

2015 Annual Report

Nebraska United Methodist Foundation
50
1965-2015

A Proud History...A Promising Future

A Letter From The Executive Director

In 2015, the Nebraska United Methodist Foundation celebrated its 50th Anniversary. Like a lighthouse, we have provided guidance for those who wanted to grow their ministries and find increased protection from storms in this unpredictable world.



*What a privilege
it is to be a part of
this Foundation.
As I reflect back
on the services
we provided to
United Methodist
Churches, ministries
and individuals,
I am awestruck at
how God worked
in us and through
us to bring a small
measure of the
kingdom of heaven
to earth.*

Anita B. Crisp
Executive Director

50 Years Strong

Since it was incorporated in 1965, the Foundation has remained steadfast and strong, even in the face of adversity, and has stood the test of time as we have continued to work in Nebraska. While our staff and Board of Directors have changed over time, our “foundation” has remained solid so the mission of the Foundation could be a beacon for those who requested our help. Our Foundation is alive and growing and we give God all the praise.

As we have deepened our partnership with churches and donors, the Foundation reached a milestone this year of over \$6.2 million in deposits and distributions of over \$2.1 million. In addition, we are very grateful to donors whose generous contributions allowed us to expand our grant and scholarship programs. Once again, we are pleased to announce that we had another year of operating under budget.

United Methodist Strong

We grew as people, as a church Foundation, striving to better follow Jesus by worshiping, praying, learning and changing throughout a year of challenges and celebrated triumphs. With a spirit of gratitude and resolve, we look forward with excitement for the future of the Foundation. With your continued support and prayers, we truly have everything we need to create the future we want and that is why we need to focus on investing in projects and creating opportunities which improve the quality of life for Nebraska United Methodist Churches and other United Methodist ministries.

On behalf of the Nebraska United Methodist Foundation, thank you for your support – whether financial, gifts of time to strengthen our Foundation or prayer for us as we move forward. We will continue to invest in the vision of hope and transformation God has set before us.

The Path To Pathways Preschool

Studying the letter “w” is more than just learning its sound at this particular preschool. Ask these children to tell you about “w”, and not only will they tell you the sound it makes, but you will hear, “W” is for whale – Jonah’s whale.” Just when director Tami O’Dell feels like they are more interested in coloring the whale than hearing the story, she overhears them repeating it. “They are like sponges at this age,” says Tami, “But you never realize the impact you can have on them until you hear 3-year-olds talking to each other about Jonah.”



With a Foundation’s ministry grant, Tami transformed a storage area in the Dakota City United Methodist Church into a colorful preschool room within a few short months. Just as Jonah was faced with the impossible, so it seemed was Tami. A mother of three, Tami felt the need for this program. “We were looking for a faith based preschool, especially for 3-year-olds. Working parents need support in this way, and it was nearly impossible to find,” she says. Tami and Pastor Gina Giles were a perfect fit for this idea. Gina had previously taught preschool and Tami had written grants and developed school programs. Just as the Bible verse says, *God shown a lamp unto their feet ... a light onto their path* (Psalm 119:105), the faith based preschool was born.



Within a month, Tami presented a proposal to the church’s ad council. The council was hesitant and wondered where money would come from and what certifications were needed. Tami worked quickly to answer their questions, and by faith, the council approved. Tami implemented a church fundraiser and found seed money. Volunteers began transforming the space. Seven months after that first proposal, the preschool opened its doors. Pathways Preschool would be its name, not only in honor of how God shown a light onto this path, but for the way they will shine a light onto the paths of these young children. From her office, Gina now hears laughter and singing where there once was silence. The preschool creates a new energy in the church, one that everyone is feeling. Every now and then, Tami finds a token of support on her desk, like a jug of apple juice with a monetary donation attached. Although they began with little, God provided a lot. And it’s no wonder, for in that room, as ten little voices sing about Jonah, there is big faith.



United Campus Ministry: A Home Away From Home

United Campus Ministry (UCM) at the University of Nebraska – Kearney (UNK) is all about making connections. “UCM serves as a place where youth get to see God in different ways while creating new friendships,” Laura Stubblefield, UCM pastor, explains. “It serves as a safety net in a new environment.”

Weekly activities and special events keep the students engaged with the ministry and with God. In 2003, UCM rented a house close to campus, eventually purchasing it from the owner, a local United Methodist. Laura and the students worked together to make their new residence feel like home, with new flooring and fresh paint, inside and out. They now host a Food-n-Faith Study, a Faith Leaders Fellowship, holiday gatherings, and other regular activities. Tuesday mornings, a table is set up on their front sidewalk with snacks such as juice and doughnuts. The items have UCM information attached and are handed out to students passing by. “The Foundation’s ministry grant supports this service and allows us to invite youth in,” says Laura. “It is a great way to connect with new students.”

