

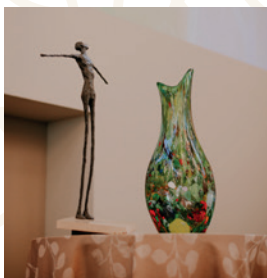


Together For Good



Lincoln
Community
FOUNDATION

SUMMER 2024



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Greetings:

I've never been big on good-byes. I much prefer the potential and possibilities within a beginning. That makes my final letter to you as President/CEO bittersweet.

When I first joined Lincoln Community Foundation in December 2021, I became part of a hardworking, talented team, and together we embraced a new era and made new connections. I am immensely proud of what we have accomplished during my time here, all of which was possible because of this group of dedicated professionals. These are folks who show up every day to inspire our community to give, act and lead. It's been an honor to work alongside them.

As an organization, we've introduced a new strategic plan, mission, and vision as well as updated our brand identity. With our community partners, we've made incredible strides for early childhood and affordable housing. And most recently, we came together to raise a record \$8.5 million for local nonprofits during Give to Lincoln Day, which you can read more about in this issue of Together for Good.

My professional journey is taking me and my family back to Omaha. Although this change was not anticipated, I am excited for the adventure ahead. I will leave here knowing that Lincoln Community Foundation is poised for continued success. We will continue to forge relationships that extend our network for good and build a community where everyone is thriving and working together for a better tomorrow.

Thank you for your unwavering support of this community and its Foundation. It's been a privilege to be a part of it.



With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Alec".

Alec Gorynski,
President/CEO





Office and Building Manager Chuck Williams cuts the ribbon to LCF's updated lobby.

LCF debuts office renovation

The past six months at Lincoln Community Foundation's office has felt a bit like musical chairs, as the first floor of 215 Centennial Mall South received a much-needed refresh.

"The patience and flexibility of our staff throughout this renovation deserves to be celebrated," said President/CEO Alec Gorynski. "Many thanks to our friends at the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce for giving our new space a grand reopening."

To accommodate a growing team of professionals, LCF worked with Davis Design to rethink the layout of its first floor. The renovation by Sampson Construction opened up the reception area to create additional meeting space and turned two offices in the south wing into four. The final step in the renovation will be new signage for the outside of the building, courtesy of TMCO.

LCF is open 8:30 am – 4:30 pm Monday through Thursday and 8:30 am – 3:00 pm on Fridays. Next time you're in the neighborhood, stop by for a visit and a cup of coffee in our beautiful space or catch a summer concert in the Barbara Bartle Garden every Wednesday at noon through September 18.

Investing in early childhood

In April LCF President/CEO Alec Gorynski joined Lincoln Littles Associate Director Suzanne Schneider for an exciting announcement from Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird and the City. Mayor Gaylor Baird announced plans to shift \$600,000 of unspent federal stimulus money to address critical workforce needs and enhance childcare services in the community. This includes support for a Lincoln Littles internship program, in conjunction with the American Job Center.

The paid internship program will bolster the early childcare workforce by providing 30 participants the opportunity to receive weekly educational opportunities while they work in childcare centers.

"I want to thank the Mayor for the strategic and thoughtful investment in our community's workforce development, and in what we characterize as 'the workforce behind the workforce,' or our early childhood education employees," said Alec.



From left to right: Suzanne Schneider (Lincoln Littles), Alec Gorynski, Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird, Kelly Ross (ECHO Collective) and Jim Blue (Cedars Youth Services).



From left to right: Sally Campbell, Kathy LeBaron, Marc LeBaron and Jack Campbell.

Celebrating generosity and leadership

By Jenny Chapin

Photos by Kelly Burken

It was a warm spring day on April 30th when more than 300 Lincolniters came together at the Lincoln Community Foundation's annual luncheon to celebrate four pillars of our community. LCF recognized Marc and Kathy LeBaron as the recipients of the 2024 Charity Award, and Jack and Sally Campbell were honored with the JoAnn Martin Civic Leadership Award.

“

“The contributions of these couples have shaped our skyline and improved the quality of life in Lincoln. They truly embody what it means to give, act and lead for our community.”

