

Simplified Charitable Giving



ETCF Grant Grows Collaboration in Henderson County

Tool Elementary School kicked off the school year with a new teaching tool. A partnership between the Malakoff Independent School District and local Henderson County nonprofits launched the creation of an outdoor garden classroom focusing on the benefits of sustainability, community improvement and nutrition.

The outdoor classroom named Miss Fran's Teaching Garden was made possible through collaboration between Cedar Creek Garden Club, Tool Elementary School and the Community Food Pantry of Tool. Funding for the project was provided in part by a grant from the Edwin A. "Blue" and Janice Owen Miller Charitable Fund held at East Texas Communities Foundation (ETCF) in Tyler, Texas.



Community volunteers work to construct the sign promoting the new addition of Miss Fran's Teaching Garden on the campus of Tool Elementary School.

"Innovative projects like Miss Fran's Teaching Garden would have been the exact type of project that the Miller's would have supported in their lifetime," said Kyle Penney, President of East Texas Communities Foundation (ETCF). "ETCF is pleased to be able to fulfill the Miller's legacy by supporting this outdoor classroom project that will provide hands-on learning to the students and benefit the community for years to come."

Brandi Sutton, Principal of Tool Elementary School, has always envisioned an outdoor learning space for her campus. "A garden had always been on my wish list," said Sutton. "When I received the call from the Cedar Creek Garden Club I knew this was the bridge needed to make my dream a reality."

The Cedar Creek Garden Club, which was founded in 1975, had always had a central focus on the love and the art of

gardening. The club set out to renew their purpose in 2020 and saw a need to expand their mission priorities to include an investment in education and nutrition for the benefit of future generations of gardeners.

"I'm neither a gardener, a teacher or a parent, yet here I am, promoting a Teaching Garden at Tool Elementary," says Debbie Bozeman-Zook, newly-elected President for the Cedar Creek Garden Club. "There are so many pay-offs to the students and this community when the children learn the lessons only a garden can teach."

Bozeman-Zook said lessons will line up with the curriculum's teachers are already teaching. Specific topics will vary by grade level, with younger children learning about colors of the garden and counting plants. Older students will learn more math and science-based topics, such as how many plants will fit into a certain area and plant life-cycles.

Miss Fran's Teaching Garden is named in honor of long-time Tool resident and community leader, Fran Sonka. Ms. Sonka retired to the Tool community in 1991 and went on to serve on the City Council for 17 years, two of those as mayor. After the opening of Tool Elementary School in 2007, Ms. Sonka made it a point to greet the students with a hug every morning as they entered the school. "I can't say enough the impact Fran has had on our students," said Sutton. "Naming the garden in her honor is only fitting."

Organizers plan for the garden to not only provide opportunities for the students, but the community itself. "Our goal is to harvest and distribute fresh produce for the food pantry to serve our most vulnerable in the community," said Bozeman-Zook. "That's were collaboration with the Community Food Pantry will play a big part in this partnership."

Vicki Dumont, Executive Director of the Community Food Pantry in Tool, also envisioned a community garden and was thrilled when the project was presented. "The Food Pantry serves an average of 400 families a month," said Dumont. "We are always lacking fresh produce for our clients. What this garden will do for our students and community will be a game-changer."

"Many studies show that school gardens provide a context to teach students to be advocates for themselves, their communities, and the Earth," said Sutton. "Our hope is that Miss Fran's Teaching Garden will encourage students to think critically about the food they eat and gain life-long skills in making healthy choices down the road."

Shelby County Nonprofits Receive Grants From Harris Fund

Grants from the John Harris Community Fund held at East Texas Communities Foundation (ETCF) in Tyler, Texas, were awarded to Boo's Battle Support Fund, Shelby County Outreach Ministries, Inc., Shelby County Children's Advocacy Center, CASA of Deep East Texas and East Texas Food Bank.

"Boo's Battle Support Fund provides financial assistance to local families or person battling cancer," said Judy Monroe, volunteer with Boo's Battle. "Whatever the family needs gas cards, groceries, rent we will provide financial support to ease their burden."

Boo's Battle Support Fund helps on average, 35 families a year with financial support. "In the past we have held fundraisers to raise money," said Judy Monroe. "With Covid, we have had little opportunity to raise funds but the need has not gone away. Receiving this grant from the Harris Fund will help families who are dealing with so much right now. It's truly a blessing."

Shelby County Outreach Ministries received funds to provide emergency food boxes, help with client utility bills, medications and emergency lodging. "Our emergency food boxes can feed a family of four for 3-5 days," said Executive Director, Sherry Harding. "Households can apply for one food box a month which consists of peanut



ETCF Program Officer, Dana Durman presents a grant check to representatives from Boo Battle Support Fund.

butter, six canned vegetables, bread, chili, rice, frozen meat and other basic items."

Shelby County Children's Advocacy Center received funds to expand their mental health staff. "We are one of only three agencies that provide mental health services in Shelby County, and the only one that provides services at no charge to the individuals we serve," said Denise Merriman, Executive Director of Shelby County Children's Advocacy Center. "At any given time we have approximately 50 individuals in therapy and another 8-10 individuals on a waiting list. Adding another provider will reduce our wait list times and increase the number of people we can serve."

