



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

a grantmaking publication of the Community Foundation of Abilene



SPRING 2025 COMMUNITY GRANT CYCLE



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Your generous donation to the Community Foundation of Abilene’s spring grant cycle can help local organizations make a lasting impact on our community.

Please consider contributing to those nonprofits in *Community Connections* that are seeking funds for projects you are most passionate about.

Together, we can create a brighter future for everyone.



Lee Hampton,
Grants Committee Chair



Contact the Foundation:

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NONPROFIT GRANT APPLICANTS

Grant Requests & Summaries

CURRENT NEED

\$12,444

Nonprofit Career and Internship Fair

Abilene Christian University – Center for Careers & Experiential Learning (ACCEL)

ACU is developing a nonprofit career and internship fair to connect students with nonprofit job opportunities. The event, held at ACU and led by their ACCEL program, will target nonprofits and all three Abilene universities to bridge the gap between students and area nonprofit sector jobs. The event is designed to foster collaboration, create a one-stop hiring event, and encourage students to remain in the area after graduation. Funds will support event development and marketing.

CURRENT NEED

\$5,680

EMDR and group therapy room

Abilene Christian University – Marriage and Family Institute (MFI)

The Marriage and Family Institute (MFI) at ACU has provided affordable therapy services for more than 40 years. They seek funds to support Eye Movement and Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) training for students and therapists and create a group therapy room. EMDR training for community therapists will allow more clients to receive this treatment for trauma. A group therapy room will provide dedicated space to accommodate more participants and allow increased confidentiality.

CURRENT NEED

\$9,000

Operational needs

Abilene Home Away from Home

Abilene Home Away from Home provides new Airmen an avenue to form community friendships and gather support beyond the work environment. The program offers Abilene community members a rewarding opportunity to host young Airmen in a family environment through monthly activities. Their events also encourage community involvement and support local businesses. Grant funds will assist in funding operational, event, and marketing costs to grow the program.

CURRENT NEED

\$7,500

Increasing access to healthy homes for vulnerable students

Abilene Independent School District

This project through Abilene ISD supports public health by providing low-income students and families with immediate pest control services to maintain a healthy home and prevent a public health crisis at school. Most notably, the substantial cost of bed bug removal is one that many families cannot afford, and there are no other community resources for this assistance. Grant funds are utilized to pay pest removal companies directly and will aid in the prevention of more widespread outbreaks of highly transmittable pests.

CURRENT NEED

\$5,993

Financial assistance for APAC families

Abilene Performing Arts Company (APAC)

APAC is a youth-centered performing arts organization that aims to develop talents and self-esteem through musical theatre, theatre, dance, and music. Their financial assistance program supports and provides opportunities to those unable to afford the cost of tuition for classes or camps as well as the additional expenses of costumes and show fees. Grant funds are requested to support up to eight scholarships for families facing financial hardships.

CURRENT NEED

\$5,000

Infrastructure support

Abilene Preservation League (APL)

The APL has been preserving historic structures and promoting Abilene's history for 47 years and currently operates out of the historic Elks building downtown. Grant funds will enable them to provide reliable internet in the building for staff and renters, contract with Datroo Technologies for IT services, and upgrade donor and data management software. The organization aims to enhance communication, connectivity, and operational efficiency for better community service.

CURRENT NEED

\$35,000

Flamingo pond boardwalk

Abilene Zoological Society

Abilene Zoo, an AZA-accredited institution, is building the Flamingo Pond Boardwalk between The Wetlands and Caribbean Cove to enhance views and accessibility, as well as educational opportunities for visitors. The project, managed by experienced zoo staff, aims to meet ADA compliance and AZA standards while improving visitor engagement and traffic flow. Funds will support construction and material costs for the addition.

CURRENT NEED

\$12,000

Awareness campaign

Alliance for Women and Children

Alliance has a history of supporting women and children through programs like A-Care, their after-school program. They are exploring an expansion to provide full-day child care and promote partnerships to enhance access to wrap-around family services. They are seeking funding for a branding and awareness campaign to support these efforts, empowering them to grow and meet the ever-increasing childcare demand, strengthening families, and enhancing community sustainability.

