

# RAISING THE BAR

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER  
**PETER KIEWIT**  
FOUNDATION



## MISSION

*To create opportunities for people to live in and help build strong, vibrant communities, achieve economic success, and enjoy a high quality of life.*

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## Feedback, Fear & Foundations

Two years ago, the executive director of one of our grantees told us the reporting terms we had put in their grant were harming their organization. The terms were not aligned to their primary goals, so complying with our grant was causing extra work and putting unneeded stress on their staff. Telling us was a big risk. Would this jeopardize their current or future funding? Would this hurt their relationship with the foundation? Far from it. With a better understanding of their goals, we drafted new grant terms in partnership with their executive director. And the courage and trust they showed in giving us direct feedback only served to increase our respect for their leadership, strengthen our partnership, and improve their likelihood of getting future grants. In other words, feedback is critically important to us doing our best work in partnership with our grantees. So I'd like to make an ask and offer some promises to our partners about feedback...

To read more, click [here](#).



*Executive Director,  
Jeff Kutash*



## Grants Awarded: Second Quarter 2017

Peter Kiewit Foundation approved 28 grants at our June 2017 board meeting for a total of \$3,957,100.

Organizations that received funding

include **Heartland Workforce Solutions** to support general operating needs for their growing facility, **Northeast Community College** to support the Nebraska Math Readiness program and **Girls Inc. of Omaha** to support STEM programming (*pictured right*).

For a complete list of the grants awarded, their amounts, and the projects we are supporting please click the button below.



**APPROVED GRANTS**

## GRANTEE SPOTLIGHTS

### YOUTH PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

## NorthStar Foundation Creates Opportunities for Boys in North Omaha



NorthStar's vision is to change lives through programming that supports, challenges, inspires and instills a life rooted in education, self-discipline, and community service. Peter Kiewit Foundation awarded NorthStar a 3-year operating grant in the total amount of \$300,000 in 2015.



Click on the video above for student testimonials.

NorthStar Foundation was created in 2007 to help North Omaha's young men grow into healthy, educated, employed contributors to the community. The organization's focus is to ensure the school-aged boys it serves complete graduate high school on time.

In 2014, NorthStar built a 38,000 square foot state-of-the-art program facility and a full-size, multipurpose athletic field at 49th and Ames Avenues. The facility is centrally located to serve several economically distressed neighborhoods, and the vast majority of NorthStar students go to school and/or live within a seven-minute drive of the campus. Transportation from school to the facility is provided by NorthStar.

The first full year of programming took place in August 2014, engaging 130 fifth-to-eighth grade boys from 28 area schools in after-school and summertime academic, athletic, and life skills programs. The program has since expanded to serve over 450 fourth-to-tenth grade boys and will start serving 11th and 12th graders by 2018-19. High School programming focuses on postsecondary education, financial literacy, and career readiness.

## 2016 Results from NorthStar Foundation

- Students who had been two or more gradelevels behind in reading gained 2.25 years on average in reading comprehension.
- 98% of students maintained or increased academic competencies over the summer.
- 88% of parents indicated that NorthStar has improved their son's ability to complete homework and their attitude toward school.



## ECONOMIC GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY

### Heartland Workforce Solutions Addresses Employment Disparities in Omaha Communities



Heartland Workforce Solutions collaborates with community partners to identify programs and services that help match jobseekers with meaningful job opportunities, address barriers to employment and identify employer workforce needs. A few of the programs and services provided through HWS are:

- Career training and job placement
- Job fairs and workshops
- Resume and job search assistance
- Occupational skills training, internships and job shadowing
- Career readiness certificate program (nationally recognized credential)
- Coordinate tuition assistance through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act address barriers to employment such as housing, transportation, health, daycare.

Peter Kiewit Foundation awarded Heartland Workforce Solutions a one year general operating support grant for \$50,000 in June 2017.

