



VIEW*S*&VISIONS

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Making A Difference, One Community at a Time

Lisa Adkins, President and Chief Executive Officer
Blue Grass Community Foundation

Lisa Adkins is president and CEO of Kentucky's oldest community foundation, Blue Grass Community Foundation, headquartered in downtown Lexington, Kentucky. An attorney, Ms. Adkins has been a leader in growing philanthropy for over 25 years.

Since Ms. Adkins joined BGCF in 2009, the Foundation's assets have increased by over 30 percent to \$47 million, held in over 285 charitable accounts. Additionally, the Foundation launched GoodGiving.net, the GoodGiving Guide Challenge and Giving Cards.

Prior to joining the Foundation, Ms. Adkins served as president and CEO of YouthFriends, a nationally recognized youth mentoring initiative of the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation. She earned degrees in liberal arts and law at the University of Kansas, where she served as student body president and was named one of Glamour Magazine's Top Ten College Women.

"Philanthropy is almost the only virtue which is sufficiently appreciated by mankind."

— Henry David Thoreau

All of us, no matter what our means, want a better world. And we know, instinctively, that the best place to start is at home. That's where community foundations come in.

By definition, community foundations are sustainable, publicly supported charities that serve the common goal of making a particular region better and stronger. In practice, they're people working together to make the world a better place – one community at a time.

Community foundations enable individuals, families, businesses and organizations to establish charitable funds, permanent endowments and scholarships to help their regions meet today's and tomorrow's challenges. Last year community foundations collectively gave more than \$2.5 billion to the causes that matter most to us: education, urban development, human services, the arts, the environment, health care, disaster relief, and the list goes on.

But community foundations go well beyond supporting charitable activities. They also



**BLUE GRASS
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**
WE'RE IN IT FOR GOOD.

identify current and emerging issues, channel resources to address local needs, and help communities prepare for the future.

That's exactly what we do at Blue Grass Community Foundation, Kentucky's oldest community foundation. Since 1967, we've been helping donors identify their interests, establish charitable funds, meet community needs and make a difference.

Each of our 285 charitable funds advances the causes that matter most to the donors who established them. We work closely with our donors to provide personalized services, maximum tax benefits and a wide array of planned giving opportunities. We make charitable giving as easy, effective and rewarding as possible. Our collective size allows us to provide outstanding investment managers and competitive investment fees. We have been certified as meeting the Council on Foundation's National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations, philanthropy's most rigorous set of guiding principles.

Our goal is to grow the seeds of generosity right here in our own neighborhoods. We believe that the power and passion of individual philanthropy lead to a stronger, more vibrant community for us all.

But we also know that we make the greatest impact when we work together. And so Blue Grass Community Foundation also promotes



The Legacy Trail is a nine-mile bike/walking trail that extends from downtown Lexington to the Kentucky Horse Park

vibrant civic engagement and provides leadership on important community projects. We've formed strategic partnerships with Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government, the Fayette County public school system, LexArts, the University of Kentucky, GuideStar, Smiley Pete Publishing, wealth advisors, public and private foundations, many local civic and arts organizations and scores of community leaders and volunteers.

Blue Grass Community Foundation's Recent Community Initiatives

GoodGivingGuide Challenge. In partnership with Smiley Pete Publishing, we initiated our region's first ever giving challenge, which raised over \$200,000 for 58 Lexington nonprofits during the 2011 holiday giving season. The challenge did more than provide much-needed support for local nonprofits; it also educated and inspired a whole new generation of local givers.

Giving Cards. The first program of its kind in Kentucky, Giving Cards are the charitable version of retail gift cards. Although they work like retail gift cards, Giving Cards can be redeemed to benefit any 501(c)(3) charity of the recipient's choice. Buyers receive a charitable tax

deduction and recipients redeem cards in their name to support any public charity in the country. Giving cards are also a great alternative to traditional business gifts. To purchase Giving Cards, go to www.bgcf.org.

GoodGiving.net. This free online resource provides consistent, validated data on Kentucky nonprofits. Each online "portrait" provides user-friendly information about an organization's mission, goals, governance and finances. To date, 185 Kentucky nonprofits committed to transparency and accountability have created GoodGiving.net portraits. As a service to the community, Blue Grass Community Foundation is underwriting the cost of this powerful, innovative search engine. Explore GoodGiving.net at www.goodgiving.net.

The Legacy Trail. Blue Grass Community Foundation provided support and forged key partnerships that raised over \$12 million for the development of this nine-mile bike/walking trail through Lexington's most scenic landscapes from downtown Lexington to the Kentucky Horse Park.

Revitalization of Lexington's East End Neighborhood. In 2007, with support from the James S. and John L. Knight

Foundation, we held a series of town meetings that identified revitalization of Lexington's East End – a neighborhood rich in culture and history – as a key priority. Since then, we have partnered with East End residents to:

- support the historic Lyric Theatre renovation
- establish a challenge grant program overseen by a committee of East End constituents
- provide bikes, helmets, and bike safety to East End youth, and
- promote better nutrition and healthier food options through FoodWorks and Seedleaf

The Isaac Murphy Memorial Art Garden, a unique park in the East End neighborhood, which will include public art, commemorating the East End's most celebrated resident, jockey Isaac Murphy.

These projects and others would not have been possible without the vision and commitment of individuals who are passionate about making our community a better place. If you'd like to support a cause you care about, join us. Tell us about your vision. Let us help you achieve it. Together we can make a difference. ♡