

Congratulations to Our 2023 #500forGood Winners

If you had \$500 to help your community, what would you do?

Colorado Winners

Zing Credit Union

Denver

I would support the organization called A Precious Child. About 250,000 children live below the Colorado self-sufficiency standard in A Precious Child's service area. Children living in poverty are more likely to be in poor health, less likely to graduate high school on time and are more likely to live in poverty as adults. A Precious Child assists children and families facing difficult life challenges such as abuse and neglect, crisis situations and poverty. We work with more than 500 Agency Partners throughout eight counties to identify children and families in the most need of their services.

Bank of Colorado

Estes Park

I would like to provide support to the Fine Arts Guild, which provides many services in the community including a community youth theatre where kids grades 3-12 create and perform in a Broadway musical. The youth empowerment is incredible, and additional funding helps the organization spend more time on youth and theater than fundraising.

Eastern Colorado Bank

Colorado Springs

I would like to donate to the Power of One Foundation. This funding would go toward the player fees for soccer players that are a part of low income or single parent households in Colorado Springs. Along with these player fees, players are provided a mentor through the organization. Their goal is to help these players use soccer as a vessel to achieve post-secondary success, help get them recruited and help them apply for schools and trade schools so they can be the best version of themselves when they leave high school.

Bank of Colorado

Estes Park

I would donate it to the Estes Valley Library Friends & Foundation. The Foundation exists to provide advocacy and support for the Estes Valley Library, which is a wonderful resource for the community. The library provides not only numerous educational resources but also a place for discussion and contemplation of larger community issues.

Colorado Credit Union

Denver, Littleton, Brighton

TGTHR is a social movement and nonprofit based in Boulder County that works with courageous communities to end youth homelessness. Colorado Credit Union has partnered with TGTHR since 2022, providing financial literacy sessions and resources, financial counseling consultation services and sponsorships for their organizational fundraisers. If CCU is awarded the \$500 grant from FHLBank Topeka, it would go directly toward meeting the needs of the youth TGTHR serves such as restocking

their resource center with the most needed items and strengthening essential resources and tools to support youth in their journey toward independence.

First FarmBank

Greeley

If we had \$500, we would provide it to Life Stories Child and Family Advocacy Center. Life Stories provides advocacy and support for abused and neglected children by advancing coordinated investigations, prosecution and victim services. By giving children a safe space to tell their story and the resources to overcome the trauma they faced, we hope all victims will become survivors and have a better future in safe, permanent homes free from abuse and neglect.

The Eastern Colorado Bank

Colorado Springs

Each year in November the Community Involvement Team at our Colorado Springs branch organizes a turkey and donation drive in conjunction with "Take a Turkey to Work Day" for the Care and Share Food Bank for Southern Colorado. Our employees bring in frozen turkeys, and we deliver them to the food bank. We also gather monetary donations. The Eastern Colorado Bank then matches those dollar for dollar. According to Care and Share, a \$25 donation provides 125 meals for our neighbors in Southern Colorado. A #500forGood donation on top of what we already donate would provide an additional 2,500 meals! We think that's a HUGE impact!

Bank of Colorado

Estes Park

I would donate to the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center. The EPNRC acts as the "chamber of commerce" for local nonprofits (approximately 100 in the Estes Valley). They provide advocacy, education and resource sharing that elevates the nonprofit ecosphere, which is an economic safety net for many in our community. Many of our nonprofits rely on volunteers for board leadership, and EPNRC is so valuable in providing those volunteers with the resources they need to be productive and engaged. They also provide networking opportunities among the nonprofit community that results in increased collaboration.

Frontier Bank

Lamar

If we had \$500 to help our community, we would like to donate it to the local 9/11 Tribute Memorial. The purpose of the tribute is to honor active military, veterans and first responders, including police, fire and ambulance. The tribute has mainly been funded by donations. It includes three walls of honor where you can purchase a panel for a loved one to honor their service. Along with the walls of honor, the tribute also features several bronze sculptures honoring soldiers and first responders.

