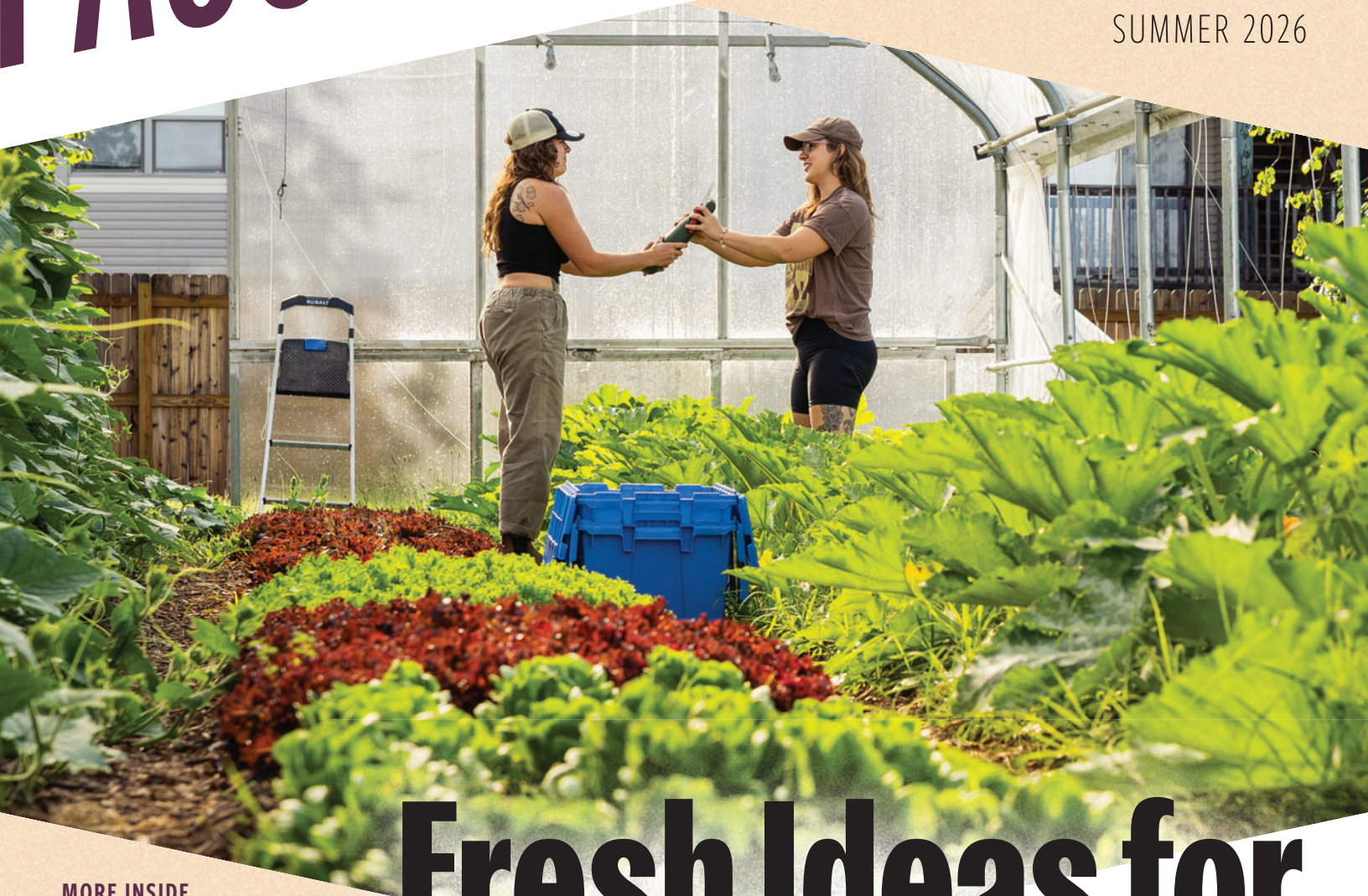


PASSION & PURPOSE

THE CFO NEWSLETTER
SUMMER 2026



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CAPITAL CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

MEET COMMUNITY LEADERS

Fresh Ideas for Ag Education

Grants and scholarships cultivate the region's next generation of farmers



A MESSAGE FROM WINTER

The unofficial holiday that is July 1 — the beginning of the CFO's fiscal year — has come and gone and, once again, I am overwhelmed by the work that our staff, donors, partners, affiliate leaders and grantees have done to make our communities better.

