



**together
for good**



**Lincoln
Community**
FOUNDATION

2025 Annual Report

Ascent, a 57' glass spire by artist Jun Kaneko, illuminates the corner of 13th and P Streets in the Lincoln Community Foundation Tower Square. This community space was made possible thanks to Sheila Dickinson Dinsmore Graf's endowed fund held at the Foundation, which will build and enhance Lincoln for generations to come.



Making More Good Possible

For the past 70 years, the Lincoln Community Foundation has existed to strengthen our community through philanthropy.

Every day we witness the beautiful ways that donor resources are transformed into relief, innovation, hope and change.

We **empower donors** by connecting their charitable goals to local needs.

We **build community** by uniting people, institutions and resources to lead positive change.

And we **help nonprofits** through grantmaking and other activities that fuel and strengthen the local nonprofit sector.

We live at the intersection of smart and generous people, financial advisors who know how to best serve their clients and nonprofits and community leaders who are extending their network for good.

On behalf of the board of directors and our staff, thank you for making more possible in 2025 by leveraging your giving through the Lincoln Community Foundation.

Let's make more possibilities together.



Tracy Edgerton,
President



Lauren Pugliese,
Chair

2025 Accomplishments

- Distributed more than **\$34 million** in grants and programs.
- Launched the Lincoln-Lancaster County Response Fund in partnership with the United Way of Lincoln and Lancaster County and other local funders to provide support to nonprofit organizations facing funding cuts that serve vulnerable populations.
- Earned certification as one of Lincoln's Family-Friendly Workplaces through the Lincoln Partnership of Economic Development and Lincoln Littles.





- Celebrated another record-breaking Give to Lincoln Day by raising **\$9.5 million** for 502 local nonprofits.
- Received re-accreditation with the nation's highest standard for philanthropic excellence, National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations®.
- Awarded more than **\$600,000** in scholarships to 299 students.
- Recognized the Harbor of Dreams Foundation with the 2025 Charity Award and presented Ava Thomas with the JoAnn Martin Civic Leadership Award.



1,202

Active Funds



614

Donor Advised Funds



404

Benefactors



552

Legacy Society Members

Investing in the Future

Many donors choose to support the community through their will, their trust or through a retirement account beneficiary designation. LCF established the Legacy Society to recognize forward-thinking donors who are investing in the future of Lincoln.

New Legacy Society Members in 2025

Glenda Dietrich Moore

Paul & Ruth Few

Teresa & Lewis
Littlejohn

Eric M. Moellering

The Katie Nissen Family

Debbie Petersen

Lucas Sabalka &

Stacie Kotschwar

Tom & Sue Tallman

Dr. Annette M. Wiechert

The Wirtz Family

Anonymous – 7

John Grady and Nancy King: Leaving a values driven legacy

When John Grady and Nancy King moved back to Lincoln in 2014 to spend time with aging loved ones, creating their own charitable estate plans felt a bit daunting.

“When we updated our trust, our attorney said, ‘You’ve got to figure this out some day,’” shared John.

Someday became today when the couple started working with the Lincoln Community Foundation.

John and Nancy were first introduced to LCF when they opened a donor advised fund to support their favorite nonprofits during Give to Lincoln Day. A few years later, they began having broader conversations about how they could extend their values beyond their lifetimes.

“We had a few core areas that we wanted our philanthropy to continue to impact when we’re no longer here to do so – the arts, hunger and housing for example,” said Nancy. “From there, the Foundation was able to make suggestions about where our dollars might go even further.”

“Thanks to Tracy, Sandi and the rest of the team – we had the guidance to help us get comfortable with what we wanted to do,” John continued.

“Attorneys are good at paperwork, but you also need someone who knows the community and can share where the needs and opportunities are.”

Nancy and John’s generous spirit has already made a difference in Lincoln. Through their partnership with the Foundation, they can support their passions now and leave a legacy gift that will invest in their hometown for generations to come.

When you work with the Lincoln Community Foundation, you can do so much with one simple estate gift. Scan the QR code to learn how you can create a lasting legacy for our community.



