Woods Charitable Fund

Annual Report 2020

Setting ideas in motion

Officers and Directors

Nelle Woods Jamison
Chair
Community Volunteer

Donna W. Woods
Chair Emerita
Community Volunteer

Candice Howell
Vice Chair
(term ended 2020)
Assistant Dean of Student Success & Persistence
Nebraska Wesleyan University

Ed Wimes
Vice Chair
Community Volunteer

Hank Woods
Treasurer
Community Volunteer

Michael J. Tavlin
Assistant Treasurer
Chief Financial Officer
Speedway Motors, Inc.

Michelle Suarez
Community Volunteer

Pablo Cervantes
Owner
Casa Property Management

Jay Conrad
Executive Director
Houses of Hope

Suk Wortman
(term began 2020)
Director of Direct Marketing
Arbor Day Foundation

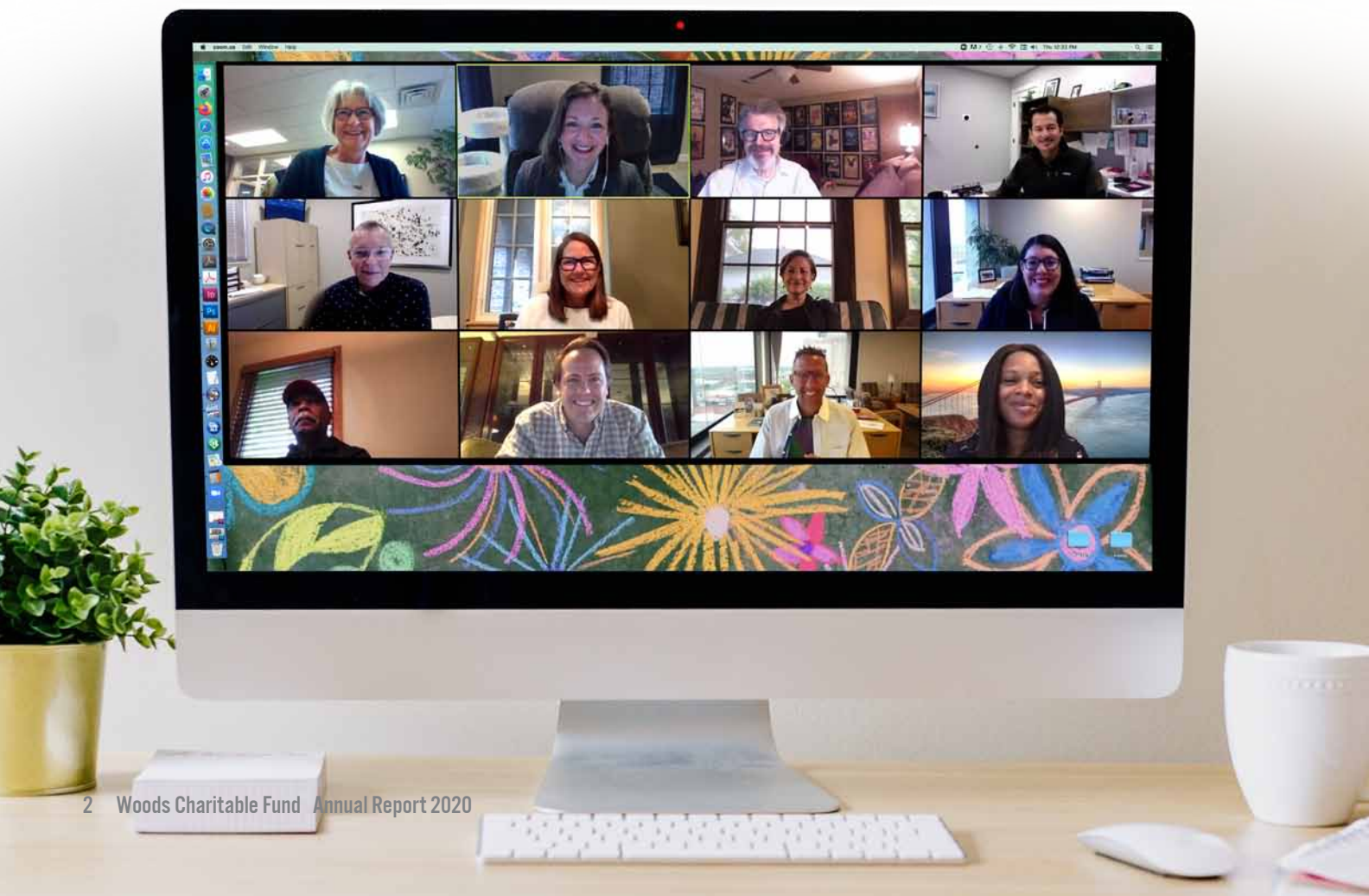
Staff

Thomas C. Woods, IV
Board Secretary
President

Joan Stolle
Operations Manager

Kathy Steinauer Smith
Senior Community Investment Director

Nicole Juranek
Community Investment Director



Letter from the President

Suk Wortman

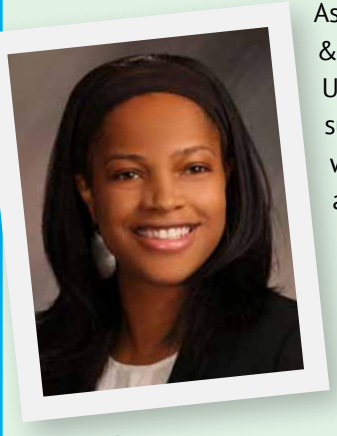
"I am not what happened to me, I am what I choose to become."
– Carl Gustav Jung

2020 was an unprecedented year. There was much uncertainty in our lives. Thankfully, Lincoln's nonprofit sector leaders and direct service providers showed great resilience — they assessed, pivoted and responded.

WCF's 2020 annual report shines a spotlight on the efforts of all of our current grantees to show you what they chose to become when faced with the challenges presented by the pandemic. Strategically, WCF limited those eligible to apply