

Finding Purpose Through Philanthropy

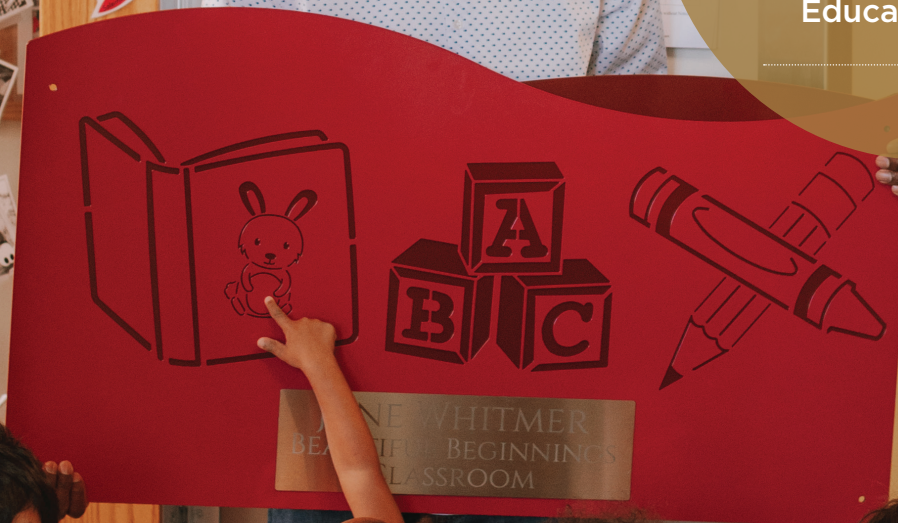
FALL 2022

# LINCOLN

F O R E V E R

## BEAUTIFUL BEGINNINGS

Generosity Opens Doors at Educare Lincoln



LINCOLN COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION





## Greetings:

What an exciting year for the Foundation! We have completed a strategic plan that establishes our top priorities to realize long-term growth and community goals. We are developing new tools and practices to better serve your philanthropic aspirations. We are refreshing our brand to communicate our modern identity and purpose. And we have made meaningful progress in our work to support prosperity for all of Lincoln.

In the midst of such extraordinary change, one thing that remains constant is our purpose to inspire and facilitate the generosity that transforms our community. We hope the stories in our fall newsletter leave you energized about the great work and life-changing gifts that are shaping our city.

As we begin the season of giving thanks and giving back, LCF is grateful to be your partner in philanthropy. There is much to be thankful for in Lincoln.



With appreciation,

Alec Gorynski

## CONTRIBUTORS



### KELLY BURKEN

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



### CHUCK WILLIAMS

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

# Empowering Students

Lincoln Community Foundation would like to congratulate this year's scholarship recipients. More than 300 deserving students received scholarships totaling \$600,200. Scholarships were awarded to students across the state with a variety of merits, needs, and intended areas of study.



See the full list of 2022 LCF Scholarship Recipients at [www.lcf.org/impacting-community/student-scholarships](http://www.lcf.org/impacting-community/student-scholarships).

**Build a stronger future for students and create a scholarship fund by contacting Diane Mendenhall, Vice President for Gift Planning, at 402-474-2345 or [dianem@lcf.org](mailto:dianem@lcf.org).**



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## Staff Shares



Staff Accountant, **Candace Dussault**, recently retired after seven years at the Foundation. Candace's diligent efforts helped LCF process more than 7,500 grants each year.

"Candace has been a valued member of our team and will be greatly missed," said Alec Gorynski. "We congratulate her on a wonderful career and wish her the best in retirement."



Digital Communications Specialist, **Kelly Burken**, and her husband Kurt welcomed their first baby **Rye Anton Burken** on July 13. Our LCF family congratulates them on their future philanthropist!





# TURNING LINCOLN VITAL SIGNS DATA INTO ACTION

Strong communities use data to make collective changes that ensure everyone has the opportunity to succeed and thrive. Lincoln’s data report – Lincoln Vital Signs – informs Lincoln residents about trends affecting our city and invites collaboration across all sectors of our community to address its findings.

