



FUND FOR RENO COUNTY 2022 GRANTS

These grants represent an innovative approach or collaboration, a new efficiency for an established organization, a critical need that requires “just in time” funding, or an opportunity that needs just a bit of local support to leverage great resources for our community.

Buhler Public Library, “Improving Operations at Buhler Public Library,” \$500:

The library staff member and volunteer board are working toward a more effective and sustainable organization. Funds will be used for costs associated with producing and mailing the library's first-time annual appeal letter.

City of Hutchinson Human Relations Commission, \$20,000: The second year of a three-year grant to support the programming and educational efforts of the Human Relations Commission through trainings, research, facilitated meetings and support of partnerships and cultural celebrations that promote diversity, equity and inclusion.

Dillon Nature Center, \$5,000: The nature center will use grant funds for a peer consultation through the Association of Nature Center Administrators. A panel of experienced nature center professionals will conduct an analysis over an intensive two-day onsite visit, touring the grounds and facilities and meeting with board members, staff and stakeholders to gain an understanding of the hopes and possibilities for future developments at the nature center. The peer panel will synthesize information and observations into a report aimed at better preparing Dillon Nature Center for its upcoming strategic planning sessions.

Emanuel Lutheran Church, \$12,000: Each month Emanuel Lutheran Church distributes dry and frozen food provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to 300 to 350 low-income families in the Hutchinson area. A necessary relocation of the distribution site left the program without a freezer. Kansas Health Foundation Public Health Endowment funds, through the Fund for Reno County process, will allow the purchase of a secure, outdoor walk-in freezer, ensuring continuation of a valued community program.

Family Community Theatre, \$15,000: Grant funding will support the replacement and upgrade of the front panel of the Flag Theatre's marquee, which was damaged in a recent storm. The new panel will be digital and allow for more effective use of the marquee for publicizing Family Community Theatre's shows and community events, and it will also allow the theater space to share messages welcoming groups to town.

Guardians of the Children-Salt City, \$5,300: Guardians of the Children aims to recognize and react to child abuse and to educate the public to do the same. Through their advocacy, they create a safer environment for abused children and provide strength and support to families in crisis. Grant funds will be used toward production of promotional/educational materials as well as costs associated with monthly outings and celebrations for children "adopted" by Guardians of the Children and travel costs associated with monthly visits to the children and their families, building trusting relationships.

Healthy Families of Reno County, \$9,500: Funding will provide Kansas Children's Service League staff training specific to the newly adopted Healthy Families curriculum, which helps the staff effectively address the developmental needs of a wider age range of children and their families that the program now serves. Funding also allows for the purchase of two tablets for use by staff in the office, on home visits and during group experiences.

Holy Cross Conference of St. Vincent de Paul, "Serving Others at St. Vincent de Paul," \$15,000: Holy Cross Conference of St. Vincent de Paul is a volunteer-run organization that addresses the most basic needs of community members. While St. Vincent de Paul has been able to meet many needs solely through donations in the past, these grant funds will allow volunteers to continue assisting with food, utilities, rent, gas/transportation and other needs that individuals and families face during these particularly challenging economic times.

Hutchinson Art Association Inc., Dialogue Reconstructed 2022, \$4,330: Funding will support Hutchinson Art Association's collaboration with diversity-driven and arts-focused organizations to host a juried exhibition featuring artists of color, highlighting under-represented artists in Kansas and surrounding states. The exhibition will also provide an opportunity to diversify Hutchinson Art Association's permanent collection and give the community an opportunity to discuss representation issues during a public forum at the Hutchinson Art Center.

Hutchinson Breakfast Lions Club, \$5,000: In 1925, Helen Keller asked Lions Clubs to be knights for the blind, and ever since, eyesight has been a focus of all Lions Clubs. Grant funds will be used by the Hutchinson Breakfast Lions Club to purchase a new piece of equipment called a Spot Screener, which is used by school nurses as they perform eye exams on students throughout Reno County.

Hutchinson Regional Health System, "Our Redeemer Early Learning Center Bridge Project," \$9,634: Hutchinson Regional Health System (HRHS) and Our Redeemer Lutheran's Early Learning Center (ELC) are developing a plan for collaboration that will allow high-quality child care for up to 39 children at the existing ELC facility while the new HRHS Child Care Academy is constructed on the hospital campus. To prepare for this bridge project, staff are required to complete two weeks of training. Grant funds will help support the costs associated with the training sessions.