for funding to past or current grantees. Although this was disheartening to some, the bright side was the potential to receive funding from the outpouring of support of the Lincoln COVID-19 Response Fund, which has granted $1,247,843 to date.

This year marked the end of Candice Howell's board term, which began in 2015. Candice is the Assistant Dean of Student Success & Persistence at Nebraska Wesleyan University, where she provides academic success services and help to students whose progress to graduation is at risk. We appreciate the fact that she was straightforward and spoke her mind, enriching our decisions. During Candice's board tenure, the Fund awarded 338 grants totaling $9,006,700. Candice's vacated board seat was filled by Suk Wortman, who is Director of Direct Marketing at the Arbor Day Foundation. She leads membership and mass market fundraising for more than 1 million members and supporters. Before beginning at the Arbor Day Foundation in 2016, Wortman worked in marketing and sales positions at financial tech, bio-tech and agricultural businesses in Nebraska and Illinois.

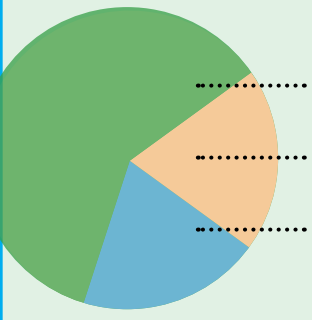
And finally, in addition to WCF's regular grantmaking decisions, the Fund's board decided to set aside $900,000 over three years for a fourth round of Breakthrough Initiative Grants (BIG) to be awarded in 2021. Read more about the first three BIG programs below and on Page 5. WCF is proud of how these projects are progressing, and we look forward to what applicants propose in the future.



