



PATTERSON

FAMILY FOUNDATION

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



**CONNECTED
THREADS**



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I reflect on 2022, it stands out as a year of discoveries. We identified new opportunities related to our rural mission and uncovered valuable insights about how communities in our philanthropic catchment move forward and stay connected. Through individual efforts, regional solidarity, and a shared belief in the profound impact of rural life, these communities demonstrate the fabric of resilience and collective success.

In 2022, we funded more than \$37 million in grants to more than 100 rural-serving nonprofit organizations. This funding was delivered through a mixture of planned and responsive grantmaking. The former is a mode of engagement that arises from proactive relationship development and research, and the latter allows us to assess and respond to local requests for assistance. In learning about the needs that drive responsive requests, we get a close-up look at how community resilience is constructed through threads that connect organizations, leaders, and institutions working

to solve challenges. We were proud to play a role in enabling regional and local leaders to make big and small commitments that help strengthen many different aspects of community life.

You will read about some examples of our planned and responsive grants in this report. Welcome Wellness Health Education Resource Center is an organization we have been proud to support because of its historical connection to one of our founding donors, Jeanne Patterson. Welcome Wellness provides a generous and supportive environment for people navigating health changes and choices. The Kansas Sampler Foundation connects young rural professionals to shared networks to help build a stronger future for rural Kansas. Through the New Growth Transit program, volunteer drivers connect rural riders and local businesses, helping support the community's economy and strengthen community relationships. At the Grow Hays MicroFactory, rural entrepreneurs will soon

work together in a collaborative space, leveraging their ingenuity and strengths to boost local business. Each of these experiences impacts the overall success of communities and broader regions.

These stories provide a snapshot of caring and innovative nonprofit grantees working to overcome challenges and provide new opportunities within rural communities. Their ability to create positive change is built upon a sincere commitment to evaluate barriers and connect people, information, and resources in ways that make a real difference.

As we look toward 2023 and beyond, we are exploring key elements of rural communities that must be healthy to support overall rural thriving. The insights we gain from grantees, experts, and research will continue to help us refine our approach to making philanthropic investments. Over the past year, we have been designing new strategic programs and are excited to add

them to our toolkit this year. These planned grantmaking programs are designed to target specific needs in rural child care, workforce development, health care, and local philanthropy (in the form of rural-serving community foundations). Watch for these programs to launch throughout the year.

Like adding squares to a treasured quilt, this integrated approach to planned and responsive grantmaking will guide our journey. Both are part of an evolving strategy to magnify, amplify, and celebrate the spirit and strength of the communities in our catchment.

We are continually inspired by the excellent company joining us along the journey of discovery.

SINCERELY,

A handwritten signature in dark green ink, reading "Lindsey Patterson Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lindsey" being more prominent.

**LINDSEY PATTERSON SMITH
PRESIDENT**

OUR STORY

Initially established by Neal and Jeanne Patterson in 2007 as a vehicle for both short-term and long-term philanthropic impact, the Patterson Family Foundation entered its long-term phase after both Neal and Jeanne passed away from cancer in 2017. Neal's plans included a provision to significantly fund the Foundation with a gift from his estate. Neal and Jeanne's intent was for the Foundation to play a meaningful role in the lives of their children and descendants, as well as the broader world.

They asked for the Foundation's giving to be strategic, to make a long-term sustainable difference, to focus on unmet needs in health care, education, and rural communities,

and to do it in the entrepreneurial way that has been so ingrained in the Patterson family. They acknowledged the broad scope of these areas, and they anticipated and supported a narrowing of focus. Today, the Foundation focuses on helping rural communities thrive. We pursue this goal under a mission that embraces all these dimensions.

In 2023, the Foundation continues to be governed by Neal's four adult children: Clay, Lindsey, Cortney, and Will, who comprise the Patterson Family Foundation Board of Directors. Our Board and staff work to make Neal and Jeanne proud while actively incorporating new values and traditions that are meaningful to the Patterson family.

OUR WHY

The Patterson Family Foundation chose a rural mission above all other possible missions. After Neal and Jeanne passed away, our family-led Board explored the best ways to honor their wishes for the Foundation's giving to make a strategic difference in an area of unmet need.