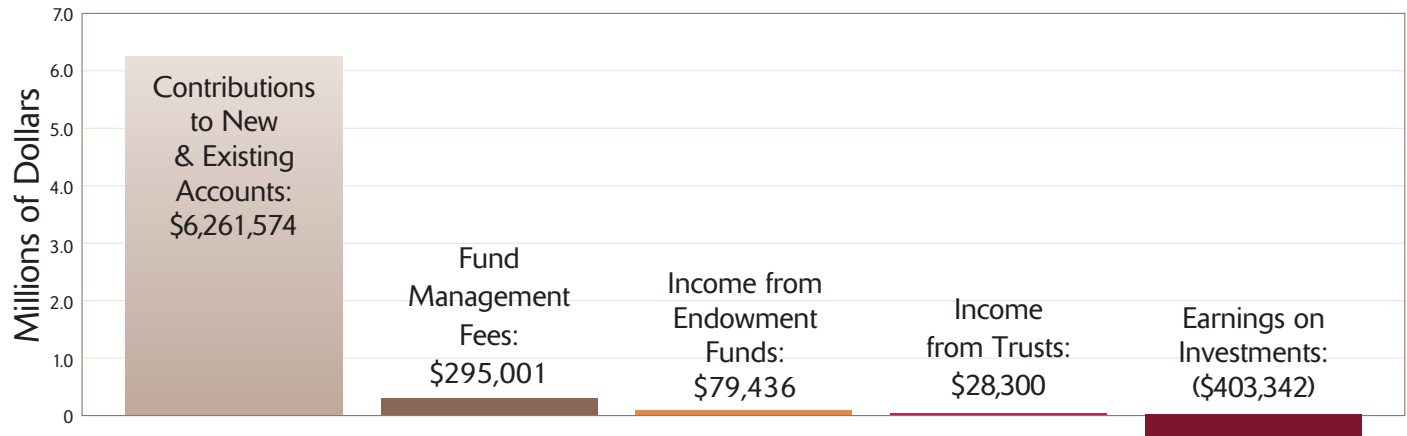
The walls of this home hold many stories of faith, hope and love, none of which are taken for granted. “What I love most is that I have found a second family. I love spreading God’s love with these awesome people while having fun,” says Mattie, student. Fellow student Abby agrees, “UCM to me is a home away from home. It’s a safe place to talk, hang out, and connect with others who love God as much as I do.”

As each year draws to a close, it is bittersweet to say goodbye to seniors. At their last worship service together, Laura follows the example from John 13 and washes the senior students’ feet. The towel she uses has goodbyes and messages written on it from the group. “It’s symbolic,” says Laura, “We teach them to go and lead. It is the same hope Jesus had when he washed the disciples’ feet.” And although these students head out into the world with a renewed confidence and faith, they seldom forget what their home away from home once was at United Campus Ministry.