Candice Howell

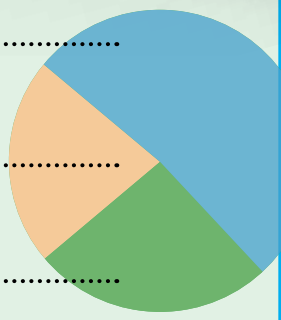
Thomas C. Woods, IV
President

COVID-related grants:
In 2020, WCF paid **$49,000** in grants to address COVID-19 needs:



- **$29,000** (60%) for child-care and after-school programs
- **$10,000** (20%) for financial aid for people not eligible for other support
- **$10,000** (20%) for building renovations needed to safely serve clients

Breakthrough Initiative Grants:
To date, WCF has awarded **$2.275 million** for three Breakthrough grants to support promising and groundbreaking programs and collaborations.



- **$1,175,000** (52%) for Collective Impact Lincoln, empowering resident-led change in six Lincoln neighborhoods
- **$600,000** (26%) for Project UPLIFT, providing legal services and education through Lincoln's cultural centers
- **$500,000** (22%) for Bridgeway to a Better Life, expanding job-skills and training for careers with specific hiring needs

In Memoriam:

Woods Charitable Fund mourned the passing of two of its previous board chairs in 2020.

LUCIA WOODS LINDLEY died December 14 at her home in New York City at age 83. She was a board member of Woods Charitable Fund from 1980-1993 and served as board chair from 1990-1993. In 1993, she was instrumental in the restructuring of Woods Charitable Fund into two private foundations by dividing WCF's endowment and creating Woods Fund of Chicago. Ms. Lindley became Woods Fund of Chicago's board chair in 1994.

She was the granddaughter of Frank H. Woods Sr., who established Woods Charitable Fund in 1941 in Lincoln with his wife, Nelle Cochrane Woods, and their three sons. She was preceded in death by her parents, Frank H. Woods Jr. and Louise Brewer Woods, and her brother, Brewer Woods. Her husband, Dan Lindley, died December 18. She is survived by her sisters, Lisa Woods and Amy Woods; a stepson and stepdaughter; and six nieces and nephews.

Ms. Lindley had been a member of the Board of Governors of the Willa Cather Foundation in Red Cloud for more than 20 years and was the photographer of the 1973 book "Willa Cather: A Pictorial Memoir." She lectured with her photographs at Cather seminars and symposia over many years. In honor of Lucia Woods Lindley's dedication to the work and memory of Willa Cather and her years of service to Woods Charitable Fund, the Fund provided a $10,000 grant to the Willa Cather Foundation in her memory.

TOM POTTER died November 8 at age 81. He was a board member of Woods Charitable Fund from 1997 to 2002 and served as board chair from 2000 to 2002. He was the first member of the Lincoln community and non-family member to serve in that role. Mr. Potter was chairman, president and chief executive officer of Lincoln Mutual Life Insurance Company when he was elected to the WCF Board. That company later became Lincoln Direct Life and in 2001 merged with Woodmen Accident and Life. He held positions on many business and nonprofit boards in Lincoln throughout his career including with Bryan Hospital, Madonna Rehabilitation Hospitals, the United Way and Nebraska Wesleyan University, his alma mater. He received a master's of business administration degree from The Wharton School of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania. A native of Sutherland, Nebraska, Mr. Potter is survived by his wife, Harriet; one son and one daughter; one stepson and one stepdaughter; several grandchildren and a great-granddaughter.

Lucia Woods Lindley and Tom Potter were important guiding forces for Woods Charitable Fund. May their memories be a blessing.

Photo courtesy of Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center

About the foundation

Woods Charitable Fund is a private philanthropic foundation located in Lincoln, Nebraska. It was founded in 1941 by Frank H. Woods, Nelle C. Woods and their three sons, Thomas, Henry and Frank.

The Fund's vision is to help build a community that offers a promising future for all, where everyone has the opportunity to participate and thrive. It supports a broad range of activities that include, but are not limited to, these special interests: Human Services, Education, Civic & Community and Arts & Culture. More details about WCF's history, grant-making and review of financial statements can be found on its website, www.woodscharitable.org.

