FALL 2021 Finding Purpose Through Philanthropy F O R E V E R THE BOLDEST **OF DREAMS** Barbara Bartle's Visionary Leadership LINCOLN COMMUNITY I O N N D



#### **Greetings:**

We have recently heard a great deal about closers during the 2021 World Series. It is a tremendous honor to serve as the closer for this era of the Lincoln Community Foundation. The past 12 years have been a great team effort thanks to all of YOU, to the amazing LCF staff and to its stellar board of directors. See home run highlights in our November magazine.

During this season of gratitude, we are thankful for young families planning their legacies. Be sure to read more about this and see the darling family photos. You will also read about LCF's grant making and the talented Prosper Lincoln drivers who are leading the great work of our community agenda.

LCF is proud to name Alec Gorynski as its next president and CEO. Alec was born and raised in Lincoln until his teen years and then returned to Nebraska for college. Read more about Alec's background on the next page. It is an exciting new chapter for the Foundation.

Spectacular...what a wonderful word. It is the perfect description of the generosity in our community. We know how to partner, cooperate, and care for each other. So, what is left to say as my closer?

Let's keep putting that love into action.

With a grateful heart,

Barbara M. Bartle

President



#### **CONTRIBUTORS**



#### **KELLY BURKEN**

Kelly is the Digital Communications Specialist for the Lincoln Community Foundation as well as its resident photographer. She specializes in wedding, family and senior portraits and lives with her husband Kurt and their dogs, Banks and Birdie.



#### MALLORY KRENK

Mallory is a senior Marketing and Management double major at University of Nebraska-Lincoln and LCF's Marketing Intern. Originally from Dwight, Nebraska, Mallory hopes to call Lincoln home upon graduation in May.



#### MARY KAY ROTH

Mary Kay Roth served as the director of communications at Lincoln Public Schools for 20 years and, prior to that, was a newspaper reporter at various publications. She now freelance writes, hikes, travels, plays with her grand-daughters and attempts to catch as many sunrises as possible.



#### **CHUCK WILLIAMS**

Chuck is the Marketing Coordinator for the Lincoln Community Foundation as well as LCF's Veteran Liaison. He is a podcasting enthusiast and amateur voice over talent. When he is not in his recording studio, he is active in his church community.

### **Upcoming Events**



**FEBRUARY 9**Lincoln Littles Giving Day

Inspired by the Prosper Lincoln focus on early childhood, LCF is hosting the fourth-annual Lincoln Littles Giving Day. February 9 gives everyone the opportunity to help more children in need receive a quality early childhood education. Since 2019, our community has raised more than \$2.4 million to help children from lower-income families attend quality early childhood programs. Lincoln Littles scholarships have provided 22,226 days of care for more than 300 children. Read more at LincolnLittles.org.

Want to make a BIG difference for Lincoln's little ones? Contact Chip DeBuse at 402-474-2345 or chipd@lcf.org to become a Match Fund Sponsor.



### MAY 26 Give to Lincoln Day

LCF will host the 11th annual Give to Lincoln Day on Thursday, May 26. Since the first Give to Lincoln Day in 2012, thousands of donors have come together to raise more than \$40 million to support Lancaster County nonprofits.

Do you want to play a BIG part in 2022's Give to Lincoln Day? Contact Tracy Edgerton at 402-474-2345 or tracye@lcf.org to learn about Match Fund Sponsorships.

### Staff Updates

#### ALEC GORYNSKI NAMED NEXT LCF PRESIDENT/CEO

The Lincoln Community Foundation's Board of Directors recently announced the selection of Alec Gorynski as its new President & Chief Executive Officer. The board voted unanimously to approve the search committee's recommendation.

Throughout his career, Alec has led efforts to maximize community impact through philanthropy, planning, and collaboration. He has more than 15 years of experience working across private, nonprofit, and government sectors.

"Alec brings the right energy and experience to continue the positive direction that LCF has taken under Barbara Bartle's leadership," said Foundation Board Chair, Kim Robak. "His skills in developing relationships and building coalitions will help continue the growth of the Foundation."



Alec Gorynski

Before his appointment to lead the Foundation, Alec served as the Vice President of Community Development and Corporate Philanthropy for First National Bank of Omaha and was President of the First National Community Development Corporation. He headed the bank's efforts to be an agent of positive change in the communities served within a seven-state region. Previous roles include Vice President of Regional Community Affairs for Bank of the West and Deputy Grant Administrator in the Omaha Mayor's Office.

