

Hope and A Future



2015-2020 **FIVE YEARS IN REVIEW**

Nevil Speer, Ph.D.

Chair, Board of Directors

Get ready...get set...go!



We believe children don't have to carry permanent scars of growing up in poverty. Through supportive education and mentoring relationships, it's indeed possible to make a lasting difference in children's lives.

With that in mind, The Foundry was started, and exists today, to change the trajectory of the lives of young people in the West End of Bowling Green. At

the same time, we also recognize the importance of simultaneously empowering the families associated with The Foundry, thereby reinforcing the home and school connection. These efforts inherently impact the strength of the entire community.

To date, The Foundry has proven successful in Bowling Green. Our students are flourishing during their time at The Foundry and leaving well prepared to begin kindergarten—an important milestone that would be non-existent without The Foundry. Meanwhile, the vision of The Foundry is still early-stage—many opportunities to make a difference still exist. As such, we continually pursue strategic partnerships within the surrounding community to carry out that broader vision. There is always plenty of need, but with committed people—it's always possible to make a difference!

Terry Daniels, Ph.D.

Executive Director

The Foundry transforms the West End future



The following quote beautifully reflects the passion many have displayed to help The Foundry transform the West End. "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me: I lift my lamp beside the golden door" (Emma Lazarus). When I

reflect upon The Foundry history, I'm grateful for the vision of the Methodist ministry to embark upon this endeavor. It was a vision and love of heart to invest in an area beyond the four walls of their places of worship.

Since the founding days, many hearts have been moved to support the work of The Foundry and transform the West End. Having spent my childhood in The Foundry facility, I'm grateful for the generosity of so many to help "lift a lamp" for our children, families, and the West End community. When I joined The Foundry Board of Directors in 2019, I immediately saw and felt the passion of everyone involved with this precious work.

When a child feels the love and passion of The Foundry experience, I'm reminded of the feeling I had in that same building. In those days, someone gave me a little attention and a glimpse of hope. Since becoming Executive Director, I'm even more excited of the role and impact The Foundry will have upon the West End future. Our long-term strategic plan, accepted by our Board of Directors, fully embraces the role we're to play in transforming the West End. We may not be "the golden door," but we accept the call to be a door to a brighter future in the West End. We will be resilient to fulfill the vision to educate our children, develop future West End leaders, and ultimately lift up the entire community.



The Foundry Christian Community Center

Melanie Llontop, M.Ed.

Education Director

An education can never be taken away



I remember one summer during my college years, my family and I were visiting relatives in Michigan. My uncle was talking to me about my decision to attend college. He told me that there are many things in this world that one can lose, but no one can ever take your education away from you. That really stuck with me.

Another thing that has really stuck with me is The Foundry slogan, "Talent is universal, opportunity is not." I was in the public school system as a high school teacher and administrator for twenty-seven years. I have seen first hand what happens to students who start out a little behind others. As the years go by, the gap becomes wider and wider as they get further behind.

Here at The Foundry our teachers have high expectations for our students, and our students are rising to the occasion. This just goes to show that the talent has always been here. By preparing our preschool students for kindergarten and tutoring our afterschool students, we are giving them the boost they need to be on the same level as others who have had more opportunity.

We are making a difference in the lives of the children of the West End of Bowling Green. We are opening the door to something that will determine their future and can never be taken away from them, an education. This will forever improve their lives and those of their families.

Foundry Programs

Preschool Academy

Educates 68 children (3 and 4 years old) through language-rich play and discovery to ensure kindergarten readiness.

Afterschool Academy

Buses from partner schools bring students to finish homework, have a healthy snack, access technology, and play.

Parent Program

Offers the parents of preschoolers 8-10 learning activities each semester, required in order for their children to attend preschool.

Summer Camp

Supports 60-80 elementary and middle school children living in our neighborhood, allowing them to keep up and catch up.

Soccer and Basketball

The Foundry uses our gym for teams of 7th to 12th graders from the West End to play basketball, and our campus has the only soccer field in the area.

Community Garden

The raised-bed garden at The Foundry is coordinated through 40 volunteers who garden in the West End.

Healthy Foundry

We join with community partners to build a system of health care resources for our children and families, through funding from the Good Samaritan Foundation. This foundation supports the bridge to our health and wellness program.