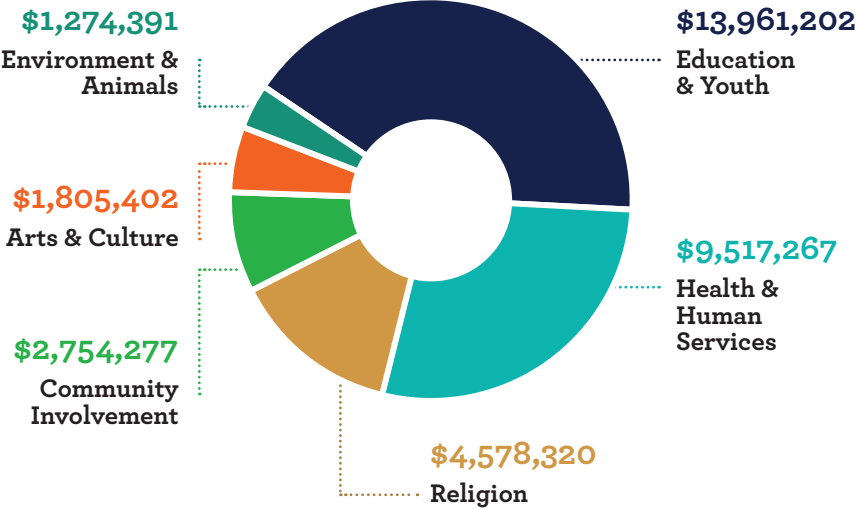


The Power of Collective Giving

In 2025, Lincoln Community Foundation deployed more than \$34 million in grants and programs – a record-high for our organization.

These investments in Lincoln and beyond were made possible by local philanthropists – those that are here today and those that have entrusted us with their legacy.

2025 Grants by Area:



LCF's Mission Investments: Making More Housing Possible

Long-term Lincolniters might remember the potted bonsai trees and vibrant 1960s delivery vans that dotted the property outside of Azalealand Floral & Greenhouses on 37th Street and Prescott Avenue. Today, that same site is taking on a new purpose: helping address one of Lincoln's most pressing community needs – affordable housing.

With the help of a mission investment from LCF, NeighborWorks Lincoln (NWL) is working alongside



neighbors to transform 2.9 acres of vacant property into 18 affordable homes for first-time homebuyers, two market rate homes and neighborhood amenities.

“Money costs money. But with a mission investment loan from LCF, we’re saving money on the entire project, which allows us to deliver more homes at an affordable price,” said NWL CEO Charlie Wesche.

Beyond the Azalealand property, a low-interest loan from LCF also helped NWL finance the acquisition and predevelopment expenses for a mixed-income project at 46th and Pioneers, which is now wrapping up construction.

When the loans are repaid, LCF can reinvest the funds into new community projects. As LCF's Strategic Partnerships Consultant, Rich Herink, stated, “it’s a home run.”

LCF's mission investments have not only supported the creation of affordable housing but also have helped entrepreneurs start and grow their businesses and provided support for local nonprofits to expand their services.

“Seeing these funds redeployed to seed new ideas in our community creates a cycle of good,” said Rich. “By putting our philanthropic capital to work, we can open more opportunities for Lincoln to grow and thrive.”

To learn more, scan the QR code.





Jumping Into the Next Chapter of Prosper Lincoln

More than a decade ago, Lincoln Community Foundation convened civic, nonprofit and business leaders to commission Lincoln Vital Signs, a data-driven snapshot of our city's strengths and challenges. What followed wasn't just a report – it launched a movement.

From that shared understanding emerged **Prosper Lincoln**, a community-wide effort grounded in listening, learning and acting together.

Since then, Prosper Lincoln has united thousands of residents, organizations and businesses around common priorities – from early childhood education to housing to building strong neighborhoods.

In April 2025, we launched Prosper Lincoln 3.0 – a renewed call to collective action rooted in the

“Hope increases with imagination. In our world today, we are worried and weary. But we’re going to ask you today to be keepers of an imagination...to be an agent of transformation in these three areas.” – Rev. Juan Carlos Huertas

values of equity, connection and shared opportunity.

