

30 Years
ANNIVERSARY

KEARNEY AREA
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

IMPACT REPORT

1995 – 2025

IT STARTED ON THE RIVER

The idea for the Kearney Area Community Foundation (KACF) began over 30 years ago, oddly enough, in a duck blind. Glimpses of birds were fleeting, but not so the conversation when Dan Lindstrom, Jeff Anderson and Roger Jasnoch—friends and community leaders—gathered on the river. As the story is told, good-natured banter soon turned to serious discussion. One idea led to another and soon the trio had hatched the notion that a community foundation was needed. KACF has been fortunate enough to make an impact on the Kearney area over the past 30 years, and will for years to come.

30 Years ANNIVERSARY

KEARNEY AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



30 Years of Building a Stronger Community

MESSAGE FROM JUDI SICKLER, KACF PRESIDENT/CEO

Like a river, a community is sustained by many streams flowing together. Water gives life, creates beauty, offers respite and supports our health. In much the same way, philanthropy nourishes a community—connecting people, ideas, generosity and action to create something greater than any one person or organization could achieve alone.

When I joined the Kearney Area Community Foundation 25 years ago, we were a small organization with big dreams. Today, as we celebrate 30 years, I am proud of how far our community has come and of the role the Foundation has played in helping shape its future.

Community foundations are often known for making grants, but our work extends far beyond writing checks. We help streams of generosity find their course. We connect people and organizations who share a passion for improving our communities. We work with nonprofit leaders, businesses, local governments, donors and volunteers to address challenges and seize opportunities. And we help turn charitable intentions into lasting impact.

Like a river, meaningful change takes time. It gathers strength through many tributaries and becomes more powerful as it flows. Some of our greatest accomplishments have come through partnerships—preserving treasured community assets, strengthening nonprofits, supporting arts and culture, investing in parks and recreation, expanding educational opportunities and responding to emerging needs. Each effort adds to the current, and together, those currents shape the community we call home.

The Foundation has also embraced a leadership role by identifying opportunities, bringing the right people together and helping ideas move from possibility to action. Leadership isn't about having all the answers. It is about creating space for good ideas to flow, take root and grow.

As we look ahead, the greatest transfer of wealth in our nation's history creates an unprecedented opportunity to sustain and strengthen our communities for generations to come. Together, we can ensure future generations inherit vibrant nonprofits, thriving public spaces, quality education and a strong sense of community—places that provide beauty, respite, connection and a healthy quality of life.

None of this would be possible without our generous donors, dedicated volunteers, visionary board members, community partners and talented staff—past and present. Thank you for helping keep the current moving.

It is a privilege of my career to serve this community. After 30 years, I am excited to see where the river flows next—and what we will accomplish together.

Message from Todd Thalken, KACF Board Chair



As we celebrate the 30th year of the KACF, we do so with gratitude for the vision of our founders, the generosity of our donors and the dedication of our non-profit partners. Over the years, the Foundation has grown from a simple vision into one of the Kearney area's most trusted and enduring community assets. Today, the Foundation stewards more than 280 charitable funds, supporting grants, scholarships and projects that strengthen the quality of life throughout the area.

Our greatest success is not measured by the dollars we manage, but by the lives that have been enriched, and the lasting impact made possible through philanthropy. Together, we have helped countless individuals and organizations turn generosity into opportunity and hope. As we look to the future, we are inspired by all we have accomplished, and even more excited for what lies ahead as we continue building a stronger, more vibrant community for generations to come.

IMPACT OVER TIME

Quotes from board members through the decades

1995

Assets Under Management: $65,435

Distributions to the Community: $0



Dan Lindstrom
1995 KACF Board Member

"Of the things that I have been fortunate enough to help create, the KACF stands out as one of the most significant. KACF arose from a conversation with individuals who had a specific need. Fortunately, we were able to recognize the long-term impacts of creating a community foundation in Kearney. Here we are 30 years later, able to see the tremendous long-term benefit that KACF has brought to the Kearney area. I'm mighty proud to have been its first board chair.