"I am honored to be selected to lead the Lincoln Community Foundation for its next chapter and generation of impact," said Alec. "The Foundation has a great reputation and strong track record, which is due to the leadership of Barbara Bartle and her team. I hope to honor her, the staff, the donors, and all the stakeholders of the Foundation with my work ahead."

Originally born and raised in Lincoln, Alec moved to Kansas in his teen years and returned to Nebraska to attend college. He holds a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology and Criminal Justice from Peru State College. Alec and his wife Laura have three young children.

Learn more about Alec in our next issue of Lincoln Forever.



Janell Walther, Bryan Seck, and daughter Miriam

Kyle, Koren and Porter Cartwright

Reagan and Max Rodenberg

# MEET THE NEXT GENERATION OF LCF'S LEGACY SOCIETY

### Putting down roots and giving back in Lincoln

What does the word "community" mean to a group of working professionals who are building their careers and families here in Lincoln? A few young members of LCF's Legacy Society recently came together to discuss just that.

Beyond the bike trails, restaurants, businesses, and venues that make up our great city, the consensus was that community is more of a feeling. A "bigsmall town." A place where you want your kids to feel safe to learn, grow and ultimately give back to.

"There is something special about Lincoln," said Kyle Cartwright. "It is the perfect mix of urban and rural."

His wife Koren agreed. "I always thought that I wanted to leave, but the more I travelled, the more I realized it is really nice to come home to Lincoln."

The Cartwrights have both recently taken entrepreneurial plunge. Koren co-owns a new salon set to open next year and Kyle is the co-founder & COO of SEAchange, LTD which he will be pursuing full-time in 2022. They met in high school when they both participated in the Lincoln High Marching Band. The Cartwrights are raising their son Porter in the city they grew up in and are experiencing the magic that Lincoln has to offer young families.

Janell Walther, senior research manager at the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, and her husband Bryan Seck, Chief Talent Strategist at Kawasaki Lincoln, didn't grow up in Lincoln, but their love story started here. In fact, they met in front of an elevator at the Lincoln Community Foundation building. They chose Lincoln as the

place to start their family and enjoy getting out on its many bike trails with daughter Miriam.

Law school brought Max and Reagan Rodenburg together. Originally from Omaha, Reagan is currently a benefits advisor with UNICO Group. Her husband Max, a partner in Rembolt Ludtke's business services and estate planning practice groups, was first introduced to LCF in 2015 when his parents were going through their estate planning process.

"I was really impressed by the opportunities to utilize LCF through planned giving," said Max. "At the time, joining the Legacy Society was as simple as listing the Foundation as a beneficiary on a retirement account. Now as we grow in our lives, we can make our



legacy plans a little more formal and have a little more weight to them than when I was a law student."

All three couples have made plans either through a will, trust, or beneficiary designation to establish legacy gifts now, to be funded at end of life. As the conversation turned to giving back, the young philanthropists agreed that establishing their legacy giving plans through the Foundation offered both ease and peace of mind.

"There are many young working professionals out there without a current will or estate plan that care deeply about their community," said Reagan. "Working with LCF is an easy and simple way to allocate funds to the causes you care about."

When asked about the benefits of establishing legacy plans at a young age, Max laughed. "Well, you're talking to an estate planning attorney here."

"It's an important exercise to go through

for a plethora of reasons," he continued.
"It challenges you to think about the
causes that you want to support and
what you want your legacy to look like.
You can really find the joy in giving back."

Finding joy in giving back resonated with the Cartwrights as well.

"You start giving and you feel good about that, and you give a little more. It's contagious, and that really translates well into planned giving," said Kyle. "Down the road, you are going to be glad you started the process early, identifying what matters to you and creating your values in a community sense."

