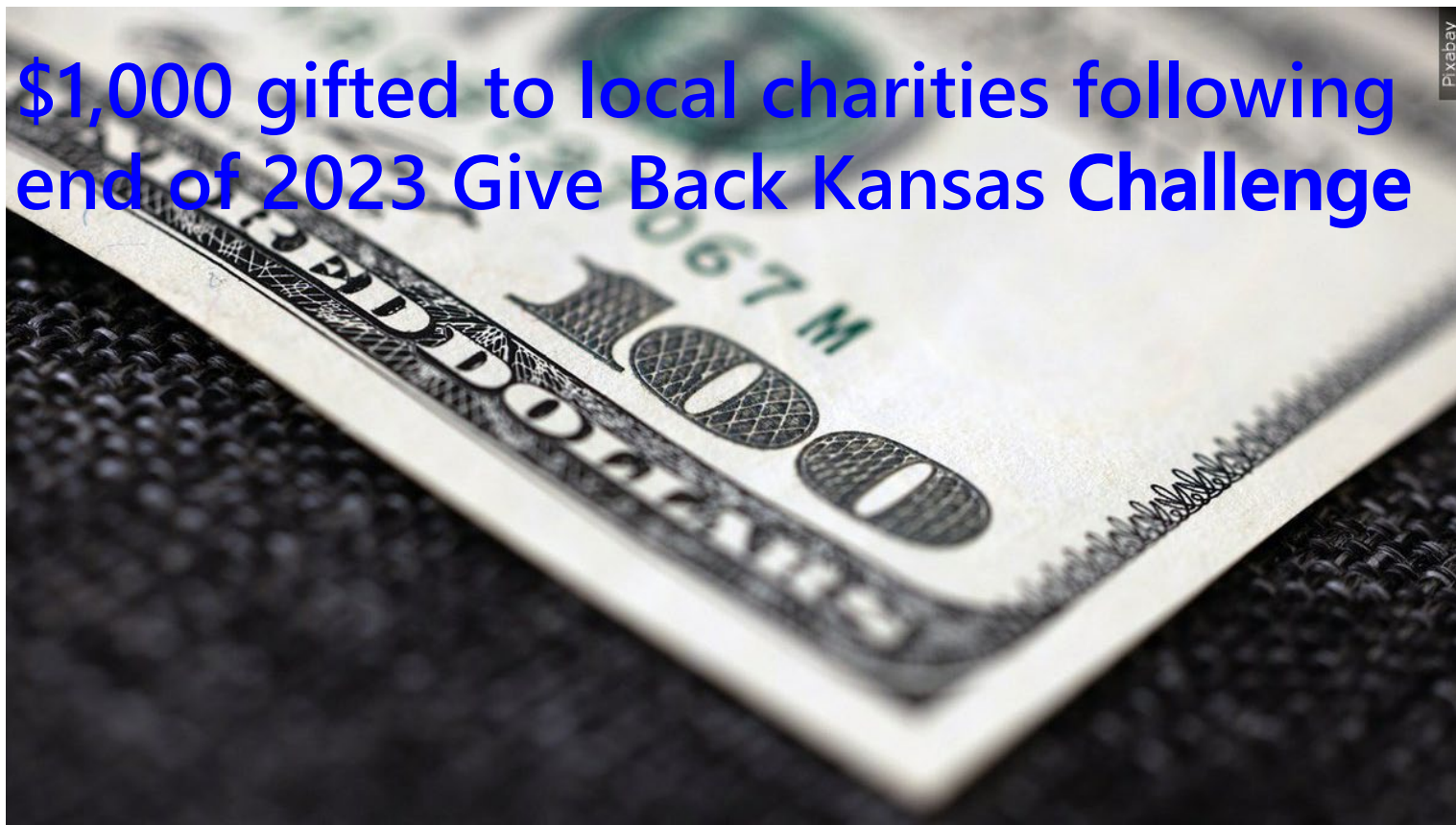


\$1,000 gifted to local charities following end of 2023 Give Back Kansas Challenge



FILE (Pixabay)

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TOPEKA, Kan. (WIBW) - Three organizations have gifted \$1,000 grants to local charities following the end of the 2023 Give Back Kansas volunteer challenge.

The [Kansas State Department of Education](#) says three employers have been dubbed winners of the third annual Give Back Kansas Challenge. Around 16 businesses participated in the 2023 challenge and were put into three categories based on the number of employees in each - small, medium and large.

The winners for 2023 have been announced as follows:

- Small organization - Wichita Festivals, Inc., Wichita
- Medium organization - City of Carbondale
- Large organization - Cloud County Government, Concordia

Officials noted that the challenge is hosted by the Kansas Volunteer Commission and Volunteer Kansas. The 2023 installment ran from April 17 through June 8, 2023, in an attempt to engage Kansans in employer-supported volunteering.

Around 7,092 volunteer hours were completed at multiple organizations by 1,305 employees for an average of 5.43 hours worked per volunteer. In 2022, nearly 2,956 volunteer hours were completed by 790 employees from 10 organizations for an average of 3.74 hours per volunteer.

National membership organization The Independent Sector has reported that each volunteer hour in the Sunflower State is valued at \$28.50 for a total contribution of \$202,122.

“Volunteer Kansas’ goal for the challenge was to engage businesses and their employees in giving back to their communities in service,” said Nola Brown, executive director of Volunteer Kansas. “The challenge is a quadruple win. The employees who participated reaped the personal reward of helping others; the businesses are better known in their communities for corporate caring; multiple organizations benefitted from the helping hands of volunteers; and three charities will receive grants to help them achieve their missions.” Officials said winning employers each named a charity to get a \$1,000 grant from Volunteer Kansas.

Wichita Festivals Inc. accepted the donation for their own nonprofit organization and plans to utilize the funds in their volunteer program. They have more than 9,000 volunteers who help with community events like Riverfest and Autumn & Art.

The City of Carbondale selected Hope Against Hunger Inc., which reduces food insecurity in the community by connecting people with affordable and accessible food resources. The organization also established a clothing closet that provides free clothing in a respectable way.

Cloud County Government selected the Concordia Lions Club. These funds will support Cloud County Community Suppers, which provides a free meal the first two Wednesdays of each month. Volunteers and financial support are two important factors that keep the community suppers going.

“Although the Challenge has concluded, the Commission encourages participating employers to maintain their high commitment to volunteerism”, said Dr. Jessica Dorsey, executive director of the Kansas Volunteer Commission. “Research of employer volunteer programs has shown a positive impact on employee engagement, organizational commitment, job satisfaction and retention.”

For more information about the Kansas Volunteer Commission, click [HERE](#).

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