Introducing the Prosper Lincoln 3.0 Focus Areas

Grounded in the **2025 Lincoln Vital Signs** report and shaped by hundreds of community conversations, Prosper Lincoln 3.0 centers on three renewed focus areas:

Connections: *All people thrive through community engagement and social bonds.*

From neighborhood coalitions to inclusive learning spaces, Prosper Lincoln will prioritize belonging, civic engagement, economic mobility and relationship-building.

Housing: *All residents live in quality housing they can afford.* Prosper Lincoln will support housing access, affordability and long-term stability in response to rising rents, aging housing stock and increasing demand.

Early Childhood: *All children are flourishing socially, emotionally, physically, and educationally.* Through partnerships with organizations like Lincoln Littles, Prosper Lincoln will continue building access to high-quality early care and a strong, supported childcare workforce.

For the latest news and stories, visit ProsperLincoln.org.

Cultivating Connection: A Sanctuary for Community Roots

At the Prairie Pines Nature Preserve, 145 acres of wild woodland and tallgrass prairie serve as a living laboratory for the power of connection – one of the three core pillars of Prosper Lincoln.

What began as the personal legacy of Walt and Virginia Bagley has evolved into a high-impact collaboration between Prairie Pines Partners, Wachiska Audubon, and Community Crops. This strategic alignment, bolstered by a LCF Open Door Grant, ensures that as our city expands, this “green postage stamp” remains a permanent space where diverse populations intersect and thrive.

“Our role is to convene, connect, and catalyze,” said LCF President Tracy Edgerton. “We don’t run every program, but we invest in the infrastructure and relationships that

allow good ideas to grow – and we support the people closest to the work.”

The preserve’s impact stretches far beyond conservation; it is a vital engine for social cohesion and equity. On any given day, the land provides a sanctuary for Yazidi refugee farmers cultivating culturally significant crops alongside “Zoo School” students and Indigenous tribal members reclaiming traditional gardening practices.

By bridging the gap between urban development and the natural world, Prairie Pines demonstrates that true community prosperity is rooted in our ability to create shared spaces where every resident feels a sense of belonging and support.

Scan the QR code to read the full story.



Lincoln Forever Funds: Making More Solutions Possible

Having flexible resources to stay responsive and nimble is foundational to our work. As needs change, **unrestricted gifts** through our **Lincoln Forever Funds** ensure a viable safety net for our community.

Lincoln Forever Funds are created by donors who care deeply about Lincoln and support LCF’s broad grantmaking, including the Give to Lincoln Day challenge match fund

and our Open Door Grant program, which provides flexible operating and program grants to local nonprofits.

Our board of directors also deploy Lincoln Forever Funds to address emerging needs and create change for the long term. We support the Prosper Lincoln community agenda as well as help fund the Lincoln Vital Signs reports, which inform the

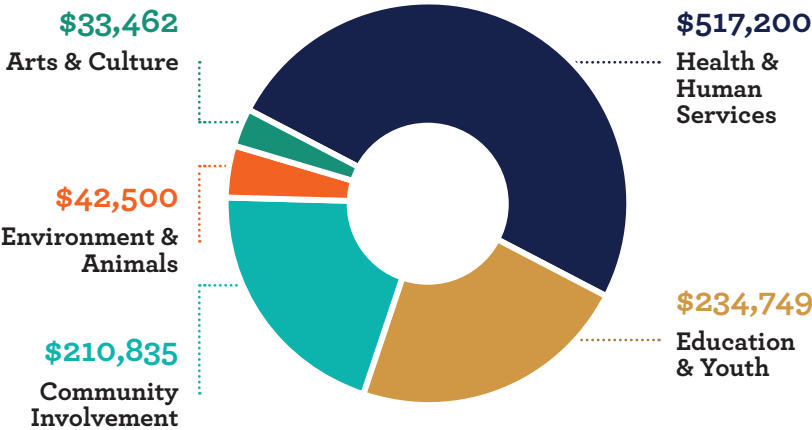
community of the areas where we are successful and areas where we have room to grow together.

Donating directly to the Lincoln Forever Fund or creating a fund in your name to support unrestricted grantmaking serves a powerful purpose, especially as Lincoln evolves.

