

FALL 2025



Community Voice

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Partnering for safe and healthy communities.



A Summer of Conversations Focused on Community Connection and Support

As part of a busy summer, members of our Executive Leadership Team have connected with a variety of elected officials in both Missouri and Kansas in our constant effort to educate those in positions of power about our work and the vital need for support from all levels of government.

In August, we were honored to host Sen. Patty Lewis (MO-7) and Sen. Maggie Nurrenbern (MO-17) at our Ozanam Campus for a briefing and quick tour. In those meetings, we were able to discuss our work and some of the challenges we face, including increasing costs for services, deferred maintenance, and, of course, our renovation needs for the new Cornerstones of Care Education Campus.

As a promising follow-up from our meetings with the Senators, we are working with Missouri Children's Division to obtain the remaining Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) transition dollars. Children's Division has agreed to expand Intensive In-Home Services (IIS) aimed at keeping families together and out of foster care. Although the amount isn't final, we expect a minimum of \$470,000 to bolster our growing in-home services program.

In Kansas, we were pleased to provide information to Representative Tim Johnson

(KS- 38) who penned an opinion editorial for the Leavenworth Times about the need for more social workers in the state. We work with area colleges and universities to provide meaningful field experiences for social work students. Ultimately, we hope to increase the number of social workers in the state and encourage many of them to choose to join us at Cornerstones of Care. Representative Johnson will be filing a bill in the 2026 legislative session to provide funding for stipends to social work students who agree to work in under-resourced communities across the state after graduation. We applaud his vision and look forward to supporting this piece of important legislation.

Finally, I had the privilege to testify in June before the Jackson County Legislature to urge them to adopt the county's budget for 2025. Upon passage of the budget, Cornerstones of Care will now receive its allocated funding to help children and families

preempt the onset of drug use or interrupt a potential cycle of substance abuse for adolescents. In addition, Cornerstones of Care was recently awarded a \$50,000 grant for our Jackson County Pathways youth to help with apartment set-up, utilities, rent assistance, and their Build Trybe wages.

Admittedly, some of our work can be confusing to those who aren't involved in it every day, and we are delighted to tell our story. Our investment of time and energy in this outreach may not immediately prove fruitful, but we are committed to building our relationships with elected officials, government entities, community partners, and others who support our work.

Many of these achievements would not be possible without the support of many of you, and we thank you for your ongoing faith in our work with children and families.

Merideth Rose, President and CEO

Interested in Becoming a Foster Parent? Our Presentation Will Help

As part of a year-long campaign to attract more individuals and families to become foster parents, Cornerstones of Care is taking the message directly to the people.

We are offering a free, no-obligation presentation to businesses, organizations, faith-based groups, and others to help them better understand the foster care process and requirements necessary to become a foster parent. Approximately 18,000 youth are in foster care in Kansas and Missouri. Even though that number has been reduced in recent years, neither state has enough foster families for the children in state care.

"We talk about foster parenting as being 'the challenge you won't regret,'" said Cornerstones of Care President and CEO Merideth Rose. "The first step in the process is to learn and have a conversation with our team to better understand how



impactful foster parenting is for both the child and the foster parent."

The 30-minute presentation will share information on how children come into foster care, the licensing process, some of the resources available to foster parents, and dispels a few myths about foster parenting. Organizations interested in booking the free presentation can do so by filling out a Contact

Us form on our website, cornerstonesofcare.org.

"The first step in the process is learning and understanding about foster care," said Cornerstones of Care's Executive Director of Programs and Services Shelia Rancatore. "Some of the people we will speak to will come away with a different understanding of foster care and the work we do in general." ■



SHARE THE LOVE



Through our Share the Love monthly giving program, we offer you an easy way to support youth with regular, automatic donations. Managing your contributions is simple, giving you full control over how you give.

When you commit to **\$14 per month** for one year, we will send you our exclusive cotton canvas tote as a token of our appreciation. Your support helps build safe and healthy communities for children and families.

SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT [CORNERSTONESOFCARE.ORG/MONTHLYGIVING](https://cornerstonesofcare.org/monthlygiving) TO LEARN MORE!



Gift In-Kind Opportunities

In distressing moments or when the weather is bad and youth in our care must remain indoors, therapeutic toys offer comfort, a distraction, and a healthy outlet. We are in need of the following items to help kids process emotions, begin to feel safe again, and positively pass the time.

- Board Games
- Books About Feelings/Emotions
- Coloring Books (Kids & Teens)
- Dolls (Baby & Barbie)
- Fidget Toys
- Hand Puppets
- Play Doctor/Dentist Kits
- Puzzles (all ages)
- Sensory Toys
- Weighted Stuffed Animals

Scan the QR code to view our Amazon wishlist.





NORTH POLE

benefiting  CORNERSTONES OF CARE

Get ahead of the holiday hustle by signing up to volunteer with **NASB's North Pole**, a holiday destination that spreads joy to children and families in the Kansas City area.