– LCF President/CEO Alec Gorynski

”

Charity Award

LCF established the Charity Award to recognize extraordinary individuals in our community for their philanthropic contributions. Marc and Kathryn (Kathy) LeBaron were honored as the 2024 recipients.

Both Lincoln natives and graduates of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the LeBarons' focus their philanthropy on making Lincoln a better place to live, work and raise a family as well as helping vulnerable children and supporting the arts.

Paige Piper, executive director of BraveBe Child Advocacy Center, shared how Kathy and Marc's involvement in our community has made it a brighter, safer, and more welcoming place for all.

"To know Marc and Kathy is to know passion for cause and a willingness to spring into action to help those in need," said Paige. "Simply put, their generosity is equal parts inspiring and contagious."

Marc is the president and CEO of Lincoln Industries. He purchased the business in 1983 from his father Dale. Seventy years after Dale started the company, Lincoln Industries remains a family-owned business with the LeBarons' daughters Katie Haszard and Kassy Knudson now in leadership roles.

Marc and Kathy and Lincoln Industries support the community in a variety of ways. They provide paid time off for employees to volunteer, and they lend their leadership to passion projects such as Junior Achievement and Willard Community Center.

The LeBarons are also avid collectors and supporters of the arts. They recognize the positive influence that art has on society and work to make it accessible with their community. They provide leadership to arts organizations such as Public Art Lincoln and Museum of Nebraska Art and create new art spaces in our community as exemplified by the private gallery they created with fellow Lincolniters Karen and Robert Duncan, The Assemblage.

Marc and Kathy's exceptional philanthropy now inspires the next generation of their family.

"Kathy and I are privileged to have two wonderful daughters and sons-in-law that share our philosophy and are active in numerous organizations in our community," said Marc. "I am intensively proud that they are, in spite of their busy lives, committed to making Lincoln a better place and carrying on the tradition."



Marc and Kathy LeBaron accept the 2024 Charity Award.

JoAnn Martin Civic Leadership Award

The JoAnn Martin Civic Leadership Award recognizes individuals in our community who have a strong commitment to servant leadership through volunteer service to nonprofit and civic organizations. A group of community leaders from Ameritas and NRC established the award and first presented it to JoAnn Martin shortly before her passing in 2021.

Jack and Sally Campbell are the third recipients of the award. Their story started nearly 80 years ago when a mutual friend set them up on a blind date in high school. Jack was from Lincoln, and Sally lived in Kearney. Their first date was to see Tommy Dorsey's Orchestra at the Turnpike.

"Two and a half dollars a ticket too," Jack remembered with a laugh.

Leslie Levy, executive director of the International Quilt Museum, reflected on what makes the Campbells so special to this community.

"When you think about Jack and Sally Campbell, you think about them together as this incredible duo," she said. "They are lively, kind, and compassionate. They live every day to the fullest, and when they walk into a room, they just light it up."

For the Campbells, living every day to the fullest has meant years of service to local organizations including The Cooper Foundation, Friends of Lied, Nebraska Cultural Endowment and countless others. They both have a passion for the arts and humanities, which is reflected in the opportunities they choose to support.

"Jack and Sally's presence in Lincoln was in the right place at the right time," said Laurie Richards, interim film programmer for The Ross. "We are very fortunate, and we should feel blessed that they have been part of all this activity. We honor them today, and we thank them so much."



Jack and Sally Campbell celebrate with Rich and Ginna Claussen after the April 30th luncheon.



A Lincoln tradition turns 50

LCF's Garden Performance Series celebrates its golden anniversary

By Mary Kay Roth

Photos by Kelly Burken

The year 1974 saw the invention of chicken fingers, Skittles and the Rubik's Cube. Barbra Streisand scored a number one hit that year with "The Way We Were," and President Richard Nixon resigned following the Watergate scandal.

Meanwhile, here in Lincoln, Nebraska, the first Lincoln Community Foundation Garden Performance Series premiered at 14th and N streets.

According to an advertisement in the June 11, 1974, edition of the Lincoln Journal Star, the first performance featured the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra with a free outdoor pop-up concert titled "Brown Bag Intermezzo."

Five decades later, hundreds of musical groups have performed in the garden over the years accompanied by the tune of scores of family picnics, as this lovely treasure celebrates its 50th anniversary.