CURRENT NEED

\$25,000

Operational support for "Our House for Young Men" transitional living program

BCFS Abilene Transition Center

Since 2011, BCFS Our House has provided a transitional living program for young men in Taylor County, serving ages 18-22, who have aged out of foster care or otherwise become homeless. This "one-stop" center and residential facility provides case management and efficient delivery of workforce life skills training and education services. Grant funds will be used to provide for residents' basic needs as well as costs to operate and maintain the facility and will help BCFS meet a \$250,000 challenge grant match.

CURRENT NEED

\$20,000

Beltway Kids Academy child care tuition assistance

Beltway Ministry Center

Beltway Kids Academy (BKA) is part of Beltway Ministry Center, a new nonprofit started in 2024 by Beltway Park Church to address the practical needs of quality child care and counseling in our community. BKA is a licensed, faith-based early childhood education center for children from infancy through 5th grade. Grant funds will support tuition assistance for up to 30 children by providing a discounted child care rate for eligible low-income families.

CURRENT NEED

\$9,114

Operational needs

Chorus Abilene

Chorus Abilene's mission is to promote choral music through performance and participation by singers of all ages and to foster community through the arts. The organization aims to promote choral music and community engagement through performances and various choirs catering to singers of all ages and skill levels. Operational grant funds will be used for day-to-day overhead expenses, including office rent, technology support, administrative assistance, and more.



Photo courtesy of Global Samaritan Resources, Inc.

CURRENT NEED

\$15,000

Rental and utility assistance program

City Light Community Ministries

City Light, a program of First Baptist Church, aids with basic needs through several programs. They provide meals, showers, and hygiene items to homeless and low-income neighbors and offer many additional services through case management, including financial assistance for rent and utilities. Neighbors are eligible once every six months to receive financial assistance with either a rent payment or utility bill, paid directly to the service provider. Grant funds will be used for direct rent and utility assistance.

CURRENT NEED

\$23,975

Beds for those in need

Community Bed Program through Global Samaritan Resources, Inc.

The Community Bed Project aims to provide over 500 beds to Abilene and Taylor County residents in 2025. There is a growing need for beds for those who have formerly been unhoused or who are being rehoused after a disaster or traumatic experience. A local donor has provided 500 bed frames to be used locally, and grant funds will aid Global Samaritan Resources in purchasing mattresses and overseeing the logistics, storage, and distribution of the beds to Abilene agency partners through a centralized process and location.

CURRENT NEED

\$35,000

Dental care

Community Dental Assistance Program through Christian Service Center of Abilene

Since 2022, the Christian Service Center has partnered with the Abilene-Taylor County Public Health District and Taylor County Social Services to administer this dental program for eligible low-income patients in need of acute dental care. Treatment is provided by local partner dentists, with the goal of improving quality of life by alleviating dental pain and preventing infections, while reducing unnecessary emergency room visits. Funding will aid in meeting their goal of serving 450 patients in 2025.

CURRENT NEED

\$25,000

Transportation works program

Disability in Action

Disability in Action's Transportation Works program provides rides to individuals with disabilities, promotes independence, and addresses barriers like cost and limited assistance. Grant funds will help cover operating costs for their bus, which are not covered through government funding. They partner with multiple transportation providers in the community, and the flexibility of this program allows DIA to fill transportation gaps for those with special needs.



CURRENT NEED

\$17,000

FCA huddle support

Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)

FCA's goal for every student and athlete is to help them grow in their faith, increase their leadership, and impact their community. The Big Country chapter is seeking operational support to grow its impact across the Abilene area middle and high school campuses and the three local universities. Their goal is to grow the huddles on each campus, empower the student leaders to lead, and equip the coaches and volunteers to thrive in their role as supervisors of the huddles.

CURRENT NEED

\$20,000

Food sourcing

Food Bank of West Central Texas (FBWCT)

The FBWCT is our community's number one safety net for people facing hunger. They recover fresh, frozen, canned, and boxed food and redistribute it to those in need across the Big Country. Grant funds will allow them to leverage partnerships to purchase exactly what is needed, in the quantities and varieties required; buy in bulk, often at wholesale prices (or less); and give them flexibility to adapt quickly to changing circumstances, such as seasonal demand or unexpected crises.

