



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

## Riverbend Head Start & Family Services

Info@riverbendfamilies.org

[www.riverbendfamilies.org](http://www.riverbendfamilies.org)

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550 Landmarks Blvd., Alton, IL 62002



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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends,

As we take stock of our accomplishments in 2023 along with the challenges that lie ahead in 2024, we want to thank the many stakeholders and contributors to our success.

Through the hard work and collaborative efforts of our staff, volunteers, members of our Board of Directors and community, we have accomplished many great things for the children and families that we serve.

As we seek to prepare children and families to be school ready and to be a disruptive force in the cycle of poverty, our children remind us of the importance of showing up and making a difference. When we see a child get glasses and see clearly for the first time, have a health issue addressed, or have a painful dental procedure taken care of, we are reminded how much we take for granted.

To get all of these things accomplished, we rely on the collaborative efforts of our staff, volunteers, board and community. A good friend of our mission once said "...when we serve these children, we are blessed with the awesome responsibility of holding their hearts and souls and simply letting them know that they matter."

As you review the annual report and see the good work of our staff, the contributions of our volunteers and caring community partners who've donated hand stitched quilts, child passenger safety seats, cribs, coats, and toiletries to meet simple basic needs, it is clear that we are among a community who gently hold the hearts and souls of our most vulnerable, and are willing to show up in their own unique way to remind every child that they matter.

We are thankful to our mission partners for getting involved and helping the children and families that we serve.

Sincerely,

Gene A. Howell, MPA  
President & CEO



ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

Office of Head Start | 4th Floor ~ Switzer Memorial Building, 330 C Street SW, Washington DC 20024 [eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov)

## Program Performance Summary Report

To: Authorizing Official/Board Chairperson

*Mrs. Jen Weber*

*Riverbend Head Start & Family Services, Inc.*

*550 Landmarks Blvd*

*Alton, IL 62002 - 6321*

From: Responsible HHS Official

Date: 08/09/2023

Mr. Khari M. Garvin

Director, Office of Head Start

From July 17, 2023 to July 19, 2023, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a Focus Area One (FA1) monitoring review of Riverbend Head Start & Family Services, Inc. Head Start and Early Head Start programs. This report contains information about the grant recipient's performance and compliance with the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) or Public Law 110-134, *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*.

The Office of Head Start (OHS) would like to thank your governing body, policy council, parents, and staff for their engagement in the review process. The FA1 review allows the OHS to understand how programs are progressing in providing services in the 5-year grant cycle. The report includes the performance measures used to understand recipient progress towards program goals. You can use this report to identify where your program was able to describe progress toward implementing program services that promote quality outcomes for children and families. Please contact your Regional Office for guidance should you have any questions or concerns. Your Regional Office will follow up on the content of this report and can work with you to identify resources to support your program's continuous improvement.

### DISTRIBUTION OF THE REPORT

Copies of this report will be distributed to the following:

Ms. Karen McNamara, Regional Program Manager

Mr. Eugene Howell, Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director

Mr. Eugene Howell, Head Start Director

Mr. Eugene Howell, Early Head Start Director

### Grant(s) included as part of this review

Grant Recipient Name	Grant Number(s)
Riverbend Head Start & Family Services, Inc.	05CH011888

### Glossary of Terms

Finding Type	Definition
Area of Concern (AOC)	An area in which the agency needs to improve performance. These issues should be discussed with the grant recipient's Regional Office for possible technical assistance.
Area of Noncompliance (ANC)	An area in which the agency is out of compliance with Federal requirements (including but not limited to the Head Start Act or one or more of the regulations) in one or more areas of performance. This status requires a written timeline for correction and possible technical assistance or guidance from the grant recipient's program specialist. If not corrected within the specified timeline, this status becomes a deficiency.
Deficiency	<p>As defined in the Head Start Act, the term "deficiency" means:</p> <p>(A) a systemic or substantial material failure of an agency in an area of performance that the Secretary determines involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) a threat to the health, safety, or civil rights of children or staff;</li> <li>(ii) a denial to parents of the exercise of their full roles and responsibilities related to program operations;</li> <li>(iii) a failure to comply with standards related to early childhood development and health services, family and community partnerships, or program design and management;</li> <li>(iv) the misuse of funds received under this subchapter;</li> <li>(v) loss of legal status (as determined by the Secretary) or financial viability, loss of permits, debarment from receiving Federal grants or contracts, or the improper use of Federal funds; or</li> <li>(vi) failure to meet any other Federal or State requirement that the agency has shown an unwillingness or inability to correct, after notice from the Secretary, within the period specified;</li> </ul> <p>(B) systemic or material failure of the governing body of an agency to fully exercise its legal and fiduciary responsibilities; or</p> <p>(C) an unresolved area of noncompliance.</p>