As I shared in my June email newsletter, it's becoming something of a tradition to highlight a few numbers that wowed me over the course of the fiscal year — I hope you will look that newsletter up if you haven't read it already! As a philanthropic organization, numbers are a big deal because every number has a story to tell. For example:

- I logged more than a few of the **31,300-plus miles** that our staff drove in FY26. That is like driving from the western edge of Missouri to the eastern edge more than 125 times! We drove all those miles in support of our mission to enhance the quality of life.
- Our "grow your own" rural teacher program, the Ozarks Teacher Corps, launched in 2010. This year, for the first time, **six graduating seniors** will receive a \$500 stipend to set up their first classroom thanks to a grant from the Rural Schools Collaborative.
- We've had at least **320 mentions** of the CFO or our affiliates in regional or national press. That comes out to just less than one a day — reminding me that this work is timely, meaningful and important.
- Reflecting the place-based nature of our work, **88% of the 11,200-plus grants** processed this year stayed in Missouri, and **91% of nearly 30,000 total gifts** were from Missouri donors.

For now, I want to focus on just one number: **seven**. That is the number of outstanding board members who are rolling off the CFO board this year. I am so grateful for the guidance of our entire Board of Directors, who generously give of their time and talent. I will truly miss working, in this capacity at least, with each of these folks.

Kari Creighton, of Springfield, served on the CFO board and executive committee for six years as chair of our Investment Advisory Board, a vital role which guides the CFO's investment strategy. Prior to her stint as chair, Kari served as an IAB member starting in 2017.



Mike Garrett, of Monett, is a retired judge who helped establish the Monett Area

Community Foundation. Judge Garrett and his wife, Phyllis, have established the donor-advised Garrett Family Fund as well as the Priscilla Bradford Memorial Scholarship fund to benefit Monett High School graduates. He also served on the CFO's development committee.



Sarah Honeycutt, of Cabool, spent the last two years of her term on the CFO board on the executive committee in treasurer and at-large roles. Sarah was instrumental in the establishment of the Cabool Community Foundation and remains active with the CCF board and the Cabool Education Foundation.



Stan Irwin, of Cape Girardeau, served two terms on the CFO board. He is a member of the CFO's Professional Advisory Council and has served on the IAB. Stan and his wife, Glenda, advise the Stanley M. and Glenda Irwin Family Fund.



Emily Kembell, of Springfield, completes her board service as a development committee member and Generosity Collective advisory board chair. Emily, an estate attorney, previously served on the COVID-19 and the Collective Impact grant committees and is a member of the PAC.



Anne E. McGregor, of Branson, chaired the CFO's board during the renovation of the CFO's new offices at 300 South Jefferson and has since co-chaired the committee overseeing the capital campaign to renovate the first floor (see page 3). She and her husband, Mac, established the Anne E. and Mac McGregor Fund to facilitate their charitable giving.



Angela Swan, of Perryville, is a construction-industry professional and past chair of the Perry County Community Foundation.



She is a member of the PCCF's Legacy Society.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

We welcome seven new board members, who began their first three-year terms July 1.

Dr. David Barbe, of Mountain Grove, is a retired physician and longtime chair of the Mountain Grove Area Community Foundation. He is also a past board chair of the American Medical Association.

Trenny Garrett, of Osage Beach, is executive vice president for Central Trust at Lake of the Ozarks. She's long been involved with the Community Foundation of the Lake and is a member of the PAC.

