



**Omaha Community
Foundation**



City of Omaha ARPA Community Grants Program

BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH STRATEGIC FUNDING

City of Omaha ARPA Community Grants Program

The City of Omaha ARPA Community Grants Program was created to address the lasting impacts of COVID-19 by supporting nonprofits providing critical community services. With funding from the City of Omaha through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the Omaha Community Foundation administered the program, ensuring resources were distributed effectively to support community needs.

Through this partnership, \$9.6 million in funding was awarded to 35 organizations, reaching over 24,500 individuals in 30 ZIP Codes. These investments strengthened nonprofit infrastructure, supported immediate needs, and laid the foundation for long-term resilience.

AT A GLANCE

\$9.6M

awarded to 35 organizations to sustain operations and expand services

30

ZIP Codes served, focusing on Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs) to address systemic disparities

24,567

total individuals served through ARPA-funded programs

80%

identified as people of color

60%

were under the age of 18

25%

growth in operating budgets from 2022 to 2024, strengthening long-term sustainability

14%

of operating costs were offset by ARPA funds

PRIORITY AREAS

In response to COVID-19, the City of Omaha allocated federal funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to support communities most affected by its social and economic impacts. The City of Omaha ARPA Community Grants Program focused on four critical areas to address pandemic-related challenges and build community resilience:

● Violence Prevention

Supported mentoring programs and youth outreach to foster safer neighborhoods.

● Workforce Development

Delivered job training programs and created employment opportunities.

● Community-Based Services

Expanded access to therapy and behavioral health services.

● Crisis Intervention

Provided essential resources to stabilize families in crisis, offering housing, food security, and safety resources.



With ARPA support, we increased programming by 150% and built cultural awareness among future healthcare professionals.

BLUEBIRD CULTURAL INITIATIVE

Grant Recipients

The City of Omaha ARPA Community Grants Program received 145 applications totaling \$55.8 million, far exceeding available funding. A diverse review committee of OCF staff, city employees, and community members, including those from Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs), selected 35 organizations that met the program's criteria.

These recipients demonstrated a commitment to expanding successful programs, addressing significant community needs related to COVID-19, and delivering lasting impact through sustainable initiatives.

VIOLENCE PREVENTION

- African-American Empowerment Network: \$358,475
- Bluebird Cultural Initiative: \$207,376
- Boys & Girls Clubs of the Midlands: \$202,890
- Completely KIDS: \$460,000
- Girls Inc. of Omaha: \$414,644
- inCOMMON Community Development: \$183,626
- Kids Can Community Center: \$200,000
- Legal Aid of Nebraska: \$186,875
- MENTOR Nebraska: \$142,200
- NorthStar Foundation: \$145,000
- Partnership 4 Kids: \$500,000
- Police Athletics for Community Engagement: \$111,879
- The Simple Foundation: \$388,634
- Urban League of Nebraska: \$293,723
- YouTurn: \$186,296

COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

- Carole's House of Hope: \$184,961
- Charles Drew Health Center: \$600,000
- Child Saving Institute: \$405,262
- Heartland Family Service: \$600,000
- Nebraska Methodist Hospital Foundation: \$187,000
- Siena Francis House: \$151,179

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- AIM Institute: \$143,945
- Heart Ministry Center: \$335,891
- Heartland Workforce Solutions: \$600,000
- Latino Center of the Midlands: \$120,302
- Ollie Webb Center, Inc.: \$99,351
- Omaha Home for Boys: \$353,675
- The Bike Union Mentoring Project: \$100,000
- The Hope Center for Kids: \$100,000

CRISIS INTERVENTION

- Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Omaha: \$235,373
- Comunidad Maya Pixan Ixim: \$432,590
- Immigrant Legal Center: \$165,000
- North Omaha Area Health: \$241,275
- The Nebraska Medical Center: \$297,703
- Women's Center for Advancement: \$264,875

ARPA funding allowed us to provide over 29,000 nights of transitional housing and over 13,000 hours of behavioral services to young women and mothers.

CAROLE'S HOUSE OF HOPE

We expanded our mental health services, reaching 89% of individuals in need and ensuring access regardless of their ability to pay.

NORTH OMAHA AREA HEALTH

Nonprofit Capacity Building

The City of Omaha ARPA Community Grant Program strengthened Omaha’s nonprofit sector by addressing immediate needs and creating opportunities for long-term growth and sustainability. From hiring skilled staff to expanding services, the program empowered organizations to adapt to challenges and innovate solutions that meet the needs of the community.

Sustainability

Grants supported an average of 14% of nonprofit operating budgets, stabilizing operations during a period of uncertainty.

