

GO GREEN!

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

YEAR-END GIVING

Getting ready for your year-end giving? Here are some things to keep in mind when making your charitable plans:

- Beginning in 2026, for taxpayers who itemize, their charitable gifts must exceed 0.5% of AGI before they qualify for deduction. There is no “floor” for the 2025 tax year, so it might be more beneficial to give sooner rather than later.
- Mailed donations must be postmarked by December 31, 2025.
- You can donate to KACF directly from your Individual Retirement Account! Ask your financial advisor to find out how to make the biggest impact and possibly save on taxes.
- Making a stock contribution can be beneficial, especially if you’ve held the stock for more than a year and its value has increased by the time you donate it. You can deduct the stock’s full market value without worrying about capital gains.
- Our annual giving day is a great opportunity to make year-end donations and support giving in our community. On December 4, donate during Give Where You Live! Or call Judi at (308) 237-3114 for ideas of unmet community needs.



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

2025-2026 BOARD AND STAFF

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Vickie Schaepler, **Chair**
Todd Thalken, **Vice Chair**
Jennifer Rowling, **Secretary**
Jeremy Armagost, **Treasurer**

Jack Besse	Jonathan Nikkila
Linette Butler	Dave Oldfather
Brette Ensz	Mindy Oman
Sherry Gangwish	Ron Scott
Brad Green	Jon Watts
Brenda Jensen	Matthew Wecker
Audrey Kauders	

STAFF

Judi Sickler, **President/CEO**
Angie Vlasin, **Finance Director**
Ashley Weets, **Program Manager**
Andi Hartman, **Communications Coordinator**
Jennifer Beck, **Donor Relations Coordinator**

2025 | Volume 4

fall
Newsletter

Recipe for Success

Give Where You Live 2025

We’re getting closer to the end of the year, which means it’s almost time for Give Where You Live (GWYL)! Our 13th annual 24-hour giving day is Thursday, December 4. Since 2013, together we have raised more than \$13.5 million for local nonprofits.

Like this year’s theme, the annual Give Where You Live campaign continues to be a true “recipe for success” in our community. Just as every great dish depends on quality ingredients working together, this campaign unites donors from all walks of life—each one an essential part of the mix.



Thanks to the incredible generosity of our donors, KACF is thrilled to announce a \$100,000 match pool and \$35,000 in prizes available during Give Where You Live! Visit givewhereyoulive.net to explore all the prize opportunities and see how your gift can make an even greater impact.

With Give Where You Live just around the corner, now’s the perfect time to decide which local nonprofit(s) you’d like to support. Inside this newsletter, you’ll find a form listing this year’s participating nonprofits, along with a short description of each organization’s mission.

Simply complete the form and return it with your check by December 4. You can drop it off at our office or mail it to:

2908 W. 39th St., Suite A
Kearney, NE 68845

Note: Mailed checks must be received by December 4 to count toward Give Where You Live totals and be eligible for match and prizes—so please plan ahead!

Prefer to give online? Visit givewhereyoulive.net to make your donation. Early giving opens November 6. All online gifts made between November 6 and December 3 will be processed immediately and qualify for the match and prizes.

Making a gift from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) is a great way to support GWYL. Qualified Charitable Distributions from your IRA go directly to charity and are excluded from your taxable income. It provides an excellent opportunity to help local nonprofits and may lower your taxes. It’s a win-win for both you and your community. Since gifts from an IRA, donor advised fund, appreciated stock or gift of grain can take some time, please call Angie at (308) 237-3114 to plan in advance.



“connecting people who care
with causes that matter”

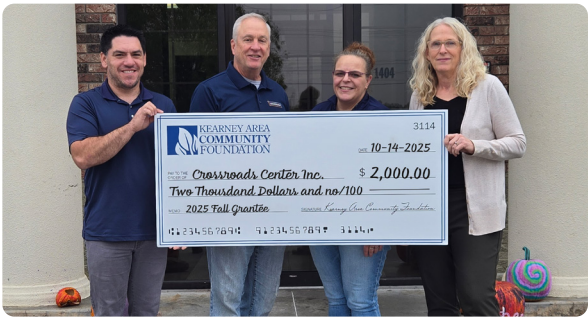
Building for Tomorrow

bi-annual grants

Fall 2025 Grantees

Kearney Area Community Foundation’s “Building for Tomorrow” fund recently awarded \$7,500 in grants to five local nonprofits.

- Crossroads Center Inc. received a grant for their Food Recovery Program, which provides meals and food boxes for those in need in the community.



- Kearney Community Sustainable Housing received a grant to help create a wraparound educational program for residents.



- Kearney Public Schools Foundation received a grant for music and music holders to use during the Parade of Heroes Veterans Ceremony in Washington, D.C. and beyond.
- Nebraska Diaper Bank received a grant for supplemental diaper supplies for local families experiencing a need.
- Salvation Army received a grant for the Holiday Hunger Assistance program, which provides gift cards to families in need so they can prepare and enjoy a traditional holiday dinner together.



Building for Tomorrow applications are accepted on a bi-annual basis, with the next deadline on February 1, 2026. To view guidelines or apply, please visit www.kenarneyfoundation.org/building-for-tomorrow.

Focusing on Family

Kearney’s Appeal to All Ages

I recently accepted a new role supporting the University of Nebraska System — with one non-negotiable: my family and I would stay in Kearney.

A big part of that decision is due to the mission and success of the Kearney Area Community Foundation.

