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## **GOLDEN BELT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES SPRING COMMUNITY BUILDING GRANT RECIPIENTS**

GREAT BEND, Kan. – Golden Belt Community Foundation is pleased to announce that \$15,415 was recently awarded for grants that benefit communities in the Golden Belt area.

The Golden Belt Spring Community Building Grant supports a wide-variety of needs in Barton, Pawnee, Rush, and Stafford County that serve the community at large including but not limited to: quality of life improvements; arts and culture; enhancing community destination points; charitable economic opportunity; planning and development. Favorable projects leverage matching funds for greater community impact.

The 8 community projects awarded funding were:

\$2,000 Gray Photography Studio, Inc.  
*Amos Bayer Fund*

Gray Photography Studio has been working to restore the historic building at 116 N Main Street in St John, Ks. The vision is to have a space for the community to utilize. The space currently functions as The Arts Center at Gray Photography Studio. The project has used grants from the Kansas Historical Society as well as Historic Tax Credits to address the needs of the building. This grant award will be used to continue to finish the main studio space so that the community may begin using the building.

\$1,500 Rush County Memorial Hospital  
*Amos Bayer Fund*

Rush County Memorial Hospital is in the process of updating its Long-Term Care unit. The vision is to restore and/or paint each room. Many of the rooms will look like homes by adding false windows and window boxes. They are adding to other rooms and areas of the unit by creating a barbershop and other shops in a town with the addition of awnings and false windows. They will also be adding a mural that will create a friendly home environment. This grant award will be used to continue the painting portion of this project.

\$750 Heartland Farm  
*Golden Belt Community Improvement Fund*

Heartland Farm purchased the Meeting Owl Teleconferencing System to enhance the virtual workshops and events that they facilitate. This system is a video conferencing system with camera, microphone and speakers that has smart zooming and noise equalizing capabilities. This will provide easier access to those outside of their area who participate in the workshops and/or meetings. They would like to provide this technology to local area businesses, groups and private individuals as well. The grant award will fund the entire project.

\$5,000 Stafford County Economic Development

*KHF Children's Health Endowment Fund*

Stafford County Economic Development (EcoDevo) will be bringing in an architectural consultant and/or contractors to assess existing buildings in Stafford County that could be used for childcare while simultaneously starting to move forward with the development of other locations. By concurrently working on renovations to properties that have already been deemed viable they will be able to move more efficiently toward providing Stafford County with additional childcare locations. This grant will provide the opportunity to work on both concerns in Stafford County.

\$2,000 City of LaCrosse

*Golden Belt Community Improvement Fund and the Arts & Culture Fund*

In 1951 the LaCrosse Boy Scouts raised money to build an 8-foot replica of the Statue of Liberty. The brick work and its foundation are in bad need of repairs. They will rebrick the foundation and fix the statue with the use of this grant award.

\$500 IGather, Inc.

*Nutrition and Physical Activity Initiative Fund*

Macksville community members, students and staff worked diligently 2 years ago to start a raised tire garden. Thriving with produce each year and drawing in visitors of all ages with its artistic appeal the garden has continued to grow and be successful. In order to have even better success, they are adding an irrigation system. The grant award will fund the new watering system with irrigation hoses reaching into each tire and a timer so that the plants will get the much-needed moisture.

\$3,665 St. John High School

*KHF Children's Health Endowment Fund*

USD 350 is in the process of implementing a Rural Career Connections project to give students in 7th-12th grade hands-on practical business experience and a place to practice employability skills. Tiger Coffee will launch in phases and the long-term plan is for it to be a school and community coffee shop. Other businesses planning to launch are a school-based bank in conjunction with SJN Bank of KS, a school store with end caps from local businesses (Dollar General, Whites Foodliner, and Kanza Coop), a broadcast/podcast and interview desk connecting to St. John News and St. John Community Television Ch 3, a garment store to design and sell tiger gear for our school sports teams, fans and booster club, a flower shop, and a photography studio. This grant will allow them to continue moving forward with the start of the Tiger Coffee shop.