CURRENT NEED

\$17,500

Support for Nonprofit Resource Center

Global Samaritan Resources, Inc. (GSR)

Founded in 1999, GSR, a Christian humanitarian aid organization, specializes in logistical services for other nonprofits around the globe and locally. They have renovated a 5,000 sq. foot warehouse space and established a Nonprofit Distribution Center dedicated to providing local nonprofits with free to low-cost goods and supplies to distribute to those they serve. Funds will offset the operational cost of procuring, transporting, and distributing these goods to Abilene partners.

CURRENT NEED

\$9,550

Equipment and supplies

Greater Than Three (GT3) Outreach

GT3 Outreach is a transformative initiative dedicated to fostering community, connection, and empowerment for individuals with spinal cord injuries and limb loss. Grant funds will aid in purchasing equipment and supplies for activity-based therapies. Their goal is to provide access to adaptive sports and fitness opportunities for underserved individuals in an inclusive environment, addressing both physical and social isolation that often accompany these life-changing challenges.



Photo courtesy of Let Us Breathe (Juneteenth Celebration).

CURRENT NEED

\$12,070

Professional education workshop for Abilene ISD teachers

Hardin-Simmons University – Irvin School of Education

HSU's Irvin School of Education is providing a four-day Professional Development Workshop, "Dream-Makers," for 120 elementary and middle school teachers selected by Abilene ISD, focusing on first-time teachers or those who have not completed a traditional teacher prep program. The workshop will focus on training for differentiated instruction for diverse learners ranging from advanced learners to struggling and Special Education students. Participants will also receive CPE credits for their training.

CURRENT NEED

\$10,500

Emergency shelter bed support

Harmony Family Services

Harmony Family Services operates a thirteen-bed emergency shelter licensed by the state to provide foster and emergency shelter care for children ages 5-17 who have been removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect or are experiencing temporary homelessness. This funding will help cover expenses to house local children and youth, providing a safe and structured environment where they can continue their education, learn healthy behaviors, and receive professional therapy.

CURRENT NEED

\$32,000

Virtual nursing program support

Hendrick Medical Center Foundation

Hendrick Health seeks funding to implement Virtual Nursing Units (VNU), an innovative solution to enhance patient care by integrating advanced virtual technologies with skilled nursing practices. The VNU will revolutionize healthcare delivery by addressing health challenges such as nursing shortages and patient access time for care. The VNU can provide assessments, handoffs, monitoring, and pain management. Grant funds will be used to purchase the first of six TV Pro 300 carts for use in Abilene.

CURRENT NEED

\$20,000

Operational needs for community advocacy

Let Us Breathe

Let Us Breathe focuses on community advocacy, addressing inequality, working towards systemic change, and fostering community understanding. Their programs include direct assistance, educational workshops, and advocacy for probation reform and equity-focused policies. They are seeking general operating support for staffing, program development, and community engagement efforts aimed at strengthening advocacy initiatives for marginalized individuals in Abilene.



CURRENT NEED

\$35,000

Samaritan and Kids' Place scholarship funds

Ministry of Counseling & Enrichment (MOCE)

Therapists at the MOCE help meet the growing needs of families in the Abilene area by providing affordable family life resources and licensed therapy services regardless of ability to pay. Through the Samaritan and Kids' Place Scholarship Funds, grant funds will be used to provide mental health services for low-income and uninsured clients of all ages. Fees are set according to client income and ability to pay, with these funds offsetting the cost of services.

CURRENT NEED

\$20,000

Exhibition and programming support

National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature (NCCIL)

The National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature organizes distinctive and unique exhibitions each year featuring award-winning illustrators and their picture book art. The NCCIL provides free admission to all, hosts school tours and family-friendly interactive art events, and highlights the featured artist for the Children's Art and Literacy Festival (CALF) each summer. Funding will allow them to further enhance their art and literacy programs.

CURRENT NEED

\$10,000

Support programs for Abilene's military and veteran families

Operation Homefront

Operation Homefront provides support programs for Abilene's military and veteran families. A grant will support their programs, which include the "Back-to-School Brigade" offering school supplies for K-12 students and "Holiday Meals for Military" providing holiday meal kits and grocery gift cards. The organization aims to help vulnerable families during financially stressful periods, collaborating with partners and community supporters to serve military families effectively.