Undoubtedly, many things have stayed the same over those many intervening summers. Families, business folks, older couples, and young children alike still come together each Wednesday at noon. Everyone still gathers in that delightful concert space next to the Lincoln Community Foundation building, and everyone still sways to the music right along with the rhythmic sounds of water fountains and rustling leaves.

This summer the June 12th concert featured a special celebration in honor of the series' golden anniversary. Nathan LeFeber was there, playing the trombone as part of the Lincoln Municipal Band (LMB). But it wasn't his first time there.

"I just wanted to drop a quick note and say congratulations on 50 years, and thank you for



A 1974 advertisement in the Lincoln Journal Star courtesy of Newspapers.com.

including the LMB in the festivities,” wrote Nathan, director of bands for Kearney High School. “I live in Kearney but grew up in Lincoln and remember the gardens and the concert series well. It was fun for me to be a part of the celebration. Here’s to 50 more years!”

LCF was established in 1955, however, the Foundation gardens were dedicated nearly 20 years later, in October 1973, according to Chip DeBuse, who works in philanthropy services for LCF.

“I think the concert area was specifically designed to be performance space,” he said. “It made perfect sense with a park located right in the middle of downtown. There’s nothing else quite like it in the city.”

Chip called it a lovely, long-time Lincoln tradition.

“Families can enjoy free, live music. And musicians love coming to play here. They play for an hour for fun, unlike a nightclub where they must play until 1 a.m. It’s an easy audience and a wonderful space.”

In 1975, the first summer-long series was announced – sponsored by the Downtown Lincoln Promotion Council and organized by the Lincoln Foundation Garden program committee. LCF’s involvement with the series ebbed and flowed throughout the years.

By 2012, current staff realized that the concert series needed additional support to continue its grand tradition.

“We picked up the banner,” Chip explained. “I think it took an organization like the Foundation to make it happen.”

First, LCF staff worked to raise money from neighboring businesses, as well as the Downtown Lincoln Association. Then they found a programming partner in Arts Incorporated.

“We started organizing and facilitating the concerts, focusing more on professional music,” said Dean Haist with Arts Incorporated. “We believe strongly in paying the musicians, respecting their talent and skill.”

At that point the concert season was also expanded from May through September, and Arts Incorporated began organizing the Wednesday performance calendar.

“We send out a call to more than 50 groups, with 19 spots to fill, and ask groups to fill out applications. Then we evaluate each one, looking for variety and quality,” he said.

After each performance, Arts Incorporated circulates surveys for feedback.

“We have raised the quality and diversity of performances over the

past decade and made the series sustainable,” said Dean. “I personally thank the musicians after every concert.”

Both Chip and Dean give a shoutout to the Downtown Lincoln Association (DLA) for stepping up with support.

“When you look at this collaboration between the DLA, the Foundation and Arts Incorporated, you think, what’s more community than that?” Chip asked.

He said the concert series is now more stable than ever.

“We’re so happy right now,” Chip reflected. “Family-friendly performances for 50 years, on rainy days or hot days, and we’re planning to continue to keep our gates open.”

Thank you to the 2024 Garden Performance Series Sponsors:

Arts, Inc., Pam Herbert Barger Piano Students, Robert F. and Barbara M. Bartle Garden Performance Endowment, Eagle Printing and Sign, Farmers Mutual Insurance, Nebraska Arts Council, Pearle Francis Finigan Foundation, Pinnacle Bank, US Bank, Kinetic by Windstream and Woods Aitken LLP.





LCF President/CEO Alec Gorynski and Emcee D-Wayne celebrate with the crowd during the first-ever Give to Lincoln Day Power Hour in the Railyard.

A match made in Lincoln

By Jenny Chapin

Photos by Kelly Burken

Each May the LCF office experiences a flurry of activity thanks to Give to Lincoln Day. From fielding calls and emails from donors and nonprofits, to facilitating thousands of gifts and grants, to coordinating events with local media and sponsors, our small but mighty staff is firing on all cylinders.

One Give to Lincoln Day activity has become a bit of an office tradition. In the breakroom there is a friendly pool where staff members make their best guess for the total amount raised. Price is Right rules apply – the closest guess without going over receives bragging rights.

