GREATER CEDAR RAPIDS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

FALL 2026

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FEATURE STORY

Planting the Seeds with Bob Kazimour



Love *in* Action

For the past two years, I've started my workday by walking beneath "love for humanity," the mural commissioned for our Community Foundation's 75th anniversary in 2024. Created by the talented team at Underground Art Studios, the mural celebrates people's lives playing out in our community. More than a beautiful piece of public art, it serves as a daily reminder of what is at the heart of our work.

The mural's inspiration comes from the Greek origins of the word *philanthropy*: philos meaning love, and anthropos meaning humankind. At its core, philanthropy is simply a love for people.

It can be easy to measure philanthropy by the numbers – how much was given, how many grants were awarded, or how many lives were reached. While those numbers matter, they are not the reason for our work. Our purpose is to help ensure everyone in Linn County has the opportunity to thrive.

Fortunately, the mural isn't the only place I witness that love each day.

In today's fraught political and economic climate, our community continues to face new and evolving challenges.

But as I've said a thousand times: **Linn County is resilient and generous.**

In the stories throughout this newsletter, you'll see that resilience and generosity come to life. You'll read about a family's legacy of kindness and generosity (page 3); you'll see nonprofit organizations ensuring that people of every age and ability know they belong and are valued members of our community (pages 6 and 10); and you'll learn how collaborations are making an impact (pages 18 and 19).

These stories remind us that philanthropy is about more than charitable gifts. It is about people choosing to care for one another, include one another, and invest in a future where we all have the opportunity to flourish.

That is the kind of love that inspires me every day. It strengthens communities, creates opportunities, and transforms lives. It brings me great joy to see this love in action across Linn County.

Karla

Karla Twedt-Ball
President & CEO



Planting THE Seeds

FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY, ONE CEDAR RAPIDS FAMILY HAS CULTIVATED KINDNESS ALONGSIDE APPLES.

On a hot July day, Bob Kazimour stands on his family's century-old farm overlooking Cedar Rapids. As chickens wander the yard and miniature horses laze in the shade, he reflects on history, family, and community. When asked what his parents might think if they could see the property today, a tear comes to his eye, followed quickly by a broad grin.

When Bob was a child, the farm and orchard were the family's livelihood. The Kazimours sold apples, strawberries, and other produce to local stores and at the farmers market, and neighbors often stopped by for a meal.

"...the spirit of generosity that has always grown here."

BOB KAZIMOUR

In the 107 years since Bob's parents purchased the property, the farm and orchard have gone through a number of iterations. It looks different today – the chickens didn't live in a converted camper back then – but Bob and his daughters will tell you there is one thing that has never changed: the spirit of generosity that has always grown here.



Top: Bob Kazimour at Kazimour Farm & Orchard

Right: Nosy Rosie the chicken stands proudly in front of her renovated camper home







Top: Kim Kazimour with her mom Janis, 1984

Right: Bob Kazimour (center, age 6) with his parents Mary and John, helping plant apple trees

PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

Bob was born in 1935 to John and Mary Kazimour. Mary emigrated when she was just five years old from what would later become Czechoslovakia, crossing the Atlantic to America on a sailing ship. John was born in Cedar Rapids shortly after his parents made a similar journey.

In 1919, the couple purchased 20 acres of forested land just south of Cedar Rapids off Otis Road. Within three years, they had planted strawberries, raspberries, grapes, plums, cherries, vegetables, and of course, apples.

Bob was the youngest of five children, and by the time he was born, the Great Depression had arrived. But in the Lower End – as Bob refers to what is now New Bohemia and Czech Village neighborhoods – street signs and grocery store labels were written in Czech, and neighbors looked after one another.

“We had keys, but I don’t remember the door ever being locked,” Bob recalled. “We would go to mass at St. Wenceslaus Church and come home to find a neighbor had borrowed some flour and left a note, or they would still be there, making breakfast for everyone. Nobody thought anything of it.”

GROWING BEYOND THE ORCHARD

Growing up when and where he did, college wasn’t something Bob expected. Like most first- and second-generation immigrants, he assumed his future would be at Iowa Steel or the meat-packing plant. Instead, his basketball talent earned him a scholarship to Iowa State University, where he completed the ROTC program.

