

FROM THE GROUND UP



CHEYENNE COUNTY KANSAS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
2024 ANNUAL REPORT

an affiliate of Greater Northwest Kansas Community Foundation

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A LETTER TO OUR COMMUNITY

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As Board Chair of the Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation, it is my honor to share a reflection on this past year—a year filled with progress, partnerships, and profound generosity. Our community continues to show what's possible when people come together with a shared vision of a stronger, more vibrant Cheyenne County.

Thanks to your support, we were able to invest in local initiatives that uplifted organizations, strengthened nonprofits, and sparked new opportunities for growth across our county. Through thoughtful grantmaking, donor-advised funds, and community engagement, CCKCF supported a range of efforts—from youth programs and education to public health, arts, recreation, and emergency assistance. We take pride in serving as a bridge between those who want to make a difference and the causes that need their support the most.

This past year brought exciting new milestones for the foundation. In addition to managing fifteen established funds, we were able to grant out \$164,746.13 in 2024, directly supporting programs and initiatives across Cheyenne County. Our Match Month campaign in December was a major success, exceeding our goal thanks to the incredible generosity of the community. We raised \$80,324.77, surpassing our \$70,000 target, and with matching contributions from Bill and Cindy Keller, the Dane G. Hansen Foundation, and the Patterson Family Foundation totaling \$220,000, the overall impact reached an outstanding \$300,324.77. I'm also proud to highlight our new Junior Board initiative, which welcomed Emily Serrano and Kierra Penka as the first student participants helping shape the foundation's future.

All of those achievements are the direct result of a dedicated board, passionate volunteers, generous donors, and our hardworking staff, all working in harmony for the good of Cheyenne County. As we look to the future, we remain committed to building a more resilient and inclusive community—one where everyone has a chance to thrive. CCKCF is not just about funding; it's about fostering hope, creating connections, and investing in lasting change. Thank you for your trust, your time, and your heart. Together, we are writing a story of generosity that will echo for generations to come.

With sincere gratitude,



Amy Hendricks
Board Chair

BIRD CITY





In 1988, a small group of dedicated community members gathered for the first board meeting of the St. Francis Community Foundation. Led by President Robert Grace, the founding board shared a simple but powerful vision: to build a lasting resource for their hometown.

Originally formed as a 501(c)(4), this foundation later became a 501(c)(3), and in 1989, its first endowment fund was created. While early activity was modest, the first distribution came in 1990—\$107 shared between two local causes. By 2006, the fund had grown to over \$25,000.

In 2007, the board made a major move by transferring the fund to the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, opening the door for more growth and support. But they didn't stop there. Between 2012 and 2016, the board explored ways to expand its impact. Eventually, they saw a new opportunity with the Greater Northwest Kansas Community Foundation (GNWKCF), which offered stronger regional ties and support from the Dane G. Hansen Foundation.

In 2017, the St. Francis Community Foundation rebranded to become the Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation (CCKCF), expanding its reach across the county and starting a new chapter of growth and community impact. Since then, CCKCF has grown steadily, reaching \$3 million in assets, distributing hundreds of thousands of dollars, and earning support from across the county. Founding members, Carl Werner and Jim Milliken, now hold emeritus status, honored for their decades of service.

Today, CCKCF is guided by a committed board, including Chair Amy Hendricks, Vice-Chair Dara Carmichael, Secretary/Treasurer Betty Petersen, and members Tim Burr, Gaby Carmichael, Kelli Dankenbring, Tom Keller, Carla Lampe, Cliff Leach, and Tom Smull—each one continuing the mission started more than three decades ago: building a brighter future for Cheyenne County.

OUR ROOTS

MEET OUR STAFF

I've lived in this small town for 18 years, and never imagined that small-town living would bring out the best in me. In 2021, I joined the foundation as a staff member, not knowing much about the role. Three years later, I can honestly say that I wouldn't have it any other way. I am so grateful for the motivation to continually learn and grow in my position, or as I like to call it, "the thing I get to do because I love it!" Each day brings new challenges and rewards, and I'm thankful for the opportunity to be part of something that makes a difference in our community.