CURRENT NEED

\$40,000

Transportation needs

St. John's Episcopal School

St. John's is a private school whose mission is to inspire and nurture each child's unique potential in a caring, Christ-centered environment. They currently serve 82 students from two years old through the fifth grade. They are seeking a grant to fund a 14-passenger bus with their logo to provide student transportation services, focusing on supporting military families. The bus will also be used to transport students on field trips to enhance the students' educational experience.



Photo courtesy of Texas Tech Foundation, Inc. (Future College Curls).

CURRENT NEED

\$9,999

Veterinary needs

Taylor Jones Humane Society (TJHS)

Since 1972, TJHS' mission has been to protect and care for unwanted animals in Abilene and the surrounding area. Many of the dogs and cats arriving at their door need a high level of care. TJHS is a no-kill facility that strives to rehabilitate unwanted animals for adoption, providing proper housing, nutrition, and all medical treatment from vaccines to more critical needs. Grant funds will support operations, facility maintenance, and veterinary care.

CURRENT NEED

\$7,500

Taylor County ramp program

Texas Ramp Project

Texas Ramp Project is a nonprofit that builds free wheelchair ramps for low-income older adults and people with disabilities. The project aims to improve safety, independence, and quality of life for clients in Taylor County. Volunteers build ramps following ADA guidelines, and all services are provided free of charge. Grant funds will be used to purchase lumber, materials, and tools, with a portion allocated toward administrative costs.

CURRENT NEED

\$35,000

Scholarship support for new programs

Texas State Technical College (TSTC) Foundation

TSTC is the state's only college system with a dedicated mission and statewide scope to offer technical training programs supporting Texas businesses and industries. They have expanded their Abilene campus, adding a new building to house plumbing, HVAC, diesel, and electrical line worker programs. A grant will allow them to provide scholarships to attract high-quality plumbing, diesel, and HVAC students, seeding these programs for their local launch.

CURRENT NEED

\$6,000

Future College Curls program

Texas Tech Foundation, Inc.

The Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health is housed within Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. The Institute is partnering with the Alliance for Women and Children to present "Future College Curls," the 9th annual conference for at-risk 6th through 12th grade girls in Abilene. The conference includes breakout sessions and a keynote address featuring topics promoting education, self-esteem, and mental health. Funding will increase accessibility for more attendees.



CURRENT NEED

\$35,000

Camp Tonkawa enhancements

Texas Trails Council Boy Scouts of America

The Texas Trails Council seeks funding to renovate outdated facilities at Camp Tonkawa, a historical camp in Taylor County that serves 1,500 Scouts and community members annually. The project aims to enhance safety, accessibility, and environmental sustainability. Planned improvements include a new ADA-compliant pool, pool house, training center upgrades, and a nature center showcasing local wildlife and educational materials.

CURRENT NEED

\$12,000

Lending economic assistance for pets (LEAP) program

Texas Veterinary Medical Foundation (TVMF)

TVMF operates the LEAP program, providing veterinary care to companion animals belonging to Meals on Wheels Plus clients at no cost. Their goal is to enrich and prolong both human and animal lives by maintaining health and quality of life for pets of vulnerable seniors. In turn, companion pets alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression, assist in healthy aging, encourage mobility, and motivate purposeful livelihoods for their caregivers. Grant funds will be used to cover vet expenses.

CURRENT NEED

\$20,000

Scholarship assistance for 2025 summer camps

The Mentoring Alliance

Founded in Tyler over 29 years ago, The Mentoring Alliance partners with public schools to provide safe, quality, out-of-school programming. They expanded to Abilene in 2024 to provide summer camps through a partnership with Abilene ISD and will also provide after-school programs in fall 2025. Grant funds will support summer camp programming and scholarships for low-income campers in first through fifth grades, hosted at Dyess and Purcell elementary campuses.

CURRENT NEED

\$10,000

Congregate feeding program

The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army serves community members who are currently unhoused and experiencing homelessness by offering temporary housing, case management, and vital resources. Their programs aim to foster pathways to long-term stability. The congregare feeding program addresses food insecurity by serving nutritious meals to shelter residents and community members in need at no cost, ensuring that vulnerable individuals have access to sustenance and support.