In 2014, a group of public and private organizations commissioned the first Lincoln Vital Signs report to educate folks about the socio-economic conditions of our community and inform funding decisions. Now in its fifth iteration, the recently published 2022 Lincoln Vital Signs report provides us with a shared understanding of our community strengths, persistent concerns, and overall population shifts.

“This information is critically important as our community leaders continue to work toward our shared economic and social prosperity,” said Alec Gorynski.

“Lincoln Vital Signs is actively informing organizations such as Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, United Way, Lincoln Community Foundation, and many other agencies as we work on the long-term needs and goals of our community.”

The data from Lincoln Vital Signs inspires and shapes giving strategies of both individual donors and institutional foundations and helps nonprofit organizations orient their programs toward clearly articulated needs. Lincoln Vital Signs also substantiates Proser Lincoln’s community agenda, which continues facilitate collaborative efforts to address early

childhood, affordable housing, strong neighborhoods, and an innovative workforce.

Overall, the recent report tells us that Lincoln continues to flourish in many ways. Lincoln has a high-quality workforce with low unemployment. Lincoln is a safe place to live, as evidenced by low property and violent crime rates compared to cities across the country of a similar size.

Our city has increasingly become more diverse, with persons of color now comprising 21% of the population. Poverty, homelessness, and food insecurity are all lower since the original Vital Signs report in 2014; and we saw a reduction in the number of census tracts experiencing extreme poverty.



Although many trends are moving in a positive direction, there are still some areas for concern. Per capita income adjusted for cost of living continues to trail the nation's average, and this gap is increasing. The cost of early childhood education continues to rise, an issue of critical concern for working families.

Lincoln's unemployment rate for racially minority populations is higher than Lincoln's total unemployment, and the poverty rate among black residents is more than double the rate for white residents.

General population shifts will shape future demand for services and programs. People moving into Lincoln currently drives our overall population growth, and half of those moving here are young adults 18 to 24 years of age. However, Lincoln's overall population is aging, as the 65+ population has grown more than four times faster than any other age group in the past decade.

Local funders and institutions, in partnership with the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, have continued to invest in and produce Vital Signs to ensure the community operates under a comprehensive and consistent set of metrics.

"For our community to become all we know it can be, we need to work together to address the Lincoln Vital Signs findings," said Alec.

"That means fewer people living in poverty. It means access to affordable housing and high-quality childcare and early education. It means a strong workforce and strong neighborhoods. It means together – we thrive."

**Explore the data and download the full report at [LincolnVitalSigns.org](https://LincolnVitalSigns.org).**



*Community members enjoy the Give to Lincoln Day nonprofit festival in Tower Square on May 26.*

## Lincoln's One Big Day of Giving

The 11th annual Give to Lincoln Day on May 26th raised a record-breaking \$8,006,074, nearly \$80,000 more than the previous record set last year. The funds are designated to help support 479 local nonprofits that serve Lincoln and Lancaster County. All participating nonprofits received a proportional share of a \$500,000 match fund based upon the organization's percentage of the total dollars raised, thanks to many generous sponsors including Presenting Sponsor, West Gate Bank.

"This year's Give to Lincoln Day was a celebration of generosity for this community," said Alec Gorynski. "To surpass last year's record-breaking event is tremendous, and we could not be more grateful for everyone who came together to make this such a special day!"

Nearly 28,000 donations were received for the 11th annual Give to Lincoln Day. The event has raised nearly \$50 million for local nonprofits in its 11-year history.

"Our local nonprofits enhance our lives and lift our spirits," said Alec. "Today's results are a collective 'thank you' for the incredible work that they do."