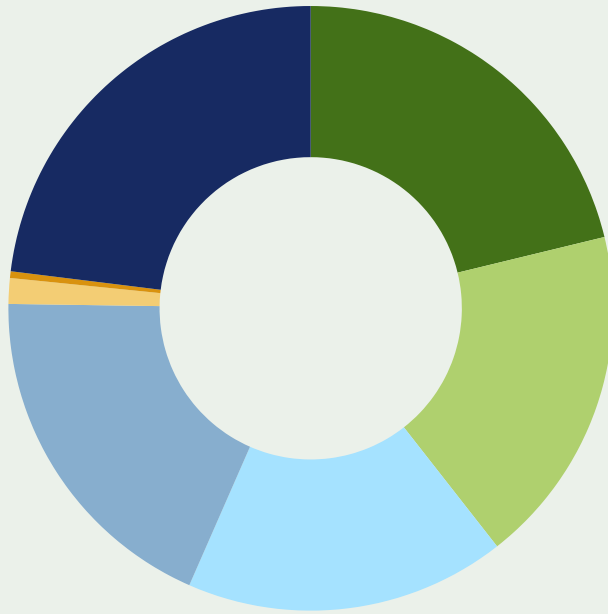
Jessica Matthies
Executive Director

A community foundation thrives because of its donors—and in 2021, the Dane G. Hansen Foundation helped strengthen that support by funding a part-time staff position to guide local foundations. That role, filled by Jessica Matthies, laid the groundwork for deeper donor engagement. By 2024, Hansen expanded its support to include full-time staffing, with a focus on capturing local wealth and building long-term sustainability.

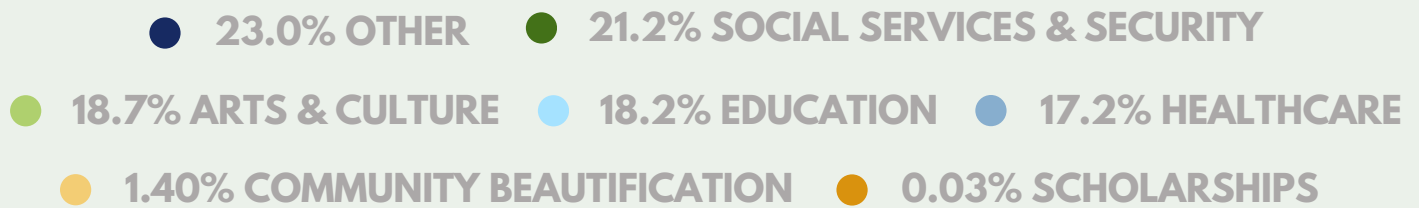
Cheyenne County embraced this opportunity in September 2024, marking a new chapter for the foundation.

While traditional operations continue, the added emphasis on donor relationships is helping grow the number of active funds—currently at 15—with a goal to significantly increase that number.

One major opportunity each year is December's Match Month, where donations can be quadrupled thanks to matching gifts from the Hansen and Patterson Family Foundations. Every dollar has the power to become four, multiplying local impact. Strategic Doing also plays a key role by encouraging community members to take initiative, spark innovation, and help shape the future of Cheyenne County.

