

*Where Local Good Grows*

# Hendricks County Community Foundation



Fall is here - and good things are happening!

There's something about September that always feels like a fresh start. Summer is winding down, school is back in session, and all across Hendricks County, people and organizations are hard at work making our community stronger.

We get to see the results of this hard work every day at HCCF. Our nonprofit partners are turning grants into services, opportunities, and solutions for people throughout the county. Students are dreaming about what comes after high school. Organizations are bringing forward bold ideas for our community's future. And neighbors are coming together to support the causes they care about.

None of it happens alone. For over 30 years, generous people have entrusted resources to HCCF because they believed in Hendricks County—and today those gifts are helping others do remarkable work.

That spirit is everywhere this fall. We received a record 561 completed scholarship applications from the Class of 2027. Our Moonshot drew 22 Letters of Intent with ambitious ideas for Hendricks County. And on Sept 9, our Women's Giving Circle gathered for another evening of grantmaking, awarding \$21,000 to Susie's Place, Meals on Wheels of Hendricks County, and Down Syndrome Indiana.

And there's much more underway—including a few things we're looking forward to sharing when the time is right. It's going to be an exciting fall.

Moose, meanwhile, will be taking a short break from all this activity. He'll be spending a few days at the lake with Megan and me and his Labrador aunties, Skye and Bonnie. His plans involve considerably less philanthropy and considerably more swimming.

Enjoy the beginning of fall!



Yours in Philanthropy,  
[William Rhodehamel](#)  
President & CEO  
(and Moose)

## A PAW-sitively Wonderful Visit from Paws & Think

We had some very special guests at the HCCF offices last week!

We were thrilled to welcome our nonprofit partner, **Paws & Think**, along with Cooper the therapy dog! HCCF awarded a **\$4,000 Stronger Together grant** to Paws & Think to support their dog-therapy work here in Hendricks County.

At first glance, you might think our CEO William's famous golden retriever, Moose (who you might recognize from above), had snuck into the building—Cooper is a dead ringer for him! Cooper completely stole our hearts and gave us a firsthand reminder of the incredible power of the human-animal bond.

We are grateful for Paws & Think and the healing work they do in our community. Thank you for brightening our day, Cooper!



Grant presentation to Paws & Think

## \$1M Moonshot Grant

Last month, over 100 community and nonprofit leaders gathered at MADE in Plainfield for an incredible milestone: the official launch of HCCF's new \$1 Million Moonshot Grant Opportunity! Made possible through the Lilly Endowment's GIFT IX initiative, this program was designed to spark bold, collaborative, and transformational ideas that will shape the future of our county.

The response from our local leaders has been amazing - we received **22 Letters of Intent (LOIs)** proposing ambitious, forward-thinking projects across a wide range of service areas.

Now, we want to hear from **you!**

We've put together a [short survey](#) where you can explore the primary service areas represented by these 22 proposals and rank which initiatives you feel are most valuable to the future of Hendricks County.

Thank you for taking a few minutes to [share your thoughts](#) and for caring so deeply about the future of Hendricks County!



Moonshot Grant Lunch & Launch

## HCCF Helps Local Nonprofits Tell Their Story

At the beginning of 2026, HCCF launched a new grant program to help local nonprofits get their message out. When asked what they needed besides money, over 70% said they struggled to tell their story and attract community support.

To help, HCCF teamed up with [Ash Interactive](#) to create high-quality, long-lasting promotional videos for 15 selected nonprofits in 2026 (more in 2027!). These videos focus on each group's mission, giving them an effective tool to catch people's attention, build connections and increase community support.

Watch this video to learn about [Susie's Place](#), a dedicated child advocacy center providing compassionate, forensic interviews to child victims and witnesses of crime in a safe, child-focused environment. Susie's Place promotes healing, supports justice, and actively works to prevent child abuse and community violence.

Learn more about HCCF's local grantmaking and nonprofit support at [www.hendrickscountycf.org](http://www.hendrickscountycf.org).



## Women's Giving Circle Awards \$21,000 in Grants

Earlier this month, the Hendricks County Women's Giving Circle celebrated its second grant award night of 2026, awarding \$21,000 to local nonprofits serving women and children in Hendricks County.

Through the combined donations of the Giving Circle members, grants were awarded to:

**Susie's Place Child Advocacy Centers—**  
\$10,500  
**Meals on Wheels of Hendricks County—**  
\$6,500  
**Down Syndrome Indiana—** \$4,000

Operating as a program of the Hendricks County Community Foundation, the Women's Giving Circle brings passionate local women together to invest directly in the heart and future of Hendricks County.

Congratulations to these outstanding organizations, and thank you to our members for



Women's Giving Circle grant award event

making these grants possible.

## LHC Applications are Open!

[Applications are OPEN](#) for Leadership Hendricks County's 35th Ignite Class!

As a proud strategic partner of LHC, the Community Foundation loves seeing dedicated local leaders rise to meet our county's needs. Through this proven program, emerging leaders gain the tools and network needed to create positive change in our community.