Heartland Workforce Solutions (HWS) is a non-profit working to strengthen and align the local workforce development system in Douglas, Washington and Sarpy counties. The organization connects employers, education institutions, and community organizations to develop solutions and services for job seekers and businesses.

HWS is located just off of 57th and Ames Streets in Omaha. "We want to be where the need is," said HWS Executive Director, Erin Porterfield. Fifteen of HWS' partners are co-located on site. HWS estimates that approximately 15,000 clients are served at this one-stop location each year.

HWS plays a critical role in developing a more integrated workforce development system to address the challenges of poverty related to unemployment and underemployment.

HWS also oversees federal Workforce Investment Opportunities Act funding and programs locally. This entails contracting with service providers and educational institutions (primarily community colleges) to provide career counseling, case management, and tuition assistance to qualified individuals in high demand jobs.

## STRONG AND VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

### Intercultural Senior Center Offers an Array of Services to Omaha's Diverse Elder Population



Intercultural Senior Center (ISC) was founded in 2009 by Carolina Padilla, with the goal of providing opportunities for elderly immigrants and refugees (many of whom are from Mexico, Central and South America, Africa, and Southeast Asia) to live vibrant lives with dignity and share their talents and wisdom with the community.

Located in the heart of South Omaha, ISC serves as a “bright hub of energy, activity, and learning”; connecting the community’s diverse elder population to social services and high quality programs. In 2014, Peter Kiewit Foundation provided ISC with a three-year challenge grant totaling \$105,000 to fund programs and operations.

Following the Peter Kiewit Foundation grant, ISC hired its first Director of Social Services, Anahi Reynoso-Ramirez, to help transform the organization from an activity center into a full-service agency offering the programs and access to social services needed by their diverse seniors. Programs include language instruction, technology, exercise, nutrition, case management, meals, food pantry, a foot clinic, blood pressure and diabetes checks, crafts, gardening, cultural dance, music, and art.

Fund Development Specialist Sarah Gilbert shared that “The grant from the Peter Kiewit Foundation transformed ISC, helping us grow in many ways. Our clients now benefit from bilingual case management, and we have been able to build more partnerships with other agencies to bring existing community resources onsite to better serve our seniors. And the challenge aspect (of the grant) helped us approach new funders who have become regular supporters of the work.”

**The Intercultural Senior Center is always accepting volunteers and large service groups to be a part of the seniors’ lives. Click here to learn more about volunteer opportunities.**



## Get to Know Our Team: Pat Thraen

Pat joined the foundation team in June 1985, celebrating **32 years** last month! She works in the foundation’s Youth Pathways to Success impact area ensuring vulnerable youth have access to the programs and services they need to be prepared for personal, academic, and professional success.

When she’s not visiting youth organizations across the state or attending professional development workshops, you can find Pat spending time with her family or enjoying the summer months on the lake!



**Associate Program Officer, Pat Thraen**



Left: Pat and her husband, Tony, wave in excitement (or fear?) while parasailing off the Gulf of Mexico in Florida.



## Meet Ashlei Spivey, Our New Associate Program Officer

Ashlei joined the team in June 2017. She will manage grants across all three of the foundation's impact areas and work on special projects.

Prior to joining the foundation, Ashlei served as the Director of Talent for the Food Bank for the Heartland and Diversity Officer at Heartland Family Service. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Communications with a minor in Spanish from Jackson State University and has 10 years of experience working in the social sector.

Please join us in welcoming Ashlei to the foundation! She can be reached at [ays@pkfdn.org](mailto:ays@pkfdn.org).

## Center for Effective Philanthropy Survey Results

In late 2016, the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) conducted an anonymous survey of current and past grantees of the Peter Kiewit Foundation.

Click [here](#) to see the survey findings.



## Interested in Applying for a Grant?

**UPCOMING DEADLINES:** If you would like more information about our application process, please click [here](#).

October  
**15<sup>TH</sup>**

Deadline for  
Grant Applications

December  
**31<sup>ST</sup>**

Notification to  
Grant Applicants