The West End Soccer Field

3,437
live in poverty in our
neighborhood



We love
our neighbors

Find a Model That Works and Implement

Across the railroad tracks from Western Kentucky University, you will find a high-poverty neighborhood in walking distance of campus, roughly 4 square miles in area where over 1,300 children under the age of 18 are living in poverty.

Yes, in Bowling Green!

Each year over 200 of these children enter kindergarten at Dishman-McGinnis, Parker-Bennett-Curry or Warren Elementary. Statistics show that only 48% of children who live in poverty are ready for kindergarten. Research shows that children from low-income homes add words to their vocabulary more slowly than their peers. The difference by age 3 is a gap of 30 million less words heard! A life of always being behind leads to greater incidences of school dropouts, incarceration, and intergenerational poverty.

We adopted the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) model which over 30 years has proven successful

In 2014 a delegation from the public schools, The Foundry Board, and local supporters went to Harlem to see the widely recognized work of HCZ and came away with a plan to create similar programs in Bowling Green.



“Poor communities bear the brunt of hard times disproportionately, and it is imperative that we not only continue, but accelerate our fight against poverty.”

Stanley Drunkenmiller
Chair, Harlem Children's Zone



What's in a Name?

John Wesley, the “father” of Methodism, leased an abandoned cannon factory in England and called it “The Foundry.” It served as a ministry center for the poor. The early Methodists used their “Foundry” to distribute food and clothing, help people start small businesses, tutor school children, teach literacy programs for adults and host free medical and dental clinics. Our Foundry continues that tradition with a focus of serving the most vulnerable in our neighborhood, the children.



389

children under age 5 live in poverty in our neighborhood



We love to partner

We Share the Same Vision

In 2015, the United Way of Southern Kentucky released its groundbreaking strategic plan with the audacious goal to increase kindergarten readiness from 49.4% to 75% by 2020! At the same time, The Foundry Preschool Academy opened its doors with the goal of ensuring that the most vulnerable of our population in Warren County were kindergarten ready.

This five year partnership between the United Way of Southern Kentucky (UWSKY) and The Foundry Christian Community Center was launched in 2016 when the United Way funded one classroom at The Foundry (and based on our success rate of over 90% K-ready) the UWSKY has continued to fund a Foundry classroom every year. As a result of this investment, 50 children who would NOT have entered our public schools ready for kindergarten have excelled at Dishman-McGinnis, Parker-Bennett-Curry and Warren Elementary.

Early childhood research indicates that intervening when a child is very young can make all the difference in a child's future as

40% are less likely to drop out of high school

80% of brain development occurs between birth and five years of age

This partnership is committed to making sure that every child entering one of our three partnered public elementary schools is ready to learn on the first day of school.



The Born Learning Trail



The Born Learning Trail helps adults and young children explore and learn together, offering activities that build language and thinking skills fundamental to a child's success in school and in life.



We love
to learn



1,313
children under age 18 live
in poverty in our neighborhood

We Share the Same Goals

Since the initial planning stages, The Foundry had a desire to connect with the children and families of the West End. Since the Warren County and Bowling Green City Schools also played prominent roles in the West End community, the Board for The Foundry sought a partnership with the school systems.



Partnering with Bowling Green City Schools

Susan McCloud, former Education Director for The Foundry, met with the principals at Parker-Bennett-Curry and Dishman-McGinnis Elementary Schools to discuss how they could work together to help preschool students better prepare for kindergarten. Each of these schools enrolled preschool students for half a day, either morning or afternoon. What if The Foundry taught the preschool students the remaining half of each day, giving the students twice as much instructional time?



Bowling Green City Schools offered to provide transportation and began busing their preschool students to The Foundry for the other half of each day. This opened the door for twenty students to receive further instruction toward their goal of kindergarten readiness. An additional preschool class has been added at The Foundry every year since 2015, and The Foundry now has one preschool class made up entirely of students from the city school system.

“Our partnership with Bowling Green City Schools allows their preschoolers to attend class four full days a week, doubling the time they were getting.”

Melanie Llontop
Education Director, The Foundry

The Foundry’s Education Director, Melanie Llontop said, “Our partnership with Bowling Green City Schools allows their preschoolers to attend class four full days a week, doubling the time they were getting. It also allows us to serve our K-6 afterschool program for some much-needed tutoring. Many of them come from homes where the parents don’t speak English and may have limited formal education themselves limiting their ability to help their children with school work.”

