



The White Cane Foundation

2022

ANNUAL
REPORT

Letter from Executive Director

How did we get here so quickly? We have had a big year at The White Cane Foundation (WCF). In 2019 we began our journey with Belmont Elementary School and to date, we are in seven schools in Lincoln. We have added Lakeview, Norwood Park, Clinton, Prescott, McPhee and Everett schools. Our plan is to add five more schools this next year. We began by giving out one brand new outfit (top, bottom, tennis shoes, socks and underwear and a coat, if needed). For the past six months, each child we see receives two brand new outfits! That has been a game changer for these children and their families. It is with great pride that I also announce we have gifted out 1,000 BOJ's to our kiddos.

This year has shown great support from the many principals and liaisons within the schools who work hard to identify these children in need. We have many new volunteers, donors and board members who give their time and talents to our mission. We currently have two employees who are committed to our mission to gift new clothing to kids so that they can go out into the world to be their very best selves.

What makes our approach special?

We meet with students one on one to provide the best experience possible and ensure the clothing fits properly. We want these children to feel special and the look on their faces as they look at themselves in the mirror is priceless. We strive to be present with this experience with these kiddos and while a new outfit is fleeting, it is the memory that remains.

I have many stories I could tell about experiences I've seen firsthand. We have provided clothing for students who would not attend school because they didn't have properly fitted clothing. The first fitting I had at a new school this last year was for two brothers who were set to get new clothes. The older brother was picking out his shoes and the younger brother comes running into the room and ran straight for me and jumps up into my arms and wraps his legs around my waist in **the biggest hug I have ever received** and he hadn't even seen his clothes yet!

Thank you once again for your continued support. The growth that we have seen can only happen with huge support from others and you have all stepped up and contributed and we are so grateful and humbled by that. From the kiddos, we've seen smiles, skips, high-fives and hugs and we've even heard singing in a tent as a young man was trying on his clothing. This was before he even saw his reflection in the mirror. That is what a donation to WCF is providing.

We are making a difference. When these children become adults they will most likely forget what their outfits looked like, however, they will always remember how they felt. Dr. Seuss said it best: "Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory".

Be the light,
Kelly Lauer, Executive Director.



About the White Cane Foundation

The White Cane Foundation was established in 2019 after an inspiring trip to St. Louis where we witnessed the power of supplying basic needs to school children in high-poverty populations. We looked at Lincoln and were surprised to find the level of need in our schools. Lincoln hides its poverty well, and kids are the first to suffer. The White Cane Foundation was imagined with these needs in mind. To be of service to kids in need and allow them to take advantage of the wonderful opportunities education provides.



How the White Cane Foundation Impacts our Local Community

- We partner with title 1 elementary schools in Lincoln, NE where the majority of students live below the poverty level. We currently serve 7 of the 20 Title 1 Schools.
- Each school has an assigned liaison to identify students in need and submits weekly information about the children selected to The White Cane Foundation.
- Volunteers take the information and make weekly deliveries to the school with supplies we provide. They meet one-on-one with students in The White Cane Foundation “store”, a designed space in every school where selected children can shop, in a place that provides privacy and dignity in a school-designated area
- Each Student receives two pairs of pants and two tops, tennis shoes, socks, underwear, hygiene items, and a coat if needed.
- We encourage and love the students while helping them “shop” and see the pride in their eyes as they walk out the door with their new clothes which we call “Bundles of Joy”.
- Our goal is to be a part of every Title 1 Elementary School in Lincoln.

Mission Statement

The White Cane Foundation is here to provide students with basic needs through a consistent presence. An emphasis will be placed on maintaining the dignity and respect of the individual. Students are empowered to go out in the world with confidence and independence to become their very best self.

Core Values

Act with dignity, grace, and compassion.
Be present.
Bring the joy.
Be open and accepting of others.

Vision Statement

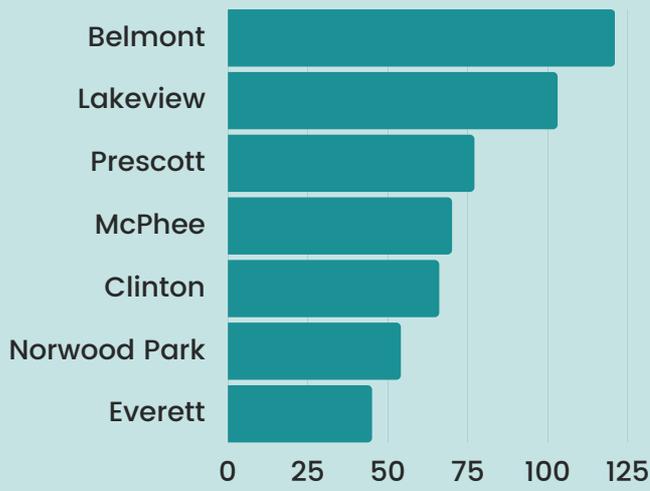
To be the light for every student
with a need.



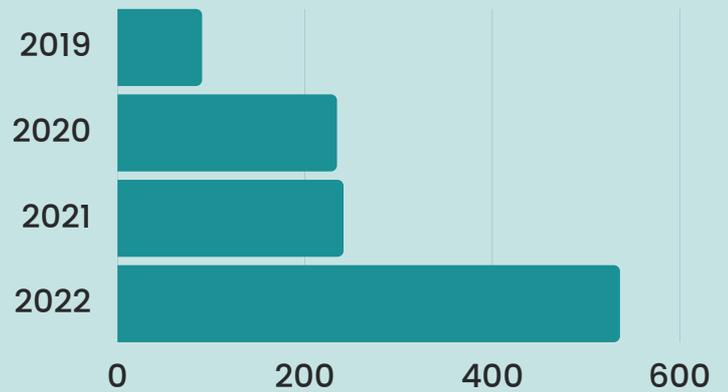
Outcomes and Impact

Each White Cane package includes all new items: two pairs of pants, two tops, two pairs of socks, two pairs of underwear, one pair of shoes, a jacket or coat, and sundry items.