You can sign up to Sponsor-A-Youth by purchasing gifts for a child in foster care, or you can help fill our Gift Gallery with toys and trinkets for families in our community-based programs.

For any questions, please contact lea.loudon@cornerstonesofcare.org.



Sponsor-A-Youth wish lists in the QR above go live on November 3.



UPCOMING EVENTS

NOV 7

SPirit GALA
Overland Park Convention Center

DEC 9-15

NASB's NORTH POLE
Location TBD

FEB 28

SAVOR THE SOUND
28 Event Space

MONTHLY

CARING ABOUT COMMUNITY COFFEE
First Wednesday each month;
Cornerstones of Care Gillis Campus

For more information, visit cornerstonesofcare.org/events

Cornerstones of Care Education Campus to Open Beginning of 2026 School Year

Beginning in August 2026, we will consolidate both of our day treatment schools into a single South Kansas City location.

The consolidation of the K-8 school at the Gillis Campus and the grades 9-12 school at the Ozanam Campus will create the Cornerstones of Care Education Campus at the former Bishop O'Hara High School at 9001 James A. Reed Road. The move will provide additional space to manage larger enrollments and add students who are currently on waiting lists.


Build Trybe, which teaches marketable job skills to youth in our care, will enhance its outdoor education center with a five-acre space to teach youth in its Landscaping and Conservation and Seed-to-Plate programs.

BIST, which provides training to educational professionals to support youth with behavioral issues and increase learning time within the classroom, will move its offices to the new education center.

The Collaborative Learning and Training team will implement plans for a simulation lab, complete with a realistic home setting to train case managers, foster parents, and biological parents about best practices

We are proud to be a United Way Impact 100 agency, working to meet today's most critical health and human services needs while meeting the highest bar of financial accountability and governance. When making your United Way designations this year, we would be honored if you chose to donor-designate to us by using #869.

We are also part of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) #27529, offering another way to support our mission. Your donation, however big or small, makes a meaningful difference and impacts the lives of those we serve. Thank you for considering us.



PROUD 2025 UNITED WAY IMPACT 100 PARTNER

Saddle Up and Get Ready for Our Yellowstone Nights Spirit Gala



Our annual Spirit Gala takes place November 7, and it's a night you won't want to miss. This year's theme is Yellowstone Nights, and guests are encouraged to sport Western-themed attire, though formal wear is equally welcome. Whether you arrive in boots or black tie, you'll enjoy an unforgettable evening where generosity meets the spirit of the West.

The Western-chic soiree will feature a gourmet dinner, live entertainment, exclusive auctions, and heartfelt presentations. Guests can line dance, sample whiskeys, and capture memories with a 360 camera or the new AI photo booth set against an event-themed background.

The evening will be hosted by Honorary Event Chairs Scott

Hefner and Jeff Westmeyer of Bukaty Companies. "If you've never been to the Spirit Gala, what a great year to come," said Scott. "This one is going to be great. You get to help your community while having a great time. If I had to describe the Cornerstones of Care Spirit Gala in three words, it would be fun, family, and friends."

He continued, "If you've ever been to one of the locations and seen the difference the Cornerstones of Care team is making, it's amazing. It's exciting. It makes you want to be part of it." Cornerstones of Care couldn't do this work without the generosity of organizations and individuals who attend our events and donate their time and resources. That's why this year's Spirit Gala will honor one outstanding company and

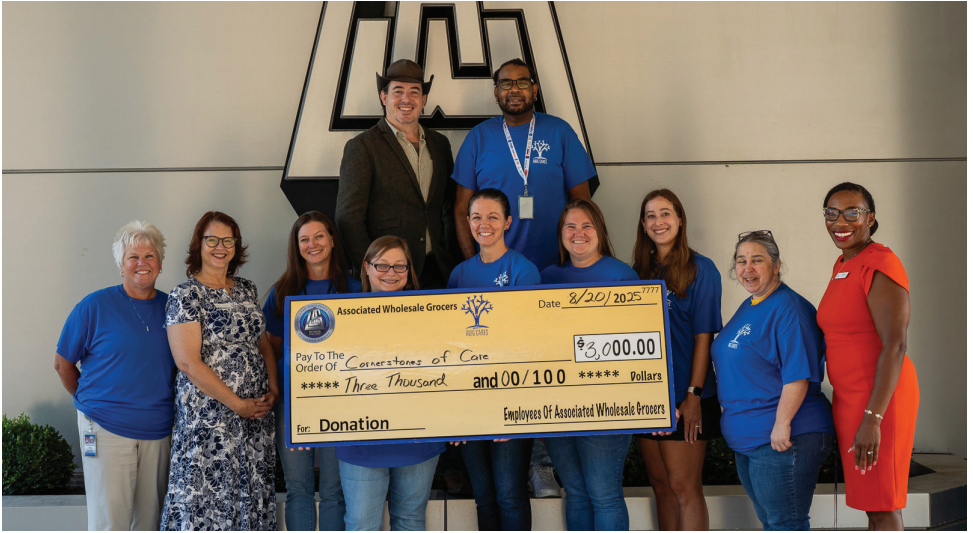
one exceptional individual or couple for their dedication to improving the lives of children and families.