Jim Grebing, of Kennett, is executive director of the Bootheel Regional Planning Commission and helped establish the Bootheel Regional Community Foundation.

Dustin Kallmeyer, of Hermann, is a business owner and has served on the board of the Community Foundation of the Hermann Area.

Shannon McMurtrey, of Springfield, is an information technology professional and professor at Drury University. He chairs the CFO's Information Security Steering committee.

Amy Wescott, of Branson, is a community volunteer and former staff with Philanthropy Missouri, a statewide association for private and community foundations.

Gabrielle White, of Springfield, is an estate attorney with McKay & White and a member of the PAC.

The board will be led by these members of the Executive Committee:

- **Chair:** Jimmy Liles, Nixa (City of Nixa)
- **Vice chair:** Brad Erwin, Springfield (Paragon Architecture)
- **Treasurer:** Greg Hoffman, Nevada (retired financial professional)
- **Secretary:** Lynne Meyerkord, Springfield (APO)
- **Investment Advisory Board chair:** Gary Garwitz, Springfield (retired financial professional)
- **Audit/Operations Committee chair:** Barb Houser, Springfield (KPM nonprofit practice)
- **At-Large:** Travis Liles, Springfield (Forvis Mazars Private Client)
- **Chair emeritus:** Roy Hardy Jr., Ozark (Associated Electric Cooperative)

Winter Kinne is president and CEO of the Community Foundation of the Ozarks.

CFO UPDATES

NEW LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS

- **Buddy Ball and Virginia Jones,** Springfield

The Legacy Society recognizes donors who make a planned gift to a fund held by the CFO or its affiliate foundations. For more info, visit cfozarks.org/legacy.

AFFILIATE LEADERSHIP UPDATES



Finley River Community Foundation

Outgoing: Elise Crain

Incoming: Josh Kitchin

NEW PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS COUNCIL MEMBERS

- **Joey Hayes** — Hayes Community Collaborations LLC, Sikeston
- **Andrea Lynn** — Edward Jones, Lamar
- **Rabera Moranga** — Merrill Lynch Wealth Management, Springfield

Through the Professional Advisors Council, the CFO partners with legal and financial experts to meet their clients' philanthropic needs. For more info, visit cfozarks.org/pac.



**COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
of the
OZARKS**

***Passion & Purpose** is a quarterly publication of the Community Foundation of the Ozarks, a public charitable foundation representing the region of Missouri south of the Missouri River. For more information, call 417-864-6199, email cfo@cfozarks.org or visit cfozarks.org.*

Production: Aaron Scott, Kaitlyn McConnell, Matthew Stewart and Matt Lemmon

CFNS

**ACCREDITED
FOUNDATION**



PHOTO BY AARON SCOTT

Winter Kinne announced the "Creating a Front Door for Philanthropy" capital campaign to the public on June 23.

CFO launches campaign for 'Front Door'

The Community Foundation of the Ozarks announced its first-ever capital campaign June 23, with more than \$4.5 million already raised toward its \$8 million goal to transform the first floor of 300 South Jefferson into a "Front Door for Philanthropy" for Springfield and the Ozarks region.

The renovation is designed to create a more accessible and collaborative space for nonprofits, donors and community leaders across the Ozarks. Plans include an expanded event center with an outdoor courtyard and catering kitchen, a new 900-square-foot conference room, and office and meeting space for emerging nonprofits. The project will also feature a digital exhibit highlighting the people, affiliate foundations and projects that have shaped the CFO and philanthropy in the region.

The campaign has received lead gifts from Eric K. Peterson, CFP®; Elizabeth Dickey on behalf of the John Wallis Dickey family; the Meek Family in memory of Mary Kay Meek; and Patricia Hall and the late Jerry Hall. Additional support has come from individuals, businesses, and anonymous donors throughout the region. The project is designed by Dake Wells Architecture and



RENDERINGS BY DAKE WELLS ARCHITECTURE

A 200-capacity event center — including a courtyard and catering kitchen — will provide an affordable, flexible option for nonprofit and community events.