Match Sponsors include: West Gate Bank (Presenting Sponsor), ABC Electric, Assurity Life Insurance Company, Bill and Marilyn Cintani, Cornhusker Bank, Davis Design, The family of Alfred A. DuTeau, Bob and Jan FitzSimmons, HBE Becker Meyer Love LLP, KidGlov, Mail Management Services Inc., William J. Mueller & Kim M. Robak, Olsson, Pepsi Cola of Lincoln, Pinnacle Bank, Runza National, Joe W. and Ruth K. Seacrest Fund, Tom and Lisa Smith, Talent Plus Inc., Mark H. Tallman, Bill and Mae Whitmer Family Fund and WRK Family Foundation.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Give to Lincoln Day 2023**  
**Wednesday, May 24**





# BEAUTIFUL *Beginnings*

## NEW EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOM HONORS THE LEGACY OF JANE WHITMER

There were happy dances and happy tears at Educare Lincoln on September 14 as Mae Whitmer toured the new early childhood classroom opened in memory of her sister-in-law, Jane (Erickson) Whitmer, who passed away in 2019 after a courageous battle against cancer.

“Every child deserves a beautiful beginning,” said Mae. “I’m just so happy it’s finally happening. Jane’s doing her happy dance.”

Mae credits Jane with igniting her passion for early childhood. Jane dedicated her life to working with young children, particularly those facing the greatest odds. During her career she taught Head Start, kindergarten and first grade.

In the 1980’s, Jane co-created the SRI/St. Elizabeth Child Development Center, which became the Gallup Child Development Center. With Helen Raikes, Jane co-authored Beautiful Beginnings, a comprehensive curriculum for infants and toddlers.

What could be more fitting to honor her memory than making sure that more children in Lincoln have the opportunity for a

beautiful beginning? And even more fitting, Jane’s dear friend Helen Raikes made the key introduction that started Mae on her philanthropic path with Educare Lincoln.

Mae reflected on her first meeting with Executive Director, Quentin Brown, where everything clicked into place.

“Quentin told me about a conversation he had with his wife when he was about to take this job that would relocate them to Lincoln,” said Mae. “He told her they were ‘going to Nebraska to change lives’ – that’s how I knew this was the right fit.”

Educare Lincoln is a research-based early childhood education program that serves children with the highest need in our community. As a no-cost provider, Educare is both a cutting-edge learning facility and community center that instills the importance of the first five years of every child’s life. Educare Lincoln is the third Educare school built in Nebraska and is connected to Belmont Elementary School.

“Thanks to Mae, we were able to reach full capacity this August,” Quentin shared. “This gift literally opens doors to children who otherwise would not have been served.”

To make Mae’s philanthropic dream a reality, she worked with LCF Vice President and General Counsel, Tracy Edgerton. Mae will utilize qualified charitable distributions (QCD’s) from her IRA in support of this new classroom at Educare Lincoln. With her initial distribution supporting classroom resources,





*Educare Lincoln pays tribute to the legacy of Jane Whitmer with a striking memorial to be hung in the classroom.*

renovations, and staff, her generosity will create an endowment that will support the classroom forever.

“I’m struck by Mae’s humility and her passion,” said Tracy. “Her desire to ensure that every child in Lincoln has what they need to really thrive in our community is truly inspiring. Mae has created an extraordinary opportunity for a whole new group of children that will pay dividends into the future.”

Mae was joined by her family and friend Helen Raikes as she toured the “Beautiful Beginnings” classroom.

“There is something very special when a donor makes a transformational gift during their lifetime,” reflected Tracy. “Getting to see Mae’s gift in action with the smiling faces of the children looking up at us in their new environment was extremely moving.”

“Generosity is what got us here today,” said Alec Gorynski. “Year after year, the lives of 12 families will be enriched with the education and care they’ll receive in this classroom. I can’t think of a better way to honor Jane’s beautiful spirit than this awesome expression of philanthropy.”



*Mae Whitmer (right) and her daughter, Lori Wennstedt, tour the Beautiful Beginnings Classroom on September 14.*



**Turn your passion into action with a transformational gift for our community. Contact Tracy Edgerton at 402-474-2345 or [tracye@lcf.org](mailto:tracye@lcf.org).**





## Tom and Lisa Smith Honored with 2022 Charity Award

Lincoln Community Foundation honored Tom and Lisa Smith with the 2022 Charity Award for their service, leadership, and philanthropy at LCF's annual Donor Recognition celebration luncheon on Thursday, May 5.