Kansas Winners

Bank of McLouth, Union State Bank

McLouth

In 2010, Mary Garcia and her family wanted to bring Christmas cheer to McLouth, so they began the first McLouth Festival of Trees. We do not have many businesses in our community, but they all give what they can, and the Garcia family makes up the financial cost if the festival is short. All children who attend from 0-17 receive a gift, and adults receive gifts until they run out along with two grand prize boxes for two lucky children. Once all the children and some adults receive a gift, we all head over to the McLouth City Park where all the businesses and organizations have placed a tree with lights on them. All the lights come on at once, and the high school band plays Christmas songs. As you can imagine this is the perfect way to start the holiday season for an average of 125 to 150 people of the community.

The Farmers' State Bank of Jetmore, a branch of Bank of Hays

Jetmore

For communities of our size to survive, people have to work together for the good of all residents. The Jetmore City Library has taken on a project in hopes of opening formative discussions that could be of benefit to our city and entire county. The newly formed "Community Conversation" is a series of events that hopefully will help discover our community's needs and preferences. The Jetmore City Library staff is facilitating these conversations that are scheduled for one hour as question/answer and general information discussions. Were our library and these conversations to be awarded \$500, they could use the funds to assist in per diem/travel charges for solicited out-of-town speakers, aid with visuals and other costs of presentations, even down to providing refreshments to the attendees and staff.

Wilson State Bank

Wilson

I would help our Senior Center make needed repairs and updates to the interior of their facility. Wilson State Bank's community is comprised of mostly senior citizens. We have a Senior Center, which was built in 1989 and is now in need of some tender loving care. They would like to remodel and update the bathrooms as plumbing repairs are needed and handicap accessible fixtures need to be updated. They would also like to give the inside of the facility a fresh coat of paint and have new carpeting installed. Our Senior Center provides an average of 80 meals a day to not only our Wilson senior citizens but also provides lunches to seniors and others for the communities of Dorrance and Holyrood, Kan. In addition, the Senior Center of Wilson is very active in hosting health fairs, club events, craft sessions and family gatherings and is a place our community members come to enjoy each other's company.

Farmers State Bank

McPherson

I would be able to support StepMC, which is an organization that helps people out of poverty with a hands-on approach. They do not directly give people living in poverty money. They instead provide a support group. The program has had good support from the community and has a small endowment with our local community foundation, but they are always needing to raise money to operate the organization.

Farmers Bank & Trust**Albert**

Albert currently boasts 132 residents. You can still find young people working alongside older residents to improve this small town. Not only does Albert have many volunteer firefighters responding to fires and accidents, but everyone -- young and old alike -- pitches in to do tasks normally taken care of by paid employees in larger towns. This includes mowing the city park and putting up Christmas decorations. Volunteers also do snow removal for our more elderly citizens if the need arises. The main kick off for each Christmas season is the annual Community Christmas Potluck Supper and party held the first Saturday in December. You will find that at least 40% of the residents show up at this event.

My goal is to use the \$500 award for additional Christmas decorations. The new decorations will be highlighted by a decorated 4' wreath to be hung on the city building and illuminated by a spotlight during the holiday season. These decorations will not be a one-off. Everything purchased will be good quality to be used for many years to come. I would like to dedicate this wreath on the evening of the Community party to honor all the current volunteers to this town, those dedicated volunteers of year's past and those future volunteers!

First Heritage Bank**Lenexa**

Five hundred dollars would be a tremendous help to the students and teachers of an English as a Second Language classroom. Olathe Wesleyan Church hosts ESL classes every Wednesday night for two hours and has over 50 students enrolled. The classes are run by volunteers. Funding for additional classroom supplies or activities would go a long way and enable students to be more eager and enthusiastic about learning. Each student has a different learning style therefore catering to as many learning styles and abilities is crucial. Everyone involved would benefit from this generous funding.

