

# Leslie County Community Foundation

COMMUNITY ACTIVITY AND INVESTMENT PLAN

JUNE 2021



Community Investment Strategy for Leslie County Community Foundation		2021-2024
WHERE WE ARE	WHAT WE DO	WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
<p>Since 2015, the Leslie County Community Foundation (LCCF) has worked to secure Leslie County's future, while meeting the community's immediate needs through awarding grants and building connections. An endowed fund will anchor the community foundation's support of projects, so the LCCF will focus on building a long-term fund. To create a better life for every Leslie County citizen, the foundation focuses on five pillars—economy, education, arts and heritage, health and well-being, and youth.</p> <p>Recognizing that issues like youth homelessness, food insecurity, and lack of transportation require collaboration, the LCCF seeks to create partnerships in service to the community and to play a role in growing charities. The LCCF has contributed more than \$300,000 to nonprofits in Leslie County.</p> <p>The LCCF board members identified pressing areas to address: small business development, retention, and growth; downtown revitalization; and substance abuse recovery.</p> <p>Over the next three years, the Leslie County Community Foundation will focus on growing the economy, addressing youth homelessness, supporting substance abuse recovery, and growing resources from within and outside the community.</p>	<p>The Leslie County Community Foundation helps the community today while saving for tomorrow.</p>	<p>Leslie County citizens will enjoy a high quality of life and will grow local resources.</p>
	<p><b>Pillars to Support Quality of Life</b></p> <p>Economic Stability and Growth   Educational Strength   Commitment to Arts and Heritage            Health and Well-Being of Citizens   Youth Retention/Engagement</p> <p><i>~ based on values that honor and strengthen the community and celebrate local resourcefulness ~</i></p>	
	<p><b>Overarching Strategies</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>ECONOMIC GROWTH</b> Collaborate with Chamber on workshops for business owners and to grow Chamber membership; support downtown revitalization.</li> <li>2. <b>YOUTH SUPPORT</b> Through PLACE, support youth planning and fundraising for projects to develop life skills and address substance abuse &amp; mental health.</li> <li>3. <b>SUBSTANCE ABUSE RECOVERY</b> Build relationships with community partners to understand needs.</li> <li>4. <b>ARTS AND HERITAGE</b> Continue support of Kentucky School of Bluegrass; refurbish community building that will include arts spaces.</li> <li>5. <b>GROW RESOURCES/ENDOWMENT</b> Seek regional and national grants; create a Club 404 Endowment Campaign; hold fundraising events.</li> </ol>
		<p>Over the next three years...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small business owners will report increased foot traffic and revenue.</li> <li>• Youth in PLACE will increase their fund balance to \$10,000.</li> <li>• Board will understand how to support addressing substance abuse issues and be ready to plan how to do so.</li> <li>• LCCF will donate an average of \$7,500 per semester in scholarships to the Kentucky School of Bluegrass.</li> <li>• Leslie County will have a community space, including an arts space, and the LCCF will generate revenue from some uses of the space.</li> <li>• LCCF will receive at least two regional or national grants per year.</li> <li>• The endowment will grow by \$640,000 (in four years.)</li> <li>• Fundraising events will raise \$12,000 per year.</li> </ul>