CURRENT NEED

\$6,250

MESSH training support

United Rescue Alliance (URA)

Part of URA's mission is training leaders in emergency management for disaster response and community empowerment. They are seeking funding to sponsor 25 participants for their MESSH Training program, which focuses on mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health during and after disasters. The training aims to equip individuals to respond effectively to disasters and emergencies, emphasizing preparedness and whole-person health.

CURRENT NEED

\$35,000

Prevention and diversion program

West Texas Homeless Network (WTHN)

WTHN is a coalition of local organizations working to prevent and end homelessness in Abilene. The Prevention and Diversion Program is a proven strategy for keeping people from falling into homelessness by connecting them with wrap-around social services and financial assistance to help them stay and/or return to permanent housing. WTHN community partners can utilize these funds to solve situations and prevent putting additional strain on the homeless crisis system.

CURRENT NEED

\$9,855

Operational needs

West Texas Tribune

West Texas Tribune is a community-based newspaper with a mission to inform and engage the community, emphasizing local stories, transparency, and factual reporting. Their nonprofit journalism also aims to amplify voices in disinvested neighborhoods. They distribute 3,000 free newspapers monthly and have added a Young Scholars program to address the decline of local journalism in Texas. Funding will support website maintenance, paper layout and printing, and delivery costs.

CURRENT NEED

\$15,000

Project Restoring Texas

West Texas Veteran Support Services

This program provides free critical repairs to low-income veterans, elderly, and disabled individuals, ensuring safety and quality of life. Services include plumbing, electrical, HVAC, roofing, windows, and other repairs. The founder of the organization volunteers to make many of the repairs, and grant funds are requested to cover other contractors and materials for qualifying Taylor County residents. The program aims to improve housing conditions, accessibility, and community stability.

CURRENT NEED

\$35,000

Innovators Lab classes for homeschool students

XDot Academy





XDOT Academy is focused on addressing the unique needs of homeschooling families by offering programs that bridge the gap between education and practical application. This program provides hands-on experiences in Culinary Arts, Web Development, and Product Development for homeschool students, aiming to prepare them for future careers while fostering creativity and innovation. Funding will help provide tools, materials, software, and partnerships with local professionals.



Photo courtesy of West Texas Veteran Support Services (Veterans Day Parade).

Ready to give? Here's how!

To make a gift to any of the proposals in this grant catalog, please list your selections in the worksheet below. You can submit your responses by:

-  **MAIL** Complete the form below and return this page to: PO Box 1001, Abilene, TX 79604.
-  **ONLINE** Visit bit.ly/CFA25Spring to share your selections.
-  **EMAIL** List your nonprofit selections and award amounts in an email to: mcollier@cfabilene.org.
-  **PHONE** We're here to help. Call: 325-676-3883.
 - Nonprofit applicant question? Contact Kassidy Nygaard, *community grants manager*.
 - Donor fundholder or fund question? Contact Misti Collier, *donor relations director*.

Contributions can be made via check; include "Spring 2025 Community Grants" in the memo. Please make checks payable to: Community Foundation of Abilene.

Are you a CFA fundholder? Complete the last section on this worksheet to recommend grants from a donor-advised fund.

Deadline: Monday, April 7

NONPROFIT	AMOUNT
TOTAL	

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Please enter your first and last name:

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Section below for fundholders only

FUND INFORMATION
List fund name if you are a fund holder recommending grants from your fund.

Fund Name

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Circle "Yes" if you wish to remain anonymous.

Yes *No*

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Coming Soon!

We're launching an enhanced online fund portal April 1, 2025.



Fund holders and advisors will see an enhanced online fund portal beginning April 1. A new look, with improved features!

- View account's fund balance, updated in real-time
- Download monthly and quarterly fund statements
- View contributions to your fund, as well as grant payments out of your fund... *and much more!*

Our staff will be available to answer questions and make the transition as seamless as possible.

If you would like to walk through the features, call the Foundation at 325-676-3883 to visit with Katie Alford, *President/CEO* (cfa@cfabilene.org) or Misti Collier, *donor relations director* (mcollier@cfabilene.org).

cfabilene.org/donors-advisors/login