2005

Assets Under Management: $7,736,263

Distributions to the Community: $5,667,333*



Karen Rhoads
2005 KACF Board Member

"It has been impressive and heartwarming watching how the KACF has grown over its 30 years. The lives it has touched and the impact it has made on Kearney and other area communities is truly immeasurable. It's exciting to see where this remarkable team will take the Foundation in the years to come. I am proudly an ongoing supporter of KACF and its mission."

2015

Assets Under Management: $16,342,173

Distributions to the Community: $41,111,157*



Ron Eckloff
2015 KACF Board Member

"I'm very impressed by the number of organizations KACF has helped in our community. By providing administrative and moral support, so many wonderful local nonprofits are able to focus more of their time and effort on making a difference in the Keamey area. The staff at KACF works hard to make sure the organizations can thrive at doing what they do best!"

2025

Assets Under Management: $46,016,460

Distributions to the Community: $97,004,065*



Brenda Jensen
2025 KACF Board Member

"Through my experience with the KACF Board, I've been so impressed by how much it has grown and by the meaningful impact it has had on our community. Getting a front-row seat to the amazing organizations and non-profits that KACF supports has been eye-opening. KACF truly is involved in so many ways that make Kearney and Buffalo County such an amazing place to live. Serving on the board has given me a greater appreciation for the people who give their time, energy and resources to make a difference, and I've enjoyed being part of an organization that is helping create lasting opportunities for our community."

**Distributions to the community are accumulative.*

The Kearney Area Community Foundation is extremely fortunate to have so many community members who encourage what we do. We appreciate every donor that helps our mission. Their support moves us forward.

The Edison Society

The Edison Society, while being a relatively new way for donors to support us, has become a large part in our success.

After holding the Wine & Jazz Festival as a fundraiser for several years, the KACF Board of Directors realized that the dollars raised during the event was not a sufficient amount compared to the work that was put into it each year. In response we decided to launch The Edison Society in 2019.

The Edison Society is reserved for those donors that would like to help the Foundation at a higher level ($1,000 or above). Thanks to our Edison Society members, we are able to incubate ideas and nurture local dreamers who want to make a difference in our community.



The Edison Society has had a big impact since its launch. In its first year, donors contributed $109,000. That number has gone up in the years since and in 2025, the donation amount increased to $204,000. The Edison Society has been a huge success, raising more than $1,036,500 for KACF in just 7 years!

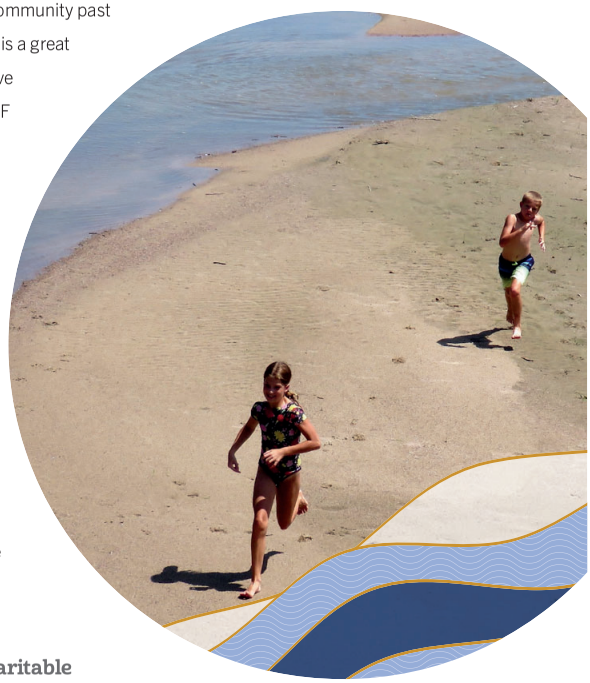
Stakeholders

It's not just The Edison Society that makes an impact at KACF! Our Stakeholder donors play a big part in funding our mission. Whether it's $50 or $500, every stakeholder gift matters and helps make a difference. We use the support that we raise through the Stakeholder campaign to improve the quality of life for others.

PLANNED GIVING

It's easy to look around the Kearney area and see the difference local donors are making. But what about making a difference that you may not be able to see right away?