Founding donor Neal Patterson was from a small agricultural community on the Kansas-Oklahoma border. He spent his formative years learning from his hardworking parents and gaining the kind of practical education that can only be obtained on the farm. In adulthood, Neal appreciated how much his rural, agrarian upbringing had shaped the values that brought him success in entrepreneurial endeavors that eventually spanned

the globe. He believed in the people who share this heritage and often worked behind the scenes to create a brighter future for his own rural community. Founding donor Jeanne Patterson was a city kid whose adult life became dedicated to a charity that changed the lives of children and families facing significant disadvantages due to faults in the health care system. The lessons she learned have many applications within a rural-facing mission. It was Jeanne's guidance to fill a gap through philanthropy that helped lead us to our rural mission. We found that the needs of rural communities are noticeably underserved by philanthropy.

While the Foundation's focus began with Neal and Jeanne, it continues

because we believe that rural places hold unique value in American life. Our work at the Patterson Family Foundation carries forth the belief that lasting, systemic change empowers rural communities to fully thrive. Through this important work, the Foundation recognizes the complexities facing rural communities while celebrating their incredible potential.

▶ OUR VISION

THRIVING RURAL COMMUNITIES

▶ OUR MISSION

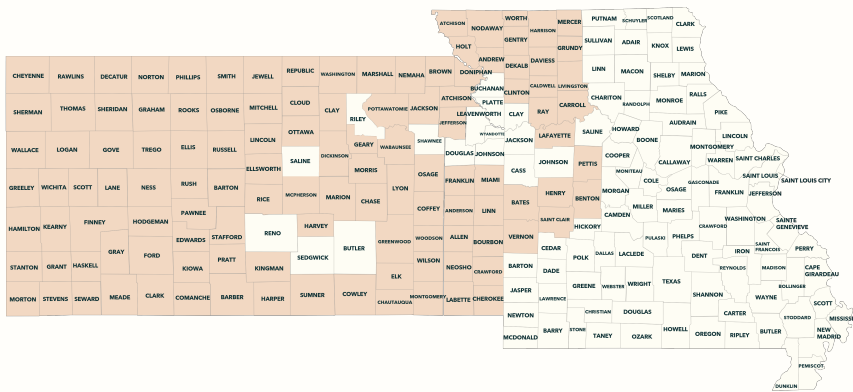
ADVANCING HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION, AND STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL AREAS.

OUR ASSOCIATES



OUR THRIVING RURAL FOCUS

THE PATTERSON FAMILY FOUNDATION SERVES COUNTIES WITH 50,000 RESIDENTS OR FEWER IN KANSAS AND NORTHWESTERN MISSOURI.



MAP KEY:

- COUNTIES IN OUR PHILANTHROPIC CATCHMENT
- COUNTIES OUTSIDE OUR PHILANTHROPIC CATCHMENT

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR GRANTMAKING IN 2022 ARE HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY.



HEALTH CARE

We work to improve the health and care of rural communities. We believe health and care are two distinct sides of the coin: health connotes healthy lifestyles and preventive wellness, while care describes directed, episodic interventions.



EDUCATION

We work to increase the knowledge and skills that support thriving rural communities. Grants and programs can benefit any part of the educational system, from early childhood to K-12, postsecondary, vocational, leadership, and other skills-based learning.



ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

We work to improve the economic position and potential of rural communities. These grants benefit an ecosystem of small businesses, nonprofits, municipal governments, and economic development organizations within a community.



CONNECTED THREADS

**THE PATTERSON FAMILY
FOUNDATION'S WORK TO
HELP CREATE THRIVING
RURAL COMMUNITIES
IS OFTEN A STORY OF
COLLABORATION.**

Our founding donor, Neal, believed that collaboration was one of the most important ways new ideas are developed. We reflected on this belief with three organizations to explore what has guided their relationships with the Foundation.

One of the oldest collaborative relationships persists to this day because the organization's mission is well aligned with our core rural mission. Another relationship fulfills a long-term commitment that started in the first generation. And one reflects how our mission is being actively strengthened by relationships we are forming with new collaborators.

