



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 15, 2026

Community Grants Fund awards over \$735,000 to 59 Nonprofits in the CSRA.

The Board of Directors of the **Community Foundation for the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA)** is pleased to announce a record-breaking year for the Foundation's Community Grants Program. **Grants totaling more than \$735,000 were awarded to support the impactful work of 59 nonprofit organizations** serving Richmond, Columbia, Burke, and McDuffie counties in Georgia and Aiken and Edgefield counties in South Carolina.

Grant awards support arts, cultural, and historical organizations, improve health and protect the environment, provide enrichment and educational opportunities to children, youth, and adults, and help grow program services for people in need.

Since 1996, the Masters Tournament, community partners, and individual donors have chosen to give generously to the Community Foundation Endowment. Through careful stewardship and investment, the Community Foundation grows these contributed funds, which, over time, has almost doubled the size of the endowment. This commitment and collaboration has allowed the Community Foundation to grant resources for almost three decades through its Community Grants program, expanding support for organizations making a meaningful difference and enhancing the long-term strength of our region.

“This legacy program of the Community Foundation has been awarding grants for almost 30 years, totaling over 12 million dollars to hundreds of nonprofits across the CSRA. Over that time, the program has grown and evolved, but still a few things remain steadfast,” says Shell Berry, President and CEO, “The process is broad and allows us to hear directly from the nonprofits in our area regarding the most pressing needs in our community. That connection to listening to community voices continues through the perspective of nearly 200 volunteers who review the grant applications, conduct site visits, and ultimately decide which programs and services should receive this year’s funding.”

The 2026 Community Grant Award recipients are as follows:

Arts History & Culture

Nonprofit arts organizations strengthen our community by preserving identity, fostering creativity, and creating spaces for shared expression and dialogue. They contribute to economic vitality through tourism and local spending while improving the quality of life and social cohesion. Just as importantly, they make arts and culture accessible to our neighbors who might otherwise be excluded. We are proud to support the following organizations in this category:

Aiken Civic Orchestra

This grant will enable more community members to experience live orchestral performances and music education, enriching cultural life and inspiring creativity in Aiken.

Augusta Jewish Museum

Resources will allow the museum to preserve Jewish history and culture while reaching broader audiences with educational programming that fosters understanding and connection.

Augusta Westobou Festival

This funding will strengthen Augusta's cultural economy by attracting visitors, engaging artists, and providing accessible contemporary arts experiences for the community.

ENOPION Theatre Company

These funds will expand youth and community theater programs, giving participants creative outlets, arts education, and opportunities to develop confidence and teamwork.

Gertrude Herbert Institute of Art

These funds will support classes, exhibitions, and outreach programs that engage students and the public while fostering creativity and cultural appreciation.

Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History

This grant will support recovery-focused services that provide housing stability, counseling, and long-term support for individuals overcoming substance use disorders.

The Jessye Norman School of The Arts

Support from the grant will provide arts education, mentorship, and performance opportunities that nurture creativity, confidence, and personal growth among youth.

Health & Environment

Nonprofits focused on community well-being play an essential role in protecting people's physical health, natural resources, and quality of life by providing access to prevention, education, and direct services. Together, they help build a healthier, more resilient community for current and future generations. We are proud to support the following organizations in this category:

143 Ministries International

Funds will provide scholarships for intensive recovery treatment, helping women overcome addiction and rebuild their lives, families, and community connections.

Asociación Latina de Servicios del CSRA

Grant funds will expand access to free preventive and primary care for uninsured residents, improving health outcomes and reducing barriers to care.

Beyond Sickle Cell Disease Foundation

Funding will support education, advocacy, and resources that empower individuals and families affected by sickle cell disease.

Cancer Support Services

This grant will cover lodging, meals, and transportation. Ensuring cancer patients and their caregivers can reliably access needed treatment without financial strain.

Community Medical Clinic of Aiken County

Support from this grant will provide free access to essential medications and pharmacy services, allowing patients to manage chronic conditions and maintain health.

Cooper Ridge

These funds will provide animal-assisted therapy services that promote emotional, developmental, and educational growth for participants.

Day One Fitness

This grant will expand programs for individuals with neurological conditions, building local capacity and piloting a replicable model to increase access and long-term community impact.

Family YMCA of Greater Augusta

Grant funding will empower individuals with disabilities by expanding access to adaptive sports, water safety, and social programs through scholarships, equipment, and trained staff.

Friends of North Augusta Animals

This grant will help prevent euthanasia and improve animal welfare by funding spay/neuter services and heartworm prevention and treatment.

Hands To Paws

Grant funds will support animal rescue efforts, veterinary care, and pet retention services for families in crisis.

North Augusta Public Safety Foundation

Funding will facilitate the addition of a trained police canine, while strengthening North Augusta's public safety and community engagement.

Phinizy Center for Water Sciences

This grant will protect and enhance the health, safety, and enjoyment of children by adding shaded play areas at Phinizy's Nature Park.

The Center for New Beginnings

Funding will offset the cost of intensive behavioral therapy for children with autism, improving access for underserved families.

The Child Advocacy Center of Aiken County

These funds support forensic interviews, therapy, and prevention programs for children who have experienced abuse, promoting healing and safety.

Via Cognitive Health

Support from this grant will expand arts-based workshops for individuals with Alzheimer's and dementia, improving cognitive function, reducing isolation, and promoting emotional expression.

Walter L. Shepeard Community Blood Center

Grant funding will provide updated tablets to ensure safe, efficient blood collection and distribution for local patients.