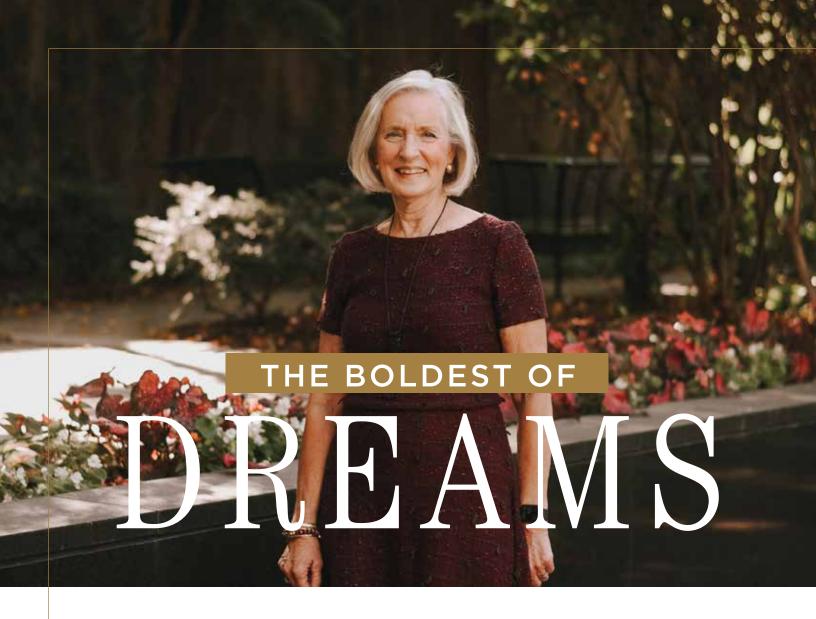
The flexibility that the Foundation offers in terms of legacy planning was also important to all three couples. Especially after already experiencing so many "unprecedented" events in their lifetime.

"As the community grows and as needs change, we know that we will be working with an organization that can pivot and address issues as they come up," said Bryan. "Nobody would have seen Covid coming in 2018. Who knows what the future will bring. With this gift, we know the Foundation will be there to address needs we may not have even thought of before."

Janell agreed. "I think that philanthropy has the opportunity to be really nimble and flexible," she said. "LCF's philosophy and professional staff allow it to pivot quickly, in partnership with government and private sector leaders, to meet community need."

Ultimately, all three couples felt that LCF was an institution they can count on to achieve their charitable goals throughout their lifetimes.

"We believe in the mission of the Foundation," said Bryan. "We feel very confident that whether it's now, or 50 years from now, the dollars that are in our gift will be used to improve the community."



Barbara Bartle chooses her words carefully, always poised and composed, an Apple watch on her wrist and, at all times, a lengthy list inside her head. Yet underneath that calm lies a smalltown girl who grew up to be a woman of grace and grit – a woman who has poured sweat and love into the Lincoln community, most notably over the past decade as president of the Lincoln Community Foundation.

"The Foundation is truly the heart of Lincoln, a place where public, private, non-profit and philanthropy intersect," she said. "It's been a gift to serve for so many years."

Barbara retires at the close of 2021,

leaving behind a decade of vast change and achievement touching every facet of the community. In fact, it's tough to wrap your arms around everything she has accomplished since arriving at the Foundation in 2010. For example, the number of donor funds has more than quadrupled during her time, assets have nearly tripled, and Give to Lincoln Day was born.

Barb distinctly remembers the birth of the first Give to Lincoln Day, launched during the recession when non-profits were struggling to raise operating dollars. "Give to Lincoln was a great way to help them get through the summer months," she said. The result, of course, was a phenomenal success that has raised more than \$40 million, reaching a record-breaking \$8 million in 2021 despite a global pandemic. "We have so many people in Lincoln who can get energized," Barb said. "It takes all of us to make things happen here, so we help each other in Lincoln."

Indeed, this is a woman who dreams big dreams – who sees paths open everywhere.

Tony Goins, director of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development and a member of the Foundation's Board of Directors, described Barb as a visionary whose legacy is engraved 66

### We have to think about ensuring our great city for the next generations.

- Barbara Bartle

99

in stone. "She influences people to see a path in the midst of challenges and inspires enthusiasm so that her team and constituents want to take the hill," he said. "Barb is the master at leveraging relationships. You can't tell her 'No."

"Clearly Barbara's vision, mission and values-driven leadership helped facilitate a bold strategic plan," Tony elaborated. "Then she recruited the right people to support execution of that plan."

Barb routinely shrugs off credit, however, pointing instead to the collective action of generous donors, steadfast citizens and leaders, and dedicated staff. "I cannot tell you what tremendous staff we have," she said. "They have such high missions and care so deeply about this community."

Barb grew up in Cozad, Nebraska, with a mom who urged her to find purpose and who told stories of a pioneering great grandmother, a single mother who raised five children in the Sandhills and modeled a life of true grit. Barb never forgot those stories.