That's where planned giving comes in. It's an opportunity for you to ensure you can make an impact on the community past your lifetime, and partnering with the KACF is a great way to do it. Many community members have made the generous decision to include KACF in their estate planning. One anonymous donor says it was an easy decision to make. "I always go back to that saying, 'For those to whom much has been given, much is required.' If I have plenty and it's sitting in an account doing nothing, I'd rather it be put to good use," the donor says. "When I'm gone, family will inherit some farmland, but the rest of it will benefit someone or some organization that needs it. Going through [KACF], I know they're reputable organizations. I don't have concerns that the money's not going to the purpose that it should."



By including the KACF in your charitable estate planning, you can ensure your generosity and your legacy stays within the community for generations to come.

2025 COMMUNITY IMPACT

$14.2 million
Total Contributions to KACF

$11 million
Distributions Back to the Community

$204,395
Scholarships Awarded





FINANCIALS

Fiscal Year 2025

ASSETS

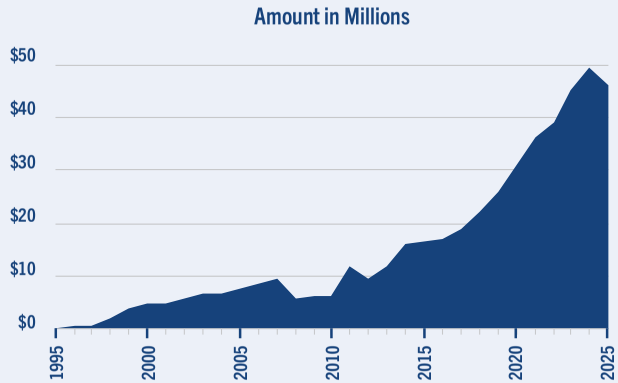
Cash and investments	$44,094,314
Property and equipment	1,173,567
Receivables	219,397
Cash surrender value – life insurance	539,640
Total Assets	**$46,026,918**

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Funds held for the benefit of others	$11,587,803
Grants and scholarships payable	880,669
Payables	41,047
Net assets	33,517,399
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	**$46,026,918**

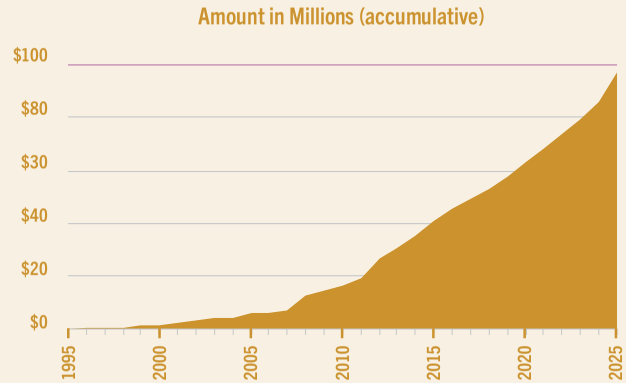
ASSET GROWTH

1995:	$65,435	2011:	$11,707,503
1996:	$402,090	2012:	$9,598,323
1997:	$710,096	2013:	$11,851,796
1998:	$1,767,505	2014:	$16,277,611
1999:	$4,042,066	2015:	$16,342,173
2000:	$4,727,770	2016:	$16,969,409
2001:	$4,956,167	2017:	$18,886,476
2002:	$5,730,282	2018:	$22,413,280
2003:	$6,676,982	2019:	$25,855,548
2004:	$6,699,922	2020:	$31,308,627
2005:	$7,736,263	2021:	$36,338,328
2006:	$8,459,892	2022:	$39,239,288
2007:	$9,366,910	2023:	$45,258,077
2008:	$5,809,864	2024:	$49,580,497
2009:	$6,415,494	2025:	$46,026,918
2010:	$6,342,043		