## STRATEGIC INVESTMENT AND ACTION AREAS

### ECONOMIC GROWTH

#### 1. Create workshops for business owners in skills such as web site development and accounting.

Activity Description	Strategic Investments
<p>The Leslie County Community Foundation has provided support to the Chamber of Commerce for small business skill-building sessions that were originally envisioned as a series of sessions focusing on various topics. The COVID pandemic has delayed this project, but as restrictions ease, the Chamber will begin planning and marketing them again.</p> <p>The sessions will be designed to provide skills and also to connect business owners to resources that will support their businesses. Sessions might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web site design</li> <li>• Business plan development</li> <li>• Accounting and finance</li> <li>• Tax preparation-CPA</li> <li>• Using the state’s one-stop portal for businesses</li> <li>• A presentation from the Secretary of State’s office.</li> </ul> <p>The program might connect business owners with resources, such as the Center for Rural Development. In addition, the Chamber can explore finding companies that might offer a discounted rate for business services if there is a group of businesses requesting those services.</p> <p>These services will be offered to all existing small business and to people seeking to start a small business. They also will serve as an avenue to grow Chamber of Commerce membership.</p> <p>Over the next two to three years, the LCCF will continue to collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce to make resources available to small businesses in Leslie County.</p>	<p><u>Funding:</u> The LCCF granted \$15,000 last year as a starting point for this work.</p> <p><u>Connections and Partnerships:</u> The LCCF and the Chamber of Commerce will seek people who can provide these sessions, such as local accountants, people from the State, or staff at the Center for Rural Development. LKLP and EKCEP may also be resources for workforce development and hiring issues. The Small Business Development Center will also be an important partner in providing support and skill-building. And the Kentucky Secretary of State’s office can provide state information and guidance.</p>

**2. Support downtown revitalization.**

Activity Description	Strategic Investments
<p>Leslie County and the City of Hyden have been making progress with downtown revitalization that has included benches, flowers, playground equipment, a recording studio for oral history collection, technology for live events, and the creation of two large twin eagle statues (one will sit at the high school and the other will overlook town.) The eagles were designed and built by students at the Area Technology Center and will support tourism development by promoting the Biggerstaff trail that is within the city limits.</p> <p>Currently, only one building is unoccupied downtown. The city has been working on a new museum, partly funded by a \$60,000 grant from UK’s CEDIK. The museum is expected to increase foot traffic for downtown businesses. Over the next two to three years, LCCF will continue supporting these efforts.</p> <p>The LCCF has been approved for a Thompson Foundation grant (\$24,000 over two years) to renovate the S&amp;T Building, which is expected to have three commercial rental spaces and a community space for arts and theater. A lack of commercial spaces in Hyden leaves businesses with nowhere to locate. One of the commercial spaces will house a restaurant with the other being for undetermined businesses. The community space will provide a venue for concerts and events such as weddings and parties. Currently, there is no place in the county for communal gatherings such as this, except for church basements. The space may also be used as a smaller venue than the acoustically unsuitable high school gym for events such as school concerts. Over the next two to three years, LCCF will continue seeking resources for the S&amp;T Building and partner with community organizations for developing the building.</p>	<p><u>Funding:</u> The LCCF will continue to invest funds from the \$60,000 CEDIK grant in the museum. Approximately half this grant will go to the museum.</p> <p>The LCCF needs to raise funds for moving the large eagles to their final locations.</p> <p>The LCCF has been approved for a \$12,000 grant per year for two years from the Thompson Foundation to get started on renovating the S&amp;T building. As plans unfold, additional funds will be needed to support the work.</p> <p><u>Connections and Partnerships:</u> The City of Hyden owns the museum and the Hyden Citizens Bank owns the S&amp;T Building. Both will need to engage in development of these sites.</p> <p>Continued conversations with the Thompson Foundation will be important.</p>

## YOUTH SUPPORT

1. In partnership with the PLACE group, develop programs and opportunities to empower youth to practice philanthropy that will help other youth in the community.