Beginning her career as a small-town teacher, Barb eventually moved to Lincoln where she landed at the Lied Center for Performing Arts as volunteer coordinator, spearheading the Friends of Lied Program. She then moved to the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools, where she started its Fund-A-Need initiative and helped create the Community Learning Centers.

But Barb believed she could paint on a larger canvas at the Lincoln Community Foundation. "I have always wanted to impact children, and now I could impact children and their families – an entire community," she said.

After arriving in the spring of 2010, Barb made magic throughout the next decade.

- Foundation assets grew from \$62 million to more than \$190 million.
- Annual grants to the community grew from \$4 million to more than \$21 million.
- The first Community Land Trust in Nebraska was established to address affordable housing.
- New initiatives were launched, spearheading support for veterans, early childhood, downtown revitalization, and capital improvement projects.
- LCF facilitated the wildly successful community-building efforts of Lincoln Vital Signs and Prosper Lincoln.

Barb is especially proud of Prosper Lincoln. Her leadership ensured the Foundation not only had a seat at the table but stepped up and took the lead. As Barb described, Prosper Lincoln required much of LCF and the community. "Faith and hope. Working together. Trusting and leading with the boldest of dreams."

As Paula Metcalf, the Foundation's Vice President for Gift Planning and General Counsel, noted, "Barb is always connecting people through improved partnerships and community conversations. Her tireless efforts helped create heightened awareness and strategies that support affordable and quality early childhood education programs, more affordable housing."

"Barbara's personality exudes optimism," said Paula. "She is a free thinker who is always coming up with new ideas to make Lincoln a better community for all of its residents."

Barb certainly stirred hope and optimism when she developed a remarkable pandemic plan that resulted in more than \$1.2 million for 66 non-profit organizations through the Lincoln COVID-19 Response Fund, established through a partnership with Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird and United Way of Lincoln and Lancaster County.

"I knew we had to work together and work fast," Barb said. "I was paying attention to what other cities were doing and knew it worked better to have one community fund. We were definitely ready, and the support from this community was overwhelming."

Barb recognizes there is work ahead. "We have to think about ensuring our great city for the next generations," she said. "We can do what we do now because in 1955 our founders literally built a solid foundation, and since then we have stood on their shoulders to carry that mission forward."

#### Advice for her successor?

"You inherit a generous-giving community. Now you have the responsibility and honor of making a difference."

Barb admits it is tough to walk away. At the same time she is ready to spend time with grandchildren, serve as district governor for Rotary International, and look for a few new adventures.

She loves the advice contained in the words of Meister Eckhart. "And suddenly you know: It's time to start something new and trust the magic of beginnings."

"I am ready for a little magic," Barbara said. "I am ready for something unexpected."



LCF Diamond Donors Dedication, 2016 - Barbara Bartle and LCF staff gather to celebrate the Diamond Donors who helped continue to move the vision of Lincoln Forever forward in celebration of LCF's 60th anniversary.



Nebraska Gold Star Families Memorial Monument Unveiling, 2017 - Barbara Bartle shakes the hand of Hershel "Woody" Williams, the last living medal of honor recipient for his service at Iwo Jima.



#### Barbara Bartle Forever Fund

Barbara Bartle will forever be known as a catalyst for community development and positive change.

While she is retiring as president of the Lincoln Community Foundation at the end of 2021, her work will remain steadfast through the Barbara Bartle Forever Fund.

To honor her career, Barbara's children have established the Barbara Bartle Forever Fund. By contributing to Barbara's fund, you will help ensure a perpetual stream of grants for the ever-changing needs and opportunities in our community.

Donate to the Barbara Bartle Forever Fund at LCF.org.

### LCF Celebrates Benefactors & Legacy Society

MEMBERS OF OUR LEGACY
SOCIETY AND LINCOLN
BENEFACTORS ARE LEADERS
WHO LOVE OUR COMMUNITY
AND INSPIRE OTHERS
THROUGH THEIR INVESTMENT
IN ITS GROWTH.

#### Lincoln Benefactors

The establishment of our generous Benefactor Society many years ago, has formed the backbone of the Lincoln Community Foundation. These gifts have provided long-term stability for the Foundation and significant benefits to our community nonprofit organizations.