This year's record-breaking results took most of the team out of the running.

"At one point, I asked our Senior

Accounting Manager Brenda Davis to make sure my numbers were correct," said Michelle Paulk, LCF's VP for Community Development and Outreach. "To say we were pleasantly surprised is an understatement."

The 13th annual Give to Lincoln Day raised more than \$8.5 million dollars – a new record for the event and nearly \$1 million more than the previous year.

"Our community has demonstrated an incredible capacity for giving back," said President/CEO Alec Gorynski. "These results will benefit 463 nonprofit organizations who contribute so much to the quality of life here in Lincoln."

This year's event also received a boost from the largest match

fund in Give to Lincoln Day history, thanks to many generous sponsors including Presenting Sponsor, West Gate Bank.

"West Gate Bank has championed Give to Lincoln Day from the beginning," said Alec. "When we met with Chairman, President and CEO Carl Sjulín last year, he challenged us to think outside of the box and find innovative ways to grow the event. With their continued commitment, we set out to do just that and increased the match by 30%."

Thanks to the \$650,000 match fund, the Foundation also established a new incentive for early giving with its Online Daily Drawings, powered by ALLO Fiber. Each day from May 1st through May 29th, one donation received through GiveToLincoln.com was randomly

selected to receive a \$250 boost for its designated nonprofit.

“The daily drawings were a great way to highlight the variety of organizations available to support while building excitement for Give to Lincoln Day,” said VP for Marketing and Communications Jenny Chapin. “As we approached May 30th, we really felt the energy ramp up. We knew we were about to have a big day.”

And what a day it was! Donors and nonprofit representatives gathered that afternoon in the Railyard for the first-ever Give to Lincoln Day Power Hour. As folks watched GiveToLincoln.com refresh on the Cube’s 40 ft LED screen, a cheer rang out when the total exceeded the final number raised in 2023 at just 5 pm. By the next morning, a new record was realized.

“When you think about a city of our size raising more than \$8.5 million for local nonprofits in the course of a month, it shows you just how generous Lincoln is,” said Michelle. “In its history, Give to Lincoln Day has been the catalyst for \$65.5 million in critical support. We can’t wait to see what’s next.”

Now that the dust has settled on a record-breaking event, it won’t be long before preparations begin for 2025 (save the date for May 29th!). In the meantime, LCF Gift Processor Karlene Behlen gets the bragging rights for having the closest guess in the office pool, although her job may have given her an inside track.

“I had a feeling as I was processing donations all month long that we’d beat \$8 million,” she said with a smile.



Community members visit nonprofit booths at the Give to Lincoln Day Festival in Tower Square.

Thank you to our generous match sponsors!

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From the Blog

A LOVE LETTER TO GIVE TO LINCOLN DAY

Do you believe in love at first sight? That feeling that hits you like a ton of bricks and stops you in your tracks. I've been lucky to experience it a few times in my life. The first was at my ninth-grade dance recital. As we crossed the stage during the curtain call, I caught the brown eyes of a tall boy tap dancing behind me. We kept falap-ing, but the world stopped spinning for me at that moment. I was hooked.

My most recent experience with this type of crush happened two years ago at Give to Lincoln Day.

As Vice President for Marketing and Communications, Give to Lincoln Day is arguably the biggest (and most fun) day of my year. Preparations for Lincoln's One Big Day of Giving start months in advance and on May 1st, we're off and running.

In a matter of weeks, Lincoln comes together to raise millions of dollars for local nonprofits. Our talented staff at LCF facilitates and processes more than 25,000 individual donations. It's really an incredible event to be behind the scenes of. Year after year, I am blown away by not only the generosity of our community but by the passion of our nonprofit partners.

My first two years on the job were unique because we were navigating Give to Lincoln Day during the pandemic. By 2022 the team was excited to gather again and host our Nonprofit Festival in Tower Square. The Tower Square event features more than 70 nonprofits. Each agency has a booth and an activity that shares their mission with the community members who stop by the festival.

That year was cold and rainy for May. In fact, we even debated canceling the event. But we're Nebraskans. We're hearty people and we persevere. At least that's what Alec told me over the phone as he was helping people hold down their tents in the wind and rain, and I was still warm and dry at the office.