Bob had married high school sweetheart Janis Stodola and after serving in the military, the couple returned to Cedar Rapids and had two daughters, Kimberly and Korlin. Bob took a job selling bananas for Dole, traveling extensively through Central and South America, before starting RFK Trucking in 1973.



Apple picking season, circa 1972, courtesy of The Gazette in Cedar Rapids



Bob Kazimour with daughters, Kim and Kory, 2026

As the business grew, so did Bob and Jan’s commitment to the community. Through board service and quiet philanthropy, the couple supported nonprofit organizations focused on arts and culture, education, health, and human services. The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, in particular, held a special place in their hearts.

“Her timing was terrible,” Bob joked about Jan’s terms of service on the museum’s Board of Directors. “She was chair twice – once when they built it by the river, and again when it flooded and they had to move it.”

Along the way, the Kazimours have been recognized widely for their generosity, though recognition was never what motivated them. Like John and Mary before them, Bob and Jan simply believed in helping others.

“There must have been 600 people at my father’s funeral,” Bob said. “Everyone wanted to tell us something my parents had done for them that we never knew about. They were just very, very generous people.”

A LEGACY IN BLOOM

In 2022, Bob’s daughters, Kim and Kory, purchased the farm and orchard from a cousin to keep it in the family. Today, the property is home to a nonprofit organization that helps adults with disabilities gain skills, confidence, and joy through horticulture and meaningful work (see page 6).

As Kim, Kory, and others have brought the farm back to life, its place in the community’s history of generosity has also been restored. Mary Kazimour – known to generations of schoolchildren as “The Apple Lady” – can never be replaced, but her legacy of kindness lives on in the sense of belonging the farm created for others today.

Bob has long been known as a gifted storyteller, but these days he sometimes finds himself at a loss for words when he walks the orchard. Watching his daughters carry forward the family’s tradition of kindness, he is content to sit back and watch the next generation plant the seeds for tomorrow’s community.



Watching them GROW

GROWING REAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORK AT KAZIMOUR FARM & ORCHARD

Just a few years ago, life on the Kazimour family's century-old farm was quiet. Vegetable and flower gardens surrounded the farmhouse and life had settled into an easy flow. By the fall of 2025, things were looking and sounding much different. More than 70 visitors walked among the rows of young fruit trees while chickens clucked in the background as youth from Four Oaks proudly presented the results of their year-long project.

Like a growing number of local nonprofits, Four Oaks partnered with GROW at Kazimour Farm & Orchard to create a service-learning opportunity for youth in its residential treatment program. Participants planted and harvested vegetables, created their own salsa, designed labels, and developed marketing plans. Along the way, they built practical skills and took pride in their work.

"See that fence?" one young boy asked the crowd. "We kids built that fence. No one thought we could, but we did."

Like that proud young man, hundreds of students, adults with disabilities, and volunteers have discovered new skills, purpose, and community at the farm.

SAVING A FAMILY LEGACY

The Kazimour Farm & Orchard was established by John and Mary Kazimour in 1919 (see page 3). By the early 2000s, the next generation had grown up and moved on, and the orchard had settled into a quiet repose awaiting its next adventure.

For Kim Kazimour, who spent countless childhood days exploring her grandparents' farm with her sister Kory, the thought of losing it was heartbreaking.

"I would literally have dreams of our family standing at the bottom of the driveway blocking bulldozers," Kim said. "I didn't know if I'd ever be able to buy it, or what I would do with it if I could, but I always told my cousin, 'If you ever decide to sell, tell me first.'"

Meanwhile, Kim had built a career as a psychologist and therapist, earning a Ph.D. and spending more than 20 years helping others. She also joined others in establishing GROW HUB, a nonprofit in Gainesville, Florida, that uses horticultural therapy to improve lives through meaningful work in nature.

As GROW HUB took root, Kim realized the model could one day be adapted for her family's Iowa farm.

Then her cousin called.