With a current or a planned estate gift, you can become a Benefactor three ways:

- Individual gifts of \$50,000 or more to the Lincoln Community Foundation Fund, our operating endowments
- Gifts of \$500,000 or more to any endowed fund held at LCF
- Gifts of \$1,000,000 or more to any LCF fund made during a 12-month period

#### **Legacy Society**

LCF's Legacy Society recognizes those who have chosen to support our community with an end-of-life gift through a will or trust, or beneficiary designation via a retirement plan, investment account or insurance policy. Such gifts may be of any size. As a member of the Legacy Society, you join a distinguished group of people who share a common vision for the future of Lincoln.

To learn more about planning a gift that leaves a lasting mark on Lincoln, contact Diane Mendenhall, VP for Gift Planning, at 402-474-2345 or dianem@lcf.org.



LCF Board Chair Kim Robak addresses the crowd at the Benefactor and Legacy Society Reception.

It is always an honor to recognize and celebrate the generosity of our Benefactors and members of our Legacy Society. They are leaders who love our community and inspire others through their investment in the Lincoln Community Foundation.

In August Benefactors and Legacy Society members gathered at the beautiful Lincoln Community Foundation Garden. New members in attendance were introduced.

WE ARE HONORED TO UNVEIL OUR NEW BENEFACTORS AND LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS, AS OF OCTOBER 2021.

#### BENEFACTORS ----

Stacie & Bob Bleicher James & D'Arcy Blosser James D.\* and Rosalind K. Carr Ann & Matthew Finkner JoAnn Martin\* Ray & Carolyn Zeisset Arthur & Christine Zygielbaum

#### LEGACY SOCIETY

Paul & Marcella\* Konig Galen & Carmelee Tuma Robert S. & Susan K. Wilkinson Art & Chris Zygielbaum \*deceased





### Making a Collective Impact

### PROSPER LINCOLN DRIVERS WORK TOGETHER TO ADVANCE COMMUNITY AGENDA

Ninety minutes pass quickly as Prosper Lincoln drivers gather once a month to provide updates and collaborate on the many community-wide efforts taking place to lift Lincoln higher.

What started as 2,100 ideas to address the 2014 Lincoln Vital Signs findings has evolved into a focused community agenda. LCF has provided backbone funding for Prosper Lincoln since its inception. The first phase of the agenda included three focus areas and three developers. Now in its second phase, the work of Prosper Lincoln has been embedded within the community through the drivers – leaders from different organizations who wake up every day thinking about the phase two focus areas.

Anne Brandt, executive director of Lincoln Littles, is the driver of Early Childhood. Anne's work focuses on ensuring access to high-quality

early childcare for all children in Lincoln through business and community engagement, policy change, collaboration, and awareness.

Nola Derby-Bennett, director of Community Learning Centers (CLC) at Lincoln Public Schools, is the codriver of Prosper Lincoln's Strong Neighborhoods focus area. Nola oversees the 29 CLC's located throughout the community and works with four new community builders (see side bar).

Allison Hatch, director of workforce development at the Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development, is the new driver of Innovative

Workforce, following Bryan Seck.

Allison works with local employers and agencies to connect individuals to full-time careers.

**Wynn Hjermstad**, community development manager with the

City of Lincoln, is the driver for the **Affordable Housing** focus area. Wynn implements Lincoln's Affordable Housing Coordinated Action Plan while also managing the pandemic-related Housing and Utility Assistance funds, Lead Based Paint Hazard Reduction efforts, and federally funded housing assistance programs.

Shawn Ryba, former executive director of South of Downtown Community Development Organization, served as the co-driver for Prosper Lincoln's Strong Neighborhoods. Shawn worked on South of Downtown's redevelopment and strategy plan and responded to community residents' priorities.

Janell Walther, senior research manager at the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, is a consultant for Prosper Lincoln and facilitates monthly meetings with the drivers. This provides a rich opportunity for overlap and collaboration. Discussion topics range from rent and utility assistance for residents impacted by Covid to workforce needs related to childcare, from community health events providing hiring opportunities and free physicals for students, to new affordable housing developments.

A common thread that runs throughout the drivers' work is the effort to achieve equity in social and economic mobility in our community. This year LCF was selected to participate in NEON, a cohort of seven community foundations working to develop common measurements and share strategies and progress reports with each other as they work to dismantle structural and systemic racism and achieve equity in their communities.

"We learned from Lincoln Vital Signs that Lincoln is growing stronger in many ways, but at the same time, not everyone is prospering," said LCF President Barbara Bartle. "Being a member of the NEON cohort is building upon our commitment to increase equity of opportunity in Lincoln."