Heartland Credit Union**Hutchinson**

If given a \$500 opportunity to assist the community, Heartland Credit Union is committed to donating the funds to the Salthawk Community Support program at Hutchinson High School in Hutchinson, KS. This decision aligns with the credit union's mission to support the communities that it serves. The donated funds will be utilized by the program to provide essential items for Hutchinson High School students. Recently there has been a noticeable rise in requests from students, particularly for shoes. By focusing on providing shoes and other necessary clothing items, the Salthawk Community Support program aims to enhance the overall well-being and self-esteem of these students.

Community Bank of Wichita, Inc.**Wichita**

There are so many opportunities in our community to help women and children that have been harmed by sex trafficking and domestic abuse. We would start by donating funds to Hope Ranch, which is dedicated to empowering women who have been exploited and abused to rise above their circumstances.

Farmers Bank and Trust**Great Bend**

If I had \$500 to help my community, I would donate the full amount to our local Family Crisis Center to help victims of domestic violence. They have provided services to over 25,000 survivors in central and

south-central Kansas. With two programs -- Domestic and Sexual Violence Center (DSVC) and Child Advocacy Center (CAC) -- they continue to raise awareness, provide education and support the women, children and men who are in need of hope and healing.

First National Bank

Dighton

If I had \$500 to help my community, I would like to donate it to City on A Hill. This is a nonprofit organization that helps women who are fighting addiction in a Christian-based environment. Often these women come with nothing but the clothes on their back. They are always in need of anything from clothing and bedding to sanitary items.

Bank of Hays

Hays

Women Who Lead has two signature projects. "Matthew's Gift" provides care bags containing a blanket, snacks, toiletries and a \$50 gift card for families when a loved one requires an emergency transport from the local hospital to another facility. "Project Suitcase" provides children who require emergency removal from their homes with a duffle bag containing pajamas, a stuffed animal, blanket, toiletries, snacks and a McDonalds gift card. I would use the \$500 to help support either of these much-needed projects in our community.

First Bank

Sterling

Sterling, KS, has lovely parks, but only some get to enjoy them fully. First Bank would like to partner with FHLBank Topeka and #500forGood to better the parks for both people and their pets. Community members are currently raising funds to purchase a wheelchair swing for a local park. This would allow children who are wheelchair bound to enjoy swinging with the rest of the community, and this platform swing can be used by all children safely. In addition to the swing, local citizens having been negotiating space for a new dog park and received permission recently for the build! Fencing, pet drinking fountains and exercise stations are on the horizon. First Bank is helping in any way we can!

First Option Bank

Paola

If I had \$500 to help in my community, I would donate it to My Father's House. My Father's House (MFH) is a housing program which offers transitional housing and programming for those who are experiencing homelessness, have low income or are struggling with addiction. The mission is to value the underserved rural population by assisting and empowering individuals and families to overcome life's challenges. Opportunities for growth are provided in a nurturing environment of grace, hope and optimism. They have recently announced their plans for a tiny home project. Tiny house shelters are an immediate bridge between the gutters and housing that is more permanent and is vital to the humane treatment and survival of the human beings in our communities who have lost their place of residence. "

Bank of Atchison, Union State Bank

Atchison

If I had \$500 to help my community, I would donate it to the organization here in Atchison, KS, called Sleep In Heavenly Peace. It's a non-profit organization that builds beds for kids in our local community that do not have a bed to sleep in.

Stockgrowers State Bank**Maple Hill**

I would love to pay off overdue lunch accounts at the local schools in Alma. I know from experience that it can be so hard to pay a lunch bill on a fixed income. There has been times when angels have come forward for me and would love to pay it forward now. Sometimes the school meal is the only meal kids get, and I know how hungry a child can get. Giving to others is so near and dear to me pulls at my heart strings. And with the rising cost of all items this would benefit so many.