In 2016, Woods Charitable Fund launched a Breakthrough Initiative Grant to support promising and groundbreaking new programs, collaborations and/or organizational best practices at nonprofit organizations serving Lincoln. Breakthrough Initiative Grants were awarded in 2017 to Collective Impact Lincoln, a collaboration led by Civic Nebraska; in 2018 to Legal Aid of Nebraska and the Center for Legal Immigration Assistance for UPLIFT; and in 2020 to Lincoln Literacy for Bridgeway to a Better Life, which provides job-skills training, mentorship and classes. More details on this grant program are available at www.woodscharitable.org/breakthrough-grants/.

Civic Nebraska and Rabble Mill partnered to hand out 400 kits containing personal protective equipment and supplies at The Bay.

To apply for a grant

Woods Charitable Fund offers two grant cycles per year and only accepts applications from nonprofit organizations serving Lincoln. Before applying, grant-seekers are required to either contact the Fund by phone or mail/e-mail a letter of intent, including a budget, to determine if an application is appropriate. To allow adequate time for consideration, interested agencies are required to contact the Fund's staff at least two weeks prior to the application deadline.

If the Fund requests a full proposal, the applicant will be asked to complete WCF's web-based Grant Application Form, accessible only to those invited to apply.

The staff at Woods Charitable Fund, Inc. is pleased to consult with applicants at any time during the process to help strengthen their proposals and reports. More information about the application process including limitations, samples of applications and report forms and what is not funded can be found at www.woodscharitable.org/apply/.

In cases of extreme emergency, WCF will consider interim proposals of $10,000 or less outside the set timetable.

Applicants should direct inquiries to:

Tom Woods, Kathy Steinauer Smith or Nicole Juranek

Woods Charitable Fund, Inc.
1248 O Street, Suite 1130
Lincoln, NE 68508

www.woodscharitable.org
(402) 436-5971

twoods@woodscharitable.org
ksteinauersmith@woodscharitable.org
njuranek@woodscharitable.org

TIMETABLE

Inquiry Deadline	*Submission Dates*	*Notification Dates*
April 15	April 15-30	November
October 15	October 15-31	May

* Please note that if the deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline will defer to the following business day.

Photo courtesy of the Malone Community Center

2020 Grant Payments

December 31, 2020

COVID

Economic Empowerment Center	$ 10,000
Malone Community Center (Youth Program Director)	10,000
Northeast Family Resource Center	9,000
St. Monica's Home	10,000
Willard Community Center Corporation (General Operating)	10,000
Subtotal	**$ 49,000**

ARTS AND CULTURE

Lincoln Arts Council	$ 20,000
Lux Center for the Arts	15,000
Nebraska Cultural Endowment	10,000
Nebraska Writers Collective	15,000
Omaha Performing Arts Society	10,000
**Willa Cather Foundation	10,000
Subtotal	**$ 80,000**

CIVIC AND COMMUNITY

ACLU Nebraska Foundation, Inc.	$ 20,000
Asian Community and Cultural Center (Collaborative Citizenship Ed Program)	70,000
Center for Legal Immigration Assistance (General Operating)	25,000
Center for Legal Immigration Assistance (Project UPLIFT, Breakthrough 2.0)	40,000
Civic Nebraska	300,000
Community CROPS	7,500
Leadership Lincoln, Inc.	15,000
Legal Aid of Nebraska (Lincoln Housing Justice Project)	20,000
Legal Aid of Nebraska (Project UPLIFT, Breakthrough 2.0)	160,000
Lincoln Community Foundation, Inc.	5,000
Lincoln Lancaster County Habitat for Humanity, Inc.	20,000
Nebraska Civic Engagement Table	30,000
**Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition (General Operating)	12,500
Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition (Youth Advocacy)	10,000
Outlinc, Inc.	20,000
South of Downtown Community Development Organization	25,000
Subtotal	**$ 780,000**