Kim and Kory purchased the property and invited another cousin, Maureen, to live in the farmhouse and help manage the land. As it turned out, Maureen and her husband had long ago dreamed of purchasing her family's farm in Swisher, only to see it turned into a housing development.

"It was like divine intervention," Kim said.



MEETING AN OVERLOOKED NEED

Starting a nonprofit is challenging under any circumstances. Fortunately, the Kazimours had GROW HUB's experience to guide them and a large extended family of cousins with a range of skillsets and a willingness to pitch in.

"The first year in 2023, we had 15 adults with disabilities in a pilot program," Kory said. "The second year we jumped all the way to 100, then 150 last year." The increasing number of participants, visitors, volunteers, and partnering organizations reflects both the family work ethic and a significant unmet need.

"Students with disabilities can stay in school until age 22, but then what?" Kim asks. "Many haven't had opportunities to develop employable skills, and day programs are underfunded and in short supply. Too often, people end up staying at home while family members try to balance caregiving with full time jobs of their own."

GROW helps bridge that gap by providing meaningful work, hands-on learning, and opportunities to build both professional and social skills at no cost for participants and their families.

"We have people coming all the way from Center Point, and interest from people in Benton County," Kory said. "There simply aren't programs closer to home."

Working with the schools to help students with disabilities transition into adulthood also revealed a wider need for hands-on learning opportunities. Besides partnerships with The Arc of East Central Iowa, Four Oaks, and To the Rescue, GROW has also worked with students from Metro and City View High Schools to create projects that connect classroom learning with real-world experience.

PLANTING SEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

In its first few years of serving the community, GROW has become a place where people of all abilities can contribute, learn, and thrive.

Volunteer support has fueled much of that progress. Corporate groups recently helped plant more than 80 new apple trees – an investment not only in the orchard's future harvest but also in the organization's long-term impact.

Anyone who knows the Kazimour family might say the success comes as no surprise.

When their father asks Kim and Kory to recite the family motto established by their grandparents, they answer in unison:

"The harder you work, the luckier you get."

Today, that philosophy lives on across the orchard in every tree planted, every fence repaired, and every person who leaves believing they are capable of more than they imagined.



Left: Students and staff take a break in the shade from working

Top: Susan, Team Lead at GROW, pets Andy, one of the farm's miniature horses

Right: Crew member Ethan feeds the chickens

A Legacy of *Giving*

Members of the William Quarton Heritage Society are ensuring their generosity will strengthen Linn County for generations while honoring the philanthropic spirit that has shaped our community.

More than 130 philanthropists gathered on June 9 for the 2026 William Quarton Heritage Society Luncheon at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library (NCSML). The annual event celebrates generous donors who have included the Community Foundation in their estate plans or established permanent charitable funds to strengthen Linn County for generations to come.

Named for one of the Community Foundation's earliest champions, the William Quarton Heritage Society honors members who follow Mr. Quarton's lead by making these permanent gifts. Mr. Quarton played a major role in the organization's early growth, challenging the community to invest in the future. Today, his legacy supports local nonprofits and inspires future generations of philanthropists.

A Celebration of Legacy

This year's luncheon celebrated not only the lasting impact of members, but also how generosity has shaped our community.

Dr. Cecilia Rokusek, President and CEO of the NCSML, reflected on the Museum's role in preserving history while connecting the present to the past. Adam Lindenlaub, Assistant Director of Community Development with the City of Cedar Rapids, shared updates on flood protection and recreational projects in the Czech Village and NewBo districts. Like the Museum, some of those projects demonstrate how philanthropy can help create lasting community partnerships.

The program also featured a conversation between Community Foundation President & CEO Karla Twedt-Ball and special guest Bob Kazimour, who offered a firsthand perspective on our community's philanthropic roots. Born in 1935, Bob grew up on his family's orchard on the south side of Cedar Rapids, surrounded by Czech family and friends (see page 3).

"Nobody had anything in the Depression," Bob said. "I mean, people literally had to figure out a way to eat. My mother had this huge soup kettle – it was always on. People could get soup all the time. They would sit around the picnic tables at mealtime, and they would donate to the church. They were very, very generous people."