ESP Financial**Emporia**

We are planning a "grocery giveaway" day for Nov. 16. Four ESB team members are going to be out in the community at our local grocery stores spreading goodwill and purchasing random people's groceries for them! Adding \$500 to this would allow us to help and additional 3-4 families have a better holiday with no cost to them.

First Bank**Lyons**

Through a grant, both Sterling, KS, and Lyons, KS, school districts have built greenhouses to be used for education. Now that the greenhouses are built, ongoing educational supplies are needed such as seeds, fertilizer, pots, sprinkler systems, etc. First Bank, an agriculture centric bank, is in support of these initiatives and would use the \$500 to help purchase supplies.

Solutions North Bank**Stockton**

Our town has only one nursing home, Solomon Valley Manor. They have been working out of a grandfathered building for some time now, sharing bathrooms and shower space and looking very institutionalized. We have a new administrator that puts her heart and soul into providing not just a space but a home for her residents. One of her goals after coming on board was to construct a new building, and the construction crews are just about finished with the final touches. Boxes of new furniture and supplies come in weekly. However, this project was bid out and started in 2020. With inflation and trouble getting workers and supplies, the cost and time has gone overboard with little funds available for the outdoors. If I had \$500, I would love to give them some new umbrellas and maybe a few flowerpots full of colorful flowers for them to enjoy come springtime. Our Western Kansas sun is very unforgiving, and I would hate for these wonderful folks to miss out on the fresh air without the proper sun protection. There's just something about flowers in front of your house that makes it feel more like home. I would like to have our manor residents feel like they are at their home away from home, appreciated and not forgotten.

Union State Bank of Everest**Everest**

The Everest Fire Department is building a new department to house their trucks, train firefighters and hold meetings. I would donate \$500 to help fund this much needed new building.

Bank of Lewis

Lewis

We recently put in a modular classroom building to put two daycare businesses in Lewis. The yard is barren and full of weeds. We are wanting to plant grass in the spring. The City of Lewis has given us five years of free water, and we have a neighbor who is willing to move the water. We just need funding for the grass seed. I would donate the \$500 to the Edwards County Childcare Committee to purchase grass seed in the spring of 2024.

Nebraska Winners

First State Bank of Norton

Holdrege

We are requesting FHLBank Topeka's support in the development of our Midtown Sculpture Garden. A group of local residents came together to purchase a vacant building in the middle of downtown Holdrege. The project is approximately 50% done with the building being razed and hauled off. We are still in need of funding to complete the installation of paving, benches and landscaping. The area will display bronzes and a wall mural created by area artists. The final owner of the site will be the City of Holdrege. It will be an area open to everyone and will improve our community tremendously.

Town and Country Bank

Ravenna

I think \$500 would greatly benefit Little Jays Playgroup, our local childcare center in Ravenna, NE. Our local center is in need of replacing playground equipment that was damaged from hailstorms. Quality childcare is in high demand in rural communities, and we strive to help keep ours local to keep our community thriving with young families.

Cedar Security Bank

Harlington

The Harlington Baseball Association is in the process of taking out bleachers at the baseball diamond. They are changing up the seating so that it is shaded and better. No one would sit in the bleachers as they were really old. This would help the community in hosting tournaments including state baseball. This would bring more people to the community, which brings money to the community.

Community First Bank

Stapleton

If we were given \$500 to help our community, we would apply it toward our funding for a community splash pad. We have currently raised \$6,000 in local donations toward our total goal of \$158,000.00. Living in small town Nebraska, we struggle to find engaging and fun activities for our families and children to enjoy while staying in our communities. We have plans to build a splash pad in our community park that would provide summer fun for our whole town. Community First Bank is going to match the \$500.00 for our Community Splash Pad project if chosen.

The Tri-County Bank

Stuart

I would contribute to Brain Builders, LLC, to support the community of Stuart's early childhood

development initiatives. Brain Builders is in the process of building a \$2.3 million facility that will host childcare, pre-school and after-school programs for Stuart and the surrounding area.