Education & Youth Enrichment

Organizations focused on education attainment are vital because they expand learning opportunities, close opportunity gaps, and help people develop the skills and confidence needed to thrive through the provision of safe, supportive environments that promote skill building, academic success, creativity, and life skills. By investing in *people*, they strengthen the long-term health and prosperity of our entire community. We are proud to support the following organizations in this category:

Augusta Dream Center

These funds will support programs addressing food insecurity, housing instability, and family support, helping vulnerable families achieve stability.

Augusta Heritage Academy

This grant will enable educational programming that promotes academic achievement and character development for students.

Augusta Technical College Foundation

Support will provide scholarships and program resources that expand access to workforce training and higher education.

Black Farm Street

These funds strengthen neighborhood programs that empower residents, encourage engagement, and revitalize communities.

Carey Hill Community Outreach

This funding will provide food assistance and outreach programs, helping families meet basic needs and access support services.

Challenge Preparatory Academy

Grant funds will support academic enrichment and youth development programs that promote student success.

Elevate Augusta

Support from the grant will provide workforce development and career readiness opportunities, helping individuals gain skills and secure employment.

Guiding Path Enrichment Center

These funds will expand educational and enrichment services that foster youth development and family stability.

Inspire Studios Center for Performing Arts

This funding will support youth theater programs, high-quality productions, and classes that build communication, confidence, and arts skills.

MACH Academy

This grant will empower youth through tennis, STEAM, and mentoring programs, helping them build character, develop academic and life skills, and prepare for future success.

Manhood Tour

Funding will provide structured programs that guide participants in overcoming barriers, improving decision-making, and building skills that foster personal growth and community contribution.

Pregnant Choices

Funding will be used to expand mentorship, educational classes, and community-building programs that support at-risk women on their path to success.

Public Education Partners

Support from the grant will provide hands-on STEM kits for fourth graders, improving science understanding and inspiring long-term interest in learning.

RISE Augusta

This funding will expand tutoring, reading remediation, and wraparound services for at-risk students, helping them achieve academic success and build confidence.

Southern Pickleball Academy

This grant will support the expansion of youth pickleball programs that promote health, confidence, and life skills in Aiken and surrounding areas.

SUCCESTEAM

Funding will support programs where youth improve fitness, develop teamwork, and strengthen social skills through structured pickleball programs.

The JO-NATHAN Foundation

Resources will expand access to leadership camps and experiential learning for financially disadvantaged youth, helping them develop critical thinking, teamwork, and confidence while gaining exposure to new opportunities.

University of South Carolina Aiken

Support from this grant will provide students with intellectual disabilities a comprehensive college experience, fostering independence, employment, social engagement, and academic growth.

People in Need

Nonprofits working to address basic human needs are essential because they ensure individuals and families have access to food, shelter, safety and stability during times of crisis and transition. By meeting immediate needs, they prevent deeper hardship and create pathways to self-sufficiency. Their work forms the foundation for a thriving community. We are proud to support the following organizations in this category:

Bridge Builder Communities International

These funds will provide safe housing, life skills training, and holistic support for young adults aging out of foster care.

Family Promise of Aiken County

Support from the grant will help families facing homelessness achieve long-term stability and independence through individualized coaching and wraparound services.

Fireside Ministries and Industries

This funding supports the construction of foster homes, providing safe housing for children while revitalizing local neighborhoods.

Fostering The Family

Grant funding will support core services that strengthen families, promote stability, and improve outcomes for children.

GameChangers Foundation

Funds will provide scholarships that reduce financial barriers for men, ensuring that those without financial resources can access essential treatment and support services.

Gap Ministries of Augusta

Grant support will fund programs addressing basic needs, spiritual support, and community outreach services.

Garden City Rescue Mission and Life Development Center

Funding will support shelter, recovery, and life-skills programming for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Hope House

Support will help deliver transitional housing and supportive services that empower individuals toward self-sufficiency.

It's About Family

Funding will support family-centered programs that promote healing, stability, and long-term well-being.

Kids Restart

Grant funds will help provide safe, trauma-informed services and programming for children in crisis.

Mental Health America of Aiken County

Grant funding will support essential programs like transitional housing, newborn support, education initiatives, and mental health advocacy.

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Support will enhance services and advocacy efforts for veterans with spinal cord injuries and disabilities.

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Augusta

Support from this grant provides nutritious meals, helping families focus on caring for their sick children.

St. Vincent de Paul Society Georgia

Funding will assist with emergency aid, housing stability, and basic needs support for vulnerable individuals.

The Salvation Army Augusta Area Command

Grant support will help provide shelter, meals, and supportive services for individuals experiencing homelessness.

The Salvation Army of Aiken

Funds will support emergency assistance programs addressing food, housing, and utility needs.

United Way of the Central Savannah River Area

Grant funding will strengthen community-wide initiatives focused on education, financial stability, and health.

Veterans K9 Solutions

This grant will be used to train service dogs that increase independence and improve the quality of life for veterans with disabilities.

About the Community Foundation for the CSRA:

For 30 years, the Community Foundation for the CSRA has connected resources to needs by bringing together donors, nonprofits, and community partners. With a focus on lasting impact, the Foundation supports initiatives in Arts, History, Culture, Education, Youth Enrichment, Health, Environment, and People in Need across Aiken, Burke, Columbia, Edgefield, McDuffie, and Richmond counties.

Media Contact:

Becky Dearden

Marketing Director

Community Foundation for the CSRA

803-317-0442 | beckydearden@cfcsra.org | cfcsra.org