THE ELLIS FOUNDATION: ROOTED IN RURAL SCHOLARS

The Patterson Family Foundation has collaborated with the Ellis Foundation on 311 student scholarships, with overall support totaling more than \$3.2 million. In 2022, we funded the Rooted in Rural scholarship program with more than \$1 million.

Neal and Jeanne Patterson believed that education, particularly in rural communities, could give people a path to a better tomorrow, and that unlocking these opportunities could create a mindset of success to truly change both the present and the future. To use a beloved Neal expression, education is a tool to 'Bait your own hook.'

The Ellis Foundation, a charitable organization based in Fort Scott, Kansas, also recognizes the power of education for rural communities. The Foundation, founded in 1998 by Danny and Willa Ellis, provides scholarship opportunities for high school graduates to honor the inspiring teaching career of their daughter, Kathy Lyn Ellis Adriance. Kathy was a graduate of Fort Scott High School and a lifelong teacher who impacted the lives of her students in and out of the classroom. When she died of breast cancer in 1997, Danny and Willa applied their entrepreneurial expertise toward establishing the Foundation, responding to a critical need for area students to

receive scholarship and mentoring opportunities. During the year after Kathy's passing, they offered three local scholarships to honor Kathy's commitment to education, with a combined award amount of \$24,000.

When the two families' paths crossed in the late 1990s, Neal and Jeanne had a desire to help students in rural communities reach success toward their college paths. Their interest began with graduating high school seniors in their home community and was expanding to include neighboring rural high schools. During the same time period, the Ellis Foundation was developing a process by which individuals or organizations could become a partner to provide scholarships. The Ellis Foundation would work directly with high school counselors to identify seniors who have the ability to succeed in college but might not have the opportunity. Neal began to help with the scholarship program, serving as part of the student selection and offering funding support for ten to 12 students each year.

As collaboration continued, the Patterson Family Foundation became the funding organization for a new rural scholarship program and named it Rooted in Rural Scholars. With a model that includes active mentoring and alumni networks, the Rooted in Rural Scholars have a graduation rate of more than 90

percent, three times higher than the national average. Scholars come from the Patterson Family Foundation rural catchment and typically enter into career pathways aligned with the Foundation's mission.

Rooted in Rural Scholars actively participate in a mentorship program with peers in their chosen career field, maintain a set GPA in college, engage in networking opportunities, and encourage each other as a part of the Ellis Foundation scholarship community of learners. In 2022, the Patterson Family Foundation reaffirmed its commitment to rural communities and their graduates by moving to a model that supports a cohort of 125 students for four years at college.

"Many Rooted in Rural Scholars are first-generation college students or from single-parent households," says Adam Erickson, program officer at the Patterson Family Foundation. "They have the drive to succeed but could benefit from extra support. The skills and education these graduates earn will continue to strengthen the rural communities they come from."



THE WELCOME WELLNESS HEALTH EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER

The Welcome Wellness Health Education Resource Center represents a connection fostered over time to our Foundation. It was created through the belief shared by Neal and Jeanne Patterson that collectively, we could address gaps in health care and health care information to build brighter futures.

The Belton, Missouri, nonprofit organization has both rural and non-rural demographics and continues to be called an anchor in the community. The Patterson Family Foundation provided seed funding in 2022 to help the Welcome Wellness Health Education Resource Center develop into an independent 501(c)(3) organization.

Wellness can have unique meanings across different milestones of life. In some seasons, it can mean maintaining the physical health level needed to thrive at daily tasks. It can also mean creating the time to intentionally encourage and lift up others. At other times, *wellness* means finding the resources to turn complex health information into a clear and positive path forward.

At the Welcome Wellness Health Education Resource Center, *wellness* means all these aspects and more. This nonprofit organization opens its doors daily to the Belton community to help bridge the gap between medical information and everyday understanding.

"We have a deep commitment to educating our members on restoring and managing their health," says Jeannine Midgett, executive director of Welcome Wellness and certified health coach. "Community members from all different backgrounds come together to learn about health-related topics and secure resources to help them through the journey of life. Our team empowers people to make the most informed choices possible for their health."

