



# 2024

## IMPACT REPORT

*OUR YEAR IN REVIEW*

*Creating Moments that Matter.*

# THANK YOU

## Our Partners and Supporters

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.*

*-Margaret Mead*

The Leadership Center is grateful for the committed partners that comprise more than a small group! This year in total we raised \$85,000 in grants, donations and through fundraisers. How we get to serve communities and develop youth would not be possible without our fiscal partners.



**Farm Credit  
Services  
of America**

*Farm Credit Services of America supplied a \$7000 grant to be put toward our Summer Food Service Program in 2024*



*The Chief Foundation supplied a \$5000 grant to be put toward our Summer Food Service Program in 2025*



*The Hamilton Community Foundation granted \$5000 to support the Lunch Bunch Program in 2025*

***Ken Malone***

*Ken Malone is a past Ag Teacher, NVAF Board Member, and an avid TLC supporter. He donated \$5000 toward TLC operations.*



*Hamilton Telecommunications served as the presenting sponsor of the 2024 Harvest Gala with a \$3000 donation. Additionally they provide secure internet, fiber and phone.*

***Hamilton County  
Visitors Committee***

*The Hamilton County Visitors Committee granted \$2250 to support our marketing efforts*

THANK YOU

# Our Partners and Supporters

\$1000 - 1500



*Outrageously Dependable®*



- T & M INC.
- Gene and Rose Wissenburg
- Burwell FFA Chapter
- Todd & Julie Reed
- Alex Stocker
- John and Maile Boeder
- Tom and Lynn Hoffmann

\$250 - \$999



- The Goossen Family
- Joel & Steph Miller
- Karen Lindquist
- Vancare
- Brittney Tvrdy
- Francis & Patricia McDonald Charitable Fund
- Easy Lawn Care (Scott Goertzen)



# THANK YOU

## Our Partners and Supporters



*Luxury Lighting Solutions  
Donated over \$7000 in  
services and lights at our  
annual fundraiser, the  
Harvest Gala*



*Ashley Brooke  
Jewelry donated  
\$7500 in gift cards  
to our Harvest Gala*



*Prairie Creek Vineyard  
and Winery donated over  
\$1300 worth of wine for  
our Harvest Gala*



*We partner with Hamilton  
4-H during the fair for extra  
kitchen space*



*We host the Husky  
Community Art Club in  
partnership with the  
Aurora Special Education  
Department*



*We are home to the FFA  
COLT Conference staying  
true to the original intent  
of the property*



*Kliwer Auction Service  
donated their  
professional auction  
services at our Harvest  
Gala since it began*



*Karyn Rae Photography  
donates all professional  
photos taken at the  
Harvest Gala*

### **Friesen Auto**

*Friesen Auto  
Donated \$6000 to  
finance and wrap  
our food truck and  
trailer*



# From our Executive Director

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Through this report our hope is that you will see just how valuable gifts like yours and many others are. The impact runs far deeper than one might expect. I am fortunate to see the day-in and day-out workings of all facets of our business. While the work can be hard and the hours long, every single day presents a moment that matters, and if not, several. It's those moments that make all that we do WORTH IT.

Some special highlights for me have been:

- This past March, we hosted the **NE Youth First Conference** for students with developmental disabilities between ages 14-21. Not only was The Leadership Center the host site for this event, but we also got to be a part of the program! Our Executive Chef, John Boeder, led students through a buffet etiquette lunch where they learned helpful dining tips and conversations starters. I also got to lead a job tips session focusing on the things we are all able to do: be kind, a great teammate, a smart problem solver, timely and respectful and a good communicator. This day was truly one of our favorites.
- One summer afternoon at Espressions: Coffee & Community, we were joined by **Theo and Willa**. Their mom had given them money for a treat. While holding hands, Theo let Willa pick. They picked a triple chunk cookie. Theo proudly laid his three dollars on the counter. He politely asked for 2 napkins and said, "thank you" before chatting on our patio. We love that all ages all feel at home in our shop.
- This fall we hit the road with our food truck where we **served lunch to FFA members** in District 5 (York), District 7 (Central City), District 6 (Kearney), and District 8 (Broken Bow). We had so much fun feeding the great FFA members of these districts. They consumed several pounds of mac n cheese, pulled pork and hundreds of cookies.

These are just a few of the things that have made our year awesome. When you take some time to flip through the pages of our Impact Report, you'll see snap shots of so many more.

Thank you for being apart of our story,

The logo for Maile, featuring the word "Maile" in a blue, cursive script font.