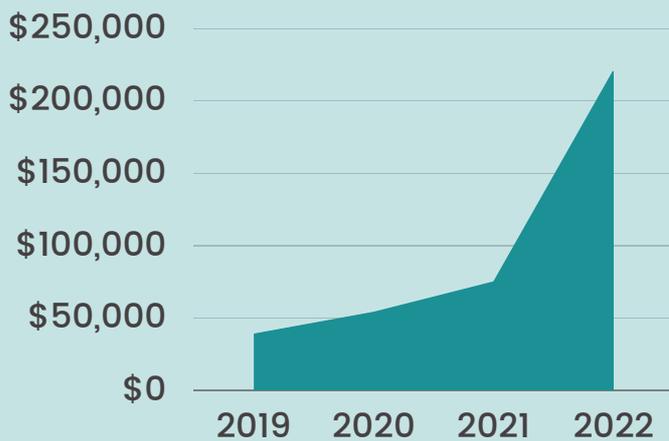
536 Packages Delivered in 2022



Over 1,000 total "Bundle of Joy" Student Packages



\$220,000 raised in 2022



Volunteer Hours



From 20 unique and consistent volunteers



A Year in Review

We added Prescott, Everett and McPhee Elementary Schools.



We received some generous donations from Scheels and 100's of Women Who Care.



We are SO excited to be receiving a check for \$7000 from 100's Women Who Care!

We were one of the recipients of \$100,000 from the Union Bank Big Give.



A Year in Review

We added new board members and an additional staff member.



We hosted our annual Lover of the Light event at Talent Plus this fall!



We created a volunteer training program to help with our significant increase in committed volunteers.

“
Having the opportunity to help these children is just one little piece of good that will hopefully help make the world a better place.
”
WCF Volunteer



The White Cane Foundation Award Recipients



2022 Lover of the Light Award
Deb Gokie



2022 Volunteer of the Year
Cindy Schwaninger



2022 Staff Member of the Year
Samantha Jacobi

The White Cane Foundation Board and Staff

Board Executive Committee Members

Deb Gokie, Board President – VP National Partnerships, The Arthritis Foundation

Stacy Gutschenritter, Board Vice President – Vice President, Union Bank

Doreen Frieauf CPA, Board Treasurer – Doreen K. Frieauf CPA, P.C.

Katie Rhone SPHR, Board Secretary – VP of HERO Development, KARE

Board Members At Large

Quentin Brown – Executive Director, Educare Lincoln

Kara Bunde-Dunn M. Ed – Chief Sales Officer, Slingshot

Paige Gade – Associate Attorney, Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck LLP

Gary Kebbel – Retired Professor, University Of Nebraska Lincoln

Ronesha Love – Service Coordinator Supervisor, Equus Workforce Solutions

Kim Rosenthal – Principal, Belmont Elementary School

Jenny Schroeder – Vice President of Product and Innovation, PrismRBS

Cindy Schwaninger – Retired Director of Elementary Education, LPS

Crystal Wichita – Chief Operating Officer, Cornhusker Bank

David Lauer D.C., Co-Founder – Chiropractor, Havelock Chiropractic

Staff Members

Kelly Lauer, Executive Director

Samantha Jacobi, Volunteer/Inventory Coordinator

Alex Dunn, Staff Member

Kate Gutschenritter, Social Media Manager



Corporate Sponsors

Union Bank & Trust \$100,000 The Big Give Grant



Warehouse Space and In-kind Donations



Be The Light Partners



The Schmieding Foundation, Inc.



Empowerment Partner



Compassionate Partner



Joyful Partners



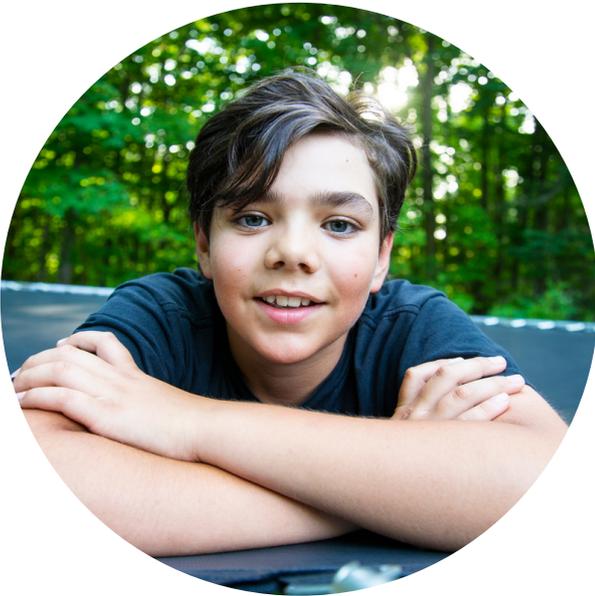
I would love to be someone like you. But I also want to become President so I can build an apartment duplex so I can help the homeless so I was thinking I could do that and be like you, so thanks.

5th Grade student from Belmont



You guys are very good role models and I think somebody will be inspired from all the kindness you have. You may not change the world, but you changed our world.

5th Grade student from Belmont



You don't want someone to be put down just because someone doesn't have certain clothes. You want everyone to have what they need like shampoo, body wash, clothes, food and water.

Arianny, 5th Grade student from Belmont





To learn more about The White Cane Foundation visit us at
www.thewhitecanefoundation.org
hello@thewhitecanefoundation.org