The luncheon concluded with a performance by Světlušky Dance Group, a youth ensemble celebrating Czech, Moravian, and Slovak folk music and dance. Guests also explored the Museum's current exhibits, featuring replica crown jewels, historic documents, and stories that continue to connect the past with the future.





Top: Guests at this year's luncheon hosted at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

Bottom: Members of the Světlušky Dance Group, a youth ensemble celebrating Czech, Moravian, and Slovak folk music and dance

How to Join the William Quarton Heritage Society

The William Quarton Heritage Society recognizes and honors those who have made permanent gifts to the Community Foundation. Donors can become members of the society by including the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation in a will or trust or naming the Community Foundation as a beneficiary of a retirement fund or life insurance policy.

To learn how you can join the 500+ who are investing in Linn County's future, contact us at 319-200-2683 or donorservices@gcrcf.org.

Supporting Older Adults with *Care* and *Connection*

As we age, our needs shift in ways that aren't always obvious. Things that may seem simple to us in our younger years like a warm meal, enjoying live music, or spending time with friends, can become more difficult to access. But by thinking beyond basic health and wellbeing, our community can help residents stay engaged and fulfilled as they age.

Recent grants from the Community Foundation's competitive grant programs – funded by gifts to its unrestricted Greater Good Funds – are helping nonprofit organizations do just that. From delivering nutritious meals and bringing live music into senior centers to raising awareness about the challenges of aging and creating new pathways to reduce social isolation, these organizations are helping older adults remain healthy, engaged, and connected.

Here are four examples of how Community Foundation grants are making a difference for aging residents across Linn County.

1. Horizons - A Family Service Alliance



MISSION: Instill hope, strengthen communities, and brighten futures by providing life-changing services to underserved populations.

GRANT: $30,000 Organization Support Grant for General Operating Support

GRANT PURPOSE: A general operating support grant gives Horizons the flexibility to improve food security, financial stability, mobility, and overall quality of life for Linn County families and older adults. Through Meals On Wheels, Horizons helps homebound seniors meet their daily nutritional needs by offering well-balanced meals seven days per week. The program also provides safety checks and socialization for people who are at high risk for health issues and social isolation. Last year, volunteers delivered 245,230 meals to vulnerable seniors who often have to choose between buying food or medicine.

2. WND Services, Inc.

MISSION: WND Services exists to ensure that for the seniors and disabled neighbors in Marion, a physical limitation never has to mean a loss of safety or pride in their home.

GRANT: $5,000 Organization Support Grant for General Operating Support

GRANT PURPOSE: WND Services aims to do 'whatever needs done' for local seniors and individuals living with disabilities. Through essential home maintenance and safety repairs, WND provides dignity and independence by allowing people to age in place. A general operating support grant will allow WND to help seniors stay safe and comfortable in their own homes.

3. Red Cedar Chamber Music



MISSION: To enrich the well-being of our community through innovative, educational, and collaborative chamber music programs of the highest caliber.

GRANT: $22,000 Program Support Grant for Into Nooks and Crannies: Chamber Music for Linn County

GRANT PURPOSE: For nearly 30 years, Red Cedar Chamber Music has provided free musical performances in senior centers, schools, and other community spaces. Many performances included a post-concert reception, allowing seniors to enjoy music and hear from the musicians behind it. In the 2026-27 season, Red Cedar Chamber Music will perform in eight senior living communities, allowing hundreds of older adults to experience the joy of live music.

Left: A senior receives a meal provided by a Meals on Wheels volunteer

Right: The New Horizons Band of Cedar Rapids performs at Greene Square Park in downtown Cedar Rapids

4. New Horizons Band of Cedar Rapids

MISSION: To provide an opportunity for seniors to play in a concert band and to bring band performances to underserved populations in the community.

GRANT: $4,000 Organization Support Grant for General Operating Support

GRANT PURPOSE: Part of a national organization of concert bands, the New Horizons Band of Cedar Rapids is open to any adult of retirement age who would like to rehearse and perform in the community. A general operating support grant has allowed the organization to purchase new music pieces and waive fees for its 45 members in 2026. Besides returning to a healthy and enjoyable hobby in their retirement years, members also find connection and fulfillment through their rehearsals and performances. The band gathers once a week to rehearse and performs regularly throughout Linn County.