Generations Bank

Exeter

I would use it to jump start a community fund to beautify a vacant lot that the town owns. The vision I have is a small park with a gazebo with some hanging lights surrounded by trees, shrubs and flowers. It is in the middle of Main Street and could provide a great space for people to gather or just take in the scenery.

Jones Bank

Seward

I would love to use the \$500 to purchase supplies for the Seward Memorial Library summer reading program or after school program. They can always use prizes, snacks, games, craft supplies, videos and books. Our wonderful library offers many book clubs, community presentations, lego clubs, chess clubs, dance classes, escape rooms and other fun activities for kids of all ages. The highlight is the library street party with bounce houses, emergency vehicles, drumlines, bands, food and games! Our beautiful library is located right across the street from our main bank. It is a beautiful, inclusive, welcoming place, more than just books! Our librarians can stretch a budget but would appreciate extra funds for "fun stuff".

Pinnacle Bank

Neligh

If I was awarded the \$500 to help our community, I would donate the money toward the Double A Project. This project is headed by a local high school junior who is raising money to create an adaptive playground for our city park. She has taken this project on as part of her FCCLA class project. Her younger brother has what is called SATB2, which affects many different motor skills such as walking, speech and more. Her brother loves being outside. When his siblings are at the local city park, they are all running around having fun, but he is not able to participate. Ashley has led many different successful fundraising events, however they are still short on funds to get the largest phase of the project completed. I know \$500 will help this project greatly.

First Bank and Trust Company

Minden

I would donate it to the Minden Opera House to go toward an updated hearing loop system. The Minden Opera House's mission is to entertain the public, inspire future generations and promote the arts in a majestic venue. They host first-rate performances by the Minden Community Players and bring in high-quality performances by professional artists from all over the world. As technology improves for the hearing impaired and as the Minden Opera House strives to increase their outreach to underserved patrons, they need to install an updated hearing loop system. This system would make all the programming much more enjoyable for the many patrons of the Opera House who have digital hearing assistance devices.

American Exchange Bank

Elmwood

I would donate to the Elmwood Murdock Merchants Association (EMMA), which is an organized group of local merchants and individuals working together to promote economic activity and business

development in the Elmwood and Murdock community. EMMA encourages volunteerism and sponsors community events, college scholarships and community improvement projects.

MNB Bank

McCook

I would donate the \$500 to the McCook Community Kitchen to help with the costs of their Día De Los Muertos celebration in our community, which is designed to help bring together a rapidly growing Hispanic population base in our community with our current traditional population base.

American National Bank

Omaha

I live in Murray, Nebraska -- a town of 491 people. We have two schools. If I had \$500 to help my community, I would have the HVAC ducts cleaned at the schools so the kids could breathe easier.

Commercial State Bank

Wausa

The Wausa community held a fundraising project in the spring of 2023 for a community walking trail to run through the park and swimming pool area at a projected cost of \$250,000. With a grant and widespread community donations, it appears that the project should be able to be completed. In July of 2023, the park sustained major wind/tornado damage to trees and structures within the park. This could delay and add costs to the project. Any additional dollars would be well spent on bringing the park and the trail project back as intended.

Brunswick State Bank

Brunswick

We would like to help establish an E-sports chapter for 7-12 students at Wausa Public Schools in Wausa, Nebraska. We would be able to purchase the needed computers, equipment and games. We want to build an "equitable and diversified" extracurricular activity community within the school. Students will have an equal opportunity to participate in an extracurricular activity that is non-sports or fine arts-related. This will help include students who would not otherwise participate in athletic sports, band, speech or play productions. The benefits of E-sports are similar to other athletic team sports. Members must work together, strategize and experience the highs and lows with sportsmanship.

