

A Legacy of Love and Generosity: Dennis and Linda Batteen

Dennis and Linda Batteen of Aberdeen, South Dakota, have built a life rooted in love, hard work and giving back. Dennis, a South Dakota Community Foundation (SDCF) board member, and Linda, his lifelong partner, are leaving a legacy through their estate gift to SDCF, ensuring future generations in South Dakota thrive.

Their journey began in a small country school, where Dennis declared Linda “the most beautiful girl he had ever seen.” After years apart for college, they reunited and married before Dennis’s final year of law school. Linda supported him financially, later managing his law office and becoming his most trusted partner.

In 2020, Linda faced a serious cancer diagnosis. Her strong faith, excellent medical care and resilience have amazed her doctors. Despite ongoing treatments, Linda’s positive outlook continues to inspire those around her.

As children of South Dakota farms, Dennis and Linda’s values of hard work, faith and frugality shaped their commitment to giving back. They have raised a close-knit family and embraced opportunities to share their blessings with others.

As members of the Christen Larson Heritage Circle, a tier of SDCF’s Legacy Society, the Batteens exemplify transformational giving. Their decision to include SDCF in their estate plans was inspired by SDCF’s mission and its profound impact across South Dakota. “After learning about all the good things SDCF does in the state, we knew we wanted to be part of it,” Dennis explained. The Foundation’s ability to efficiently connect donors’ philanthropic goals with the greatest community needs resonated with the Batteens’



▲ Above: Four generations of the Batteen family
▶ Right: SDCF Board Member Dennis Batteen

desire to make a lasting difference.

Their estate will support causes they deeply care about, including the Aberdeen Community Theatre, where Linda has served as a board member for more than 30 years, as well as Safe Harbor, Boys and Girls Club and the Aberdeen Family YMCA’s Glenna and Rodney Foubert Youth Development Center. They also founded the Sonlight Children’s Foundation, which supports their local church and funds faith-based education for disadvantaged youth in Mexico.

Dennis’ service on the SDCF Board of Directors underscores their shared mission to “pay it forward.” Reflecting



on their philosophy, Dennis said, “Our attitude grew out of the scripture, ‘To whom much has been given, much is expected.’”

The Batteens’ thoughtful generosity ensures their legacy of love and community will impact South Dakota for generations. If their story inspires you, contact SDCF to learn how you can make a difference.

South Dakota Fund Grants

From January 1 to May 31, 2025, SDCF awarded 12 South Dakota Fund grants totaling nearly \$170,000. The South Dakota Fund is an unrestricted fund that makes grants to nonprofits and charitable organizations across the state in support of culture, economic development, education, financial literacy, health and human services. SDCF accepts applications for South Dakota Fund grants on a rolling basis.



Face It TOGETHER, Inc.

➤ Face It TOGETHER, Inc. (FIT) received a \$20,000 South Dakota Fund grant to provide additional support to their addiction wellness peer coaching services across South Dakota. FIT's peer coaching model is rooted in the belief that recovery is possible for everyone and that personalized support can make a significant difference in achieving sustained wellness.



Baltic Community Garden

➤ Baltic Community Garden received a \$2,000 South Dakota Fund grant to support a new outdoor classroom. This addition will enhance the garden's capacity to deliver educational programming and further its mission of promoting healthy food and foster community through education and shared service.



Avera Research Institute

➤ Avera Research Institute, in partnership with South Dakota Healthy Nutrition Collaborative, has been awarded a \$20,000 South Dakota Fund grant to support a statewide assessment of the food environment and policy landscape. The study will focus on key factors such as access, affordability, availability and assistance. Its findings will help identify priorities for building improved policies, systems and environments that promote food and nutrition security—laying the groundwork for a healthier, more resilient South Dakota.



Youth & Family Services

➤ A \$10,000 South Dakota Fund grant was presented to Youth & Family Services, Inc. (YFS) to assist with the Middle School Program in Rapid City. The program provides hands-on academic experiences, skill-building, leadership and workforce development, mentorship opportunities, hands-on STEM exploration, literacy activities, entrepreneurship, career exploration, life skills and social-emotional learning to prepare young people to take their place in society as adults.

❗ The South Dakota Fund grant program is competitive, and grants are awarded by the SDCF Board of Directors throughout the year. Please visit our website to learn more about grant recipients and the application process: SDCommunityFoundation.org/Grants

Grantmaking Update

Capital Area United Way Reaches Major Milestone

Uniting Communities Across Central South Dakota

Capital Area United Way (CAUW) connects people and resources to tackle challenges across eight central South Dakota counties. Focused on education, financial stability and health, CAUW empowers nonprofits and strengthens communities. In 2024, CAUW took on SDCF's Nonprofit Savings Account (NSA) challenge: raise \$80,000 to receive a \$20,000 match. Boosted by their partnership with the Let Freedom Fly International Air Show in May, CAUW met their goal by December and unlocked the full match.