Lincoln Forever Funds – 131



2025 Open Door Grants by Area:



The HUB:

Making more hope possible for unconnected youth

“The reality is – the bumps of life are going to happen.”

Rose Hood-Buss, executive director of The HUB Central Access Point for Young Adults, has spent her career supporting Lincoln’s youth in whatever life situation they may find themselves.

“If we can come alongside them and help in what seems like small ways – a car repair, a utility bill, a bus pass – that keeps them on the path of independence and on the path of their success,” she shared.

For The HUB, success often looks like someone taking the first step to walk through their doors at 1037 South 12th Street.

These are young people navigating life without permanent family support, including those who are pregnant or parenting, experiencing homelessness or housing instability, involved in foster care or juvenile probation, survivors of trafficking or exploitation, or otherwise estranged from their families. Many have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and carry risk factors that increase their

vulnerability to multi-generational system involvement.

At The HUB, they’re welcomed by a passionate team that’s able to walk with them as they achieve their goals.

“We focus on education, employment and empowerment, and everything is voluntary – it’s all up to them,” said Rose. “The core of our work is unconditional support on the path that they choose.”

While The HUB is primarily funded through grants and contracts, the support they receive can often be restricted, leaving a gap for operational expenses like rent, utilities and salaries. To help fill this gap, the organization was awarded an Open Door Grant in 2025 from Lincoln Community Foundation for flexible, operational support.

“We’re proud to invest in The HUB through our Open Door Grant program,” said Michelle Paulk, Vice President for Grantmaking and Operations. “Helping youth in transition build stability toward



independence and success is critical for our community to truly thrive.”

While young people find their path to prosperity, The HUB remains a safe, inclusive space where individuals facing barriers can access critical resources, build stability and pursue personal growth.

“No one organization can do this alone,” said Rose. “It takes all of us working together. The interconnectedness of the nonprofit sector, the funders and individual donors is how we move the needle for our community.”

**To learn more,
scan the QR code.**



2025 Financials

Assets

\$282,677,656

Contributions

\$42,598,809

Grants

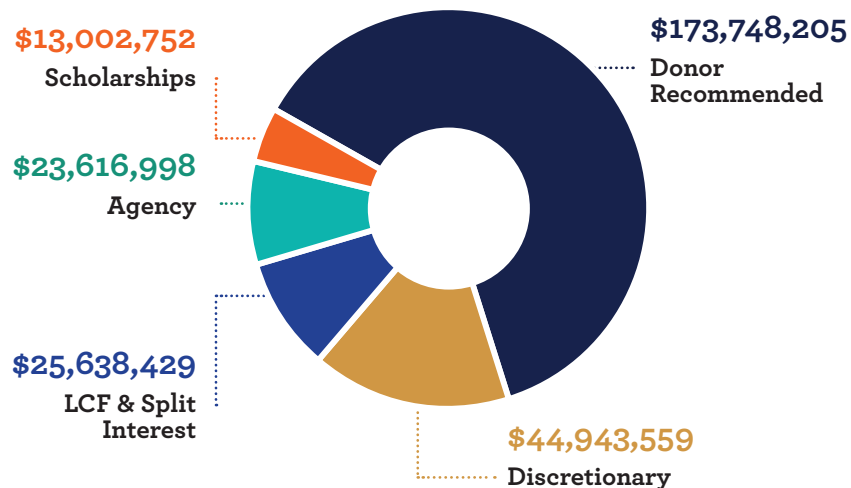
\$33,890,859

\$1,700,000 from Discretionary Funds

Funds Opened

41

Assets by Type:





Board of Directors

Lauren Pugliese,
Chair

John Olsson,
Vice Chair

Susie Keisler-Munro,
Treasurer

Brett Ebert,
Secretary

Mark Hesser,
Past Chair

Susie Blue

Eric Buchanan

Yohance Christie

Connie Edmond

Kathy Farrell

Shannon Harner

Aaron Hilkemann

Juan Carlos Huertas

Kile Johnson

Ben Kiser

Kassy Knudson

Alyssa Martin

Makenzie Rath

Max Rodenburg

Rhonda Seacrest

John Skretta

David Spinar

Sandra Washington



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