The Women's Center for Advancement used funds for advocates who responded to 11,238 hotline calls and assisted survivors with 2,099 nights of emergency shelter.

Growth

Funded organizations experienced a 25% increase in budgets from 2022 to 2024, enabling program expansion.

Completely KIDS expanded its social-emotional learning curriculum, serving over 700 students and addressing post-pandemic challenges with improved staffing levels.

Experience

Grantees gained expertise in managing federal funds, enhancing their capacity for future opportunities.

AIM Institute introduced culturally responsive tech education for Spanish-speaking communities, reducing barriers to technology access.

This grant allowed us to meet youth where they are, providing culturally relevant, trauma-informed care that builds trust and promotes healing.

CHARLES DREW HEALTH CENTER

Thanks to ARPA funding, our team launched Youth 360 and healing circles, which have strengthened relationships between grassroots organizations and our larger network.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN EMPOWERMENT NETWORK

The grant enabled us to expand our Siembra Nebraska internship program, connecting 92% of interns to career opportunities.

LATINO CENTER OF THE MIDLANDS

The funding allowed us to build capacity and implement restorative practices that helped students thrive emotionally and academically.

URBAN LEAGUE OF NEBRASKA

Strategic Oversight

The Omaha Community Foundation ensured the City of Omaha ARPA Community Grants Program was effectively managed from start to finish. By providing strategic oversight and support, OCF maximized impact while maintaining compliance and empowering grantees.

PHASE 1: Planning

The City of Omaha set priority areas and goals, guiding OCF in developing the grant process and compliance guidelines.

PHASE 2: Application

Launched a multilingual application portal and provided webinars and one-on-one support for applicants. Promoted the program through outreach and public notices.

PHASE 3: Due Diligence & Review

Verified eligibility and alignment with priorities, scored applications, and convened a Community Review Committee to recommend funding.

PHASE 4: Award & Implementation

Distributed funds, monitored progress through quarterly and annual reports, and approved project or budget adjustments as needed.

PHASE 5: Monitoring & Reporting

Collected quarterly updates and annual reports to evaluate progress, inform adjustments, and ensure compliance with all guidelines.

PHASE 6: Post-Performance & Closeout

Reviewed final reports to confirm compliance and project completion.

With ARPA funding, we adapted our programs to focus on stress management, mental health, and STEM education, ensuring girls are equipped to thrive.

GIRLS INC. OF OMAHA

We expanded services to families impacted by addiction, offering psychoeducation and support that strengthened their recovery journeys.

SIENA FRANCIS HOUSE

This grant allowed us to implement advanced assessment tools, enabling us to monitor academic and social-emotional growth and address barriers for youth.

NORTHSTAR FOUNDATION

Lessons for Future Success

Administering the ARPA Community Grants Program revealed critical lessons about supporting nonprofits and implementing large-scale funding initiatives. These insights will guide future efforts to maximize impact and improve community outcomes.

1

Flexibility Matters

Allowing operational funding ensured uninterrupted services and gave organizations the flexibility to meet challenges directly.

- ▶ **AIM INSTITUTE** adjusted its curriculum to address large gaps in foundational technology knowledge for migrant and refugee students, ensuring culturally responsive programming.
- ▶ **CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF OMAHA** enhanced its screening processes to focus on domestic violence services while referring clients experiencing homelessness and mental illness to other providers.

2

Collaboration is Key

Engaging community voices and funders in decision-making resulted in funding that aligned with local needs.

- ▶ **LEGAL AID OF NEBRASKA** launched a pro bono protection order project, mobilizing private attorneys to address unmet legal needs in domestic violence cases.
- ▶ **COMUNIDAD MAYA PIXAN IXIM** leveraged partnerships to embed cultural and language-specific approaches into domestic violence prevention and intervention services for Maya women and families.

3

Building Capacity Takes Time

Investments in nonprofit infrastructure will yield long-term benefits for Omaha's communities.

- ▶ **PARTNERSHIP 4 KIDS** learned to allocate 9-12 months for program planning, including staff recruitment, curriculum development, and logistical coordination to meet the growing demand.
- ▶ **HEART MINISTRY CENTER** reinforced the importance of maintaining long-term contact with graduates, showing that sustained engagement supports continued success in housing, employment, and financial stability.



Omaha Community Foundation

Growing good,
together.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The City of Omaha ARPA Community Grants Program addressed immediate needs and strengthened the nonprofit sector. We thank the City of Omaha, nonprofit partners, and community review committee members for their contributions.

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- Laura Contreras, Senior Program Manager

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