FALL 2026

LATEST EDITION

The Ripple Bulletin

NEWS & NOTES FROM THE GREATER CEDAR RAPIDS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

NEW STAFF UPDATE

Welcome Sandy Weger



We are excited to welcome Sandy Weger as the Community Foundation's new Data and Systems Analyst. Sandy brings more than 11 years of nonprofit experience and valuable expertise to our Finance Team. Welcome, Sandy!

Rethinking Philanthropy "in Mount Vernon Through *UnCharitable*

On June 22, the Community Foundation partnered with the Southeast Linn Community Center (SELCC) and United Way of East Central Iowa host a free screening of *UnCharitable*. More than 50 people attended the showing at the Bijou Movie Theater in Mount Vernon.

UnCharitable is a thought-provoking documentary that examines the realities of philanthropy and challenges traditional approaches to giving. The film explores how freeing nonprofits from outdated constraints can empower them to create lasting change.

"We were excited to work with our wonderful partners to bring this documentary to the Mount Vernon-Lisbon community," said Nicole McAlexander, Executive Director of SELCC. "It was a great evening of connection, conversation, new ideas, and of course, delicious Bijou popcorn!"



FALL GRANT DEADLINE
Friday, September 11, 4:30 p.m.

NONPROFIT APPRECIATION DAY
Thursday, September 17, 8 – 10 a.m.

FREE FOR ALL: LINN COUNTY ARTS & CULTURE WEEK
Monday-Sunday, October 19-25

GIVINGTUESDAY
Tuesday, December 1

2026 Scholarship Awards

100 SCHOLARSHIPS TOTALING $304,600

This spring, the Community Foundation awarded 100 scholarships to area students, totaling more than $304,600. Scholarship funds established by local donors help the next generation of leaders pursue their educational and professional goals. Congratulations to the class of 2026! View recipients at gcrcf.org.

Spring Grant Awards

$4.6 MILLION IN GRANTS TO 352 NONPROFITS

The Community Foundation awarded more than $4.6 million in grants this spring to 352 nonprofit organizations. Awards included distributions from donor-advised, designated, scholarship and nonprofit funds, as well as $1.1 million in competitive grants from the unrestricted Greater Good Funds. A complete list of grantees, projects, and amounts can be found at gcrcf.org.

ECICOG Lead Hazard Reduction Program Accepting Applications

A new Lead Hazard Reduction Grant Program is now accepting applications from local homeowners. The program is administered by the East Central Iowa Council of Governments. Contributions from the Community Foundation and other local funders helped secure nearly $3 million in federal funding for the program. Assistance is available to low- to moderate-income households living in homes built before 1978 with children aged five and under who live in or frequently visit the home.

Matching Gifts Support Local Classrooms through DonorsChoose.org

The Community Foundation is once again partnering with DonorsChoose.org to double the impact of gifts supporting local classrooms. Since August 3, the Community Foundation has matched donations made to Linn County public school projects through the platform, with up to $30,000 available through the Community Foundation's Fund for Educational Excellence.

Last year, this partnership helped donors support 104 projects in 24 Linn County schools, providing teachers and students with resources to enhance learning. To support a classroom project, visit DonorsChoose.org.

Greater Connection Event Highlights Progress in Reducing Homelessness

On May 12, community members gathered at Waypoint Services for the Community Foundation's Greater Connection: Reducing Homelessness in Linn County event. Attendees heard from local housing leaders about the collaborative strategies transforming how organizations work together to prevent and end homelessness.

Panelists shared how the City of Cedar Rapids, Linn County and nonprofit partners have built a coordinated, data-driven housing system focused on prevention, outreach and permanent housing solutions. While homelessness continues to rise nationally, Linn County has reduced homelessness by nearly 50% since 2021, demonstrating the impact of collaboration and shared accountability.

The discussion also highlighted the work still ahead, including expanding supportive housing options.





