



Grant Supports Preschoolers at Play

A generation ago, enrolling your children in preschool gave them an advantage when entering school. Today, it's a necessity as the rigors of kindergarten have increased and gaps in school readiness have followed suit.

With the Davenport Early Childhood Development Center overflowing, the Dodge County Head Start program keeping a waiting list of up to 70 families, and a limited number of licensed preschools in the community, the Fremont Public School Board of Education recognized the need for enhancing its early childhood program. Administrators secured an Early Childhood Education Grant from the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) to help open new preschools at three FPS elementary schools – Linden, Milliken Park and Washington – with a goal to serve primarily at-risk 4-year-old children eligible to attend kindergarten the following year.

In order to accept the NDE grant and comply with its regulations for early childhood programs, the school system was required to install playground facilities with age-appropriate equipment and safety features. Thanks to a grant from the Fremont Area Community Foundation, all three preschool sites are equipped with safe and fun playgrounds, which allow for good exercise and gross motor skill development while meeting the State's rigorous outdoor playground expectations.

"We are truly thankful for your support of this project," said Theresa Muhle, FPS Assistant Director of Student Services. "The playground space for K-4 students is not appropriate for students ages 3 and 4. Until this equipment was installed, the children had few safe places to play. Now they are very much enjoying playtime outside while developing gross motor skills. Thank you so very much!"



The mission of the Fremont Area Community Foundation is to improve the quality of life by connecting donor interests with community needs and serving as a leader and catalyst in the development of solutions.

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Area Youth Challenged to Make a Difference, Again

Kids want to make a difference, regardless of their age.

That's evident by the number of area youth who spearheaded projects through the Youth Philanthropy Contest hosted by the Foundation last year.

More than 130 youth participated in our first Youth Philanthropy Contest. In groups as small as two and as large as 50, they embraced our challenge and used their creativity and passion to make a difference in their communities.

The Youth Philanthropy Contest invites area youth to propose a project that will better their community. It is divided into three age groups: kindergarten through fourth grade, fifth through eighth grade and ninth through 12th grade.

Youth submitting a project proposal are required to complete an application form by Oct. 16. Then they have nine months to execute their idea. Projects should take place in the Foundation's granting area (greater Dodge County), must be charitable in nature and focus on public interests or serving the common good. Up to seven ideas will be selected to receive a \$1,000 grant from the Foundation to help meet the project goals.

"Once the project meets this criteria, the sky is the limit," said Melissa Diers, Executive Director. "We encourage youth to consider what's important to them and the needs they see in their community. If they supply their creativity, talents and energy, the Fremont Area Community Foundation will provide the funding to help make their ideas a reality."

Applications and more information about the contest is available on the Foundation's website at <http://www.facfoundation.org/community-involvement/youth-philanthropy-contest.html>, at the Foundation office located in the First State Bank building at 1005 E. 23rd St., Suite #2, or by calling 402-721-4252.

FACF Launches New Website

Nearly every nonprofit organization, both large and small, has a website to inform people about the work that it does. However, it can be a challenge to communicate all the things that are done daily to achieve their mission.

To meet this challenge, the Fremont Area Community Foundation launched a redesigned website that provides more clarity around the work the Foundation does, is easier to navigate and is more intuitive. With this redesign, visitors will be able to take advantage of the most current tools and sources of information for support of our community.



What are some of the new features?

Photos and News Feed

The new site features photos and stories from the Fremont area. Many pages have a news feed section that links to stories about our grantees, donors and includes story topics of interest for community partners and professional advisors.

Accessibility

With a responsive layout and design, the new site is optimized to view on multiple devices and using any level of internet connection.

Online Giving

Making a gift to the Foundation is now easier than ever! A **Give Now** button is featured on each page of the website. The new donation form allows you to choose how you would like to support the Foundation – whether it is through a general gift or designated for a specific fund.

Improved Grant Application Form

Organizations now have the option of submitting a grant application through the website.

Nonprofit Directory

This is a comprehensive list of the nonprofit organizations in our area.

We invite you to browse our new website at www.facfoundation.org and let us know what you think!

Establishing a Fund at FACF: It's as easy as 1-2-3

1 Determine your charitable goals and aspirations.

Is your passion helping those in need, supporting the arts, ensuring youth can afford a college education, or is it something else? Dream big. We can help you achieve your philanthropic goals and make a difference.

2 Work with FACF to identify the best type of charitable fund.

From scholarship funds to family foundations, we have a fund-type that is designed to fit your needs and interests. Let us help you identify which one will serve you best.

3 Complete a simple governing document.

We'll provide a fund agreement for your review and signature. This will ensure your wishes and intentions are recorded and followed forever.

The benefits to you:

- You choose how to make your establishing gift – cash, appreciated stocks or other assets.
- You receive tax benefits in the year your gift is made.
- If you choose an endowed fund, your gift is invested over time. Your gift – and future earnings from your gift – become a permanent source of community capital, helping do good work, forever.
- The best part: we handle all the administrative details.

Contact Melissa Diers at 402-721-4252 to establish your fund today!

Celebrating Our 2015 Grantees

More than \$317,500 in grants has been awarded during 2015 from donor-advised funds or as competitive grants. The following organizations have received competitive grants from the Foundation's Fremont Forever Fund:

Arlington Public Schools - \$1,500 for CPR training mannequins from the American Heart Association.

City of Fremont - \$6,000 for body cameras for Fremont Police Department.

Digg Site Productions - \$10,000 for expansion of the organization's Fremont/Eastern NE Film Commission Office and its "Film It: The World Inside and Out" accredited summer film documentary workshop for area high school students.

Dodge American Legion - \$7,500 to support the Veterans' Memorial Park project in Dodge, NE.

First Congregational Church - \$2,000 for a Zoll AED plus defibrillator.

Fremont Area United Way - \$10,000 to support a "Bridges Out of Poverty" Two-Day Community Workshop.

Fremont Rotary Club - \$1,000 toward the organization's annual Outstanding Teacher Award.

Fresh Hope - \$500 to help establish a Fresh Hope chapter in Fremont.

Hope Center for Kids - \$10,000 for renovations for the new home of The Hope Center for Kids in Fremont.

Main Street Fremont/Friends of the Pathfinder Hotel - \$5,000 for the Pathfinder Hotel Monument that will be located in the City of Fremont park across the street from the hotel site.

Rebuilding Together, Greater Fremont Area - \$10,000 for a Volunteer Project Trailer that is outfitted with tools and construction supplies for use by volunteers; \$5,000 for a North Bend branch office expansion.

St. Wenceslaus Catholic School - \$1,000 to update the automated library system at the school in Dodge.



Board of Directors

Our 28-member Board of Directors provides inspired leadership and a passion for improving the quality of life in the Fremont area. At the helm for the 2015-16 year are:

Front row: Martin Koopman, Christine Leech, Marv Welstead*, Russ Peterson, Jane Dugan, Tom Thomsen*, Greg Haskins

Second row: Brad Holtorf, Barbara Christensen, Sid Dillon, Jr., Cheryl Lamme, Terry McClain, Cathy Saeger

Third row: Dick Hendriksen, Jessup Wilson, Barry Benson, Ron Kortan, Cindy Coffman, Toni Vering

Not pictured: Dee Bang, Todd Hansen, Bob Hillis, Sheila Monke, Gaylord Mussman, Steve Navarrette*, Dale Olson*, Kari Ridder, Joe Sajevic

*Ex-officio

Photo by: Richard Rader