#### Program Overview

Riverbend Head Start & Family Services, Inc. was established in 1916 as a non-profit community agency. The grant recipient serves 759 Head Start and Early Head Start children and expectant families in center- and home-based program options. The program maintains six centers in southwestern Illinois that serve urban and rural counties.



## **Program Design and Management**

### **Program Design**

The grant recipient's program design and structure takes into account community strengths and needs.

### **Program Management**

The grant recipient has an approach for providing effective management and oversight of all program areas and fiduciary responsibilities.

### **Program Governance**

The grant recipient maintains a formal structure for program governance that includes a governing body, a policy council (or policy committee for delegates), and parent committees.

## **Program Design and Management Summary**

Riverbend Head Start & Family Services, Inc. analyzed assessment results and program data to make improvements to service delivery. Program data indicated an increased need for services to expectant families. The recipient expanded its services to include weekly prenatal visits, implementation of a prenatal curriculum, opportunities for lactation counseling, and preventive mental health services targeting postpartum depression and anxiety. Staff training also focused on the delivery of quality prenatal and postnatal services and health care. Intentional program improvement ensured women had a good understanding of child growth and that they and their infants were healthy.



## Designing Quality Education and Child Development Program Services

### Alignment with School Readiness

The grant recipient's approach to school readiness aligns with the expectations of receiving schools, the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF), and state early learning standards.

### Effective and Intentional Teaching Practices

The grant recipient has strategies to ensure teaching practices promote progress toward school readiness.

### Supporting Teachers in Promoting School Readiness

The grant recipient has an approach for ensuring teachers are prepared to implement the curriculum and support children's progress toward school readiness.

### Home-based Program Services

The grant recipient has strategies to ensure home-based program services help parents to provide high-quality learning experiences.

## Education and Child Development Services Summary

Riverbend Head Start & Family Services, Inc. increased coaching support to educational staff. Child assessment, screening data, and environmental observations emphasized the need for a tiered coaching plan for both home- and center-based teaching staff. The plan included a spectrum of strategies intended to improve instruction universally. Additionally, learning communities and group coaching sessions brought the teaching team together for opportunities to share collaboratively. Improved coaching strategies helped ensure staff members were supported in creating growth in child outcomes.



## Designing Quality Health Program Services

### Child Health Status and Care

The grant recipient has an approach for ensuring the delivery of high-quality health services.

### Safety Practices

The grant recipient implements a process for monitoring and maintaining healthy and safe environments and ensuring all staff have complete background checks.

## Health Services Summary

Riverbend Head Start and Family Services, Inc. focused on increasing staff training to address a rise in mental health concerns. Family assessment data found an upward trend in requests for services related to mental health. In response, staff members were taught to apply an emotionally responsive, relationship-based approach when working with families. The program also hosted teacher reflection groups that offered attendees the opportunity to share the personal challenges they experienced in classroom and home settings. Empowering staff members allowed them to emotionally partner with children, families, and each other through self-awareness and self-reflection.





## Designing Quality Family and Community Engagement Services

### Family Well-being

The grant recipient has an approach for collaborating with families to support family well-being.

### Strengthening Parenting and Parent-Child Supports

The grant recipient has an approach for providing services that strengthen parenting skills.

## Family and Community Engagement Services Summary

Riverbend Head Start & Family Services, Inc. increased fatherhood engagement activities when data showed males were interested. Males actively engaged in home visits and socialization events and were represented on program governance and parent committees. Furthermore, while the program's gender-neutral curriculum ensured parenting roles were interchangeable, family services staff also supported the male understanding of child development and guided child/father interactions from the male perspective. The program encouraged male involvement in child growth and development.



## Developing Effective Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) Strategies and Fiscal Infrastructure

### Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance

The grant recipient enrolls children or expectant mothers who are categorically eligible or who meet defined income-eligibility requirements.

### Enrollment Verification

The grant recipient maintains and tracks enrollment for all enrolled participants.