ARTS & CULTURE *for all*

From October 19 - 25, Linn County residents and visitors are invited to explore the arts and culture experiences that make our county vibrant – all free of charge. New in 2026, Free for All: Linn County Arts & Culture Week is a weeklong celebration featuring art, history, music, theatre, and cultural experiences across Linn County.

The event builds on the success of the Community Foundation's Free Admission Days, which introduced thousands of people to local museums, cultural organizations, and historic sites over the past two years. Encouraged by the community's enthusiastic response, the Community Foundation expanded the initiative into a full week of free opportunities to explore, learn, and connect.

"Participating organizations saw an uptick in attendance, and visitors were excited by the opportunity to explore, learn, and discover something new," said Joe Heitz, Vice President of Community Impact. "By expanding the event to a full week, we're able to partner with more organizations and diversify the experiences that will be available. We hope more people will discover and engage with the incredible nonprofits that enrich our community."

The list of organizations and events continues to grow, with more than a dozen nonprofits expected to participate. From museums and galleries to live performances, historic sites, theatres, and cultural celebrations, there will be something for everyone to enjoy.



"The arts can bring the community together in many powerful ways – it can connect people from diverse backgrounds and it can be a common expression of joy and celebration," said Andrew Bribriesco of Fuerzas Culturales Ballet Folklorico de Cedar Rapids.

"We look forward to sharing our unique expression—ballet folklorico (Mexican folk dance)—with the greater Cedar Rapids community."

To view the latest schedule of events, visit gcrcf.org or scan the QR Code.

A performance of Ballet folklorico (Mexican folk dance) in Cedar Rapids



Vice President of Development, Kristi Columbus, meets with a donor

Your Will is a Reflection of What *Matters*

Life is full of moments that shape who we are and what we value. While we often think about the legacy we're building through our daily actions, it's equally important to consider how those values will continue to make a difference in the future. A will is more than a legal document—it's a reflection of what matters most and the legacy you hope to leave behind.

For many people, a will provides a way to care for loved ones and manage assets. Including a charitable gift in your will—or what we call planned giving—can transform that document into a lasting expression of your values.

Conversations about planned gifts often begin with one question: What matters most to me? For many, the answer includes family, community, and the causes they care about. A planned gift helps ensure the people and causes you value have the resources they need for the future.

Even modest gifts can create meaningful impact over time, and gifts to an endowed fund can support the community forever.

Creating Your Legacy Can Be Simple

Many people assume planned giving is complicated, but the process can be simple. The Community Foundation works with donors and their advisors to explore options that align with their goals.

The first step is a conversation. We'll listen to what matters most to you and help identify giving options that align with your goals. You can then work with your attorney or financial advisor to incorporate your wishes into your estate plan. We're also happy to provide sample language to make the process easier.

Donors who work with the Community Foundation find comfort in knowing they have provided for the people they love while also creating a lasting investment in the community they call home.

By including the Community Foundation in your estate plan, you will also become a member of the William Quarton Heritage Society, a group of philanthropists committed to strengthening our community's future.

Your will is about more than assets—it's about the legacy you leave behind. A charitable gift is an opportunity to put your values into action and continue supporting the causes that matter to you for generations to come.

We'd be honored to visit with you about your charitable goals and how a planned gift can reflect the legacy you want to leave. To learn more, please visit gcrcf.myplannedgift.org.



Kristi Columbus
Vice President of Development

Maximize Your Giving with the Endow Iowa Tax Credit

One of the many benefits of giving through the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation is access to the Endow Iowa tax credit.

This unique program allows Iowa taxpayers to receive a 25% state income tax credit on charitable gifts of up to $200,000 for individuals or $400,000 for joint filers when gifts are made to a qualified permanently endowed charitable fund at an Iowa community foundation.

A portion of the gift may also qualify for a federal charitable tax deduction. Combined, these tax benefits can help donors maximize both the impact of their giving and their tax savings.

Contact Us

To learn more about how the Community Foundation can help with your charitable giving goals, visit gcrcf.org/donors or contact us at 319-200-2683 or donorservices@gcrcf.org.

Preparing Today for Tomorrow's Disasters



Since 2008, governments, nonprofits, businesses, and funders have worked together through Linn Area Partners Active in Disaster (LAP-AID) to strengthen Linn County's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. As a founding partner, the Community Foundation has invested significant staff time and leadership in these efforts.