This collaboration traces its roots to 1995 when Jeanne Patterson co-founded the First Hand Foundation together with other Cerner associates. As director of First Hand, Jeanne drove the creation of an institute that offered free health screenings for elementary students. Some years later, First Hand

launched a related health screening and referral initiative for adults and children. Operating the community-based program from space offered by Jeanne's home parish in Belton, Missouri, the Healthe Communities Institute evolved to include additional community services and eventually became the integrative wellness center that today is Welcome Wellness.

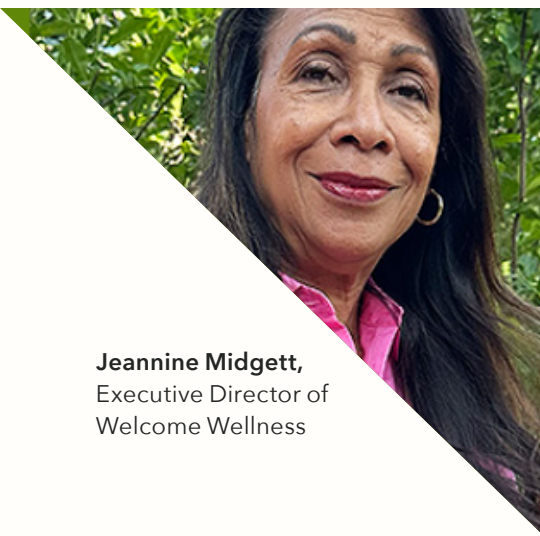
Like every initiative she believed in, Jeanne had goals and expectations for the wellness center. It would be self-sustaining within five years, continually setting higher priorities for health education for the individuals served. It would also provide a positive, welcoming, and collaborative experience, offering important health care education and authentic paths forward for every person who entered its doors.

Today, the Welcome Wellness Health Education Resource Center has exceeded these expectations, serving individuals across areas like financial wellness, physical fitness, spiritual wellness and nutrition. Health screenings and



fitness classes are an overall part of health navigation and advocacy services, and team members have also expanded to include Spanish speakers. Wellness center participants have a range of stories, and wellness center team members have helped aging participants successfully navigate life transitions, such as moving to managed or assisted living facilities or discovering hospice care options.

"People often just need help and encouragement navigating the health information system. They have a voice, but they need support in identifying it and using it as a resource for their health path, especially when they receive a diagnosis," says Midgett. "The Welcome Wellness Center can inform, empower, and inspire individuals in a personalized way."



Jeannine Midgett,
Executive Director of
Welcome Wellness



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE KANSAS SAMPLER FOUNDATION

Like many rural initiatives, the Kansas Sampler Foundation has roots in a passion for the state and the people who call it home. Longtime Kansans Marci Penner and her late father, Mil Penner, began traveling the state in 1990 and sharing information about its culture, history, and tourism through a series of guidebooks. The books led to a signing party on the Penner Farm in rural Inman, Kansas, and eventually small area exhibits and displays. Soon, the Kansas Sampler Festival was launched, an annual showcase of the state's travel, cultural, and tourism opportunities. As the Penners spent more time learning about Kansas communities and sharing these stories, they focused on helping people see their state with new eyes. The Kansas Sampler Foundation, a public nonprofit, officially began in 1993 to help educate Kansans about their state's highlights and to find ways to help strengthen rural communities. Today, the Kansas Sampler Foundation office hosts events and workshops to share ideas about rural Kansas successes and challenges.

THE KANSAS SAMPLER FOUNDATION

The first step to creating change in rural communities often includes listening and understanding unique challenges and opportunities. Along our journey, we have met people and organizations with “boots on the ground” in rural communities, and they have insights to share. In this spirit, an initial conversation in 2021 between the Kansas Sampler Foundation and the Patterson Family Foundation led to many conversations about new ways to learn about and support the capacity needs of rural Kansas communities.

In 2022, the Patterson Family Foundation funded the organization around three core areas, each aimed at a unique aspect of rural community success.

The Kansas Sampler Foundation *knows* rural Kansas.

The organization and its volunteers know where to find the most interesting historical structures and which counties still have natural prairie. They know where to find culturally rich experiences, where community hospitals are located, and what residents say about

solutions to critical challenges, like child care and job opportunities.

Similarly, the Patterson Family Foundation strives to understand the real-world challenges and opportunities facing rural Kansas communities. When the Kansas Sampler Foundation began exploring a plan in 2021 and 2022 to restructure its work, expand its team, and increase its impact, connections to the Patterson Family Foundation's goals emerged.

