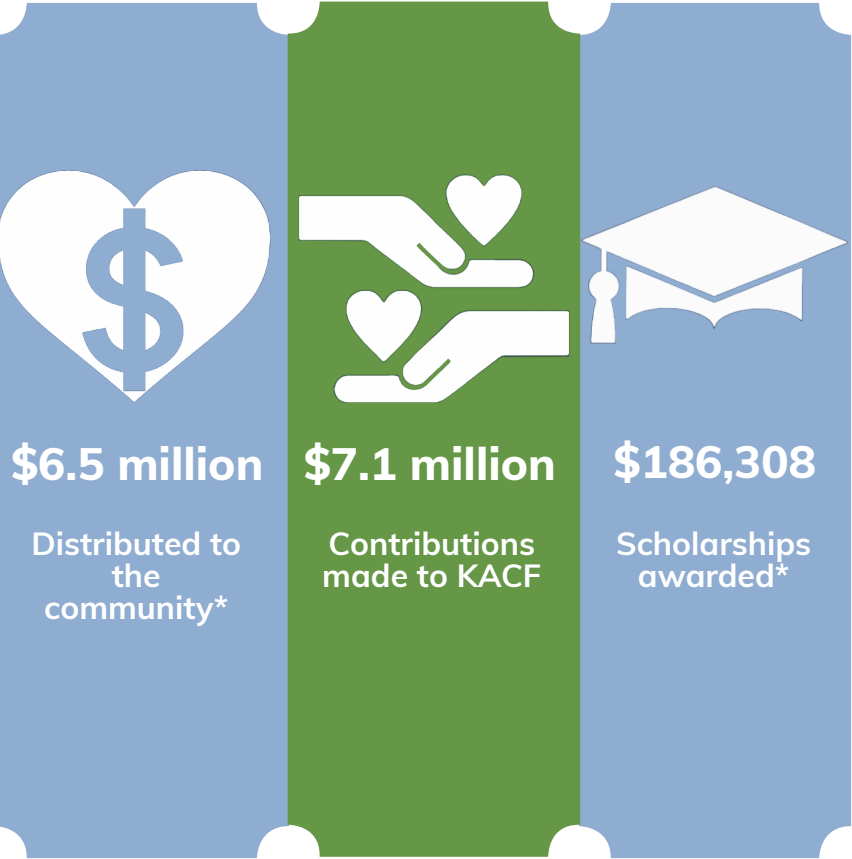


GO GREEN!

Help us save on costs by receiving this newsletter via email. Please send your email address to us at: kacf@kearneyfoundation.org

2024 Impact



*Includes allocations for future distribution.

www.kearneyfoundation.org | (308) 237-3114

2025-2026 BOARD AND STAFF

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2025 | Volume 2

spring Newsletter

Lifting Our Nonprofits

KACF Offers a New Way for Nonprofits to Learn

A new program at the Kearney Area Community Foundation (KACF) is going to make a big difference in the community. Part of KACF's mission is to enhance the quality of life in the Kearney area, and our nonprofits play a key role in that. That's why we're launching a new program to help prepare local nonprofits to make as big of an impact as possible.

THE NONPROFIT EXCHANGE

The Nonprofit Exchange will host a monthly workshop to serve the Kearney area nonprofit community. Our goal is to provide space for nonprofit leaders to come together on topics each month with expert speakers, to share experiences and collaborate on solutions to strengthen their organizations and community impact. "As a community foundation, our dream has always been to provide more educational opportunities and programs that bring people together, empower them, and spark lasting change," says Judi Sickler, KACF President/CEO. "With the opening of the new Community Collaboration Space, this dream is now a reality. This space is more than just a building—it's a hub for connection, learning, and growth." Events are free to those who are employed at, volunteer for, or serve as a board member in a Kearney area nonprofit organization.

"I am excited we can offer this series of programming to our nonprofit community," says KACF Program Manager Ashley Weets. "Our hope is we can inspire collaboration through expert presentations and time to share together. We want to use our space to make our nonprofit community stronger and The Nonprofit Exchange will be a big part of that effort."

Upcoming Sessions

We're excited to announce the first two sessions of The Nonprofit Exchange have been scheduled! Be sure to keep an eye on www.kearneyfoundation.org/nonprofitexchange as we announce more sessions!

Grant Seeking Resources & More

Thursday, May 1, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

- Guest Speaker: Sarah Haack from the Kearney Public Library
- Join us to learn about free resources nonprofits can use at the library. Sarah will walk us through how to navigate databases that are useful in grant seeking and more! KACF's Program Manager, Ashley Weets, will also share some local and regional grant funding opportunities.

Grant Writing Basics

Thursday, June 5, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

- Guest Speaker: Mark Whitacre, Grant Writer/Coordinator, Kearney Public Schools and Educational Service Unit 10
- In this session, seasoned grant writer Mark Whitacre will share his knowledge on grant writing. Get tips and ideas to build the writing foundation of a grant proposal. Whether you're new to grant writing or have experience, you're sure to walk away from this session with information that helps move your organization forward!

Space is limited, **registration is required** for each session. Nonprofits can register team members at www.kearneyfoundation.org/nonprofitexchange.