EDUCATION

Dimensions Educational Research Foundation	$ 15,000
Lincoln Community Learning Centers (Fiscal Sponsor: Lincoln Community Foundation, Inc.)	65,000
Lincoln Literacy Council (Bridgeway to a Better Life, Breakthrough 3.0)	200,000
National Audubon Society, Inc. (Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center)	20,000
Subtotal	**$ 300,000**

2020 Grant Payments

December 31, 2020

HUMAN SERVICES

Asian Community and Cultural Center (General Operating)	$ 30,000
Bridges to Hope	25,000
Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties	30,000
Disability Rights Nebraska	20,000
El Centro De Las Américas	30,000
Food Bank of Lincoln, Inc.	20,000
Girl Scouts-Spirit of Nebraska	10,000
Good Neighbor Community Center, Inc. (General Operating)	30,000
HUB Central Access Point for Young Adults	30,000
Lincoln Medical Education Partnership	10,000
**Malone Community Center (General Operating)	12,500
Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach, Inc.	25,000
Mental Health Association of Nebraska	30,000
Planned Parenthood of the Heartland, Inc.	20,000
Rabble Mill	30,000
The Set Me Free Project	24,250
Voices of Hope Lincoln, Inc.	20,000
Willard Community Center Corporation (General Operating)	20,000
Yazda (Yazidi Cultural Center)	10,000
Subtotal	**$ 426,750**

MISCELLANEOUS

Good Neighbor Community Center, Inc. (Cultural Centers of Lincoln Operations)	$ 10,000
Subtotal	**$ 10,000**
TOTAL GRANTS PAID	**$ 1,645,750**

** *Indicates Directors/Officers/Staff/Honorary Awards*

SUMMARY OF 2020 GRANTS PAID BY SPECIAL INTEREST AREA

Arts & Culture
$80,000 | 5%

Education
$300,000 | 18%

Human Services
$426,750 | 26%

Civic & Community
$780,000 | 47%

COVID
$49,000 | 3%

Miscellaneous
$10,000 | 1%

Thank you, Lincoln

2020 was a unique and remarkable year. Every one of us – every organization, every client, every family, student and employee – found our lives disrupted by a pandemic that sent us home in March with lots of questions and launched an entirely unpredictable year.

But Lincoln's nonprofits kept going. Through isolation and quarantines, every one adjusted, focused on what they do and how they do it. They pivoted. They kept showing up and serving people through immense upheaval, change and loss. The COVID-19 pandemic and the economic uncertainty of 2020 created a demand for Lincoln's nonprofit community that was greater than ever.