### Fiscal Infrastructure, Capacity, and Responsiveness

The grant recipient's fiscal staff have the qualifications needed to provide oversight of the grant.

The grant recipient has a budget development and revision process that includes stakeholders and appropriate approvals, and ensures continuous alignment with program design, goals, and objectives.

## ERSEA and Fiscal Summary

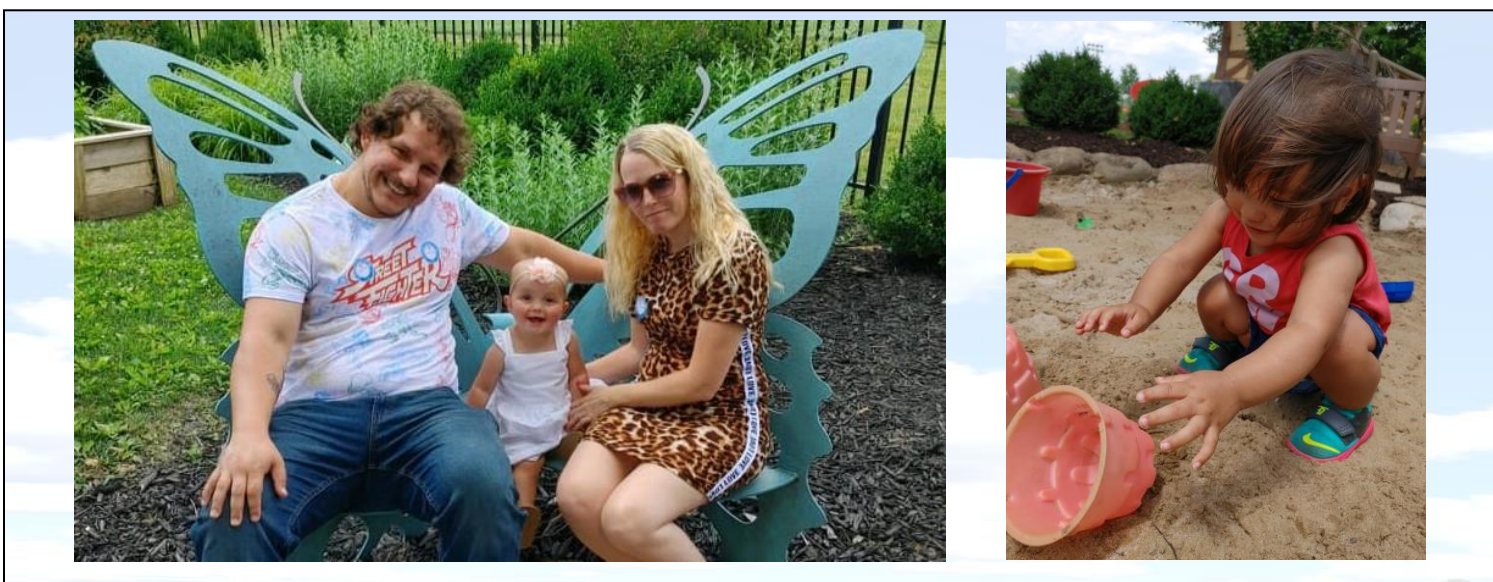
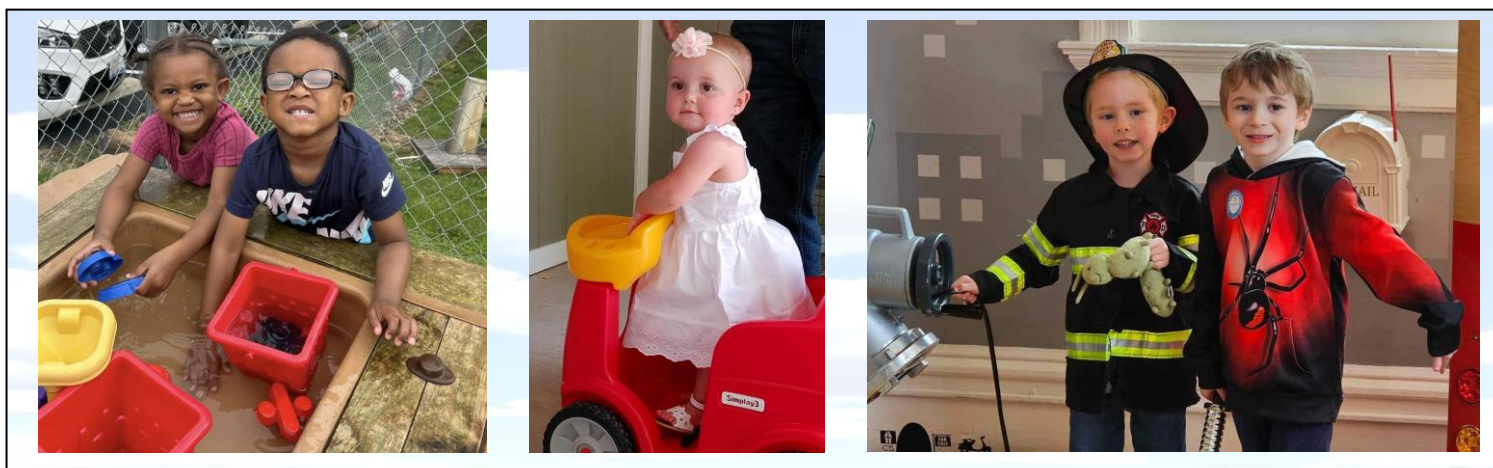
Riverbend Head Start & Family Services, Inc. implemented an ERSEA system that ensured the enrollment of only eligible families. Policies and procedures outlined the roles and responsibilities for determining eligibility. The family services staff collected information and determined eligibility, and managers verified the submitted applications. All staff members were provided training on determining and documenting eligibility during onboarding. Documents were collected and recorded electronically, and applicants were ranked according to assigned selection criteria. The program's ERSEA systems ensured eligible families were enrolled following a standardized process.