.....
"Our youth and our families are our future. Cornerstones is multifaceted and works to help our community move forward. We need the support and resources Cornerstones offers to help our community heal and grow," Scott said.
.....

Mark your calendar, gather your friends, and join us for a night that blends Western charm with the heart of giving—because together, we can make a lasting difference.

To learn more about this extraordinary one-night event or to purchase tickets visit cornerstonesofcare.org/gala. ■

Celebrating a New Partnership: Associated Wholesale Grocers



When Kelly Hasenohr with Associated Wholesale Grocers (AWG) learned of our mission through our partnership with the Kansas City Corporate Challenge, they decided to volunteer at The Farm at our Ozanam Campus. As the nation's largest cooperative food wholesaler, AWG was looking for a way to celebrate Earth Day by giving back locally, and our program was a perfect fit.

On a bright spring day, a dedicated team of eight AWG team members rolled up their sleeves to mow, spread mulch, and bundle spring onions with the youth from our Build Trybe program for our upcoming Plant Sale. Their hard work brought fresh energy to The Farm and tangible support to the kids.

But AWG didn't stop there. Inspired by their experience, Kelly applied for a quarterly grant on our behalf offered through AWG's corporate

office. Thanks to Kelly's efforts, Build Trybe was selected from all the submissions to receive a \$3,000 award.

President and CEO Merideth Rose joined Director of Build Trybe Theo Bunch and Community Engagement Manager Lea Loudon to accept the grant check.

"AWG showed themselves to be caring leaders and hard workers," Theo said. "This is a company that shows up, cares about community, and makes the good work happen. Their help made a huge difference to us and to our youth."

AWG leaders are already looking at another opportunity to collaborate with us — potential employment pathways in their warehouse. We are excited to continue this meaningful relationship with AWG and look forward to seeing the impact this partnership will have in the future. ■

2025 GOVERNING BOARD

- Jennifer Seyller, Board Chair
Mayo Clinic
- Mo Awad
Evergy
- Brett Loxterman
GR8 Global
- Nathan Turner
Burns & McDonnell
- Ryan Bennett
VanTrust Real Estate
- Patrick McCullough
Hallmark Business Solutions
- Claudia Vazquez-Puebla
Kansas City Board of Public Utilities
- Hayley Cacioppo
emfluence
- Dr. Jason Moss
MyoCore
- Alexandria Zacny
Turner Construction
- Kim Ford
Community Volunteer
- Dr. Yvette Richards
St. James United Methodist Church
- Bill Gassen
Bank of America
- Kyle Tritsarolis
H&R Block

2025 FOUNDATION BOARD

- Brian Stewart, Board Chair
Kansas City Orthopedic Alliance
- Jim Hogan
Community Volunteer
- Michael Pyle
Challenge Everything Financial, LLC
- Christine Leyva
Infinitas, LLC
- Nika Sien
Real Broker LLC
- Ryan Miller
The Miller Group
- Marceda Starks
Hardwick Law
- Bryan Moore
MarksNelson Advisors
- Kim Wisdom
Community Volunteer
- Ash Parulekar
Somerset Ridge Winery



8150 Wornall Road, Kansas City, MO 64114

Partnering for *safe* and *healthy* communities.

- Youth & family support
- Foster care & adoption
- Education & training

1-844-824-8200 | cornerstonesofcare.org

We'd like to thank the following funders without whom our work could not be done:

- Children Services Fund of Jackson Co.
- St. Louis County Children's Service Fund
- Jackson Co. Community-Backed Anti-Drug Tax (COMBAT)
- Jackson Co. Community Mental Health Fund
- Mo. Dept. of Economic Development: Neighborhood Assistance Program
- Mo. Dept. of Economic Development: Youth Opportunities Program
- Children's Services Fund of Clay County
- United Way of Greater Kansas City



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savor the sound

Our annual Savor the Sound event will take place on February 28, 2026, in the Kansas City Room of 28 Event Space.

With Chef Celina Tio at the helm, the magical evening revolves around a carefully curated culinary experience with each course presented against captivating background music performed by talented harpist Calvin Arsenia. The night is then rounded out with cocktails, pastries prepared by Darius Thompson, coffee from Cafe Cà Phê, and the opportunity to purchase goods hand-crafted by youth in our Build Trybe program. Cutting boards and beautiful centerpieces are among the items up for grabs. All proceeds and donations generated at the event benefit Cornerstones of Care and Build Trybe.

Information about tickets to Savor the Sound is coming soon. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, please contact Katie Culbertson at katie.culbertson@cornerstonesofcare.org.