Another benefit of being a part of the NEON cohort is the opportunity to engage in ground-breaking work with Urban Institute as they develop ways to measure outcomes for systemic change.

The Prosper Lincoln drivers bring their experience and passion to the table and work together to solve complex issues facing our community. The opportunity to collaborate both deepens and strengthens their work to build a more prosperous future for all Lincolnites.

Thank you to Shawn Ryba for his dedication to the South Downtown community. He has recently been named Executive Director for Big Brothers Big Sisters Lincoln. Congratulations!

To learn more about the community agenda and work of Prosper Lincoln, visit ProsperLincoln.org.



From left to right: Jodi-Renee Giron, NE Quadrant Community Builder, Jenee Kucera, SE Quadrant, Community Builder, Samantha Thomas, NW Quadrant Community Builder, Emily Trauernicht, SW Quadrant Community Builder

## LCF Grants Funds for Four Community Builders

LCF continued to maximize the impact of its discretionary grant-making in 2021 by committing to Prosper Lincoln's community agenda. In support of the Strong Neighborhoods focus area, LCF approved funding to the Lincoln Community Learning Centers (CLC) for a community builder in each quadrant of the city as well as mini grants to facilitate resident community engagement in neighborhoods.

Using an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) framework, these Community Builders work with CLC schools, families, and neighborhoods to build relationships, make connections, and elevate community/resident voices. Lincoln Community Learning Centers strive to promote successful students, thriving families, and strong neighborhoods.

The ABCD framework taps into the assets of residents and uses existing community strengths to build stronger neighborhoods for the future. Do not be surprised to see your Community Builders attending Neighborhood Association meetings, working with businesses and local community organizations to plan and execute neighborhood events, or meeting and connecting with people who live and work in our neighborhoods at your local coffee shops.



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### Open Door Grant Helps Rabble Mill Move Towards Opening of "Bay High"

Since 2010 The Bay has been a safe space for Lincoln's youth. The one-of-a-kind community space features the state's only public indoor skatepark as well as a music venue, digital art lab, and Goldenrod Coffee. The space will soon be home to an LPS Focus Program, Bay High, that aims to equip highly diverse high school students with the social network, confidence, and social-emotional and technical skills needed to ensure agency and upward mobility.

With the help of an Open Door Grant from Lincoln Community Foundation, Bay High will continue to make a positive impact on the Lincoln community.

Centered around Content Creation and Emerging Media Technology, the new Focus Program will serve approximately 100 youth each year, with focus areas in



skateboarding, music, art, and fashion. Teacher and student applications for Bay High will be opening this fall, in preparation for a Fall 2022 launch.

Rabble Mill, the nonprofit behind projects like The Bay and Bay High, plans to use the Open Door Grant to help offset operating expenses, such as hiring teachers and curriculum builders. The organization is currently fundraising for building renovations in order to create a space that will further inspire learning and creativity.

The skills and education students receive at The Bay and Bay High will enable them to contribute to Lincoln's thriving tech workforce. The Bay is currently collaborating with local businesses to aid in curriculum development and build internship opportunities, creating a direct pipeline from Bay High to Lincoln's workforce.

"Not only are the students going to get first-hand experience in a field that they're passionate about, but they are also building a strong network of professionals in the Lincoln community," said Rabble Mill's Development Director Morgan Kazanjian.

Open Door Grants, launched in January 2020, serve as an unrestricted and flexible way for local nonprofits to meet existing needs or address challenges and opportunities within the community. Grants may be applied to operations, programs, or capital projects.

"The new Open Door Grant application has been simplified and streamlined in a way that makes it so easy," said Morgan. "I love it."

#### LCF'S UPDATED ONLINE PORTAL FOR DONOR ADVISED FUND HOLDERS

The Lincoln Community Foundation recently launched a new Donor Portal! Once you have created a fund at LCF, we make giving through your fund easy, convenient, and meaningful. LCF's secure Donor Portal lets you manage your fund online by viewing your fund balance, submitting grant recommendations, and viewing past grants – all with up-to-the-minute information.

Are you a fund holder needing assistance logging on to the new portal? Contact Michelle Paulk at 402-474-2345 or michellep@lcf.org.

To learn more about how Donor Advised Funds can simplify your giving and record keeping, contact Chip DeBuse at 402-474-2345 or chipd@lcf.org.