A digital philanthropy showcase will share the stories of the CFO, its affiliates, and generous individuals across the region. Nearby offices will be rented to emerging nonprofits.

will be built by JE Dunn Construction.

The reimagined first floor is the next phase of the foundation's investment in its downtown Springfield headquarters following completion of fourth-floor renovations for its home offices in 2025.

"This project will help meet the growing needs of our region — not just for the CFO, but for the broader nonprofit community," said Winter Kinne, president and CEO of the CFO, at the campaign's June 23 public announcement. "It will also be a place where aspiring philanthropists and leaders can learn through meetings, events, and networking.

Construction is expected to begin in early 2027.

—by Matt Lemmon

MORE ONLINE

To learn more about the "Creating a Front Door for Philanthropy" campaign, a list of campaign committee members, and the planned renovation, visit cfozarks.org/frontdoor.



From Classroom to Cultivation

FERTILIZED BY PHILANTHROPY, AG EDUCATION
PREPARES YOUNG FARMERS FOR BOUNTIFUL FUTURES

Agriculture has helped sustain the Ozarks. Since the earliest family farms and its heyday in the fruit and dairy industries, the land has long been part of the “why” people came here and the structure of their lives.

The landscape looks different today than it did when many were twice-daily milking dairy cattle, growing farm-like gardens to feed families or working at tiny canning factories to earn some cash money. The industry’s impact, like the people and their use of available technology, has evolved.

But its broader presence persists. According to the Missouri Department of Agriculture, the industry was expected to have a \$93.7 billion impact on the state’s economy in recent years.

On a grassroots level, that work is visible through rural schools, where agriculture and FFA programs still develop students’ home-based farming skills. Others study it after high school. Its place is also seen through bigger business pursuits that choose to base their operations in the Ozarks. That’s not to

mention adults who may not be preparing to run a family farm, but have an interest in things like urban gardening, beekeeping or community building.

“There’s never been a time where education is more important than now. Things are always changing, and in particular with agriculture,” says Kyle Whittaker, a retired ag teacher who now works as a University of Missouri Extension specialist. He says ag education can be a fit for a lot of students because it teaches skills in so many different areas.

“Is it for everybody? Probably not, but I think it’s grown because kids see it as different, and it’s very diverse. It’s very diverse. I mean, if they stay in the program, they could literally learn countless different content areas.”

HARVESTING PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

While agriculture is very much a business, philanthropy makes a difference in supporting future farmers. Through the CFO, several programs are designed to support regional ag-related efforts.

“Agriculture is foundational to community life and economic development in rural Missouri,” says Ashley Walden, vice president of community impact at the CFO. “Programs that train our kids ultimately enrich our communities by helping prepare them for their futures, whether that’s in STEM, an ag-based career or managing their own agricultural pursuits. The CFO is pleased to partner with organizations and donors to help further these missions.”

An example is the Vital Farms Local Impact

Sisters Eve and Kirsyn White keep chickens in a modern chicken coop at the family’s farm near Lamar. They received the coop through a Barton County Extension program supported by Danny and Jewell Little’s donor-advised fund.



Grantmaking Program, which reflects the company’s mission to enhance outdoor spaces in the communities where its network of more than 600 farms is located.

Individual decisions have made a big difference, too. Through a planned gift in their estate, the late Clinton and Nancy Schilling donated farmland they owned across Barton, Dade and Jasper counties to support the Schilling Community Fund and a scholarship endowment for students in that tri-county area.

Danny Little, a Lamar-based businessman, and his wife Jewell have made significant contributions through their donor-advised fund to champion agricultural projects like the Show Me Youth Ag Academy. Other funding has supported the purchase and distribution of chicken coops to kids through the Barton County Extension.

“Now we have our own coop, so we have our chickens by themselves,” says Kirsyn White, whose family received a coop through the program. She says it’s better because it’s larger, easier to clean and offers protection from predators on their farm near Lamar.

