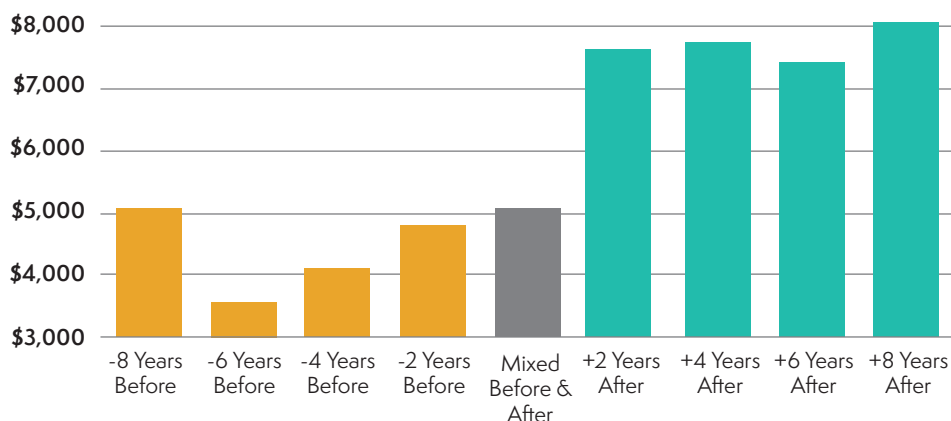
Nebraska Community Foundation's Five to Thrive campaign asks you to consider leaving just five percent of your assets to your favorite hometown or to NCF to benefit all of our communities. If we all left five, that's well over \$5 billion that could be reinvested in our communities over the next 10 years.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

A beneficiary designation is a great way to "leave five" and is as simple as contacting the person who helps you with your account (such as a broker, banker, or insurance agent). You can designate Nebraska Community Foundation or an NCF affiliated fund as a beneficiary of a retirement, investment or bank account, or your life insurance policy.

Beneficiary designation gifts are among the most flexible of all charitable gifts—you can still take distributions or withdrawals from your retirement, investment or bank account. You can also change your mind at any time in the future for any reason. ■

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

AVERAGE ANNUAL CHARITABLE DONATIONS BEFORE AND AFTER ADDING CHARITY TO AN ESTATE PLAN



Source: James III, R.N. (2020). *The Emerging Potential of Longitudinal Empirical Research in Estate Planning: Examples from Charitable Bequests*. UC Davis Law Review.



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Excellence. Accountability. Impact.™

CONNECTIONS

Spring 2024

Inside this issue:

- Endowment growth progress
- Three ways to reverse brain drain
- Estate gifts as a gesture of trust
- New planned giving research

Friend Area Fund celebrated the completion of a unique amenity last year when it unveiled a new gathering space, which features a custom-built grain bin gazebo—or binzebo. The project transformed land that had sat vacant since 2005 into an ideal gathering space for food trucks, farmers markets, musical performances, and more.