"As a community, we're indebted to Tom and Lisa Smith for their many contributions," said Alec Gorynski. "The Charity Award is a meaningful demonstration of our appreciation for their dedication and commitment to the growth and prosperity of Lincoln."

Lisa and Tom have established a legacy as heart-forward philanthropists who give freely of their time, talent, and treasure to the many causes and organizations they care about. Those

in attendance at the luncheon viewed a video tribute to Tom and Lisa for their personal and philanthropic connections in Lincoln.

"I couldn't think of anyone more deserving when I look at all they've done for our community for so many years," remarked family friend, Tom Henning.

Married in 2004, both Tom and Lisa have always had a passion for philanthropy, and this commitment became even stronger as a couple.

"Tom and Lisa are both dynamic," said family friend, Marc LeBaron. "They roll their sleeves up, they like to get involved and they work hard."

Tom and Lisa are graduates of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's College of Business Administration – a philanthropic thread that ties them together.

"Tom and Lisa's philanthropic impact to the University has been tremendous," said Dr. Kathy Farrell, dean of the College of Business. "Their giving comes in ways that are so impactful from so many different angles."

Serving in leadership roles on nonprofit boards in many different sectors, Tom and Lisa's vision for a stronger Lincoln can be seen throughout our community.

"These are two people that are so giving and so humble," remarked Christie



Hinrichs, president and CEO of Tabitha. “They are bright people with bright ideas, and they bring their ideas to execution.”

“They are very diverse in what they are interested in,” said family friend, Kathy LeBaron.

“From the environment to community – South of Downtown and the 2015 Group being two examples that come to mind – to organizations that help families and children to funding scholarships,” she continued. “They don’t do it to have their name put on something. They do it because they care.”

Tom’s involvement with South of Downtown started on the ground level – partnering with fellow philanthropists, consultants, and the Lincoln Community Foundation to make improvements to the neighborhood, including investments in housing.

“About seven or eight years ago he approached me and convinced me that the neighborhood was in need of a lot of help,” said David Schmidt, Concord Management and Development. “He has a way of convincing me and others to get involved in projects, and that’s what we did.”

“Their passion is just infectious with their friends and their business associates,” agreed family friend, Candy Henning. “Lisa has led numerous charitable efforts in the state, and in most of those efforts has always assumed a leadership role.”

“They are also just dear friends,” said Kathy Farrell. “They open up their home, they open up their life, they open up themselves to the people around them. They are so welcoming. To me, that exemplifies what Lincoln is about.”



*LCF President, Alec Gorynski, greets guests at the annual Donor Recognition Event.*



*Tom and Lisa Smith accept the 2022 Charity Award.*





## For Good

### LCF CELEBRATES NEW BENEFACTORS, LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES AT SPECIAL UNVEILING

At the close of 2021, Lincoln Community Foundation's board of directors prepared to celebrate President Barbara Bartle's retirement and for a moment, members of the board were stumped. How do you honor a 12-year tenure of leadership such as Barbara's? The board decided it needed to be something as impactful as her time at the Foundation – something that truly would leave a mark.

In June, the board unveiled and dedicated the newly named *Lincoln Community Foundation Barbara Bartle Garden* at LCF's annual Legacy Society, Benefactor and Trustee celebration.

"Barbara's impact on the Foundation will last for generations," said Alec Gorynski, president. "With the Barbara Bartle

Garden we are able to permanently memorialize her leadership."

Barbara and her husband Bob recently set up the Robert F. and Barbara M. Bartle Garden Program Endowment Fund at the Foundation to support and fund programming in the Barbara Bartle Garden in perpetuity.

The evening also celebrated and welcomed new Benefactors, Legacy Society members and Trustees. These folks are passionate leaders of the Lincoln community who inspire others through their investment in its future.

#### Lincoln Benefactors

The establishment of LCF's Benefactor Society many years ago formed the

backbone of the Lincoln Community Foundation. These gifts provide long-term stability for the Foundation and significant benefits to our community nonprofit organizations.

The Benefactor Society recognizes current or future gifts of \$50,000 or more to the LCF Operating Fund, gifts of \$500,000 or more to any endowed fund, and gifts of \$1 million or more to any LCF fund made during a 12-month period.