# From our Board President

To Our Invaluable Supporters,

Wow! I hope that you are just as amazed by the impact numbers told in these stories as I am. As the Nebraska Vocational Agriculture Foundation Board President, I am proud of the work our Executive Director, Maile, and The Leadership Center staff have accomplished, not only this past year but all the years prior. These numbers speak volumes about how our TLC family is making a difference: improving lives of others, “making moments that matter”, and developing people of all ages, in our communities, state, nation, and world-wide.

The most impactful parts of these stories are the intangible moments that are difficult to quantify. They are the heart-warming, tear-jerking, pride-filled moments that happen at the center. Over the decades, I’ve witnessed countless moments like these during my time as an FFA member, FFA advisor, board member, and supporter of The Leadership Center. Here are just a few that stand out in my mind.

- One year, I brought a team to a training at the center. They were learning about team dynamics and individual responsibilities but were struggling to come together as a cohesive group. I shared my concerns with Maile, and she graciously offered to help. After the training, my team and I headed to the city park for a fresh setting and a new perspective. Maile and Abby created a phenomenal, positive experience that helped us turn things around. **We returned home more united and inspired.**
- Several of my FFA members have also benefited from the interview training provided by TLC staff. **Watching students gain confidence** in their speaking abilities and learn how to articulate their stories more effectively **has been incredibly rewarding.** This skill not only contributes to their personal growth but often helps them achieve higher placements in competitions.
- On a more personal note, my quiet, introverted daughter—who usually prefers to stay behind the scenes—has grown tremendously through her experiences at The Leadership Center. Over the past few years, she has baked, decorated, and donated a cake for the Harvest Gala dessert auction. Not only that, but she also steps in front of the crowd to share the story behind her creation. **The sense of comfort and confidence she feels at The Leadership Center is truly transformative.**

We cannot thank you enough for your past support and the continued generosity that makes these experiences possible. It takes the work of many to drive change, and it takes the support of even more to sustain it. Together, we are making a difference.

Sincerely,

*Kurt*

# Mission Statement

At The Leadership Center we serve our clients as a premier conference and retreat center by providing quality leadership programs, exceptional customer service and rewarding experiences while fostering partnerships, resources and fiscal responsibility.

## Meet Our Team



### Conference Assistants

Ayden Scott, Barb Olson, Caitlin Salmon, Carrie Crosby, Charlie Evans, Devin Johansen, Emerson Dinville, Jacob Trusdle, Jade Beer, Jane Nuss, Jayden Smith, Kim Evans, Lucas Riley, Lukas Evans, Melinda Montoya, Norm Schachenmeyer, Roxanne Bredthauer, Abigail Hendrickson, Grace Howland, Tegan Burson, Tucker Sherman, Vonnie Whiting, Toby Kounovsky, Chaz Boeder, and Gary!