“They’re healthier, and they all have their own space,” she says of the birds. “A chicken — if they’re not happy, their tails kind of stay down, but these guys always have their tails up, so I think they’re happy.”

On a more regional scale, Springfield Community Gardens is an example of how philanthropy can fuel connections to fresh, local food. Most recently, a grant from the Jewell Schweitzer Quality of Life grant program provided \$30,000 to support the relocation of one of its Springfield farms, where it hosts farmer-education programming.

“Our hope is that we really hyper-localize our food system,” says Maile Auterson, SCG’s founding executive director. That mission can be found even in urban areas, as SCG maintains



PHOTO BY KAITLYN MCCONNELL



Emily Franklin, staff member of Springfield Community Gardens, harvests cucumbers at the nonprofit's new Osage Prairie Farm in Springfield. SGC staff serve as educators for its farmer incubator program.

PHOTO BY AARON SCOTT



PHOTO BY KAITLYN MCCONNELL

Golden City High School students tend to pigs at the school farm, which has expanded through \$80,000 in Schilling Technical Educational Grants. Michael Lee, the school's agricultural teacher, says the hands-on experiences provide agricultural lessons for life. "That's the whole purpose behind the 'school farm' concept. ... (It's about) having the experience and knowledge — if they want to raise their own beef or own hog for their family, they have a concept of how to do it."

about 20 sites in Springfield dedicated to local food.

PUTTING EDUCATION INTO PRACTICE

Education has long been part of sustainable agriculture. For example, SCG trains future farmers in its farms and gardens. Sometimes that's formally through internships, while at others it's by naturally integrating locals into the grassroots mission around local food.

"We've got crops growing right down the street for the schools and the senior centers," Auterson says, speaking of SCG's new Osage Prairie Farm in Springfield. "They're growing a little more scratch food, so it is for the salad bars, but (it's also) to get the students interacting with the farm."

Agricultural knowledge is often passed down in families from one generation to the next. It's also found in classrooms — where ag education can mean more than simply learning about farming best practices.

"Ultimately, what we want for students to do is to become productive citizens," Whittaker says, noting skills like problem-solving, critical-thinking and people skills are on that priority list. Developing those qualities is part of helping students become successful adults, even as ag education has shifted over time.

An example is Future Farmers of America, established in Kansas City in 1928. Throughout rural areas, the program — now known officially as FFA — integrates with ag education to help students become self-sufficient problem

solvers more than strictly learn how to run a farm.

Michael Lee, agriculture teacher at Golden City High School, sees this firsthand. The Ozarks native says there's been a shift in the number of kids who come to school with ag knowledge today compared to when he was in high school.

"Fifteen years ago, when I was in school, a lot of kids still lived on the farm, and they learned all this stuff at home," he says, noting that there are far fewer today with that background.

Golden City R-III has received \$80,000 in grant support from the Schilling fund to support an animal science laboratory for a hands-on learning environment for students enrolled in agriculture, food and natural resources courses. Another grant round supplied funding to create a non-ruminant animal addition, purchase a floral cooler and expand the welding area.

Collectively, that support creates an environment where kids can learn skills to help them integrate agriculture into their future.

"That's the whole purpose behind the 'school farm' concept," Lee says. "I'm not trying to come out of this having kids going out and being feedlot managers in Kansas and running 8,000 head of cattle. (It's about) having the experience and knowledge — if they want to raise their own beef or own hog for their family, they have a concept of how to do it."

BEYOND THE FARM

Others apply that information

to careers in related fields. Emily Nelson, a graduate of Joplin High School, got interested in agriculture in seventh grade when a local farmer visited during career day. Years later, she became an FFA leader and received a scholarship from the Schilling fund. It helped her graduate from Cornell University, the only Ivy League university with a dedicated school of agriculture.

"It just afforded me a lot of opportunities," Nelson says of the scholarship, one of six awarded annually to students majoring in agriculture from select southwest Missouri counties. "We live in a broken world, and I want to be a part of something that changes it for everyone else to make it better."