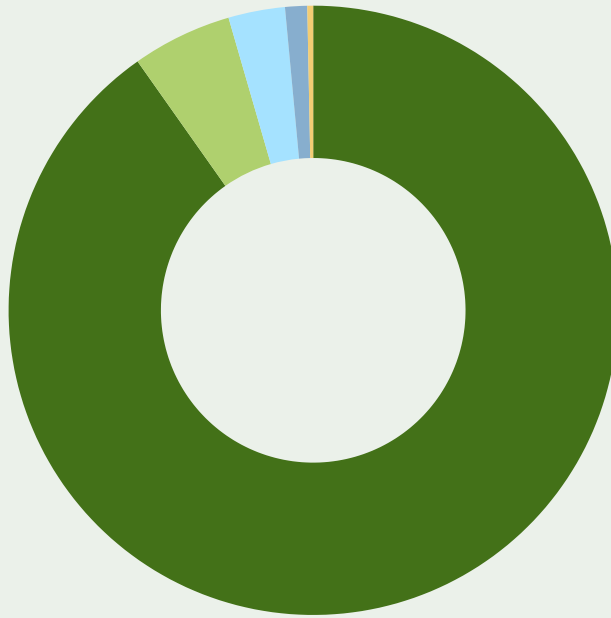


GRANTS AWARDED BY CHARITABLE FIELD FROM 2021-2024

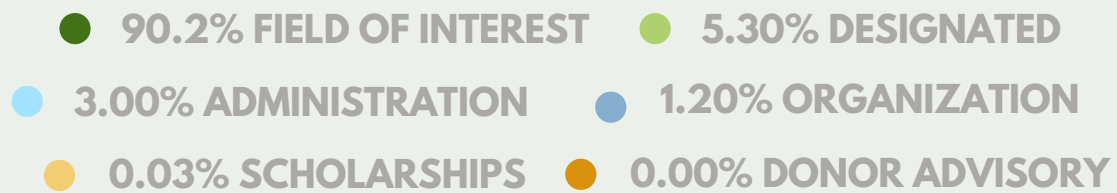


2024 GRANTS

Bird City Library - Computer Update	SFCHS - Raw No More
CC Historical Society - Old Country Church - Siding	SFCHS - Remember Your Why
CC Hospital - Fresh Start Bags	SFCHS - Wrestling Mat
CC Hospital - InMar Drug Take-Back Program	St. Francis Rec Commission - Holiday 2024
CC Hospital - Rehab Office Equipment	Surprise Grants - \$200,\$300,\$500
Cheylin - Snacks for Students	St. Francis Senior Center - Windows
Cheylin Wellness Center - Mirrors	The Fight Against Cancer - NWK Foundation for Hope
Cheylin & SFCHS - Mini Foundation Grant \$500/School	Together CC - Senior Center Dishwasher
CCV Assisted Living - New Activity Dept Revamp	Together CC - Tri-Angle Park - Phase 2
NWK Clinic & Wellness - Special Olympics	Together CC - Saint Francis Smoke Ring - Event
SFCHS Alumni - 2024 Reunion	United Methodist Church - Thrift Store-Roof
SFCHS - National Honor Society	Vic Oelke Memorial Scholarship - Jordan Smull



GRANTS AWARDED BY FUND TYPE
FROM 2021-2024



GRANTED TOTALS IN DOLLARS
YEAR OVER YEAR



Bird City Library

was granted \$2,000 from the Cheyenne County Impact Fund. These funds were used to replace four computers for patrons as well as four new computer tables to rearrange the area to allow patrons more privacy and workspace.



Great Plains of CC Hospital

was granted \$3,000, from the Dane G Hansen Foundation Community Grant Fund for Cheyenne County. These funds were used for fresh start bags, which will provide essential items that meet patients' immediate needs.



Cheyenne County Historical Society

was granted \$10,000 from the Dane G Hansen Foundation Community Grant Fund for Cheyenne County. These funds will be used to install new concrete siding. The check presentation was held at the church's 110th birthday celebration.



Grants from the Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation empower local organizations to bring meaningful projects to life—whether it's enhancing healthcare services, supporting educational initiatives, or preserving our rich history.