Envisioning Long-Term Impact

Four organizations are currently in NSA challenges: Casey Tibbs South Dakota Rodeo Center, Diamond Willow Ministries, Lost&Found and Salvation Army – Western Division.

Learn more about this challenge grant opportunity and the benefit of endowment funds on our website: SDCommunityFoundation.org/grants/nonprofit-savings-accounts

Learn more about Capital Area United Way here: capareaunitedway.org

Preparing South Dakota's Future, One Budget at a Time



Junior Achievement of South Dakota

Over the past 56 years Junior Achievement of South Dakota (JA) has inspired and prepared young people to succeed in a global economy. Through real-world learning in classrooms, JA reaches over 54,000 students each year with lessons in financial literacy, career readiness and entrepreneurship.

In 2023, JA introduced JA Finance Park, an immersive, hands-on simulation that allows students to take on adult roles with a career, salary, family circumstances and

bills. They learn how to build a monthly budget under those circumstances. With a two-year \$100,000 South Dakota Fund Financial Literacy grant, JA purchased a mobile unit, the software and hardware to run the simulation and the volunteer training materials to facilitate JA Finance Park for the first two years. "Junior Achievement of South Dakota is incredibly grateful to the South Dakota Community Foundation for their support of our new, immersive student experience," said JA President and CEO Kayla Eltreim. "JA Finance Park will help students understand the need for and importance of philanthropy and supporting their community for the future."

To prepare them for this four-hour simulation, students complete up to 13 in-class sessions taught by their classroom teacher. They use this information to visit 20 stations during

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◀ Left: Ruby (Himrich) Humphrey
 ▼ Below: Ruby's late parents, Edna and Oscar Himrich of Selby, South Dakota.

and community projects now and in the future. This type of giving not only honors a family legacy but builds one.

"My mother and father were always giving to Selby," shared their daughter, Ruby (Himrich) Humphrey. "They would be proud to know this fund will support the community they loved for years to come."

As more donors approach the age of RMDs, a QCD can be one of the most tax-efficient and impactful ways to give. It's especially meaningful when combined with

initiatives like challenge grants, where a single gift can help unlock even greater funding for local causes.

If you're looking for a way to support your community while maximizing your retirement giving, consider exploring an IRA QCD. For more information about the Selby Community Foundation challenge or how SDCF can help you meet your charitable goals, visit SDCommunityFoundation.org or call 800.888.1842 to speak with a member of the SDCF team.

Honoring a Legacy

IRA Gift Helps Launch Selby Community Foundation

A heartfelt gift made in memory of the late Oscar M. and Edna A. Himrich to SDCF is helping establish long-term charitable support in the Selby area.

The Oscar M. and Edna A. Himrich Family Fund, a subfund of the Selby Community Foundation, was created by a gift from their daughter through an IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), a powerful and often overlooked way to give that can benefit both the donor and community.

An IRA QCD allows individuals age 70½ or older to make tax-free gifts directly from their IRA to a qualified

charity. This giving option can reduce a donor's taxable income, even if one does not itemize deductions, and possibly satisfy a required minimum distribution (RMD) for the year. It's a strategic tool for those who want to use their retirement savings to make a lasting difference and lower the income and taxes from IRA withdrawals.

In this case, the IRA QCD was directed toward a generous challenge match to help launch the Selby Community Foundation, one of 90 Community Savings Account partners with SDCF that will benefit area nonprofits, schools

▶ For more information on Qualified Charitable Distributions (or IRA Charitable Rollover), scan the QR code.



Junior Achievement

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the simulation and receive coaching from volunteers to purchase items within their budget. They face real-life choices like housing, groceries, insurance and savings, giving them a powerful look into what financial responsibility really means.

Students often leave Finance Park with a new outlook: "I didn't realize how much it costs to live," one participant said. "It made me want to start saving now." Over the past two years, 3,195 middle and high school students from 12 schools participated in the experience, thanks to 547 volunteers and 90 teachers who led 32 simulation days across South Dakota. Each student

gained a full day of immersive learning that connected classroom lessons with real-world experience. SDCF Senior Program Officer Ginger Niemann, who participated in a session, said "By the end, they weren't just spending, they were thinking, planning, even saving. It was incredible to watch."

Learn more about Junior Achievement of South Dakota at southdakota.ja.org.