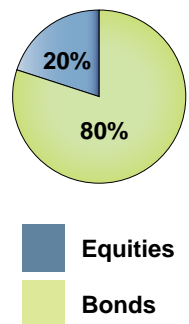
On average, Shelby County Children's Advocacy Center (SCCAC) serves 150

unique child victims each year. The SCCAC provides a full spectrum of services to child victims and their non-offending caregivers. Services include training programs regarding child abuse prevention, detection, and reporting to law enforcement, personnel, teachers and local school personnel, and to parents and children directly.

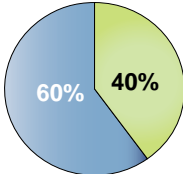
CASA of Deep East Texas was awarded a grant to assist with general operations. "We have experienced a loss in funding due to recent legislation that cut CASA's Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding," said Tonya Herring, Executive Director of CASA of Deep East Texas. "Funding is a challenge for most nonprofit agencies at this time following the pandemic. This change greatly impacts smaller programs such as ours that can see up to a 21% loss in funding for the year."

"John Reagan Harris was a generous benefactor, giving both his time and his resources to many groups and worthy causes in and around Center," said Kyle Penney, President of ETCF. "The John Harris Community Fund was established to support worthy civic, religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational projects which benefit the Center, Texas, community."

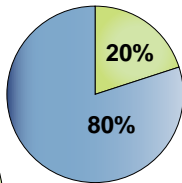
CONSERVATIVE



MODERATE



GROWTH



INVESTMENT RETURNS- As of September 30, 2021

PORTFOLIO	Year-To-Date	3 Year	5 Years	Since Inception
Conservative	0.57%	6.27%	5.00%	4.80% (02/03)
Conservative-ETF	1.32%	NA	NA	5.33% (06/20)
Moderate	5.18%	9.11%	8.47%	6.24% (02/03)
Moderate-ETF	6.75%	10.27%	9.61%	8.40% (09/11)
Growth	7.80%	10.94%	10.42%	7.70% (02/03)
Growth-ETF	9.85%	11.77%	11.87%	12.36% (03/16)

Additional information available at www.etcf.org. Returns shown are net of fees paid to money managers.

Scholarship Benefits Students in Anderson County

Ben and Bettye Bitz enjoyed their retirement years in Berryville, Texas, where they were actively involved in their church and community. Ben was a WWII veteran who proudly served his country during the Normandy invasion, earning a Purple Heart. Betty was a member of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.

Advocates for youth education, they created a scholarship to benefit students that attend Frankston or LaPoyner High Schools.

November is National Scholarship Month. If you have considered opening a scholarship to support students with their educational pursuits, please contact ETCF at 903-533-0208 for details on how to establish a fund today.

Scholarship applications open online for students to apply December 1, 2021. For complete details go to <https://etcf.org/scholarships/available-scholarships/>



Bitz Scholarship recipient Jaden Rackley, poses with her dad at the 2021 ETCF Scholarship Reception.

GRANTS

MAKING AN IMPACT +

Take a look at what is happening around East Texas. The pictures below represent just a few of the ways fundholders are investing in our communities through ETCF.

Health: The Roy and Betty Erickson Charitable Fund for Nursing awarded \$10,000 to Panola College Health Science Division for the purchase of interactive smart boards for classroom instruction. The addition of new Smart boards will allow nursing instructors to use our SimCapture cameras from the simulation lab and mark the video when teachable moments occur.



1.



2.

Arts & Culture: A grant was awarded to the Tyler Junior College Academy of Dance. The TJC Academy of Dance offers pre-professional level training for students of all levels from age three to adult.



3.

Youth Development: A grant to the Boys and Girls Club of Rusk County supports programs that help Rusk county youth by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and influence.

4.



Education: Longview ISD Foundation was awarded a grant to their memorial scholarship fund in honor of lifelong Gregg County resident, LeGrande Northcutt. Northcutt was a 1954 graduate of Longview High School.



5.

Human Services: Titus County Cares received a matching grant from the Burt & Nancy Marans Charitable Fund to assist with their Food4Kids Program. Food4kids delivers sacks of kid-friendly food for identified needy children every Friday to area schools.

Holiday Hours

ETCF offices will be closed:

Thursday, November 25th
& Friday, November 26th

In observance of Thanksgiving

Friday, December 24th
& Monday, December 27th

In observance of Christmas



Friday,
December 31st
In observance of
New Year's Day

ETCF
EAST TEXAS COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION
315 N. Broadway, Suite 210
Tyler, Texas 75702
www.etcf.org

 facebook.com/SimplifiedGiving

For more information about ETCF,
please contact us
at 866-533-3823 or info@etcf.org

EAST TEXAS GIVING DAY



Nonprofit Registration Opens

Wednesday, January 19th

register your nonprofit online at

www.EastTexasGivingDay.org

Want to be a part of East Texas Giving Day?

Plan to attend our virtual trainings & learn how to
build a successful campaign.

Use your smart phone to scan the QR code or go to
<https://www.easttexasgivingday.org/resources>
for links to register!



**USE PHONE CAMERA TO
SCAN QR CODE**