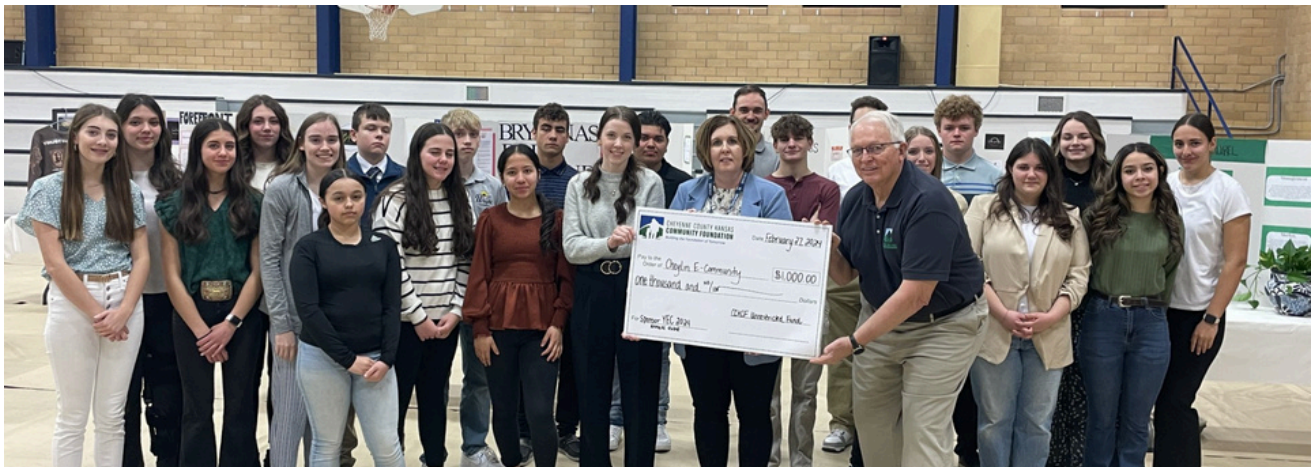
CHA



Congratulations to our \$500 Surprise Grant winner, Shay Zweygardt!

Shay generously decided to grant the St. Francis Kids Wrestling Club \$500.

In an incredible act of kindness, Tom Keller chose to match this donation with an additional \$500, bringing the total grant to \$1,000!



YEC-Youth Entrepreneur Competition

The Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation (CCKCF) proudly sponsored this year's event with a generous \$1,000 contribution. The annual competition, which alternates its location between Bird City and St. Francis, drew an impressive lineup of young talent. This year's event, hosted at Cheylin, featured 16 presenters from the host school and 7 from St. Francis.

NGE THAT ENDURES

OUR BRANCHES OF GIVING

At the Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation, our funds are the seeds from which community growth flourishes. Whether endowed for lasting impact or non-endowed for immediate support, each fund reflects the generosity of donors committed to nurturing Cheyenne County from the ground up.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Supports foundation operations.

- Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation Operating Endowment Fund
- Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation Operating Fund

DESIGNATED

Provides annual support for specific charities.

- Cheyenne County Village Fund (Quasi-endowment)
- St. Francis Educational Foundation Fund (Quasi-endowment)

DONOR ADVISED

Enables donors to recommend grants to the charitable organizations or programs of their choice.

- David and Deanna (Gerver) Nelsen Family Fund (Non-endowment)
- Junior and Deloris Knorr Family Fund (Endowment)
- LRO Family Fund (Endowment)

FIELD OF INTEREST

Responds to current and future needs by supporting a specific cause or geographic area rather than a charity.

- Cheyenne County Impact Fund (Endowment)
- Dane G. Hansen Foundation Community Grant Fund for Cheyenne County (Non-endowment)
- Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation Unrestricted Fund (Non-endowment)
- St. Francis New Generation Fund (Quasi-endowment)

ORGANIZATION

Offers a simple & efficient way for your nonprofit to build capacity & provide long-term support for your mission.

- 202 On Washington Fund (Quasi-endowment)
- Cheyenne County Historical Society Fund (Quasi-endowment)
- Cheyenne County Hospital Enhancement Fund (Quasi-endowment)

SCHOLARSHIP

Supports student education and impacts our future leaders.

- Vic Oelke Memorial Scholarship Fund (Endowment)

WHAT IS A FUND?

A fund within a foundation is a designated pool of money set aside to support charitable activities, community projects, or specific causes. These funds are typically established by individuals, families, businesses, or organizations who wish to contribute to the community in a structured and impactful way. There are two primary types of funds:

- **Endowed Funds:** These are permanent funds where the dollars are invested, and only a calculated spendable is used to make grants. This approach ensures that the fund can support causes indefinitely, providing a lasting legacy.
- **Non-Endowed (Expendable) Funds:** These funds allow the entire principal and interest to be used for grants, offering more immediate impact but without the perpetual nature of endowed funds.