Town & Country Bank

Kearney

At a time when one person is lost every 11 minutes to suicide, I would donate the \$500 to reducing those statistics. The McKenna's Rae of HOPE Foundation was founded in Kearney, NE, in 2017 after several community teen's were lost to suicide. The foundation has worked diligently to bring awareness, foster kindness and connection and to remove the stigma of mental health issues in area schools and communities. Additionally, they partner to provide resources to the survivors who have experienced loss due to suicide. They provide scholarships to students who demonstrate the characteristics of HOPE (Helping Other People Everyday) and provide resources to make counseling more financially available to students in need.

Trius Federal Credit Union

Kearney

We would like to work with the Foster Care Closet in Kearney. This closet is one of four locations in the state of Nebraska that is available to foster kids and their families. The closet is donation driven and run by volunteers in the community. Each kid can go shopping and can pick five new outfits including socks, underwear, coats and a pair of shoes. Most of these kids have been taken out of their homes with very few personal belongings. A big part of restoring dignity to kids in crisis is creating the opportunity for youth in foster care to choose clothes they want to wear.

Oklahoma Winners

Armstrong Bank

Muldrow

The High School Band Booster Club is instrumental in helping our students at Muldrow High School. If I had the \$500, I would contribute to the boosters to help fund the program. We help the band by feeding the band, assist in prop creation for competitions and other various ways. Feeding the 65+ member program is no small feat. We also provide senior gifts for each senior student in the program. Boosters volunteer to work concession stands, perform uniform alterations, chaperone trips and much more. In a day where funding for schools is tough, this helps to give the band students support beyond what the school is able to do.

The Bank of The West

Thomas

Thomas Daycare is such a blessing to the community. It enables families to be able to work knowing their children have a safe place to go during the day and after school. The community didn't have a daycare for many years, so we would like to do everything we can to help them. They are desperately in need of a structure in the play area for shade, so the funds would be applied towards that project.

Great Nations Bank

Norman

Great Nations Bank would give \$500 to Bridges of Norman. Bridges provides homeless teens a home and structured environment to graduate high school and learn life skills. The teens are typically alone because of family crisis. The goal of Bridges is to assist students by removing barriers to graduation and help with food, clothing, shelter and medical needs.

Armstrong Bank

Muskogee

If I had \$500 to help my community, I would invest it in the Doorways of Hope Recovery Program at Keefeton Free Will Baptist Church in Muskogee, OK. This money would go toward 12 Step books for participants, fuel to drive attendees to the meeting each week, food for the meetings and for purchasing coins to celebrate milestones in their recovery.

Oklahoma Community Credit Union

Stillwater

I would make the donation to the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 2027 in Stillwater, OK. They are desperately in need of a new facility including a new drive and parking area with handicap accessible sidewalks. The VFW supports our community of Stillwater and the surrounding areas, and they provide student activities and mentoring for our local schools.

Community Bank

Bristow

Community Bank would donate the \$500 to the Harry McMillan's Blessings in a Backpack program organized through the Bristow Presbyterian Church. This program provides 167 local students each week during the school year a sack of food that includes 11-12 items of meat, protein, vegetables, fruit, milk, juice, cereal, raisins, and pudding. The local school counselors identify students who are food insecure. Volunteers haul the food from the Eastern Oklahoma Food Bank and the local grocery stores, unpack/sack the food bags, and delivery them to the schools. The programs annual budget is \$36,000, funded by local business donations, grants, individual donations, and other church donations.

Volunteers throughout the community, including many of the other churches help ensure the program is successful. This program has helped countless students and families in the local community for many years. Community Bank would like to help them continue to be a blessing.

Armstrong Bank

Norman

I would like to donate it to OKCity Crisis Nursery. We offer emergency care for children in times of crisis. There are never any fees for families to utilize the Nursery. We understand not everyone has a village around them to utilize when emergencies arise. We exist to prevent children from being exposed to violence, stressful situations, unfit (or last minute) caregivers, or any other circumstances that can lead to child abuse and neglect. In addition to caring for children, we also equip families with necessities during emergency situations such as clothing, diapers, formula, car seats or any other necessities. "