“Through conversations with the Kansas Sampler Foundation founders, we recognized some overlap between the work of the Foundation in Kansas and key areas of rural challenges,” said Jessica Hunt, vice president of programs and strategy at the Patterson Family Foundation. “This included efforts to attract young adults, boost education and health care, and preserve rural quality of life. During these conversations, the Patterson Family Foundation program team was considering a listening project across Kansas, and the path led to the Kansas Sampler Foundation for collaboration.”



The Kansas Sampler Foundation's 2021 and 2022 strategic plans incorporated a robust utilization of the foundation's network, which includes more than 10,000 Kansans. Specific growth plans centered around Communities of the Future, a program to help promote engagement, explore crowdsourcing ideas, and network with decision-makers. Other plans were based on the PowerUp Movement, an initiative launched over a decade ago to build the strength of rural Kansans in the 21 to 39-year-old age group.

Relationships built through PowerUp have led to increased business capacity and more vibrant collaboration and support for younger families and professionals. The Patterson Family Foundation helped fund the Kansas Sampler Foundation in 2022 for work in these critical areas.

"Many people don't realize that 75 percent of our incorporated cities in Kansas are volunteer-led, which creates unique challenges," says Marci Penner, co-director of

the Kansas Sampler Foundation. "More young people are embracing these challenges and choosing to live rural. They are eager to help improve their towns for younger families and citizens of all ages."

To further boost understanding about the challenges and opportunities of recruiting young people to live and work in Kansas, the PowerUp and Go project was launched to help report and analyze data. Findings have been shared with the Kansas Office of Rural Prosperity and government and nonprofit agencies nationwide, including information about the lifestyle attributes and resources younger adults seek in rural communities.

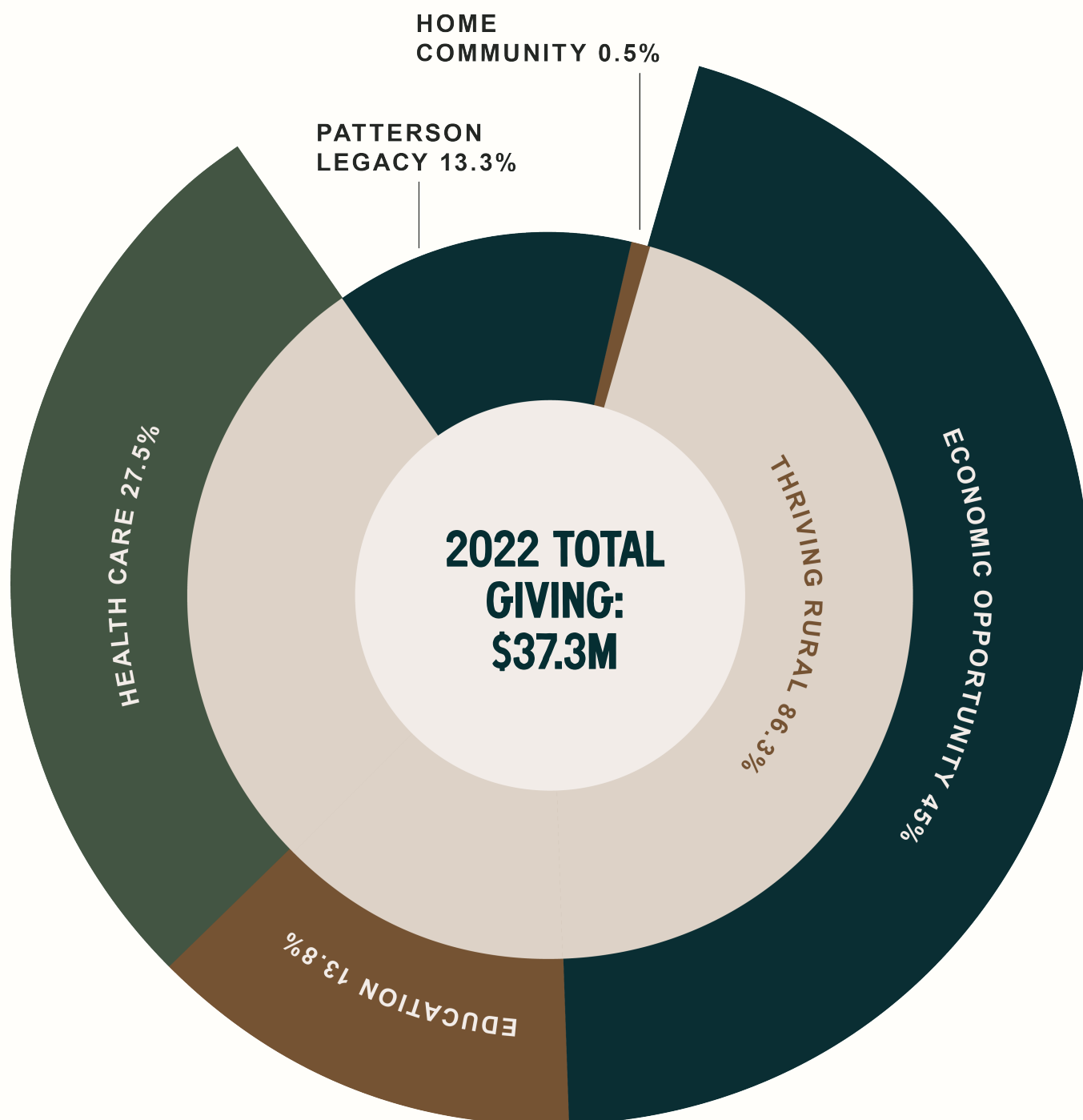
With funds from the Patterson Family Foundation and additional sources, the Kansas Sampler Foundation has carried its goals forward by adding two new team members – a co-director and a PowerUp project manager.