I bundled up and headed to Tower Square. The nonprofits were out in force, and the space was already a buzz, albeit a little damp. I was bouncing between our radio remote broadcasts when it happened. The crowds parted, our eyes met, and I knew my life would never be the same.

"What's his name?" – I asked the woman standing next to him.

"This is Patch. He's never been on

a leash before, and he's up for adoption."



Patch. He was five pounds of absolute sweetness. I had never seen a dog that looked like him before. The eyes. The ears. The floppiness. I couldn't handle it. Why didn't anyone warn me that puppies would be here? Okay, they did, but I didn't anticipate this.

Throughout the day, I made several trips to the booth's puppy playpen to visit him. At one point, someone with the rescue organization said, "Patch's mom is here."

I had never been called "mom" before.

But what was I thinking? I couldn't get a dog. I was working my busiest day of the year, and the show must go on. Right?!

Maybe just one more trip to Tower Square to see him, and then I'll definitely get back to work.

As the festival activities wrapped up and the puppies were carefully loaded back in their van, I said goodbye to Patch and went back to my desk. In-between posting on our social media channels and fielding interviews, I found myself on that agency's adoption website. Then on my apartment's website.

How much is a pet deposit anyway?

Then suddenly I had an appointment the next day to go see him. It was all happening, and I was defenseless to stop it. My coworkers cheered me on and also questioned my sanity.

"Are you really going to get that dog?"

"I think so."

I once read if you're torn between two choices when making a decision – pick the bigger life. That night, as we watched the total on GiveToLincoln.com climb towards a new record, I felt confident. I could

handle this. Dogs like Patch don't just walk into your life every day and when they do, you say "yes."

I woke up the next day in a panic.

What was I thinking? I stayed up past midnight refreshing the website, my apartment is a mess, I can't bring home a puppy today!

And yet...

He came home. And I did open myself up to the bigger life. A messier, more chaotic, more loving life.

All dog owners think that they have the very best dog, and the thing is, they are all correct. But Patch is really a special guy. He's spunky and curious and playful. He can't let someone walk by without a hello. I now know all my neighbors by name, thanks to Patch. He's taught me how to love unconditionally, and that kind of love makes you a better person.

Two years later, when I think about Give to Lincoln Day, I feel like a character in a Hallmark movie that finally gets the true meaning of Christmas. I was working it, but I wasn't fully living it. And now I am.

This year I donated to the organization that brought Patch to me and many others that are close to my heart. When you give back, you get so much more in return.

And how lucky are we to have a day that celebrates exactly that?

I hope each year, you find something to fall in love with during Give to Lincoln Day and who knows...you may end up picking the bigger life.



For the latest LCF news and blog posts, visit [LCF.org](https://www.lcf.org)
or follow us on social media, @LincolnCommunityFoundation.  

Notes from nonprofits

Hello,

I wanted to reach out on behalf of the Immigrant Legal Center + Refugee Empowerment Center (ILC+REC) board and staff to send you a thank you to Lincoln Community Foundation for the generous grant for resettlement services. We are so grateful to have the support of Foundation as we begin our refugee resettlement services in Lincoln, and we are eager to join the incredible network of nonprofits serving Lincoln's refugee community. LCF helps make our critical work possible, and we value your partnership.

ILC+REC also participated in our very first Give to Lincoln Day celebration. It was wonderful for our organization to connect directly with the community and other nonprofits in the area. We recognize just how much time and energy is required to pull off Give to Lincoln, and we are so grateful for the chance to be a part of it. Thank you for all of your hard work and the support of the Foundation in making this possible.

Warm regards,
Rose Margrave

*Director of Development and Strategic Analysis
Immigrant Legal Center, an affiliate of the Justice For Our Neighbors Network*



Celebrating the Open Harvest grand opening and ribbon cutting on February 29, 2023.

Opening new doors for Open Harvest

By Mary Kay Roth

Photos courtesy of Open Harvest

Open Harvest Co-op Grocery has found a new home, perched right smack in the middle of the Telegraph District in the heart of Lincoln.

That's only 1.6 miles from the store's longtime home at 17th and South streets. But it's one giant leap for this feel-good co-op grocery store, landing in an airy 10,000-square-foot space nestled in one of the city's newest iconic, historic districts.