Activity Description	Strategic Investments
<p>PLACE (Philanthropy Leadership Advocacy Culture and Engagement) is a youth group through which young people (primarily high school students) identify issues and raise funds to support addressing them. The program empowers youth to help other youth, while learning to raise their own money and practicing philanthropy. Over the next two to three years, the Leslie County Community Foundation will continue to support and advise PLACE in its fundraising and grant making efforts. In this role, the board advises and approves grants for PLACE.</p> <p>PLACE has partnered with UK’s CEDIK and received a \$7,500 grant to address mental health and substance abuse issues with teens. The CEDIK funds include a \$5,000 pool for grants.</p> <p>PLACE members have identified youth housing insecurity, such as couch surfing, as an issue in the community. Group members want to install a student cleanliness facility for showers and laundry at the high school. PLACE has raised \$6,000 for this effort, but COVID restrictions have been a barrier to carrying out the work.</p> <p>The LCCF has also been working with PLACE to plan an Adult Boot Camp to connect youth to adults and teach them life skills, such as changing a tire, doing laundry, managing credit, cooking, and preparing for job applications. As COVID restrictions ease, the LCCF and PLACE will continue to work with the high school on this basic skills training idea.</p> <p>Over the next two to three years, the LCCF will maintain and expand its work with PLACE through assisting with planning and youth fundraising for the activities described above and others identify by the members of PLACE.</p>	<p><u>Funding:</u> PLACE has access to the \$5,000 grant pool from CEDIK, and members have raised \$6,000 for the student cleanliness facility. The group is planning additional fundraisers over the summer and fall of 2021. LCCF will support fundraising activities such as covering the cost of a movie for a drive-in movie fundraiser.</p> <p><u>Connections and Partnerships:</u> LCCF will continue to maintain and expand its relationship with PLACE and its school sponsor.</p> <p>PLACE will continue to connect with CEDIK.</p> <p>Relationships with community members who can share skills will be an important part of the Adult Boot Camp—as will the relationship with the school.</p> <p>LKLP will help board members and PLACE members better understand youth homelessness issues. Leslie County High School and Youth Service Center will help with identifying how to invest in services for youth experiencing housing insecurity.</p>

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE RECOVERY**

**1. Deepen the board’s understanding of ways to address substance abuse in the community.**

Activity Description	Strategic Investments
<p>Members of the Leslie County Community Foundation board acknowledged that substance abuse is a complex and important issue in the community and that they have not done a great deal around this issue. Therefore, during the next two to three years, the board will work to build an understanding of best practices for supporting addiction recovery. They will pursue this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring bringing an individual in recovery on as a board member to join in the learning and decision-making about supporting recovery efforts.</li> <li>• Asking Derek Lewis to help them understand the legislation for Recovery Ready Communities that is in the Kentucky House.</li> <li>• Seeking to understand Addiction Recovery Center’s (ARC) interests in having a facility in Leslie County and explore how to help them find a space, as determined by conversations.</li> <li>• Considering how to engage with and perhaps support Celebrate Recovery, a successful recovery group.</li> </ul> <p>While there may not be immediate grants during the initial learning period, a clearer understanding of substance abuse recovery may lead to future investments.</p>	<p><u>Funding</u>: Have funds to potentially support the work of Celebrate Recovery.</p> <p><u>Connections and Partnerships</u>: LCCF will seek to engage an individual in recovery who is interested in taking a role on the board. This may entail partnering with a recovery program to identify potential board members.</p> <p>LCCF will connect with ARC to explore their interests.</p> <p>LCCF will work with Celebrate Recovery to understand what works for successful addiction recovery and could help lift up these success stories.</p>

**ARTS AND HERITAGE**

**1. Continue support of the Kentucky School of Bluegrass and Traditional Music.**

Activity Description	Strategic Investments
<p>The Leslie County Community Foundation has a historic and ongoing connection with the Kentucky School of Bluegrass and has raised significant funds for the school. The board wants to continue this support throughout the next two to three years, including maintaining scholarship funds for the school. The board wants to see the school continue to thrive and grow as an important asset to the community.</p>	<p><u>Funding:</u> LCCF will continue to raise funds for scholarships for the music school.</p> <p><u>Connections and Partnerships:</u> LCCF will remain connected to the school to learn about what is needed for the school to thrive.</p>

**2. Refurbishing a portion of the S&T Building for use as a community space that will support arts activities.**

Activity Description	Strategic Investments
<p>As described in the Downtown Revitalization section of this plan, the Leslie County Community Foundation will support the refurbishing of the S&amp;T Building, which will include commercial space and also a community space with a stage that can be used for community theater, high school performances, and other arts-based events. The community space will have a reception area and meeting space.</p>	<p><u>Funding:</u> The LCCF has received a \$24,000 grant (over two years) from the Thompson Foundation to start renovating the S&amp;T building. Additional funds will be needed to support the work.</p> <p><u>Connections and Partnerships:</u> The bank owns the S&amp;T Building and both will need to engage in development of these sites. Continued conversations with the Thompson Foundation will be important.</p> <p>Gathering input on the community’s arts needs for the space will also be important.</p>