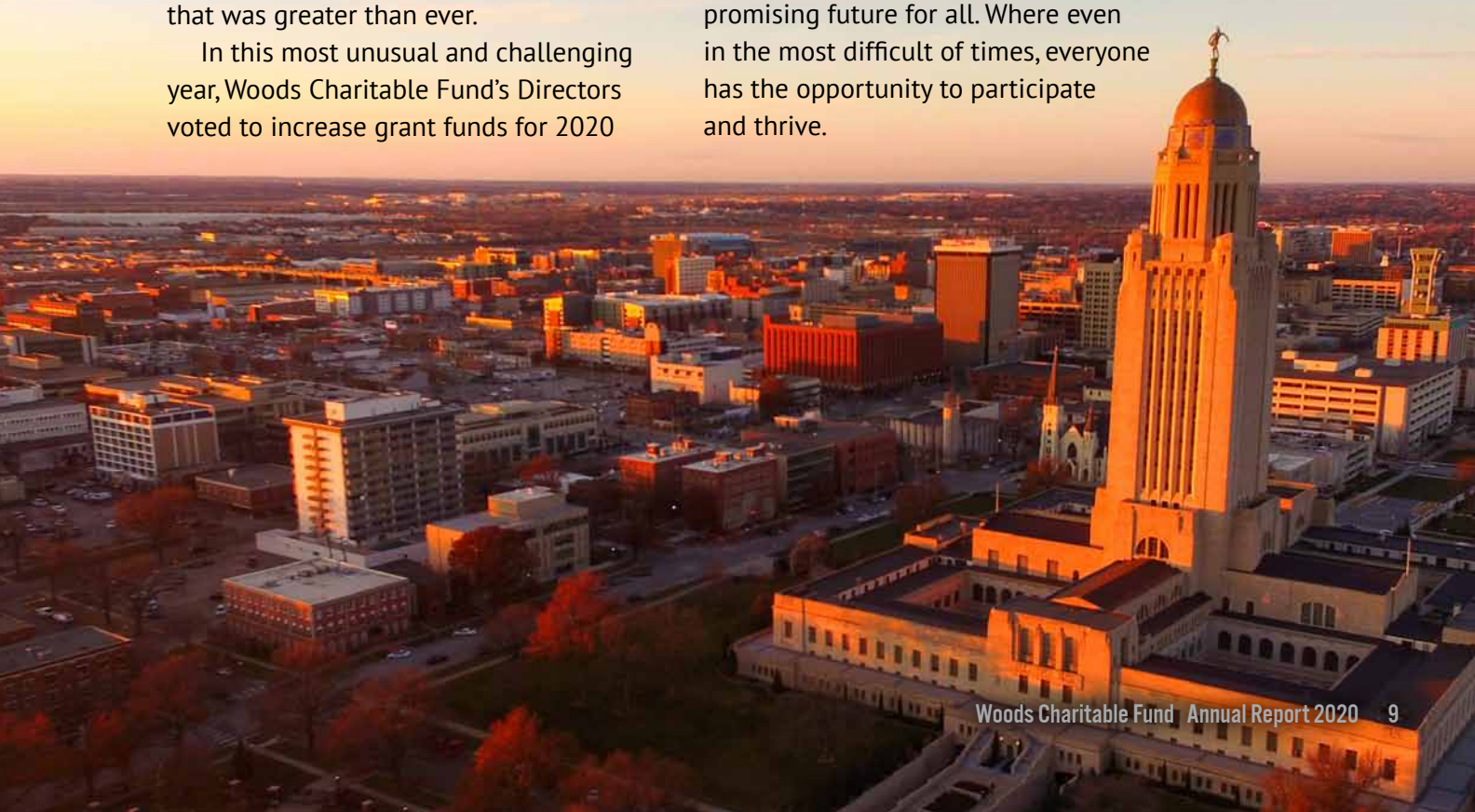
Volunteers painted and chalked sidewalks to encourage and help with voter registration and filling out the census.

In this most unusual and challenging year, Woods Charitable Fund's Directors voted to increase grant funds for 2020 over 2019. They also increased funds available for emergency or interim grants to $100,000, creating a new funding interest area to meet the needs of organizations during the pandemic.

Woods Charitable Fund's vision is a community that offers a promising future for all. We do that by supporting nonprofits that expand prosperity and justice, advance diverse and balanced participation, and stimulate creativity and ingenuity. Through the year, we've seen every organization creatively and flexibly fulfill their missions to serve an ever-growing need**.**

This year, **our annual report is a thank you, to all our grantees. We can't meet our mission without you**.

This report tells the story of 43 organizations, their staff and what they've done in a most demanding year to make Lincoln a community that offers a more promising future for all. Where even in the most difficult of times, everyone has the opportunity to participate and thrive.