### 2024 Summer Interns

Michelle Montenegro, Rebecca Ford, Samuel Kibunga, Kylie Kort, and Alex Clark

### Office Staff

**Maile Ilac Boeder**  
Executive Director

**Abby Miller**  
D4LC Program Director

**Ashley Jelinek**  
D4LC Facilitator

**John Boeder**  
Executive Chef and  
Head of Operations

**Lisa Montoya**  
Espressions Manager

**Jane Nuss**  
Conference Assistant

**Devin Johansen**  
Office Manager

**Taylor Ruwe**  
Management  
Support Staff

**Kurt Wissenburg**  
D4LC Facilitator

# NVAF Board

**President: Kurt VanDeWalle**  
*Fillmore Central Public Schools*

**Vice President: Jessalyn Schrock**  
*Shickley Public Schools*

**Treasurer: Joel Miller**  
*Hampton Public Schools*

**Secretary: Alex Stocker**  
*Central City Public Schools*

**District 1, 2, 5: Holly Luettel**  
*Centennial Public Schools*

**District 3, 4, 7: Amanda Hafer**  
*Lutheran High Northeast*

**District 6, 8, 11: Madi Marker**  
*Kearney High School*

**District 9, 10, 12: Rylee Dexter**  
*Chambers Public School*

**At-Large: Phil Simpson**  
*Burwell Public Schools*

**At-Large: Evey Choat**  
*McPherson County Schools*

**At-Large Business Advisor:**  
**Curt Friesen**  
*CNF, Inc*

**At-Large Lincoln/ Omaha:**  
**Shane Hennessy**  
*AKRS*

**At-Large Nebraska:**  
**Bailey Cooper**  
*Nebraska National Guard*

**At-Large Finance Advisor:**  
**Brittney Tvrdy**  
*Exchange Bank*

# 2024

## IMPACT REPORT

### SNEAK PEAK

#### **HEALTHY FOOD**

Providing nutritious food to our community, events, and programs

# 91K

## MEALS

Prepared and Served



**15,000**  
Drinks served at Espressions



**18,000**  
FREE meals served over the summer since 2018



**15+**  
Communities hosted our food truck



**5**  
Bee hives

#### **CONNECTING COMMUNITES**

Offering inclusive events for all members of the community

# 662

## EVENTS

Hosted or Catered



**26**  
Countries served to date



**30,000**  
Pages read in book clubs

#### **SUPPORTING ARTISTS**



**23**  
Art Education Events



**30**  
Artists showcased



**703**  
House Concert Attendees

#### **DEVELOPING LEADERS**

Giving people tools to thrive in their communities

# 2400

## STUDENTS

Facilitated in 2024



**19**  
New student employees



**3**  
Edgerton Partnership Camps



**13**  
FFA Officer teams coached

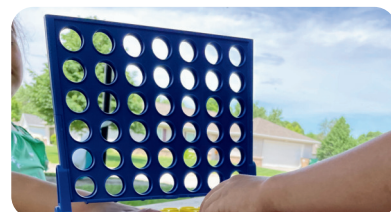


## Creating Moments that Matter through FREE meals and strong role models.

The Lunch Bunch program celebrated its 7th summer serving 2,647 FREE lunches between Aurora, Marquette, and Central City and introducing 84 youth in our leadership development programs to service-based leadership. Our youth leaders plan the enrichment activities for the day. They always find that the “secret sauce” wasn’t in how hard they planned, but instead simply saying “hello” to the kids and engaging in conversation - something they can do in their communities and organizations. Reminding them that relationships are not only essential, but the MOST impactful!

# 18,000

FREE meals served  
since 2018



## Working to create a privately funded program in 2025

The Lunch Bunch program is known as the “Summer Food Service Program” by the state which is government funds to bridge the free and reduced lunch program over the summer. This year, Aurora did not qualify for a traditional program and therefore we had additional constraints to comply with to receive funding. Of these, the most hindering was that meals were required to be to-go and we couldn’t offer enrichment activities. For 2024, The Leadership Center sponsored almost every Wednesday meal in Aurora to offer games. To better sustain the program in its entirety, and specifically make sure we can continue to offer the community building portion every day in the summer, our goal is to privately fund the program to stay more aligned with our mission.

## Meet the intern



**Samuel Kibunga**





## We give people tools to thrive individually, in their communities, and on their teams.



### WE BUILD LEADERS, WHO BUILD LEADERS

This summer we hosted 13 FFA chapter officer teams in MAPS where we identified priorities, discussed membership participation strategies, planned and executed a practice chapter event, and identified strengths and weaknesses of the chapter.



HOBY KEYNOTE



STATE FFA  
WORKSHOPS



### BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND VALUES

As a team we recognized there were limited options for middle school aged students for building tools for confidence and values during some of the most socially taxing years of their lives, so we set out to change that! This summer we welcomed 12 young men who cooked steaks, learned about values and skills like shaking hands, and hopefully made new lifelong memories and friends



SERVICE LEARNING



FUN AT BEARINGS

**2400+**  
individuals coached or  
taught in 2024



# ESPRESSIONS



**Creating Moments that Matter through clubs, workshops, and coffee!**

For the last 55 years, creating community has been our mission. When the opportunity arose in April of 2023, we knew that creating consistent community on Aurora’s square was not only aligned in our mission, but the perfect way to strengthen it. The Leadership Center is no longer just a destination for community building, but now a consistent daily offering. We are so excited to see this space continue to flourish and, of course, *create moments that matter*.



**Coffee and Crafts**



**Game Night**



**Husky Art Club**



**Scribbles with Ella**

## 2024 Clubs and Events

- Craft Night
- Book Clubs
- Pumpin Painting
- Ornaments with Cindy
- D&D Club
- Chess Club
- Writers Club
- Poetry Night
- Murder Mystery Club
- Harry Potter Tea Party
- Alice In Wonderland Tea Party
- Hello Kitty Tea Party
- Scribbles with Ella
- Bullet Journal Workshop
- Game Night
- Story Time with Lisa
- House Concerts
- Painting with Tori and Pam
- Ceramics with Melinda
- Macrame with Cindy
- Vision Board Workshops
- Terrarium’s with Elise
- Mosaics with Cindy
- Block Printing with Cindy
- Squeegee Painting with Cindy
- Star Wars Day
- Writing Workshops
- Second Saturday Filights

# 343

**club nights and events**

# 14.8K

**drinks served**

# 30

**artists showcased**

# 30,216

pages read in book clubs

# 157

students in Espressions classes

### Why a coffee shop?

For the last 55 years, creating community has been our mission. When the opportunity arose, we knew that creating consistent community on Aurora’s square was not only aligned in our mission, but the perfect way to strengthen it. The Leadership Center is no longer just a destination for community building, but now a consistent daily offering. We are so excited to see this space continue to flourish and, of course, *create moments that matter*.