Donors can tailor their funds to align with their philanthropic goals, such as supporting education, health initiatives, the arts, or other community needs. By establishing a fund within a foundation, donors benefit from the foundation's expertise in managing charitable assets and distributing grants effectively, ensuring their contributions make a meaningful difference.



**HELP US PLANT
THE SEEDS OF
TOMORROW**

2024 MATCH MONTH RECAP

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our donors, Match Month 2024 was a remarkable success!

We are proud to share that the Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation raised \$80,324.77, surpassing our \$70,000 goal. With the support of our incredible matching partners, the total amount raised reached an impressive \$300,324.77.

Matching donations included:

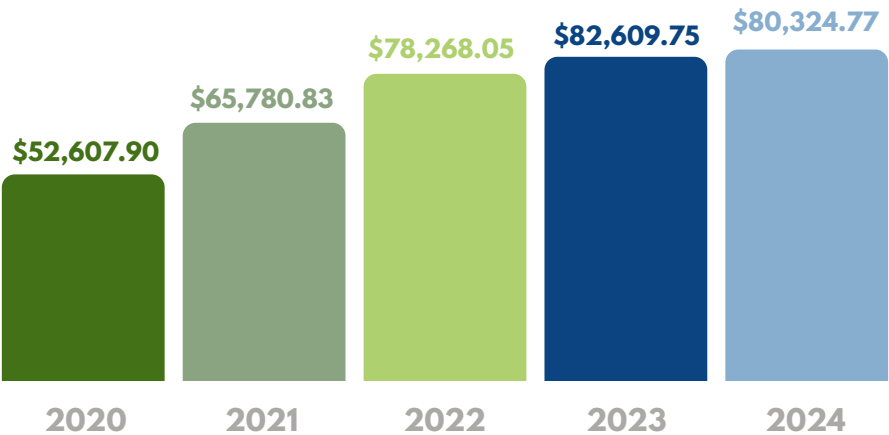
- \$100,000 from the Dane G. Hansen Foundation
- \$70,000 from the Patterson Family Foundation
- \$50,000 from longtime supporters Bill and Cindy Keller

These matching contributions amplified the impact of every local gift, allowing the foundation to invest even more into projects that strengthen Cheyenne County and improve lives across the region.


We extend our heartfelt thanks to our matching donors and to everyone who contributed. This achievement is a testament to the power of community and shared purpose.

Together, we are building a brighter future for Cheyenne County!

DOLLARS RAISED DURING MATCH
MONTH FROM 2020-2024



Amounts above reflect the total before the match

A photograph of two women in conversation. On the left, an older woman with short, curly white hair and glasses is seen in profile, looking towards the right. On the right, a younger woman with blonde hair is smiling and looking towards the older woman. They are standing in front of a large sign for the Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation. The sign features a logo with silhouettes of a person and a child, and the text 'Cheyenne County Kansas', 'Community', 'FC', and 'Building the Found'. The entire image has a blue tint.

**THANK YOU TO
THE GENEROUS
DONORS WHO
MAKE MATCH
MONTH
POSSIBLE.**

CULTIVATING A LEGACY

In 2024, two esteemed individuals, known affectionately as the "Two Toms," retired from the Cheyenne County Kansas Community Foundation Board, marking the end of an era. Both have made an indelible impact on the foundation throughout their time on the board, contributing to its growth and success since 2007.



Tom Keller

Tom Smull

Tom Keller offered his perspective on generosity and community service:

"My parents shared through their words and actions the Christian message that it is better to give than receive. This message was to be shared with family, friends and community. As I grew older and retired, I found that community service became one of the reasons to get up every morning. I also started thinking of my community as one of my heirs through charitable giving. Giving back to my community is one of the joys in my life."

Reflecting on his tenure, Tom Smull shared:

"I have proudly served on numerous boards over the years, both in the community and my church. However, I feel that being a member of CCKCF for the past 10 years has been the most important and rewarding for me. The CCKCF board has had the greatest impact on St. Francis and Cheyenne County. Through grants, we have been able to support a wide range of groups, helping them achieve their goals and carry out activities that have enhanced the quality of life for everyone. It has been my great honor and privilege to serve as a CCKCF board member and to contribute to the prosperity and future of Cheyenne County."