GRANT AWARDS, PROGRAM SUPPORT & SCHOLARSHIPS

1995:	$0	2011:	$18,925,835
1996:	$24,508	2012:	$26,792,028
1997:	$155,446	2013:	$30,196,629
1998:	$617,279	2014:	$34,788,535
1999:	$987,806	2015:	$41,111,157
2000:	$1,692,297	2016:	$45,544,505
2001:	$2,167,724	2017:	$49,431,920
2002:	$3,319,780	2018:	$53,382,512
2003:	$3,864,087	2019:	$57,858,850
2004:	$4,523,104	2020:	$63,040,486
2005:	$5,667,333	2021:	$67,869,365
2006:	$6,358,818	2022:	$73,243,473
2007:	$7,276,172	2023:	$79,424,954
2008:	$12,253,630	2024:	$85,967,905
2009:	$14,342,506	2025:	$97,004,065
2010:	$16,837,205		



COMMUNITY COLLABORATION SPACE

In 2024, KACF purchased an office building on the west side of Kearney, and with it came a large gathering space that we've been able to use in multiple ways. We use it to host regular training sessions for nonprofits (The Nonprofit Exchange) and community members (Giving for Good). The space is also available to area nonprofit organizations to use for meetings and trainings.





Giving for Good

KEARNEY AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Giving for Good is a series hosted by the KACF on philanthropy, planned giving, incorporating charitable giving into your life and other aspects of charitable gift planning that may require special consideration and expert insight.

At Giving for Good sessions attendees learn from local and regional experts and professional advisors. This series is open to anyone interested in learning more about how to incorporate purposeful giving into their life. KACF has held Giving for Good sessions on topics such as estate planning, charitable investment strategies and more!

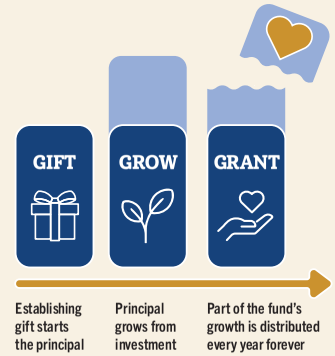
THE NONPROFIT EXCHANGE

The Nonprofit Exchange hosts regular workshops to serve the Kearney area nonprofit community. Our goal is to provide space for nonprofit leaders to come together on topics with expert speakers, to share experiences and collaborate on solutions to strengthen their organizations and impact the community. "The Nonprofit Exchange has been one of the most practical learning opportunities available to local nonprofits," says Nancy Lyon, Executive Director at LyonHeart Equine Assisted Learning. "As an executive director, there is always something new to learn, and these one-hour sessions provided practical, bite-sized information that we could immediately put into practice."

Events are free to those who are employed at, volunteer for or serve as a board member in a Kearney area nonprofit organization.

An unrestricted endowment gift

at the KACF guarantees your donation can make a difference long into the future. An endowment is a fund that is invested to create ongoing financial support. Instead of spending the original principal, KACF will be able to use part of the gift's investment earnings each year to fund our mission. This allows the original gift to provide financial support year after year. It really is the gift that keeps on giving!



At the Kearney Area Community Foundation, our mission is to **enhance the quality of life** in the Kearney area by **promoting the spirit of charitable giving** and effectively **responding to the community's needs.**

We Enhance the Quality of Life:

We've been fortunate to work with incredible nonprofits all around Buffalo County that are working to make a great quality of life for their communities.



Ravenna Community Foundation

"The Ravenna Community Foundation is proud to be an affiliate of the KACF. Together, we have helped support projects and organizations that make Ravenna a stronger community." says Bryce Luth, Director of the Ravenna Community Foundation.

"For the past 30 years, the Ravenna Community Foundation has been honored to invest in projects that improve the quality of life in Ravenna. None of this would be possible without the generosity of the donors who believe in our community and its future."


(rendering)

Shelton Community Pool Project

"KACF has been instrumental in connecting us with individuals and organizations who share our passion and belief in our project," say Shelton Community Pool Project fund advisors Kay Johnson and Lexie Wiseman. "KACF has provided valuable opportunities to connect with philanthropic partners who are committed to making a lasting impact. Their partnership continues to help us move closer to our mission of building a new pool that will benefit our community for generations to come."