Today, the recent graduate — who completed studies in agriculture studies and economics — looks to impact the "greater good" intersection of farmers and consumers.

"People are talking about demonizing sugar or fats," Nelson says, "or what sort of subsidies should we give farmers? What should they be growing? What should everyone be doing? I want to be a part of something that looks at how we can make agriculture more sustainable and how we can feed people better."

Something that helps — whether it's individuals working in agriculture, or larger efforts like SCG — is community support. Auterson gives an example of how funding from local partners helped SCG when federal funding was lost during recent recessions.

"It's an important story for our community that everybody lifted us up in that time of really a lot of change," she says. "The community just was so supportive. I think that's really always important to emphasize, and then just the need for small farm support in the Ozarks — always. I'm always going to be preaching about that."

—by Kaitlyn McConnell



"I want to be a part of something that looks at *how we can make agriculture more sustainable* and how we can feed people better."

EMILY NELSON
SCHILLING SCHOLARSHIP
RECIPIENT



Annual Summit celebrates rural innovation

The fourth-annual Rural Philanthropy Summit created a space for community and civic leaders from across Missouri to learn and connect on April 24 in Rolla. The event, presented by the CFO and Philanthropy Missouri and sponsored by Patterson Family Foundation and Marillac Mission Fund, fostered conversation around the good happening across the state and the value of what it means to be rural.

Following a keynote address by Andy Mink, the Smithsonian Institution's director of Rural Initiatives (see interview at right), breakout sessions shared thoughts on the future of rural areas, touching on philanthropic capital, literacy rates, health care infrastructure and economic development. Such topics remind us that community needs, while nuanced from place to place, often include shared vision and challenges — which can be addressed through common conversation.



PHOTOS BY AARON SCOTT

University of Missouri Extension–Scott County's Taylor Clark moderated the "Celebrating Innovation" panel with, from left to right, West Plains Mayor Mike Topliff, A Village for Good's Patrice Shumate, and Mountain Grove Area Community Foundation President Dr. David Barbe.

MORE ONLINE

Watch a recap of the Rural Philanthropy Summit at cfozarks.org/summit26, or see which affiliate foundations and affiliate leaders were recognized during the conference kickoff at cfozarks.org/2026affiliateawards.



Q&A with Andy Mink

*DIRECTOR OF RURAL INITIATIVES,
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION*

Before the Rural Philanthropy Summit, the CFO sat down with keynote speaker Andy Mink, director of Rural Initiatives for the Smithsonian Institution, to understand the department's collaboration with rural communities. Below is an excerpt of what he shared.

ON SMITHSONION'S RURAL INITIATIVES

ANDY MINK: When I go to places, it's still shocking to me how surprised many small towns and local communities are, like, 'What? The Smithsonian is interested in our story?'

We're not interested in working with communities from a deficit perspective. This is not our attempt to bring small towns as big cities unrealized into the 21st century. We're not there to fix some perceived problem. We are there, though, to acknowledge that rural communities are innovative and creative and resilient and loyal and proud and that's the work that we want to celebrate.

What we're able to do is surface five key priorities that rural communities generally agree are really important to them, and then match those five priorities with resources, expertise, background that the Smithsonian can offer to address those priorities locally.

First, in no particular order: access to arts, history and culture. The data showed us very clearly that rural Americans feel a very strong connection to their local history, their family history. They also recognize that it's a health

metric — that when your community has more sophisticated access to arts and culture, not only can you get people to move there ... but it just creates a better sense of connection and less isolation.

A second is access to cultural preservation strategies, particularly before tragedies like hurricanes and floods and fires when all these things that tell the story of your town are gone. Or your elder folk die, and suddenly all that is lost. We have units at the Smithsonian who specialize in working with communities to not just digitize all their work, but to create strategies (for preservation).

Number three is access to education, resources and opportunities. Small towns — all towns, really — understand their most valuable asset is their youth, and they don't want living in a small town to restrict the economic opportunities that they have in 2026.