The grant recipient used data to maintain financial sustainability. A review of data showed that recipient's insurance plans provided less coverage and higher premiums for employees. When the agency and staff reported experiencing higher deductibles and more out-of-pocket expenses, the agency implemented a self-funded employee health insurance approach. This model reduced deductibles, increased prescription coverage, removed co-pays for specialists and doctors, and provided wellness screenings for all staff. The reduction in the cost of employee health insurance improved the agency's financial position while increasing staff health and wellness.

----- End of Report -----

## BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES

- ✓ 783 Children had continuous access to health care
- ✓ 368 Children had continuous access to dental care
- ✓ 107 Children were identified as having special needs
- ✓ 27 Families received job training
- ✓ 25 Pregnant people were served by Early Head Start
- ✓ 14 Parents advanced their education level



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Head Start Program (HS)
  - 514 Children served, ages 3-5
  - 475 Families served
  - 196 Two parent households
  - 279 Single parent families



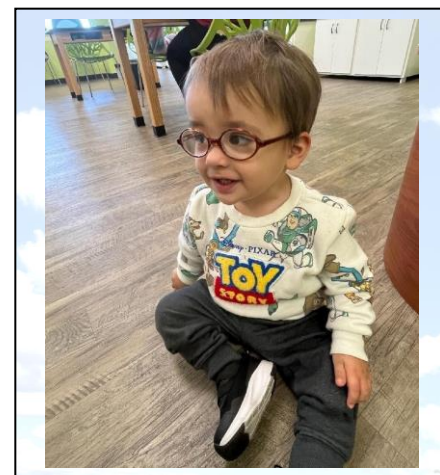
<b>90%</b>	460 of 514	Enrolled children completed a medical exam
<b>84%</b>	434 of 514	Enrolled children completed a dental exam



On average, 94% of our funded enrollment opportunities for children were filled at any given time. Our program served 57% of eligible 3 to 5-year-old children in Madison County, IL.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Early Head Start Program (EHS)
  - 292 Children served, ages birth to 3 years
  - 25 Pregnant persons served
  - 246 Families served
  - 125 Two parent households
  - 121 Single parent families



<b>89%</b>	259 of 292	Enrolled children completed a medical exam
<b>45%</b>	132 of 292	Enrolled children completed a dental exam*
<b>49%</b>	142 of 292	Enrolled EHS children who are up-to-date on a schedule of age appropriate preventative and primary oral health care, according to the state's EPSDT (early, periodic screening and diagnostic testing) schedule.