Resources have also been expanded for the Big Kansas Road Trip, a multi-year plan for the volunteer-led Foundation to visit each of the 627 incorporated Kansas towns.

"We are asking ourselves some tougher-than-usual questions about what work should be carried forward," says Penner. "As a collaborative effort, we are ready to hear and share how the top issues have changed over the years. We want to learn more about what issues will take their place for the best future for rural Kansas."



2022 CHARITABLE GIVING



**IN 2022, THE PATTERSON FAMILY
FOUNDATION FUNDED**

111

**GRANT DISBURSEMENTS ACROSS OUR
RURAL KANSAS AND NORTHWESTERN
MISSOURI CATCHMENT.**

The following highlighted stories are part of our Thriving Rural grants. They represent only a snapshot view of the Patterson Family Foundation's work alongside grantees to fulfill our mission. There are dozens more stories to share.

We are inspired daily by the work grantees and collaborators accomplish to help rural communities thrive. This work is both a mission and a promise. We are committed to

finding ways to create opportunities and fuel potential day after day, generation after generation.

You are invited to continue learning about grantees' work and their innovative solutions to tough rural challenges at www.pattersonfamilyfoundation.org. On behalf of the Patterson Family Foundation, we join you in celebrating this work as we continue learning, too.

NEW GROWTH TRANSIT PROGRAM EL DORADO SPRINGS, MISSOURI

Transportation in rural communities represents so much more than connecting point “A” to point “B.” These resources can build meaningful connections that support an area’s present and future success. As more discussions occur around solving rural transportation problems, New Growth Transit, based in El Dorado Springs, Missouri, is extending transportation options for a larger group of riders while connecting volunteer drivers, business owners, and core community entities.

The New Growth Transit program trains volunteers who offer transportation for essential activities like medical appointments, educational opportunities, and daily work shifts. Services are often needed during hours when public services are unavailable and impact intertwined areas of community life. Recognizing transportation as a part of complex rural challenges, the Patterson Family Foundation helped fund New Growth Transit in 2022 with \$277,000 toward the program’s technology needs and goals.

For rural residents facing transportation challenges, the confidence to arrange rides for critical needs – from medical

appointments to banking to child care or employment shifts – is paramount to daily living. Quality of life can also be enhanced if ride arrangements with a trusted volunteer means valuable appointments are maintained.