For 30 years, KACF has worked to enhance the quality of life in our area by investing in people, projects, and progress. It has helped make Kearney not just a place to live, but a place to belong. A place to be proud of. A place I find myself bragging about to co-workers in Lincoln and Omaha. A colleague recently told me that one of their favorite things is traveling to Kearney for “family weekends.” No sports. No packed schedules. Just a hotel room and the shared understanding that what Kearney offers is wholesome, welcoming, and truly special.



Jon Watts
Senior Associate Vice
President and COO
University of Nebraska
System
KACF Board Member



As we celebrate this milestone anniversary, I’m reminded of how generosity has shaped our community. Since its founding, KACF has been a true champion of the region by responding to needs, connecting people to causes, and helping good ideas grow. As we look ahead, the next 30 years must carry that spirit forward. We must grow legacy and planned giving, support promising organizations, and meet community needs head-on with purpose, compassion, and determination.

Today, as we reflect on all that’s been accomplished, we invite you to join us. Whether through giving, volunteering or simply cheering us on, your involvement matters.

To all who have given, served, partnered or believed in KACF’s mission — thank you. Your generosity has changed lives. My family, and so many others, are better because of your commitment to the Kearney Area Community Foundation.

A Cause for Celebration

Honoring Three Decades of Impact

A Big Milestone

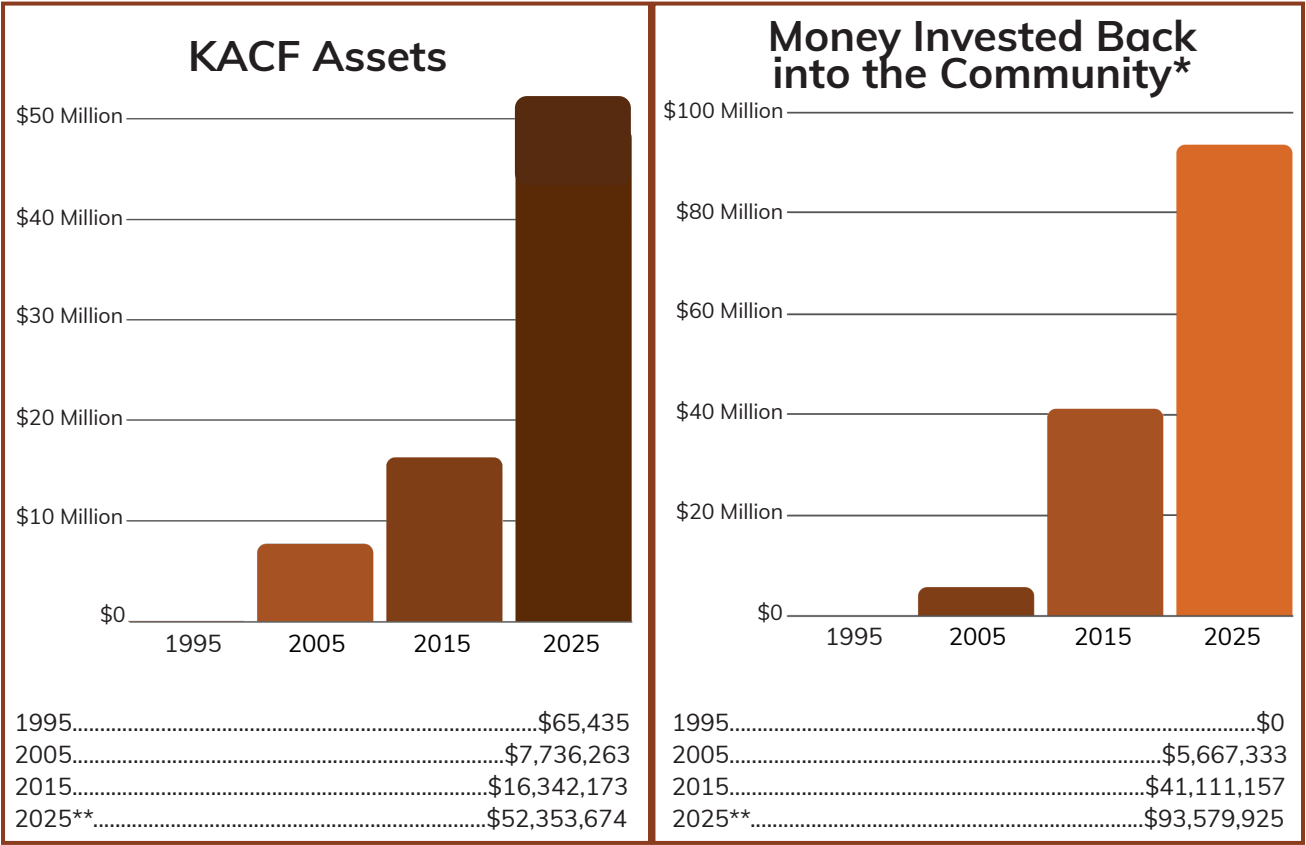
It was a night to remember! Friends and supporters of the Kearney Area Community Foundation (KACF) gathered to celebrate decades of community impact. The anniversary event wasn’t just a party — it was a heartfelt reflection on three decades of generosity and the countless lives touched along the way.

2025 marks KACF’s 30th birthday! An idea that started in a duck blind in 1995 has blossomed into a foundation and philanthropic mission that the community has fully embraced. To celebrate the milestone, KACF had a party on October 2 to thank the community for their support over the past thirty years.

The celebration featured delicious food (including a birthday cake and homemade ice cream!), live music and beautiful autumn weather. It also gave people a chance to tour the new building KACF moved into last year.



Hitting this milestone gives us a chance to look back at how the Foundation has changed since 1995, and every decade since! Check out the graphs below to see how we’ve grown!



*Accumulative, through grant awards, program support and scholarships
**Unaudited 3Q numbers