*\*Only children ages 2 and older are recommended to receive a dental exam.*



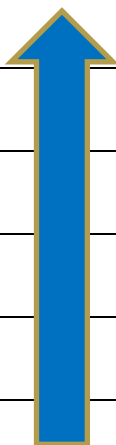
On average, 77% of our funded enrollment opportunities for children were filled at any given time. Our program served 22.4% of the eligible newborn to 3-year-old children in Madison County, IL.

## LEARNING & PROGRAM OUTCOMES

<b>94%</b> (202 of 216)	Children going to Kindergarten who met widely held developmental expectations.
<b>85%</b>	Head Start and Early Head Start families enrolled who were connected with at least one family service resource.

Percentages of all children enrolled who met or exceeded age appropriate developmental milestones:

Center based	Pre-K Fall 2023	Pre-K Spring 2024
Social/Emotional	39%	<b>76%</b>
Physical	49%	<b>77%</b>
Language	35%	<b>69%</b>
Cognitive	32%	<b>69%</b>
Literacy	21%	<b>65%</b>
Math	26%	<b>63%</b>



The percentage of children served that has a learning disability as represented by an:

**Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**

57% Head Start home-based

17% Head Start full day classes

6% Head Start part day classes

**Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP)**

11% Early Head Start (all home-based)

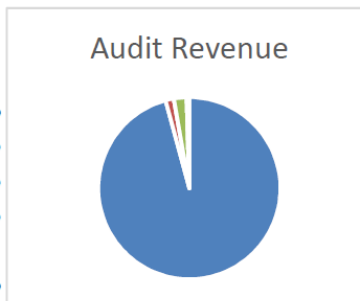
# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## Head Start and Early Head Start

FY 2023

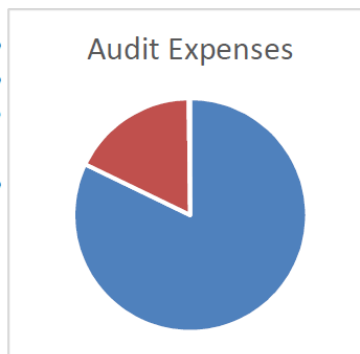
### Audited Revenue: Public and Private Funds

Federal & State (Fees & Grants)	\$ 13,147,415	95.8%
Local In-Kind (Matching Funds)	\$ 199,006	1.4%
Contributions (including United Way)	\$ 314,195	2.3%
Other Income	\$ 64,501	0.5%
<b>Total = Audited Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 13,725,117</b>	<b>100%</b>



### Audited Expenditures

Program Expenses	\$ 11,163,073	82.2%
Administrative Expenses	\$ 2,389,074	17.6%
fundraising Expenses	\$ 31,934	0.2%
<b>Total = Audited Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 13,584,081</b>	<b>100%</b>



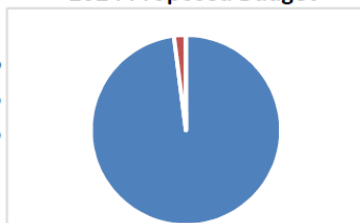
Income in Excess of Expenses	\$ 141,036
Beginning Net Assets	\$ 3,206,168
Ending Net Assets	\$ 3,347,204
Total Liabilites	\$ 141,036
<b>Total Net Liabilities + Assets =</b>	<b>\$ 5,587,878</b>

The most recent financial audit was completed by CPA firm, C. J. Schlosser & Company, LLC. In Alton, Illinois in May 2024 without any questioned costs. The board of Directors approved the financial audit on July 31, 2024.

### Proposed Revenue: Public and Private Funds

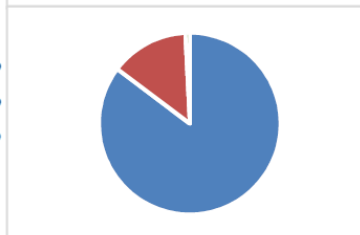
Federal & State (Fees & Grants)	\$ 13,296,846.00	98.0%
Contributions (including United Way)	\$ 268,376.00	2.0%
Other Income	\$ 3,850.00	0.0%
<b>Total Proposed Revenue =</b>	<b>\$ 13,569,072.00</b>	

### 2024 Proposed Budget



### Proposed Expenditures

Program Expenses	\$ 11,570,950.00	85.3%
Administrative Expenses	\$ 1,889,247.00	13.9%
fundraising Expenses	\$ 108,875.00	0.8%
<b>Total Proposed Expenditures =</b>	<b>\$ 13,569,072.00</b>	