"This is a dream come true," said Amy Tabor, general manager of Open Harvest. "And it's finally starting to feel real. The store is filled with our merchandise and our

people, and I'm no longer tempted to accidentally drive to the old location."

But the dream may never have become a reality without a boost from Lincoln Community Foundation, which served as fiscal sponsor for funds raised to support the move and space renovation.

"We're a beloved organization, and I think we underestimated how Open Harvest has touched so many people," said Carla McCullough Dittman, chair of the Open Harvest Board. "What a gift our community has given us. And gratitude to the Foundation. We hoped they might

help us raise maybe \$100,000, and their fund came closer to \$400,000."

Established almost half a century ago in 1975, Open Harvest is an authentic co-op grocery store that boasts, "Real Food. Real Local. Real Community." The store moved to its South Street location in 1990, and despite an expansion or two, was running out of space when the lease was set to expire a few years ago. It was then that the team began to explore raising money for a capital campaign.

"Sitting in the store today, it's amazing to think back when we were only dreaming about this

possibility,” Amy remembered. “How I would ride my bike past this space and feel sure this was the place for us. And suddenly to have it all come true, because so many people gave so graciously and generously.”

Amy emphasized that Open Harvest is not a traditional grocery store, but rather a full-service cooperative with support from 3,000 dedicated, diverse and engaged member-owners. In planning the best path forward for raising funds, the store’s financial consultant suggested that other co-ops across the country had worked with their local community foundations.

Open Harvest approached the Foundation and made the case that the project fit within the Foundation’s mission of serving and enhancing the community. And upon careful review, the Foundation agreed.

Tracy Edgerton, vice president and general counsel for the Foundation, was excited to support Open Harvest’s fundraising efforts. “Providing equitable access to healthy food lines up perfectly with the Foundation’s core vision, and it was such an honor to work with them,” she said.

In determining the best location for the new store, the leaders of Open Harvest sought feedback from the community. And one message came through loud and clear: it was essential to remain close to the central city core.

“We were serious about listening to our member-owners in this major decision,” Carla said. “We conduct annual customer surveys, and it

was clear that the majority did not want us to move far.”

Amy agreed and was absolutely thrilled at the results of the fundraising campaign. “I think it speaks to our community and the impact Open Harvest has had over the past 50 years,” she said, “that people clearly wanted to invest in a community grocery store.”

Open Harvest is now open for business at the new location.

“I’m just so excited that we’ve been able to continue and can now pass on this co-op for the next generation,” said Carla.

“Providing equitable access to healthy food lines up perfectly with the Foundation’s core vision.”

- LCF Vice President and General Counsel Tracy Edgerton



Open Harvest, 330 S. 21st St., is open 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.



MICHAEL AND SUSAN FERRIS:

Embracing Lincoln's bountiful opportunities for giving

By Mary Kay Roth

Photo by Kelly Burken

Susan and Michael Ferris met as she approached her senior year of college, and he was ready to start medical school. Eventually they married and, like families of so many beginning physicians, lived in various cities across the country including in Michigan, California and Wisconsin, eventually landing in Lincoln.

Thirty-one years later, they have never looked back from this decision. Michael and Susan are delighted they made Lincoln their forever home, working and raising their four children here. And thanks to their enduring trust in Lincoln Community Foundation, they have lived a life of philanthropy and giving back.

Susan shared that she and Michael believe strongly in

demonstrating their pride of place. "Deep in our hearts, we believe in paying it back and paying it forward, to support the community we love."

Michael agreed and is grateful that LCF has enabled them to learn so much about how best to support their adopted hometown.

"I'm not sure everyone realizes how many areas of need there are in this city," Michael said. "But the Community Foundation helps you see the big picture, identifying where your dollars can make a difference, and where your community benefits the most."

Truly, Michael and Susan adore this city, professionally and personally.

Susan currently leads a team of eight Realtors alongside her daughter, Jenna, for RE/MAX. When working with a family, she often shows them the entire community rather than simply focusing on a specific home.

