

February 2017

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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The Secret to the Good Life? Good Jobs.

A good job solves a lot of problems. A good job means you can support your family, feed and clothe your kids, afford housing and transportation, and have health care. A good job means you can go to the movies, or take a vacation once in awhile. A good job just might be the best cure for poverty. But while we pride ourselves on having the good life in Nebraska, we don't have enough good jobs. And we need more *great* jobs.

Through our [Economic Growth and Opportunity work](#), we have been looking at jobs in Nebraska; and the role they play in prosperity for our residents and our state. Did you know Nebraska has almost twice the national rate of people working two or more jobs?

Click [here](#) if you want to read more or find out what else we're learning.



*Executive Director,
Jeff Kutash*

**Grants Awarded:
Fourth Quarter 2016**



Defy Ventures Inc. focuses on the talents and skills of formerly incarcerated individuals and redirects them toward the creation of profitable and legal business ventures. Click on the photo above to learn more about the work of Defy Ventures Inc.

Peter Kiewit Foundation approved 19 grants at our December 2016 board meeting.

Organizations that received funding include **Justice for our Neighbors** to grow their immigration legal services, **Midwest Housing Development Fund** to launch a statewide workforce housing initiative and **Nebraska Children and Families Foundation** to support providers of after-school programming.

For a complete list of the grants awarded and the projects we are supporting please follow the link below.

[Approved Grants](#)

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHTS

YOUTH PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS



Above: Jennifer, a senior at South High School and TEP participant, has a passion for working with youth. She plans to attend college and then become a social worker. Working with Transition Coordinator Jan Benitez, Jennifer has been able to develop time management skills, boost her resume and connect in class learning to her position at TEP.

Completely KIDS' Teen Employment Program Provides Opportunities for Job Readiness

Striving to ensure that kids are safe, healthy, and connected, Completely KIDS hopes to break the cycle of poverty in our community. In December 2015, Peter Kiewit Foundation awarded a three-year operational grant to Completely KIDS. They are currently in their second year of support.

Recently, Completely KIDS launched an initiative called the Teen Employment Program (TEP). This program provides employment and training opportunities for graduates of the Completely KIDS after-school programs, who are now in high school. Participants begin their employment with Completely KIDS as a Junior Support Staff member at one of the six area elementary sites, under the supervision of the site's Program Coordinator. Job duties include assisting with the supervision of children, co-facilitating enrichment activities, and other related duties as assigned.

To date 16 students have been able to work at Completely KIDS. Check out some of their success stories in the surrounding photos.



Above: Joe is currently a senior at Central High School. Following the death of his adoptive grandmother, he decided to focus on a career in medicine in addition to working at Completely KIDS. Joe recently joined a University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) program for high school students. He hopes to obtain a full-ride scholarship to the University of Nebraska at Omaha and UNMC.



Above: Jenny is a junior at Central High School with a wide range of interests, such as cosmetology, business administration, and teaching. TEP has helped Jenny with goal setting and planning. *"I've learned more about myself. I'm more confident. My Transition Coordinator makes me think out of the box when I write my goals and it feels good to accomplish them."*

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY

Nebraska Enterprise Fund Supports Small and Micro Businesses

Nebraska Enterprise Fund (NEF) provides capital support, training, and technical assistance to help the owners of micro and small businesses across the state grow. In May of 2016, Peter Kiewit Foundation awarded NEF a \$200,000 grant to assist with general operations.

Since its inception in 1994, NEF has supported over 2,000 businesses. NEF measures their success by financial metrics of the businesses they support, such as growth in sales, revenue or employees.

Click [here](#) to learn more about NEF and the businesses they support.



"If it were not for NEF, with a much needed infusion of capital to get us to the next level, none of this would have been possible." - Joe Hodges of Lions Gate Security Services.

STRONG AND VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

Humanities Nebraska's Reading Program Challenges Readers of All Ages

For 15 years, Humanities Nebraska has run



Above: Gema Ramirez has been a participant of Prime Time Family Reading Time since she was 11-years-old when her family moved to the United States from Mexico. Now a college graduate, Ramirez serves as the Prime Time Reading Assistant, overseeing all Prime Time Sessions throughout the Omaha metro.

the Prime Time Family Reading Time program. “Prime Time” is a free 6-week family literacy program designed for children ages 5-10 and their guardians. Led by a storyteller and discussion leader, underserved children and their families meet in public libraries, elementary schools and other community venues to read and discuss award-winning children’s books. Discussion encourages critical and analytical thinking, helps develop connections between storybooks and real-life situations, and, in the bilingual program, encourages Spanish-speaking parents to speak and read English.

In September of 2014, Peter Kiewit Foundation awarded Humanities Nebraska with a \$50,000 grant to support program costs and expansion to serve over 1,500 families annually.

Click [here](#) to watch a short video about the Prime Time program.

In a survey of Nebraska families who participated in Prime Time within the last four years:

- 87% said they spend more time reading now as a family
- 89% said the program improved the way they read and discuss books together
- 98% showed interest in participating again in Prime Time or similar family reading and educational programs



[Click here to learn more about Gema and Prime Time](#)

Get to Know Our Team: Becca Bode

Rebecca, or “Becca”, Bode joined the foundation as Controller in 2015. She manages the foundation’s financial and administrative processes. When she’s not ensuring that the team is spot on with finances, she enjoys traveling and spending time with family and friends. Did you know that Becca wanted to initially attend pharmacy school?

Learn more about Becca [here](#).



**Controller,
Rebecca Bode**



Left: Becca takes a



behind the scenes tour at the Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo to interact with penguins in the Suzanne and Walter Scott Aquarium.



Welcome to the Team: Stephanie Burkholder

Stephanie joined the Peter Kiewit Foundation team in January 2017 as the Office Administrator.

Stephanie graduated from the University of Nebraska at Omaha with a degree in Business Administration, with concentrations in Investment Science and Portfolio Management.

Please join us in welcoming Stephanie! She can be reached at smb@pkfdn.org

Interested in Applying for a Grant?

UPCOMING DEADLINES: If you are interested in applying for a grant and would like more information about our application process, please click [here](#).

April
15TH
Deadline for
Grant Applications

March
31ST
Notification to
Grant Applicants

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