Since 2022, Vice President of Learning, Carrie Walker, has served as LAP-AID Chair. As her term concluded in July, we sat down with Carrie to reflect on the organization's accomplishments and the work ahead.

What is a memorable experience from your time with LAP-AID?

We've continued to learn from the derecho and pandemic experience and take steps to strengthen the network. Through external grants, we hired a project manager and hosted an Inclusion Cohort. Equity is central to LAP-AID's mission, and the cohort connected communities historically left out of disaster planning with the broader preparedness network.

We also had the opportunity to share Linn County's story with communities across the country. What we've built here is rare, and other communities are interested in learning from our collaborative approach.

That success is because our partners are committed to working together and learning from every experience.

What is LAP-AID doing when there isn't a disaster to respond to?

Our community's recovery from the derecho was possible because strong partnerships existed before the storm. Today, LAP-AID includes more than 40 organizations that work closely with Linn County Emergency Management to maintain a coordinated disaster response network.

The group meets quarterly to share information, strengthen relationships, and practice disaster response. We welcome organizations that could play a role during a disaster, especially those serving vulnerable populations.

How will the Community Foundation continue supporting LAP-AID and disaster preparedness?

Although my term as Chair has ended, I'll continue serving on the leadership team as Past Chair to support the network. Community Foundation Program Officer Casey Baustian also serves on the LAP-AID Advisory Council.

Disaster preparedness and response remains a community leadership priority for the Community Foundation. We'll continue investing in preparedness while maintaining our Disaster Recovery Fund, ensuring resources are available to support Linn County when future disasters occur.



Representatives from the TrueNorth Legacy Foundation present a Community Grant to Kids First Law Center in Cedar Rapids

A New Chapter for TrueNorth's Legacy of Giving

TrueNorth Legacy Foundation transitions its charitable giving to a donor-advised fund at the Community Foundation.

Strong communities are built by organizations that make giving part of who they are. For the past four years, the TrueNorth Legacy Foundation has invested in the communities where its colleagues live and work. Now, that commitment is entering a new chapter through a new partnership with the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation.

The TrueNorth Legacy Foundation has established the TrueNorth Legacy Foundation Endowment Fund at the Community Foundation, transitioning its charitable giving from a private foundation to a donor-advised fund. The move allows TrueNorth to continue leading its grantmaking decisions while benefiting from the Community Foundation's resources and expertise in charitable stewardship and fund administration.

"Our mission has always been to support the communities where our colleagues live and work," said Anne Parmley, Community Impact Director and TrueNorth Legacy Foundation Board Member. "Partnering with the Community Foundation allows us to stay focused on making thoughtful grants while knowing the administrative side is in experienced hands."

The partnership recently supported $360,000 to 13 organizations across five states for TrueNorth Legacy Foundation's 2026 grant cycle.

"We are excited to welcome the TrueNorth Legacy Foundation to the Community Foundation," said Karla Twedt-Ball, President & CEO. "TrueNorth has a long history of investing in our community, and we look forward to helping support their philanthropy for years to come."

The TrueNorth Legacy Foundation will continue recommending grants that are meaningful to its colleagues and aligned with its philanthropic priorities of children and education, vibrant communities, and emergency preparedness and response.

The Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation will provide charitable infrastructure to administer the fund and help support TrueNorth's long-term philanthropic goals.

GREATER CEDAR RAPIDS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

324 3rd St SE Ste 400, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401



Join us for a full week of art, history, music, theatre, and cultural experiences across Linn County – all free of charge. Scan this QR Code to see the schedule of events.

PREVIEW WHAT'S INSIDE!

"Philanthropy is about more than charitable gifts. It is about people choosing to care for one another, include one another, and invest in a future where we all have the opportunity to flourish."

page 2

"Our family motto is 'the harder you work, the luckier you get.'"

page 7

"The arts...can connect people from diverse backgrounds and can be a common expression of joy and celebration."

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"What we've built here is rare, and other communities are learning from our collaborative approach."

page 18