# OUR DONORS MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE!

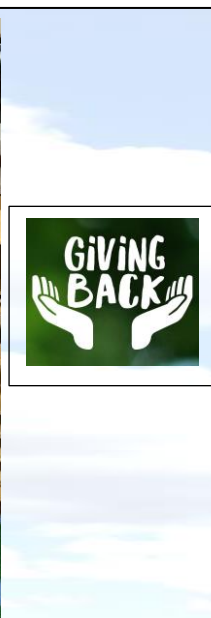
We are thankful for the corporate and individual donations that were made in 2023





## VOLUNTEERISM

<p><b>12,309</b> Hours</p>	<p><b>370</b> Head Start Parent volunteers</p>
<p><b>39,159</b> Hours</p>	<p><b>241</b> Early Head Start Parent volunteers</p>
<p><b>1,882</b> Hours</p>	<p><b>124</b> Community Members volunteered</p>
<p><b>53,351</b> Hours</p>	<p><b>735</b> Total volunteers</p>



# DONOR HONOR ROLL

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to those companies and individuals who donated in 2023

## \$10,000 +

Alton Woman's Home Association  
Cope Plastics, Inc.  
Delta Dental of Illinois Foundation  
PNC Foundation  
Schrimpf Family Foundation  
Mr. John and Jayne Simmons

## \$5,000 - \$9,999

Alton Foundation  
Ameren IL  
Mr. and Mrs. John Barry Julian  
Dr. and Mrs. Neal Roller

## \$2,500 - \$4,999

Mrs. Edna Griesbaum  
Madison County Alliance for Children & Families  
Rotary Club of the Riverbend  
The Rev. Steven A. Janoski Charitable Fund  
and St. Benedict Outreach Fund  
Town of Alton

## \$1,000 - \$2,499

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Alton Argosy Casino  
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Discount School Supply  
Mrs. Shirley Emons  
First Mid-Illinois Bank & Trust  
Godfrey First United Methodist Church  
Goldenberg Heller & Antognoli, P.C.  
Heyl, Royster, Voelker & Allen  
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene A Howell  
Dr. Larry Huels and Mrs. Eileen Petito  
Junior Service Club of Edwardsville/Glen Carbon  
Kiwanis of Wood River Township

## \$1,000 - \$2,499

Ms. Virginia Long  
Mr. Ed Morrissey  
OSF - Saint Anthony's Health System  
Phillips 66 - Wood River Refinery  
Mr. and Mrs. Mark/Liz Reinders  
Ms. Shirley Roderfeld and Mr. Roger Motley  
Sams Pawn Shop  
Mr. and Mrs. David and Cindy Smalley  
St. Louis Community Foundation  
Drs. Erik and Kristen Stabell  
Mrs. Karen Wilson  
Ziemer USA, Inc.

## \$1 - \$999

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Mr. Dan Adams and Ms. Angie Braida  
Ms. Jayme Allen  
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Alton Refrigeration  
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Barrett Heating & Cooling, Inc.  
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Mr. Thomas Bechtold  
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Dr. and Mrs. Frank Bemis  
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Bethalto Police Department  
 Ms. Brittany Billhartz  
 BJC HealthCare  
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 Father David Boase  
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 Collinsville Sunrise Kiwanis  
 Ms. Casey Cope  
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 Ms. Connie Eaton  
 Elias Kallal & Schaaf Funeral Homes  
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 Ms. Whitney Foote'  
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 Ms. Sarah Fox  
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 Ms. Alicia Green  
 Mr. and Mrs. Russell Groppe  
 Group Interventions  
 Ms. Julie Haberer

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 Ms. Brandie Jones  
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 Dr. David Riedel and Ms. Margaret Donnelly  
 Roberts Motors, Inc.  
 Mrs. Minnie Robinson  
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 Mr. Alvin Roderfeld  
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 Southwestern Illinois Building & Construction Trades  
 Mr. James Spain

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## \$1 - \$999

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 St. Paul United Methodist Church of Rosewood H  
 Mrs. Joni Stanley  
 Stobbs & Sinclair, Ltd.  
 Ms. Georgia Stryffeler  
 Mr. and Mrs. Don Sutton  
 Anonymous  
 Tarlton General Contractors  
 The Daniel and Henry Co.  
 The Gori Law Firm  
 The Tedrick Group  
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