



Community foundation grants \$30K to 14 Reno County projects

Hutchinson Community Foundation recently awarded a total of \$30,000 in grants to groups and nonprofit organizations serving Reno County.

Fourteen projects received funding from Changemakers at Work grants at a ceremony Nov. 16 at Pizaacos, 112 S. Main St., as part of Third Thursday festivities in Hutchinson.

Changemakers at Work grants are small funds available to Reno County residents and organizations working on projects that spark community spirit and pride, build social capital, and create opportunities for positive changes that strengthen the county.

This year's awards ranged from \$1,000 to \$2,500. The grants are supported by the Fund for Reno County, the foundation's unrestricted fund designed to meet the ever-changing needs of Reno County.

Grants were awarded by the community foundation's Changemakers at Work Grants Committee made up of foundation board members and Reno County residents selected through a public application process. Members of the 2023 committee are Jason Depew, Meg Green, Lexi Jobe, Kelley Lester, Lauren Mobley, Adam Pina, Cammie Rumbach, Holly Spaniol and Stacy Watson.

The following organizations received grants:

Arlington United Methodist Church, \$2,500: Grant funds will allow for the addition of a permanent shade structure for the sand area in the community park, encouraging outdoor play and interaction even on the hottest of days.

City of Haven, \$1,000: Grant funding will be used to help with the development of a dog park, which will provide an adequate and safe gathering place for Haven dog owners and their pets to enjoy activity and interaction with one another.

City of Pretty Prairie, \$2,500: The city will use grant funding to add outdoor seating, outdoor games, shade and turf to an empty lot in the business district. The resulting activity park will provide outdoor space for the after-school program at the adjacent library as well as during community events.

Creekside Neighborhood, \$2,500: Neighbors will build a sense of community through a group cleanup day at Bernard White Park in Hutchinson's Creekside Neighborhood. Funds will be used for a mailing to neighbors announcing the workday, dumpster and equipment rental, gloves, tools, and food for the volunteers.

Emanuel Lutheran Church, \$1,910: Grant funds will be directed toward Emanuel's ongoing mission to share rebuilt bicycles with low-income individuals. The bicycles provide an economical way to reach various destinations within the city, such as job interviews, places of employment, medical appointments and community events.

Fairfield-USD 310, \$2,500: The Falcon Family Program will create and foster an interconnected web of supportive relationships among children and trusted adults, who may be staff members or volunteers. Access to supportive relationships can contribute to a reduction in risky behavior and build a sense of belonging and community. Grant funding will be used to purchase materials and curriculum.

Farmington Park Neighborhood, \$2,500: Farmington Park neighbors are eager to enhance the new trail recently installed in the park by the City of Hutchinson. These grant funds will allow for planting new shade trees where older ones had to be removed and for the installation costs of two benches already purchased for placement along the trail, making the trail even more inviting.

Founders Neighborhood, \$2,500: After observing high rates of neighborhood participation during the city's spring cleanup day each year, Founders Neighborhood leaders, in collaboration with Iglesia Nueva Vida church members, will organize an additional fall cleanup – complete with volunteers to assist those who have difficulty transporting objects to the dumpster provided. Grant funding will cover the cost of mailings to advertise the spring and fall cleanup days and the cost of meals, gloves and necessary tools for event volunteers. This joint effort among residents aims to help create a cleaner place to live and instill a greater sense of neighborhood pride.

Grace Arbor Neighborhood, \$2,500: Residents of Grace Arbor Neighborhood will purchase soccer goals with their grant funding as the first step in turning an empty space into a gathering place for the neighborhood. The Salvation Army of Reno County is partnering with neighbors and Hutchinson's Parks Department in turning the vacant field near its building into a park through a series of improvement projects.

Rise Up Reno Prevention Network, \$1,500: Reno County students in fifth through eighth grades will spend a day at Hutchinson High School learning and building leadership skills with high school Rise Up Reno Youth Leaders, who lead groups in fun projects, presentations and activities. Funding will assist with the fee for a featured speaker during YES.

Salvation Army of Reno County, \$2,500: Grant funding will cover the cost of three benches and the concrete necessary for installation as part of one of the first steps neighbors have

requested in creating a park in the lot near the Salvation Army's building. The City of Hutchinson, Salvation Army and neighborhood residents are partnering on planning and carrying out this project.

SW Bricktown Neighborhood, \$2,500: SW Bricktown Neighborhood will use this grant funding to purchase two soccer goals for residents and community members to enjoy while in the park. Neighbors believe the addition of this equipment will increase use of the park, creating more opportunities for neighbors to engage with one another.

The Mary Magdalene House, \$2090: The Mary Magdalene House building is utilized for mental health awareness, mental health classes, mental health connection groups, grief therapy, clinical counseling services, and events for foster care/adoptive families. The organization is continuing to add programming, and because many programs occur at night, the funding will be used for a solar-powered light to illuminate the parking lot, helping to ensure the safety of attendees.

Vieyra Honors Foundation, \$1,000: Residents sparked a conversation with their Hutchinson City Council representative about the possibility of bringing back the eternal flame that once burned at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial at the intersection of First Avenue and Walnut Streets. The City of Hutchinson and Kansas Gas Service collaborated with community members to ensure the return of the eternal flame. Grant funds will help with fuel costs and maintenance of this memorial that is a source of community pride.

Hutchinson Community Foundation's mission is to inspire philanthropy, leadership, and collaboration to strengthen Reno County. Since 1989, the foundation has granted more than \$97 million to organizations.