KEARNEY AREA
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

"connecting people who care
with causes that matter"

Building for Tomorrow

bi-annual grants

Inspiring Students

Investing in Education

Planning Ahead

Helping Your Future Self

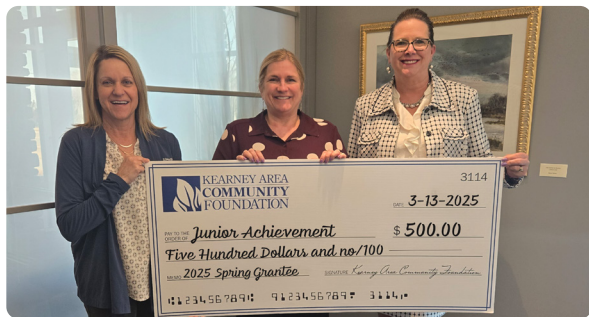
Spring 2025 Grantees

Kearney Area Community Foundation's "Building for Tomorrow" fund recently awarded \$7,500 in grants to eight local nonprofits.

- **Axtell Area Oratorio Society** received \$500 to help cover expenses for their performance of Handel's Messiah at the Merryman Performing Arts Center.
- **Banisters Leadership Academy** received \$500 to support their program of building future leaders.
- **Buffalo County Community Partners** received \$2,000 to go toward hiring a consultant to create a new space for their organization.



- **Crane River Theater** received \$1,000 to go toward the purchase of a computer for their office.
- **Dreamweaver Foundation** received \$1,000 to help provide live, monthly professional musical entertainment for seven Kearney area senior communities.
- **Junior Achievement of Kearney** received \$500 to help cover expenses related to the programs they provide in our community's schools.



- **Kearney Rescue Cats** received \$1,000 to go toward veterinarian expenses.
- **Kearney Teen Reach Adventure Camp** received \$1,000 to help cover the cost of camp for area campers that are at-risk or have been/are in foster care.

Building for Tomorrow applications are accepted on a bi-annual basis, with the next deadline on August 1. To view guidelines or apply, please visit www.kenarneyfoundation.org/building-for-tomorrow.

From the time my husband Jeff and I attended UNK as undergraduates, we knew that UNK was a great school and that Kearney was a special community. However, I don't think we truly appreciated how special until we became working adults and decided to plant our roots in Kearney.

Before changing my career and becoming a financial advisor at Edward Jones, I spent over a decade working at UNK and helping recruit and retain students. During my time, I saw how a scholarship – big or small – could change the trajectory of a student's educational path. It was also at that time I started my tenure on the board at the Kearney Area Community Foundation (KACF). As a board member, I have witnessed firsthand how our talented team at KACF is helping everyday people, like Jeff and me, become donors who are able to help our community supply countless scholarships to students attending our local post-secondary educational institutions.



Brette Ensz
KACF Board Member
Financial Advisor at
Edward Jones



Just this last year, Jeff and I had our own opportunity to create a scholarship at KACF for UNK students seeking to be part of the Kearney Law Opportunities Program. Jeff and I are grateful to be able to work with KACF and provide a scholarship to a student who would otherwise not receive any additional aid and to do so at the institution that has had such a positive impact on both our lives in the hope that future students can have a similar experience.

Are you interested in creating a scholarship fund and investing in our community's youth? The Kearney Area Community Foundation is here to help! Establishing a scholarship fund with KACF is an effective way to meet your charitable objectives as a local dreamer. Scholarship funds may vary in size and complexity, but one thing is in common throughout all funds: the charitable spirit and dedication to the education of local youth. Call our office at (308) 237-3114 for more information.

Tax Season is Over - Now's the Time to Plan for Next Year!

April 15 has come and gone, and another tax season is officially behind us. While it may be tempting to put taxes out of mind until next year, savvy taxpayers know that now is the perfect time to plan ahead—especially when it comes to charitable giving.

By strategically planning your charitable contributions now, you can maximize your impact on the community while also reducing your taxable income for the 2025 tax year. Here are some smart ways to incorporate charitable giving into your tax strategy:



1. Consider Donor Advised Funds (DAFs)

A Donor Advised Fund allows you to make a tax-deductible contribution now and distribute funds to charities over time. This option provides flexibility and immediate tax benefits. Contact us about setting up a DAF at the Kearney Area Community Foundation (KACF).

2. Group Your Donations

Instead of giving smaller amounts annually, consider making a larger donation in one tax year to surpass the standard deduction threshold and maximize your tax benefits.

3. Donate Appreciated Assets

Giving stocks, mutual funds, or real estate that have increased in value can help you avoid capital gains taxes while still receiving a charitable deduction for the full market value of the asset.

4. Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs)

If you're 70½ or older, you can donate directly from your IRA to a qualified charity. These distributions count toward your required minimum distributions (RMDs) and are excluded from taxable income.

5. Set Up a Charitable Trust

A Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT) or Charitable Lead Trust (CLT) can provide income for you or your beneficiaries while ensuring long-term support for the causes you care about.

6. Work with a Financial Advisor

A tax professional or financial advisor can help you structure your charitable giving in a way that aligns with your financial goals and tax planning strategy.

7. Plan Ahead for Give Where You Live 2025

Give Where You Live will be held on December 4, 2025, with Early Giving starting November 6. Although it's over half a year away, you can start planning your giving now! Start thinking about the local nonprofits you'd like to support, and what size gift you'd like to give. The final list of this year's nonprofits will be available in October.

Planning ahead now will not only reduce your tax burden for the future, but also ensure your charitable giving has the greatest possible impact. By taking steps today, you can make a meaningful difference while optimizing your tax situation for April 15, 2026!

If you're not sure what you want your giving to look like in the next year, KACF is here to help! Judi Sickler is available to discuss your charitable wishes with you and has the knowledge to assist you in making a giving plan that makes the biggest impact on your community.