The fourth: A lot of communities use the word 'workforce preparedness' or 'career readiness.' We do a lot of work at the Smithsonian around internships. ... What we've done in the Rural Initiative is create a rural pipeline for rural students who can identify some issues of local concern. They can come to the Smithsonian and gain the skills to address it. Then they go back home and they apply it to career readiness.

And then the last one is the local story in America 250. This one will probably change in the future, although we look at America 250 as a launching point, not as a birthday. This is a way for us to do things, to really bring people in conversation and discourse, well beyond when the fireworks fade.

ON RURAL EDUCATION

ANDY MINK: To me, the key to rural education is imagination. What I mean by that is the imagination for young people to realize that there is no stigma to where they are. There is deep value to their rural background, and they have access to all the things over the horizon line.

That's different than when I grew up in a very small rural town, and it's even different when I raised my kids and taught in a rural town. Because now we sort of imagine that there's access to all the things in the world.

But to me, it's the imagination of knowing that that is available, and that you have a place in that.

And so it's exposure, it's introduction, it's encouraging young people to sort of take the risks, to expand beyond. I do believe that does not mean they leave home. In fact, I think that means they're more likely to stay rooted in the place they're from.

—by Kaitlyn McConnell

PASSION *for* PROGRESS

Three leaders moving the needle in their communities through the power of philanthropy

STORIES & PHOTOS BY KAITLYN MCCONNELL

Laura Dumey

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR · STARS AND STRIPES
NATIONAL MUSEUM AND LIBRARY — BLOOMFIELD

Laura Dumey shares and saves thousands of stories every single day when she comes to work at the Stars and Stripes National Museum and Library. The institution honors the nation's military newspaper, which began during the Civil War in Bloomfield.



"We are closely tied to the Stars and Stripes newspaper," the museum's executive director says; the paper is still published globally. "The publisher of the newspaper comes to our museum every November, and he attends what we call our Spirit of Democracy event, which is our big fundraiser."

The southeast Missouri community where Stars and Stripes was born is also where Dumey grew up. Pride in the paper's history grew locally in the 1960s when the Stoddard County Historical Society received one of its first editions. Years later, the Stars and Stripes museum became its own entity, and Dumey joined as a volunteer.

"The more I learned about this newspaper and how it was different than any other newspaper in the world — we're a country that has the freedom to criticize our government in our military newspaper — I thought that was pretty cool," she says.

That work has taken her across the globe to retrieve artifacts for the museum. Recently she traveled to Germany to receive newspapers from the Vietnam War era, as well as an original printing plate used after 9/11. That trip was supported by a grant from United for Veterans; other work at Stars and Stripes has been aided by funds held with the CFO. The museum also received a Shaping Tomorrow grant from the CFO to update its online giving platform.

"Our mission is always free," Dumey says. "We want people to come visit — because, like me, if you stop by, you will fall in love and get sucked in."

Aaron Kitchens

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR · THE GLO CENTER —
SPRINGFIELD

Advocating with an authentic voice: That's a key mission of Aaron Kitchens, executive director of the GLO Center. Based in Springfield, the center — the oldest of its kind operating in Missouri — serves the local LGBTQIA+ community through support, resources, education and advocacy.



Originally from Texas, Kitchens is the center's first full-time executive director in its 30-year history. Along the way, he's developed different skills (like fundraising) and the nuanced understanding of championing acute needs (from potential food insecurity to mental health concerns) alongside a spirit of hope.

"I think that urgency is oftentimes missing when we're talking about services for marginalized communities," Kitchens says. "The mental health and suicide rates in the queer community nationwide, worldwide, are a crisis and should be responded to like a crisis."

"Balancing that with sort of creating a really positive, optimistic, hopeful culture as an organization for our overall community has been an interesting challenge."

GLO's work is supported by grants and community partners, including the CFO, which in connection with the Jeannette L. Musgrave Foundation distributed \$45,000 in June. The final installment of a three-year grant supports the salary of the community services specialist, a new role that creates programs and partnerships to fill gaps in services to LGBTQIA+ people.