We Promote the Spirit of Charitable Giving:

It's not just the Foundation itself that reached a big milestone in 2025, it was also a big year for *Give Where You Live* (GWYL), the KACF's annual giving day. In 2025, for the first time, donors raised more than $2 million for local nonprofits in 24 hours.

Since its inception in 2013, GWYL has raised nearly $16 million for more than 200 area organizations.

give where you live
KEARNEY AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

2025: $2,364,072

2024:	$1,944,214	**2018:**	$1,040,784
2023:	$1,936,848	**2017:**	$845,767
2022:	$1,618,940	**2016:**	$640,073
2021:	$1,437,720	**2015:**	$638,198
2020:	$1,325,551	**2014:**	$420,635
2019:	$1,203,453	**2013:**	$453,214

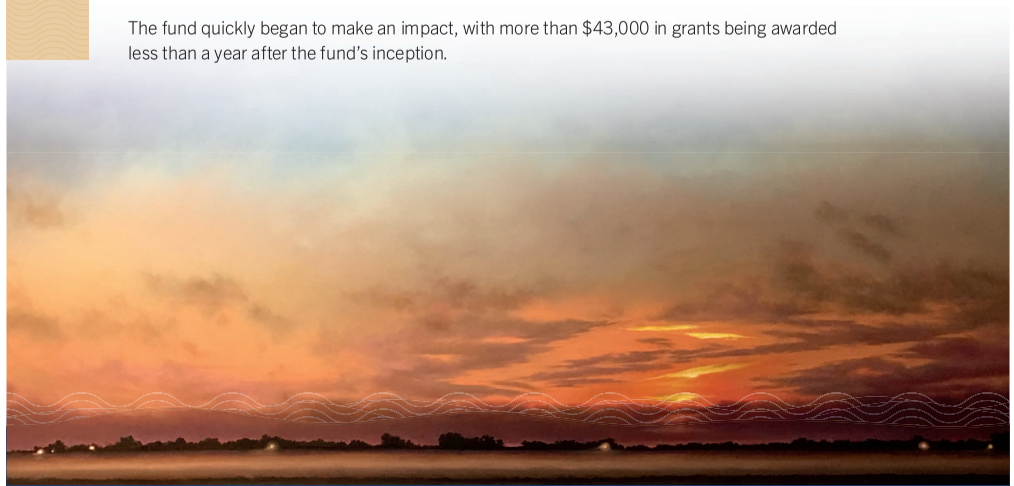
We Respond to Our Community's Needs:

Community Critical Needs Fund
KEARNEY AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

In addition to our day-to-day operations, the KACF is always ready to respond if an urgent need arises in the community. From the floods in 2019, to the pandemic in 2020, KACF has been able to lend a helping hand when unexpected challenges hit the area.

That's why the KACF Board of Directors created the Community Critical Needs fund in 2025. The fund provides grants to local nonprofits addressing critical needs like food, housing, transportation and healthcare. KACF started the fund after receiving a generous lead gift from Pam Radtke and Rhonda Artrup, and it grew with an anonymous $100,000 gift.

The fund quickly began to make an impact, with more than $43,000 in grants being awarded less than a year after the fund's inception.



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For more information:
www.kearneyfoundation.org
Follow us on social media

Nature Photographs by Lori Potter
Landscape Paintings by Jennifer Homan

ACCREDITATION

The Kearney Area Community Foundation is proud to be accredited with the National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations, the highest standard for philanthropic excellence.

The Council on Foundations adopted the National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations in 2000. The Kearney Area Community Foundation received the accreditation after submitting their policies and procedures to a rigorous review of 26 National Standards in key areas of community foundation operations, including mission, structure, resource development, stewardship, grantmaking and donor relations.

CFNS
ACCREDITED FOUNDATION



KEARNEY AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Kearney Area Community Foundation is a place that you can use to make a significant impact through charitable giving.

All gifts that come through the Kearney Area Community Foundation, no matter what size, make an impact. From health, education, recreation or the arts, find the causes you and your family are passionate about and make a difference today.

With many different types of funds, there's sure to be a charitable cause you can learn more about and support. Call our office to discuss ways you can make an impact in your community at (308) 237-3114.