## GROW RESOURCES/ENDOWMENT

### 1. Create a Club 404 Campaign to build an endowment.

Activity Description	Strategic Investments
<p>The Leslie County Community Foundation plans to adopt an endowment campaign that they have seen other Affiliate Community Foundations do—a fundraising project based on raising \$1 per square mile in the county. Leslie County is 404 square miles, and the LCCF will create a campaign that asks 400 people to donate \$400 a year for the next four years. At just \$35 per month by each donor, the result would be \$640,000 in donations by the end of four years.</p> <p>One way to move this campaign forward is to fully engage a project that the LCCF started a couple of years ago—to develop an outreach program for Leslie County High School alumni. The foundation has a database of alumni from 1950 to 2015 or so. A board member (Frank) will run the database through a program that will collect addresses for the mailing list at an insubstantial cost. When a list is secured, board members might review it to correct any addresses that they recognize to be wrong or for people who may have passed. Board members could also make contact with personal acquaintances on the list.</p> <p>The LCCF board needs to develop printed and/or electronic documents for the 404 Campaign. This might be in the form of a letter or newsletter. They will ask the Foundation staff to assist with creating this collateral and web site information. In addition, the LCCF will seek peer advice from other Affiliate Foundations who have done this kind of fundraising effort. The LCCF will also explore doing a live event focused on the Club 404 campaign, perhaps in connection with the Local Treasures event.</p>	<p><u>Funding:</u> Funds will be required to print fundraising collateral/letters and for connecting the campaign to a live event.</p> <p><u>Connections and Partnerships:</u> The Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky staff is a partner in creating collateral and adding information to the LCCF’s web page.</p> <p>Other Affiliate Community Foundations will serve as peer advisers for this effort.</p> <p>The engagement of alumni from Leslie County High School will be critical to kicking off the campaign.</p>

### 2. Seek funding opportunities on a regional and national level.

Activity Description	Strategic Investments
<p>The Leslie County Community Foundation hopes to seek funding from regional and national funders who are interested in investing in Appalachia. The LCCF has worked with the Appalachian Impact Fund already on regional funding, which provides an opportunity to demonstrate to additional funders that the LCCF can be successful with philanthropic investments. Communicating with other regional and national funders will require creating a message and case statements for potential areas for funding. This work will happen in collaboration with the Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky.</p>	<p><u>Funding:</u> No particular funding will be required for this work, but board members and Foundation staff will invest time and effort.</p> <p><u>Connections and Partnerships:</u> The Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky and the Appalachian Impact Fund are partners in this work.</p>



**3. Hold special fundraising events and research other avenues for funding.**

Activity Description	Strategic Investments
<p>The Leslie County Community Foundation will explore using special events to raise money for the foundation. For example, Kiristen will invest some funds from the foundation into an event in July 2021 designed to re-establish connections among women in the community. Money from this event will go back into the LCCF. Proceeds will likely depend on COVID restrictions and the number of women who can be involved, but this is an example of an event that could result in revenue for the foundation. The LCCF will pursue further events such as this over the next two to three years as a way to raise revenue and educate people about the foundation’s existence, purpose, and ways to contribute.</p> <p>The LCCF will continue the Local Treasures Program as an annual event to honor local residents who have made significant contributions to the community. While the event has had to be online during COVID, the community foundation will seek to return to a live event for the largest fundraiser of the year.</p> <p>In addition, the LCCF might explore options to raise funds for special projects poised to have impact in the community. For example, Hyden Citizens Bank is in very early stages of exploring with the county an effort to use tax credit lending to develop affordable housing at the FNU campus. This work is in the very early stages but could possibly result in an opportunity to raise community investments to meet a significant community need.</p>	<p><u>Funding:</u> Funding will be needed to underwrite fundraising events with the intent to create revenue based on that investment.</p> <p><u>Connections and Partnerships:</u> Foundation board members will need to partner with community members to determine the appetite for and nature of desired special events.</p> <p>LCCF will continue to communicate with other agencies in the county to identify potential opportunities to raise funds and contribute to significant projects.</p>