Kitchens says that ultimately sharing an effective message comes back to conveying, in a genuine way, why causes are important — but also doing what you say you will.

"I think that it just really goes back to being authentic with the messaging," he says. "Then being good stewards and showing that support is actually turning into real tangible impact."

Jennifer Jones

CO-FOUNDER & BOARD VICE PRESIDENT · DADE COUNTY
ARTCONNECT — GREENFIELD

Jennifer Jones is all about adding color — quite literally — to people's lives. A longtime art teacher in Greenfield, Jones has added a new brush to her work through Dade County ArtConnect, a grassroots group she co-founded that brings locals together for classes, events and connection.



The idea began when a local mom asked Jones if Greenfield had an arts center. The short answer: It did not, leading the women to start DCA. Its efforts expanded in 2025 when a local man donated a former church building to be the center's home.

"As an artist, I would like to share a safe place for anybody to come in and experience what it might mean to have their pictures up on the wall for everybody to see," Jones says.

DCA's board is still learning what the rural community desires from the center. At times, it's creating awareness about the opportunity for art; at others, it's building bridges to bring people — kids and adults — together.

DCA's work spans artistic disciplines. It recently installed padded seating in the auditorium for patrons to enjoy theatrical and musical productions. During the summer, "Fun Fridays" draw people to create. Classes, ranging from rug-hooking to basket-weaving, are held regularly at the center. That work is supported by the DACO Community Foundation and the Springfield Regional Arts Council, which recently contributed funding for the center's kiln.

Jones says DCA has learned a lot in its early years, which includes learning where people's interests are, and using that to see where they can contribute. Do not let personal agendas stop the momentum. Always have a curiosity about the possibilities of what can be done.

"I think the number one lesson we've learned as an organization is do what you say you're going to do," she says.

WHO INSPIRES YOU? Send your suggestions of individuals moving the needle in your community to Kaitlyn McConnell, the CFO's writer in residence, at kmccconnell@cfozarks.org.



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PARTING SHOTS: “Resiliency” was the recent grantmaking theme for two of the CFO’s long-running impact partnerships that dedicated more than \$1.5 million to improving the quality of life across the region.

On April 30, the CFO announced the Coover Regional Resiliency Grants, which directed \$500,000 to 23 nonprofits (pictured above) that serve rural communities and faced funding challenges due to the loss of government funding.

“As a member of the Greatest Generation, resiliency came naturally to someone like Mrs. Coover,” said Jill Reynolds, senior vice president at Commerce Trust and chair of the Louis L. and Julia Dorothy Coover Charitable Foundation grant selection committee. “I think she would be proud of the focus of this year’s program, and the work all of these organizations do to foster resiliency in our communities.”

This year’s Coover Regional grant program was doubled by a match from The HWS Charitable Foundation Inc., a private foundation with a passion for improving economic outcomes of residents in rural communities.

On June 16, the CFO announced \$1.01 million in several grant programs from the Jeannette L. Musgrave Foundation, managed by U.S. Bank Private Wealth Management, to 15 nonprofits (pictured at right) serving the Springfield metro area. New for 2026 was the “Resilient Families” multi-year



PHOTOS BY AARON SCOTT

program, splitting \$300,000 among Child Advocacy Council, FosterAdopt Connect and Harmony House for their first-year initiatives to build family resiliency, empower parents and improve outcomes for children — all with the goal of preventing cycles of abuse.

“The key focus of (our program) is really raising education and awareness so that the adults who work and live within our communities — as caregivers, teachers, childcare workers — all can understand what the dynamics around abuse and neglect are,” said Katiina Dull, executive director of Child Advocacy Council. “(They can) help recognize when families may be spiraling towards crisis and feel empowered to step up and help ... so we can intervene before those circumstances truly escalate to crisis.”

MORE ONLINE

For a full list of grant recipients and a video recap of both presentations, visit cfozarks.org/coover26 and cfozarks.org/musgrave26.