#### Legacy Society

Many donors document their charitable plans in a will or trust, establishing a gift now and funding it at end of life. These legacy gifts are highly honored by the Foundation.



# Thank you to our new Benefactors and Legacy Society Members



## 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 Chip DeBuse, Vice President for Development, at 402-474-2345 or [chipd@lcf.org](mailto:chipd@lcf.org).**

*New Benefactors, members of LCF's Legacy Society and Trustees gathered for a garden celebration on June 23. From left to right: Alec Gorynski, Todd & Amy Peterson, Reagan & Max Rodenburg, Fred & Julie Hoppe, Margaret Bartle & Terry Wittler, Pam Manske, Ruth Gerber, Anne Vidaver, Shirley Daugherty, Derrel Martin, Bill Woito, and Robert Hinrichs.*

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 2022.**

### NEW BENEFACTORS

Jim & D'Arcy Blosser

Rosalind & James\* Carr

Pam Manske & Marty Adkins

JoAnn\* & Derrel Martin

Linda Rossi

Scott & Jane Stuart

Dr. Bruce & Debra Taylor

Art & Chris Zygielbaum

### NEW LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS

Cory & Lynné Bergt

Rosalind Carr

Jenny Chapin

Lyle\* & Doris Jones

Dale E. & Janice E. Kimes

Pam Manske & Marty Adkins

Linda Rossi

Dr. Bruce & Debra Taylor

Anne Vidaver

Richard Vierk

Bert & Susan Wilkinson

Barbara\* & Bill Woito

Art & Chris Zygielbaum

*\* honored posthumously*



## Story of Impact: Truth & Reconciliation History Project

Uncovering the racial history of Nebraska and Lincoln's last 170 years is not an easy task – but getting us closer to the truth is just what a group of community members have set out to do.

Initiated by the Lincoln NAACP and Nebraskans for Peace, *Roots of Local Justice: Historical Truth and Fair Reconciliation* aims to create a well-documented history of race in Lincoln and Nebraska. In 2021, the Foundation granted \$7,500 to the project through our Open Door Grants program.

The idea came to life during discussions at a recent Nelson Mandela picnic, a celebration these groups host in Trago Park each year to honor Mandela's civil rights work and his efforts towards truth and reconciliation.

“What initially started as a fun social event led to some forthright conversations about race and racism in Lincoln and the state of Nebraska,” recalled William Arfmann, co-president of the local Nebraskans for

Peace chapter and member of the project's steering committee.

“We decided we need to do more than have meetings,” added Dewayne Mays, president of the Lincoln NAACP, and chair of the committee.

As the conversation turned local, the idea took shape to tell the story of race and racism in Lincoln and Nebraska. The steering committee organized the project into researching and sharing the stories of Nebraskans from five distinct groups: African American, Latino, Asian American, Native American, and Refugees since 1975.

The Foundation's Open Door Grant enabled the group to hire a graduate student to assist in the collection and compilation of stories for the project's bibliography. Students at Lincoln Public Schools are already using this bibliography, which is currently available on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Digital Commons webpage.

The project's goal is that by the end of 2023, these five bibliographies will reflect a comprehensive narrative to help folks understand the history of our community, where we have gone astray, and what we can do to bring about reconciliation in our community and in our state. The committee is currently hosting local community listening sessions on Nebraska and Lincoln's history.

“We needed to be able to do something for our community to bring people together and to talk about the truth, justice and reconciliation,” said Dewayne.

**To learn more about the Roots of Local Justice program and book a speaker, contact Dewayne Mays at 402-429-4477 or [mdmays402@gmail.com](mailto:mdmays402@gmail.com). Read more stories of impact at [LCF.org](http://LCF.org).**

*Support Local Nonprofits  
This Holiday Season*

Your donor advised fund is a great giving tool to make year-end grants to organizations that extend cheer to those who need it the most this holiday season.

There is still time to contribute to a current fund or create a new fund before the end of the year. Contact Tracy Edgerton at 402-474-2345 or [tracye@lcf.org](mailto:tracye@lcf.org).