In the west central Missouri region, this kind of experience has become part of a program called New Growth Transit. An affiliate of West Central Missouri Community Action Partnership, the program offers a solution to an ongoing rural transportation challenge through a volunteer driver network, with rides available to residents throughout the nonprofit’s nine-county region. An expanded program is operated by Jefferson Franklin Community Action Corporation in Jefferson and Franklin counties in east central Missouri, bringing transportation opportunities to 16 counties. Volunteer drivers are reimbursed per mile and choose their driving schedule based on New Growth scheduling parameters.

Kelly Ast, regional mobility transportation director of West Central Missouri Community Action Partnership, explains that people may not realize how many individuals in rural communities are isolated

when it comes to getting groceries, accessing child care or educational classes, and making it to their jobs or critical medical appointments.

“There is such a diversity of need across the riders we serve,” says Ast. “New Growth is incorporating the existing public transit resources and providing more access opportunities, including transportation for late afternoon, evening, or weekend appointments. These times may be underserved or not available in rural areas.”

The program started in 2019 with a network strategic plan that included more than 40 regional partners. In 2020 and 2021, New Growth Transit was officially launched with a driver transit network supported by CARES funding and a Community Services Block Grant.

In 2022, New Growth Transit leveraged funds from the Patterson Family Foundation and other sources to find a scalable model and solution with a New York-based transportation agency. The agency had been in business successfully for 13 years and helped New Growth Transit with smartphone app technology and the creation of an essential “playbook” for operations. New Growth Transit



sought additional private and public funding from this launch point. These funds helped the organization acquire accessible vehicles from the State of Missouri to accommodate riders for whom a regular driver's vehicle is not an option. In 2022, New Growth Transit served nearly 250 individual client riders.

Ast explains that it was critically important to find the right resources related to technology in the beginning because rural transportation is unique. New Growth may need to serve riders in areas that may not even be on a satellite map, for example.

"There are so many inspiring stories made through New Growth Transit on a daily basis. We are building a community of riders, drivers, and places of business that didn't exist before the program," says Ast. "We have taken an innovative approach to the significant issue of rural transportation, and it is exciting to see the impact it makes as a solution. We look forward to learning how the program can be replicated across more counties."



GROW HAYS, INC. ELLIS COUNTY, KANSAS

Many communities have an abundance of rural entrepreneurship and innovation, but they lack the right-sized business space to see continued growth. Soon the Grow Hays MicroFactory, an incubator for manufacturing companies to expand and scale their operations, will offer 35,000 square feet of new space in the region for small to medium-sized manufacturing companies. Companies who become tenants can rent space suitable to their needs and bring their own equipment. In 2022, the Patterson Family Foundation funded Grow Hays, Inc., with a \$500,000 Rural Economic Opportunity grant as part of a mix of funding streams to carry the project forward toward completion.

What happens when an idea for economic growth connects with an understanding of the region's distinct rural needs and a list of enthusiastic minds? Economic development initiatives like the Grow Hays, Inc., MicroFactory go from paper to ground breaking, for starters.

Grow Hays, Inc., is a nonprofit organization that advances the economic health and vitality of Ellis County, Kansas. In August 2022, the organization (also known as Ellis County Economic

Development Corporation) received \$500,000 in grant funds from the Patterson Family Foundation, part of multiple funding resources.

Significant additional support came from the State of Kansas, the Heart of America Development Corporation, and the Northwest Kansas Economic Innovation Center. The ground was officially broken for the 35,000-square-foot Grow Hays MicroFactory in October 2022.

Aimed at helping smaller manufacturers get off the ground and then expand their production, the MicroFactory marks a milestone in the Ellis County region's upward economic success. Tenants at the Grow Hays MicroFactory can "right-size" their space rental needs to match production, and they can also strategize future growth more efficiently. Each time a MicroFactory tenant expands out of the space into their own facility, the vacated space

can be repurposed for another smaller manufacturer in a continuing cycle.

"The Grow Hays MicroFactory can help propel future manufacturing companies in Ellis County and the region," says Doug Williams, executive director of Grow Hays, Inc. "This can lead to a boost in entrepreneurship, job creation, new investments in the area, and new avenues for young adults seeking to build careers – all important factors in rural success."