Serving the underserved: WCF's 2020 grantees

Woods Charitable Fund has a special interest in supporting organizations and projects that help Lincoln's New Americans. Those nonprofits were especially busy in this pandemic year, reaching out to individuals and families to provide important resources, including vital public-health information to their clients in many languages. The **Asian Community and Cultural Center, El Centro de las Américas, the Malone Community Center, Yazda** and **the Good Neighbor Community Center** went above and beyond to provide food and supplies, virtual classes and much more. The **Center for Legal Immigration Assistance** offered legal help for its clients and through its partnership with **Legal Aid of Nebraska** assisted people through Lincoln's cultural centers with housing, debt and other legal issues. The **Economic Empowerment Center** provided direct financial aid during the pandemic to those not eligible for local, state or federal support.

Organizations added virtual programming and at-home delivery to their services during a time when many were homebound or in quarantine. Top, El Centro de las Américas and above, Asian Community and Cultural Center.

A community where all have the chance to participate and thrive includes those incarcerated and recently released. **Bridges to Hope** expanded its capacity to provide clothes, household goods and a welcoming face to returning citizens, and **Nebraska Writers Collective** provided its writing programs for those at the Lincoln Correctional Center virtually. In a year with greater attention on the importance of mental and behavioral health care and services for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, **St. Monica's Home,** the **Mental Health Association of Nebraska** and **Voices of Hope** expanded their programs and at some even their physical spaces to better care for our community.

Khero Edo is a participant of Community CROPS' Yazidi Farmers Project.

This year reignited our appreciation for the outdoors and the many benefits of learning from nature. Two organizations – **Spring Creek Prairie** and **Community CROPS** – expanded programming to get more Lincolnites, especially those without regular access, into the prairie and gardens.

Providing basic needs:

Many nonprofits providing essentials, such as food and housing, served skyrocketing numbers in 2020. The **Food Bank of Lincoln** saw more and more people line up to get food each week and modified distributions for safety. Despite a national moratorium on evictions, **Legal Aid of Nebraska's** Housing Justice program was vital as Lincoln's eviction courts continued operating and Nebraskans sought legal help and advice through the pandemic, and **Matt Talbot Kitchen and Outreach's** Homeless Diversion program kept people housed or helped locate alternative housing. **Lincoln Lancaster County Habitat for Humanity** expanded the role of its Homeownership Coordinator position to better support families, and the **Community Action Program of Lancaster and Saunders Counties** increased its staffing for financial education and coaching.

Habitat for Humanity expanded its education and support for its homeowners in 2020.

To help families mired in poverty develop the skills to land living-wage jobs, **Lincoln Literacy** received Woods Charitable Fund's third Breakthrough Initiative Grant. The Bridgeway to a Better Life program expands job-skills training classes focused toward careers with specific hiring needs in Lincoln.

In a year that threatened some nonprofits' survival, Woods Charitable Fund provided three grants for nonprofits' internal projects or capacity: **Nebraska Cultural Endowment** for increased marketing support as its fundraising was centered on helping the state's hundreds of arts and humanities organizations; **Lincoln Community Foundation** in support of the fifth Lincoln Vital Signs communitywide data survey coming in 2022; and to the **Good Neighbor Community Center** to help establish the Cultural Centers of Lincoln, a collaboration of Lincoln's cultural centers.

Staff members direct traffic at a Food Bank of Lincoln distribution site.

Lincoln Literacy, which received WCF's 2020 Breakthrough Initiative Grant, hosted a drive-through wellness fair in December including job opening information and flu shots. (Photo credit: Charles Haacker)

Youth development and programs:

Programs serving children were turned upside down in a year when students were suddenly learning from home and parents quickly became teachers. With Lincoln Public Schools closed starting in March and modifying its school days through the fall, **Lincoln's Community Learning Centers** became a hub of student services, providing at-home activities, online and home-school support, and some remaining open to offer care, including through the summer. Organizations offering programs through the schools adjusted by providing online classes and activities, arts and other supply kits or other alternatives to continue serving youth and families.

Child care and education looked very different in 2020, including at Willard Community Center (top), Northeast Family Center (above), and at the Malone Community Center (right), where students attended school and did class work remotely.