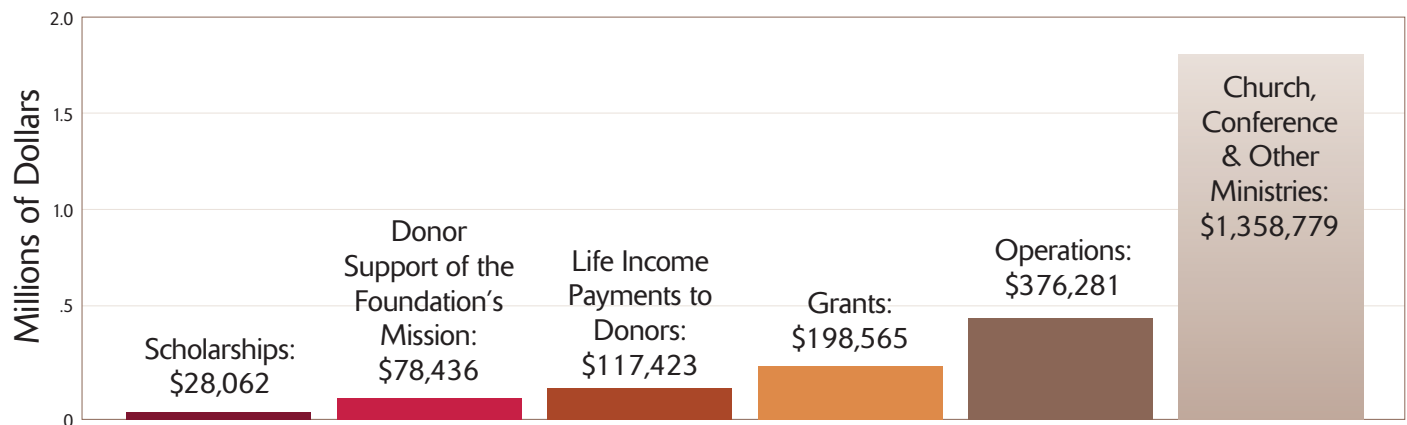


2015 Financial Information*

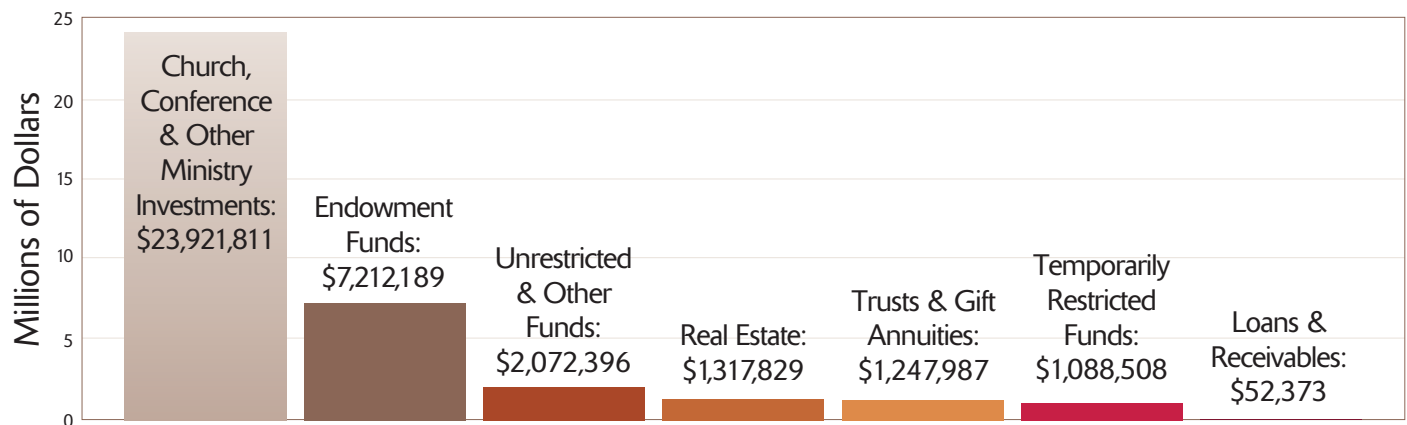
Contributions/Earnings For 2015: \$6,260,969



Distributions For 2015: \$2,157,546



Assets Held By The Foundation On 12/31/2015: \$36,913,093



* Figures compiled prior to 2015 Audit

Our Mission Statement

The mission of the Nebraska United Methodist Foundation is to support the ministries of the local church and the Great Plains United Methodist Conference through the development of gifts and the stewardship of resources entrusted to the Foundation in support of God's work.

2015 Board Of Directors

R. David Wilcox, Lincoln – Chair *	Loren Lindahl, Wahoo – Secretary
Doug Skiles, McCook – Chair **	Doug Skiles, McCook – Treasurer *
Rev. Dr. Janice Japp, Omaha – Vice Chair	Larry Harvill, Cozad – Treasurer **

* Term ended June 30, 2015

** New office as of July 1, 2015

Lynn Ashby, Omaha	Rev. Jeff Kelley, Milford **
Rev. Lance Clay, Grand Island	Marilyn Moore, Lincoln
Rev. Cathy Cole, Gibbon *	Gwendolyn Newkirk, Lincoln *
Rev. Craig Collins, O'Neill	Gary Warren, Aurora
Leslie Gibbens, Lincoln **	Katie Wrede, O'Neill
Jim Girardin, Broken Bow	Marilyn Zehring, Columbus **
Doug Glenn, Auburn	Ex-Officio Representative
Bishop Scott Jones, Great Plains Area	R. David Wilcox, Lincoln **

* Retired June 30, 2015

** Term began July 1, 2015

Foundation Administration

Anita Crisp, Executive Director	Jackie Urkoski, Director of Operations
Rosanne McClarnon, Director of Finance (Retired June 2015)	Marci Logsdon, Director of Finance (March 2015 – Present)



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