CAMBER CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH CENTER HAYS, KANSAS

Mental health resources for children and youth are part of the framework of healthy communities and remain in critical need nationwide. In rural areas, the barriers to accessing children's behavioral and mental health services may be even more significant. In 2022, the Patterson Family Foundation funded the Camber Children's Mental Health Center (formerly KVC Hospitals) with more than \$1.5 million, helping close a critical funding gap for renovations to a new center in western Kansas. Additional funding streams, including state-based and other private funders and organizations, are helping the project reach its goal.

Children and teens who are striving to meet mental health and emotional well-being needs are like most other youth. They are discovering their unique voice in the world. They want to create meaningful relationships with peers who have similar experiences to share, and they have hope for their futures.

Camber Children's Mental Health Center makes more of these connections possible by helping families in western Kansas access the inpatient and outpatient resources they need to reach their goals and maintain wellness. This can be especially complex work in rural areas,

which typically experience a critical gap in youth mental health care.

As a continuum-of-care network of nonprofit hospitals, Camber Children's Mental Health Center began the journey toward a new children's treatment site years ago when the need for youth mental health care on multiple levels continued to increase, especially for youth where community support has been lacking or improvement has not been sustained. The Patterson Family Foundation recognizes mental health as part of the overall success of rural communities, and through Foundation funds of \$1.5 million, alongside other funding sources, Camber hopes to serve 600 more youth each year in the renovated center and maintain a focus on healing.

The project offers compassionate mental health treatment for children and teens with a combination of both acute inpatient care and residential services. Children living with depression, anxiety, or trauma will be able to access care in one location at the renovated 27,000-square-foot center in Hays.

Services are designed to help children and teens ages six to 18 expand their skills so they

can return home and continue outpatient treatment, keeping them close to their families, schools, and communities.

The renovated center can offer full medical, clinical, and nursing assessments within the first 24 hours of admission. Medication management, family and group therapy sessions, and case coordination can also be part of the care journey.

"We provide care so children can live balanced, resilient lives and achieve mental health wellness," says Michelle Lawrence, president of Camber Children's Mental Health Center. "Our mission and values are focused on providing children with access to high-quality behavioral and mental health services as soon as they need them."



ADVANCING BARTON COUNTY CHILDCARE, INC. GREAT BEND, KANSAS

A lack of access to child care can limit vital community functions like education, health care, employment, and local industry. Recognizing this need, the Patterson Family Foundation began exploring grantmaking programs to help strengthen rural child opportunities, increase local access to child care, and help support child care centers' operational sustainability. In 2022, the Foundation made a grant to Advancing Barton County Childcare, Inc., to assist in the construction of a new child care center in Great Bend.

Across rural communities, access to safe and affordable child care is a core element of overall success. However, many rural communities are likely to be classified as child care deserts – areas where the demand for licensed child care greatly exceeds the local capacity. This lack of access can be a limiting factor for working parents who support the functions that keep a community thriving. Throughout 2022, the Foundation received several funding requests for short and long-term child care center needs, including operational support, capacity building for current and future employees, and minor capital improvements.

Demonstrating one example of the need, approximately 700 child care spots were identified in Barton County that were beyond the community's current capacity. In response, conversations with area business leaders and families led to the creation of an organization called Advancing Barton County Childcare, Inc. (ABCC). Together with partner Great Bend Economic Development, the organization aims to address the escalating demand for child care capacity within the community while considering the region's specific workforce needs. In 2022, ABCC received funding of \$500,000 from the Patterson Family Foundation for the construction of a new child care facility in Great Bend. These funds helped the organization reach 95 percent of its overall fundraising goal.

"Access to child care is a very important resource for families, employers, the educational community, and the health care system of communities," says Denise Schuele, program officer at the Patterson Family Foundation. "Child care is part of many new opportunities to expand potential in rural areas, and we are pleased to help fund this effort across our catchment."

**WE ARE INSPIRED DAILY BY THE WORK GRANTEES
AND COLLABORATORS ACCOMPLISH TO HELP
RURAL COMMUNITIES THRIVE.**

**THE PATTERSON FAMILY FOUNDATION IS
COMMITTED TO FINDING WAYS TO CREATE
OPPORTUNITIES AND FUEL POTENTIAL
DAY AFTER DAY, GENERATION
AFTER GENERATION.**



PATTERSON
FAMILY FOUNDATION

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