That included **Lux Center for the Arts, Planned Parenthood, The Set Me Free Project, Nebraska Writers Collective** and **Omaha Performing Arts Society. Lincoln Medical Education Partnership's School Community Intervention Program**, which provides behavioral health support for school administrators, teachers and students, adapted by connecting families to resources like telehealth and provided remote training while adjusting to a long-term and heightened need for services because of the pandemic. The **Lincoln Arts Council**, a fundamental art partner across Lincoln Public Schools, expanded its outreach to launch partnerships with nonprofit and community organizations. **The HUB Central Access Point**, which provides education, training and empowerment to youth transitioning to adulthood, offered online classes and stayed connected to clients even when its building closed. **Rabble Mill** launched its online programming through Bayside Online and hosted physically distanced events and giveaways of kits and supplies with a range of community partners. **Girl Scouts** scrapped plans for a summer camp for its outreach troops and instead packaged at-home educational activity kits with hopes to launch an in-person day camp in 2021.

Child care and early childhood education was upended, with some centers' families no longer needing care, and yet others needing care more than ever. Every center found itself taking on new expenses to provide quality care, purchase materials and follow health directives to keep its staff and children safe. The **Malone Community Center, Northeast Family Resource Center** and **Willard Community Center** all responded to serve their communities through expanded capacity and extended childcare programming in this unusual year. And in anticipation of a greater need for support for early childhood teachers and centers in the year to come, **Dimensions Educational Research Foundation** will provide training for Lincoln centers' staff.

Lifting community voices:

Participation and empowerment are core values for Woods Charitable Fund, and they were especially important in 2020 in anticipation of the U.S. Census count and the November election. Then in summer 2020, Lincoln activists and nonprofits joined the national Black Lives Matter movement reckoning with racial injustice and organized, protested and spoke out to build greater awareness and inclusivity. The **Malone Community Center, Rabble Mill,** the **Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition** and others organized events, listening sessions and trainings to encourage everyone, especially youth, to activate and engage on these systemic issues. Coordinating with dozens of nonprofits statewide, the **Nebraska Civic Engagement Table** supported its member organizations to empower their constituents to speak against racism, be counted and to vote, in 2020 and beyond.

The Malone Center launched the "Hold Cops Accountable" initiative in June.

Other nonprofits organized participation and the lifting of voices and action to improve their communities. **Civic Nebraska** continued its Collective Impact Lincoln collaboration to empower resident-led investment and change in six of Lincoln's core neighborhoods. **Disability Rights Nebraska** trained people on how best to advocate for educational access for students with disabilities, while **OutNebraska** built partnerships with businesses to support nondiscrimination policies toward the LGBTQ+ community in the workplace. **ACLU Nebraska Foundation** will continue its work to stop cash bail as an entry to debtors' prisons through a court-watching project to ensure laws requiring options are followed in Lancaster County. The **South of Downtown Community Development Organization** collaborated with Lincoln arts organizations, museums, libraries and nonprofits on exhibitions and research to draw attention to affordable housing concerns and conditions. And **Leadership Lincoln** continued its 35 years of service to develop Lincoln's next generation of leaders and shifted to virtual programming.

"Behind on Rent" is a short documentary sharing stories of housing-insecure Nebraskans amid the pandemic.

Lux Center for the Arts hosted an outdoor, socially distanced Art Safari in August. (Photo credit: Joslyn Schmutte)

Woods Charitable Fund

Setting Ideas In Motion

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402.436.5971
www.woodscharitable.org
www.facebook.com/WoodsCharitableFund/

To make a gift to Woods Charitable Fund, please contact President Tom Woods at 402.436.5971 or twoods@woodscharitable.org.

Woods Charitable Fund offers its office conference room as a meeting space to nonprofit organizations from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and 8 a.m. to noon Fridays. Call WCF at 402.436.5971 for more information or visit woodscharitable.org/meeting-room/.