Hutchinson Symphony Association, “The Hutchinson Symphony Presents: The Dream Season,” \$4,230: Grant funding will support the payment of two guest performers and the music rental fees for several pieces in this dream-themed series of performances, which will take place at Hutchinson’s Historic Fox Theatre through April 2023.

Milestone Clubhouse, Transitional Employment Program, \$15,000: Funds will be used to provide intensive employment supports to participants in a newly created Transitional Employment Program through Milestone Clubhouse, a local branch of Breakthrough (Episcopal Social Services Inc.), addressing the needs of those in Reno County who experience severe mental illness.

New Beginnings, Inc., “Developing a Land Trust,” \$7,000: Grant funding will cover the costs of exploring and working with an attorney to develop a land trust, which would allow a split between a piece of land and the housing on that land. This legal structure enables people in the housing development to be members of the land trust while making the cost of the housing itself more affordable.

Kansas Fairgrounds Foundation, \$5,964: Grant funds will allow installation of fiber optic internet in the Lair White House, building the capacity of the foundation’s director and board to more effectively communicate with potential donors, thereby increasing the foundation’s potential to support a greater number of improvements to the fairgrounds. The installation will also make internet available to community groups, who may use the conference room in the building.

Kansas Food Bank Warehouse, “Food 4 Kids Weekend Backpack Program,” \$5,000: Grant funds will help cover the costs of weekend food backpacks provided to the more than 330 Reno County students who might otherwise go without food until their next meal at school.

Reno County Boxing Academy, \$14,208: The Reno County Boxing Academy seeks to give participating youth a positive physical outlet at an affordable price while increasing their engagement in the community. Grant funds will be used to purchase additional workout equipment and upgrade the facility door with a key-fob system, making the gym available 24 hours a day as a workout facility. The additional membership fees generated will create an income stream, allowing the academy’s team to travel to more tournaments while keeping team membership fees affordable for area youth.

Reno County Entrepreneurship Ecosystem, \$90,000: Year three of a five-year grant and funding partnership with the City of Hutchinson and Reno County to strengthen and grow the small-business sector through supporting the Entrepreneurship Navigator at StartUp Hutch, efforts to improve mentorship and connection among entrepreneurs, and increased communications that inspire and celebrate innovators.

Reno County Museum, \$1,500: Funds will support the Reno County Museum's renovations to the children's play area, creating a fresh, immersive and historically accurate space for Reno County children and families.

RSVP-The Volunteer Center, \$15,000: The Volunteer Center has provided free tax form preparation for qualified community members through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program for 48 years. In 2022, volunteers prepared 1,279 federal tax returns and 1,212 state tax returns. Funding will cover the cost of replacing 10 outdated laptops, allowing VITA volunteers to effectively provide this service to Reno County families with low to moderate incomes.

Salthawk Community Support, \$10,000: Salthawk Community Support is a ministry program of Trinity United Methodist Church and receives volunteer and financial support from other local churches and community members in addition to grant funding. The goal of Salthawk Community Support is to work together to remove barriers to education for students at Hutchinson High School and Hutchinson Middle School-8 through mentoring, character development activities and financial education alongside offering basic needs supplies. This is year one of a three-year \$10,000 per year grant.

Salvation Army of Reno County & Aging Projects Inc., \$12,775: The Salvation Army houses Friendship Meals, a valuable community program of Aging Projects Inc., in its dining room and kitchen. Grant funds will allow for the purchase of a commercial dishwasher, increasing the capacity of this mostly volunteer-run program to serve the community more efficiently and effectively.

Salvation Army of Reno County, \$15,000: Year two of a three-year grant that provides bridge funding as The Salvation Army increases staff, allowing continued implementation of their emergency services while increasing opportunities for Reno County individuals and families to participate in the Pathway of Hope program, which helps people reach a level of stability that is necessary to begin moving out of poverty.

Youthrive, \$5,500: Grant funds will support the partnership Youthrive has developed with Hutchinson Community College to help support foster youth who are transitioning into adult and college life by creating nurturing relationships with college staff and helping students aging out of foster care navigate the college application process and identify supports that are in place for them, such as financial literacy programs and community mentors.