Community at Its Core with Harding County Community Foundation



Harding County Community Foundation Advisory Council members (left to right) Jim Erk, Billy Clanton, Sam Olson, Sydney Turbiville, and Kelli Doll celebrate their CSA challenge grant.

Harding County Community Foundation (HCCF) has transformed a generous challenge into a legacy. Established in November 2022 with a \$100,000 challenge gift from former residents Jim and Janice Clarkson, HCCF quickly became a testament to the strength and generosity of Harding County's communities.

Residents and supporters rallied to meet the challenge, raising \$100,000. This achievement was further amplified by an additional \$50,000 from SDCF through a Community Savings Account (CSA) challenge. Now, as one of 90 CSAs managed by SDCF, HCCF stands as a vital resource for future generations, ensuring continued support for many local worthy causes.

When asked about mobilizing the community to raise funds, HCCF

President Billy Clanton shared, "I knew we could raise the money because I see so much generosity throughout our county. We have such a strong board from people across the county that we were able to raise the money pretty quickly in the grand scheme of things."

A local advisory council oversees fundraising and grant distribution. The funds raised are invested with SDCF, ensuring a sustainable source of annual grant funding for local projects and programs for years to come.

"We heard so many stories of just how much people care about the community when we were raising the money, and that has really stuck with me," added Billy.

CSAs offer long-term support, and HCCF has already made a profound impact in life-saving ways. Through

the foundation, 10 defibrillators were strategically placed throughout Harding County to ensure quick access during emergencies. With a population of just 1,100 spread across 2,500 square miles, addressing the challenges of such a rural area is critical. These defibrillators can save lives and reduce emergency response times.

"I think about those defibrillators, and how they have already saved the life of a gentleman who worked for the county. He had a heart attack, and they were able to run and get a defibrillator close by and save the man's life. That made the whole thing worth it," reflected Jim Clarkson, generous donor to HCCF.

At its core, Harding County is one united community, no matter how far apart its towns and ranches may be. HCCF is dedicated to enriching the lives of every resident, ensuring a strong and supportive future for generations to come.

"Philanthropy is a lot more than giving money—philanthropy is caring for your fellow citizens," said Jim.

To learn more about HCCF, visit SDCommunityFoundation.org/local-impact/community-foundations/hardingcounty

SDCF Hosting Regional CSA Conferences

SDCF will again host regional gatherings this fall for Community Savings Account advisory council members. The conferences offer an opportunity to hear about best practices, share ideas and discuss ways to support their communities. The conference schedule follows:

- » September 22: Faulkton
- » September 24: Salem
- » September 30: Aberdeen

Western South Dakota Community Savings Account advisory council members gathered in Rapid City in April 2025.



New Faces at SDCF

➔ SDCF recently added four new staff members:



Originally from Pierre, **PHIL ADAM** graduated from the University of South Dakota's Beacom School of Business, earning a bachelor's in business administration with a minor in social media marketing and an MBA. He will join SDCF in July as Affiliate Funds Coordinator.



ASHLEY HOBBS was born in Sergeant Bluff, Iowa, and graduated from Iowa State University. With more than a decade of nonprofit experience, she recently served as Executive Director of the Mitchell Area United Way. She and her husband Kyle have four children—Nora, Sullivan, Cullen, and Declan. Ashley will join SDCF in August as Community Development Coordinator in southeastern South Dakota, based in Mitchell.



JACEY IEDEMA comes from a role as a Learning and Development Assistant at BankWest and is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in business organizational leadership through Dakota Wesleyan University. A Pierre native, Jacey, her partner Tim and daughter Milaina live there. She joined SDCF in May as Front Office Administrator.



MARY STADICK SMITH spent more than 20 years at the South Dakota Department of Education, first as Communications Director and then as Deputy Secretary. Originally from Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, she has an undergraduate degree from the University of Minnesota and a master's in public administration from the University of South Dakota. Her family includes husband Jeff, daughter Addy and puppy Hank. Mary joined SDCF in the Pierre office in June as Operations Manager.

BIG/Bush Prize Convening Highlights Innovation and Impact

In Pierre in November 2024, SDCF hosted 62 people representing 36 Beyond Idea Grant (BIG) and Bush Prize: South Dakota nonprofit awardees. The event marked the midpoint of SDCF's six-year partnership with Bush Foundation. Since 2022, more than 40 nonprofits across the state have received over \$4 million from the programs to address challenges through community-based problem solving.

The convening was a powerful reminder that when local leaders convene to share, learn and support one another, lasting change is possible, and it is happening across South Dakota.

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