Ready to make a difference? [Join Class #35](#) and help shape the future of Hendricks County!



Check out dozens of great events in our community on the [Hendricks Community Calendar!](#)

## Grants at a Glance

Our vision is to make Hendricks County a place where everyone has the opportunity to have a fulfilling life and the tools they need to build a stronger future together.

[HCCF grantmaking](#) is the heartbeat of that vision! Below are the grants awarded last month, building a stronger future for our community.

| FUND                                           | GRANTEE                                               | GRANT AMOUNT     |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Anonymous Fund                                 | Shepherd's Pathway/Take Time and Pray Church          | \$21,294         |
| Butler Fairman & Seufert Fund                  | Hendricks County International Festival               | \$1,200          |
| Daisy's Animal Fund                            | Misty Eyes Animal Shelter & Learning Center           | \$2,000          |
| HC Health Partnership 2025 Resource Guide Fund | Hendricks County Health Partnership Community Project | \$3,300          |
| HC Health Partnership Community Project Fund   | Hendricks County Health Partnership Community Project | \$113            |
| HCCF Inclusive Philanthropy Fund               | Family Promise of Hendricks County, Inc.              | \$1,500          |
| HCFPC Libby Hammond Fund                       | Hendricks County Food Pantry Coalition                | \$14,667         |
| HCFPC Libby Hammond Fund                       | Hendricks County Food Pantry Coalition                | \$10,850         |
| Imagination Library of Hendricks County Fund   | Dollywood Foundation                                  | \$4,278          |
| North Salem State Bank Community Fund          | North Salem Police Department                         | \$5,200          |
| Pingel Memorial Fund                           | Tri-West Theater Boosters                             | \$3,500          |
| Sports for All Kids Fund                       | Danville Junior Football League                       | \$2,237          |
| Tom and Nancy Newlin Fund                      | Plainfield Friends Meeting                            | \$30,000         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                   |                                                       | <b>\$100,139</b> |

## Our Favorite Five in Hendricks County

Summer may be over, but local calendars across Hendricks County are still full!

From fall festivals to community events, we've highlighted five can't-miss happenings this next month to keep you connected with what's going on right in our backyard.



### Fave Five #1: Hendricks County International Festival

Join us for the [Hendricks County International Festival](#) on Saturday, October 3, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Hobbs Station in Plainfield. This vibrant community event offers a fantastic opportunity to explore and celebrate the diverse cultures that make Hendricks County so unique. Bring your family and friends to enjoy a day packed with international cuisine, live music, traditional dance performances, and interactive cultural experiences for all ages. Learn more [here](#).



### Fave Five #2: Opening Doors Series

As part of the *Opening Doors Series* sponsored by HCCF, *Cabaret Latino: Songs of the Americas* is a dynamic, 90-minute bilingual musical revue celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month and the profound influence of Latino music across the Americas. Created by Tom Alvarez and produced by Klein & Alvarez Productions, the concert features an 11-piece live band, acclaimed vocalists, and vibrant dance traditions ranging from salsa to mariachi and Mexican folk dance. Get tickets [here](#).



### Fave Five #3: Can't-Miss Fall Festivals

Autumn is the perfect time for families to get out and celebrate right here in Hendricks County as local parks, pumpkin patches, and corn mazes come alive with seasonal fun.

Don't miss out on the incredible lineup of fall events—bring the whole family and make lasting memories straight through November! Check out all the local fall festivals on the [Visit Hendricks County website](#) [here](#).



### Fave Five #4: HCCF Staff Attend IPA Conference

HCCF staff (and our friend Katy Cummings from the [Parks Foundation of Hendricks County](#)) attended the **2026 Philanthropy Leads Conference** this month, learning and connecting with fellow philanthropic leaders from across Indiana. We were grateful for the opportunity to share ideas, hear new perspectives, and be inspired with others who are passionate about making a difference in their communities.



## Fave Five #5: Dr. Shafer Announces Retirement

Dr. Tracey Shafer has announced he will retire as Superintendent of Danville Community School Corporation in June 2027, concluding over a decade of leadership. Since 2015, Dr. Shafer has guided DCSC through major growth, campus upgrades, and a commitment to student success. Thank you Dr. Shafer for your dedicated service and the lasting legacy you have left to all the Danville Community Schools!



Hendricks County Community Foundation

## Thank You to Our 2026 Corporate Partners

Thank you to our incredible corporate partners! Their generous support is essential to making our vision for Hendricks County a reality – a place where everyone has the chance to thrive and build a brighter future. We encourage you to show your appreciation for these community-minded businesses by supporting them in return.

### Platinum Partner



### Gold Partners



### Silver Partners



### Bronze Partners



### Foundation Friends

Elliott Company | Estep Burkey Simmons, LLC | Photography by Sarah Crail

Is your organization looking to expand your customer base? Join this group of community-minded organizations and become a HCCF Corporate Partner! Contact us to learn more.

Where Local Good Grows  
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