The legacy of the "Two Toms" will undoubtedly resonate within the community for years to come. Their dedication has not only shaped the foundation's trajectory but also ensured a brighter future for Cheyenne County. Their enduring impact serves as an inspiration for continued growth and community engagement.

A note from Bill Keller:

I was born and raised in St. Francis, one of five children of Ed & Rachael Keller. I loved growing up in St. Francis; and, as I have gotten older, I have an even greater appreciation for my experiences growing up in St. Francis, going to school there, and having an opportunity to be involved in many activities and organizations. My wife, Cindy, also grew up in a small town, Pratt, KS. We both have an appreciation for the value of the lessons learned and experiences lived by growing up in a small town. My home just northwest of St. Francis was my official home from 1950 until 1975, when I went out into the big world, taking a job in Kansas City. Cindy and I have lived in Pratt since 1982. We were both fortunate to have parents who were very active in their communities and very generous in supporting charitable and community causes. We believe very strongly in continuing the tradition of giving back that we learned from our parents. Contributions of time and treasure are particularly important for smaller communities because of the limitations they face with a small population base.

"SMALL TOWNS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE SUCCESS OF OUR NATION, AND WE WANT THAT INFLUENCE AND VALUE OF SMALL TOWNS TO CONTINUE."

We are proud to be able to contribute to the Community Foundation in St. Francis because we know that it is doing great work in helping the community survive and thrive. St. Francis will always be my hometown, and we are honored to support such a great community.



Cindy and Bill Keller

ROOTED IN GENEROSITY

The Keller Family's Enduring Legacy

OUR 2024 BOARD



Board Chair

Amy Hendricks



Vice Chair

Dara Carmichael



Treasurer

Betty Peterson



Tim Burr



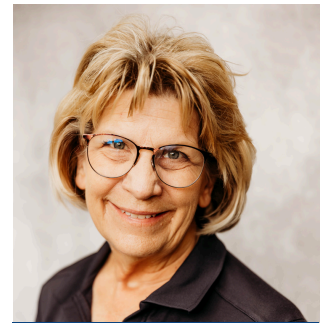
Gaby Carmichael



Kelli Dankenbring



Tom Keller



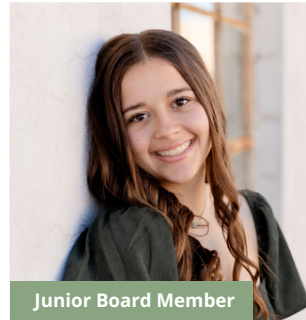
Carla Lampe



Cliff Leach



Tom Smull



Junior Board Member

Kierra Penka



Junior Board Member

Emily Serrano



SOWING SEEDS OF LEADERSHIP

CCKCF JUNIOR BOARD INITIATIVE

After a successful year of hosting summer interns, the foundation is excited to take the next step in fostering long-term engagement by bringing junior board members onto the foundation board. This initiative will provide emerging leaders, who have already gained valuable experience and insight through their internships, the opportunity to contribute fresh perspectives and energy to the foundation's strategic decision-making.

By involving these junior board members, we aim to cultivate a pipeline of future leaders who are deeply committed to the foundation's mission while ensuring diversity of thought and new ideas. This step reflects our commitment to inclusivity and mentorship, empowering the next generation to have a lasting impact on the foundation's growth and success.

Junior board members will also take on individual projects. They follow a structured process where they select a project, secure school approval, apply for grant funding, implement their initiatives, and complete them with a written follow-up. This hands-on experience will enhance their leadership skills while directly benefiting the community.

Additionally, they will participate in leadership development opportunities, collaborate on community-driven initiatives, and work closely with seasoned board members to gain firsthand experience in nonprofit governance. By equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to drive meaningful change, we are strengthening the foundation's ability to serve Cheyenne County for generations to come.

COMMUNITY CONNECTION GROWTH

PRSR MKT
ECRWSS
U.S.POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM Retail

*****ECRWSS*****

Local
Postal Customer



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starting a fund:**

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