“When we get in the car, I don’t just sell them on a home. I sell them on the city, a wonderfully safe place where you know your neighbors and can get anywhere in under 20 minutes,” Susan said. “A place with fine arts, libraries, parks, trails. Entertainment and restaurants. Wonderful public and private schools, colleges and universities. The Children’s Museum and Children’s Zoo.”

Michael said Cornhusker football and sports are exciting and fun, but he’s even more impressed with the resources the University brings to the community. “Our son is now a professor, but when he was in fifth grade, he took a physics class at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.”

Indeed, the community has offered their family countless possibilities, including bountiful opportunities for giving. The couple remembered when they first crossed paths with LCF.

“We were contributing to a standard list of charities, approaching our year-end donations and realized we wanted to look for something different to broaden our view,” Michael said. “What we found was a one-stop shop for giving, a place that stays abreast of all charities and can offer new ideas.”

Over the years the Foundation has helped them set up a donor-advised fund to maximize what they

give and channel their gifts to local programs that support the things they care about the most. “Along the way, we believe that the more we give, the more we are blessed with to give anew,” Michael said.

For instance, they consistently support St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, their church and, through the Foundation, a variety of charities in Lincoln.

“We have a soft spot for children and families in need, and the Foundation supports us in finding the charitable options that tug and speak to our heart,” Susan said. “We have been fortunate and recognize God’s blessings in our own lives, while recognizing there are so many people who are hurting, hungry, homeless.”

Their charitable hearts are tied directly to experiences from their childhood. Susan’s family was hit by tragedy when she was only 12 years old, and her father suffered an aneurysm.

“Somehow friends and family came together and raised enough money to send him to a specialist in Switzerland,” Susan shared. “I can still remember that knock on the door, and seeing too many people to count, people who arrived with sacks of groceries.”

Her dad survived the aneurysm and left a legacy of overwhelming gratitude for charity. “When you’re

on the receiving end of beating hearts and generosity, you never forget,” she said.

Michael grew up in a family of six children who all worked together in the family business. But when Michael was in college, his youngest brother was diagnosed with leukemia and died just nine months later.

“But we will never forget when we took him to St. Jude, the loving care and generosity they extended to children and their families,” Michael said. “When you have those kinds of early experiences, you develop a love and heart for giving to others.”

St. Jude is still a central part of their giving, but it also inspired a general spirit of charity through LCF.

“If you have a philanthropic mindset but aren’t quite sure where your heart is, where you want to focus your dollars, we would tell anyone to contact the Foundation,” Michael said. “They will honor your priorities.”

These days Michael is happily retired, but they both believe it is important to continue showing their gratitude to the community where they raised their family and practiced their professions.

“People will tell you that retirement is the time to move to warmer climates, move to where your children live,” Michael said with a smile. “We aren’t moving anywhere. We will always come back to Lincoln. Lincoln is hard to beat. Lincoln is home.”



Interested in creating your personal charitable plan?
Contact VP for Development-Legacy Planning,
Chip DeBuse, at 402-474-2345 or chipd@lcf.org.



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One for the record books

The 13th annual Give to Lincoln Day raises \$8,565,662 for local nonprofits

The 13th annual Give to Lincoln Day on May 30th raised more than \$8.5 million for 463 local nonprofits, the highest amount raised in the event's history. These funds support charitable organizations that serve Lincoln and Lancaster County.

"Give to Lincoln Day is about inspiring our community to give, and Lincoln gave in a big way," said Alec Gorynski, LCF president/CEO. "This incredible display of generosity for our local nonprofits means more meals, more access, more help, and more hope. While setting a new record is to be applauded, it's the many ways in which our community shows up and



lends their support that matter."

All participating nonprofits also received a proportional share of a record \$650,000 match fund based upon the organization's percentage of the total dollars raised, provided by LCF and sponsors, including Presenting Sponsor West Gate Bank.

More than 25,000 donations were received for the 13th annual Give to Lincoln Day. The event has raised more than \$65.5 million for local nonprofits in its 12-year history.

Read more about this year's Give to Lincoln Day on Page 8. To see gifts received for each nonprofit, visit www.GiveToLincoln.com.



In 2023, the collective generosity of our neighbors vibrated throughout our city. Our annual report puts the spotlight on individuals coming together to create a thriving community.

Scan the code to access the full report. >