# Strengthening Community

Creating Moments that Matter with our friends, families, and teams.

**662**  
**EVENTS**  
hosted or catered

## Polka Patio Party

*Polka, German food, and  
Dancing!*



## Fall Art Workshop

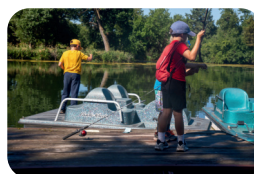


## House Concerts

*703 guests in attendance*



## Fishing Nights with Rebecca



## Meet the Intern



**Rebecca Ford**



# Back to our *Roots*

Creating Moments that Matter with fresh food from our urban farm.

**We were founded by ag teachers. How could we not grow fresh food?** All of the food we grow is put in our TLC dishes or sold directly at the coffee shop! We currently have 5 bee hives, a large garden, tapped maple trees, 40+ logs of mushrooms, 10+ fruit and nut trees growing. in addition, and we planted over 1200 bulbs to bloom for pollinators! As our micro operations become more established, we are excited to turn these into formal educational opportunities.

## Mushrooms



## Honey Bee Colony    Fresh Veggies



*On the way:*  
**An Orchard!**



**Meet Marketing and Education Interns  
Michelle Montenegro and Kylee Kort**

# TLC Kitchen

Creating Moments that Matter through delicious meals and kitchen giggles.

91,909  
meals served

at TLC, through catering, or Espressions



## Culinary Education

This year we hosted 6 students in a summer camp while also creating an opportunity for our summer intern, Alex, to gain immense experience from baking pastries for our coffee shop, packing meals each day for summer food service program, creating creative dishes for the Imagination Bacon competition and more!

## Meet the intern



Alex Clark



# We Travel!



We served in over 15 communities this year!



2023  
*Harvest Gala*

The annual celebration of The Leadership Center

**\$28,529**

Raised to create more *moments that matter*



*Presented by Hamilton Telecommunications*

# Our History



In 1968, Twenty-seven acres, a swimming pool and a roller skating rink, which was built about 1928, were purchased for the leadership training of the FFA and named The Nebraska Youth Leadership Development Center. Articles of Incorporation were signed by Irv Wedeking, Dr. Ted Ward and Norval McCaslin

1971

First FFA Summer Camp Held



FFA members slept in army tents



1972-1990

New buildings, a tornado, and more buildings!



1991

Name changed to The Leadership Center





**1992-2004**  
**More remodeling!**



**2011**

**Workforce Development**  
First college Intern and ability to hire 15 year olds in an effort to contribute to workforce development

**2015**

**D4LC is born**

After years of simply being the facility-y for Leadership Development, we became facili-tators!



**2018**

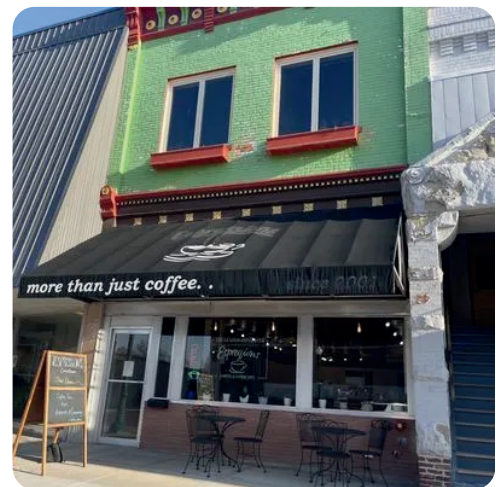
**First year of the Lunch Bunch Program**

**Completed \$1.2 M remodel**

**2023**

**We Bought a Coffee Shop!**

Espressions, an existing coffee shop was purchased by The Leadership Center to foster daily community building on the square of Aurora



**Urban Farm**

In 2023, we became certified as a USDA Urban Farm





We create  
Moments that Matter.

[www.d4lc.org](http://www.d4lc.org)  
[www.tlcaurora.org](http://www.tlcaurora.org)

*This report was designed in-house. Like what you see? Let us know and we are happy to help!!*