Partnering with Warren County Schools

Beginning in 2016, The Foundry received funding through an early childhood grant program with the Kentucky Department of Education’s Preschool Partnership Program, cementing what is now an ongoing partnership with The Foundry.



Ms. Alyssa Benton teaches the Warren County Elementary School classroom that is housed at The Foundry. Students come to Ms. Benton’s class for a full day of instruction four days each week. Since most of the schools don’t have enough room for preschool students to come all day four days a week, Ms. Benton has seen the impact this opportunity has had on students.

“Having four full days of preschool each week helps the students really learn with their classmates and get the feel of them operating as a family,” Ms. Benton said.



When these three-year-olds enter the four-year-old class, I can see how that extra year of preschool at age three helped tremendously with any developmental delays.

Alyssa Benton
Preschool Teacher, WCPS

The grant also encouraged preschool classes for three-year-olds, who are learning socialization at this age. “When these three-year-olds enter the four-year-old class, I can see how that extra year of preschool at age three helped tremendously with any developmental delays and has brought a lot of maturity into the students,” Ms. Benton said.

Last year, Ms. Benton said that approximately three out of sixteen spoke English as their first language. To manage this challenge, Mrs. Benton learned a few words in other languages to help her students learn English, and they also learned words creatively by drawing, acting out scenarios, and turning to Google. Despite so many of the students being unfamiliar with English, Ms. Benton stressed, “All children at age three and four are learning language.”



A young child with short dark hair is smiling broadly while holding onto a green vertical pole at a playground. The child is wearing a white t-shirt with a green graphic that says "LIFE IS" and red shorts. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a large orange structure on the right.

1,510
children have attended
a program at The Foundry



We love
to play

A Community that Plays Together Stays Together

The Foundry through its partnership with Bowling Green Parks and Recreation houses the West End's only soccer field providing a venue for health and wellness. The Foundry also uses the field for the annual Easter Egg hunt, and other sports and games. The U.S. Tennis Association has also donated its curriculum to The Foundry.

The Foundry has land that is used as a community garden for over 40 community gardeners. The response to the gardening program these past five years has been outstanding. Colorful tomatoes, beans, corn, and other nutrient-rich vegetables have been filling up the dinner tables. Parents, brothers, and sisters can often be found working together as a family on their plot of the garden.

The Foundry has been the home to the community's Trunk-or-Treat program for several years now, as well as the Valentines Dance.

Summer can be detrimental for low-income students who, on average, lose two months in reading achievement and math computation skills. To prevent learning loss that increases the education gap for children in poverty, The Foundry provides a summer Enrichment Camp for five weeks.



"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)



Preschool Academy
5-Stars since 2018
Afterschool Academy
5-Stars since 2018



We love
to plan

The Foundry Strategic Plan



Mission

Our Mission is to lay the foundation for future leaders to serve our community from the West End of Bowling Green through education, health and wellness, and spiritual development.

Vision

Our Vision is for The Foundry Christian Community Center to build sustainable redemptive partnerships around children and families in the West End of Bowling Green. Within 3.4 square miles of The Foundry we work to bring about the revitalization and transformation of the community.

Principles

Education Focus: We will forge strong federal, state, and local partnerships, as well as partner with our local schools in order to support their work with young people. Our efforts and activities will primarily emphasize early childhood education. We will strive for excellence in delivery of our services and the cultivation of relationships, with constant progress monitoring in all areas to ensure the success of every individual and the organization.

Family Engagement and Partnerships Focus: We seek to empower individuals, families, and community members with the skills needed to affect change in their own communities through strategic engagement and partnerships.

Children and Poverty Focus: We seek to help children escape the damaging effects of poverty, through supportive education and mentor relationships. We recognize that diversity is a strength and will seek to involve all people as active participants in community learning. Thriving communities cultivate mutual respect and human dignity, sharing both its responsibilities and celebrations.

- 2010**
 - The Boys' Club Building at 531 W 11st is purchased
 - Board development/Early neighborhood association
- 2012**
 - Launched summer camps for neighborhood
- 2013**
 - Visited The Harlem Children's Zone
- 2014**
 - A task force team was formed to study the feasibility of launching a preschool program
 - Launched Annual Easter Egg Hunt with BUMC
- 2015**
 - Launched two Foundry preschool classrooms
 - Launched after school program
 - Launched soccer program
 - Launched Community Garden
- 2016**
 - Launched a third preschool classroom funded by a Preschool Partnership Grant through the Kentucky Department of Education.
 - Added WCPS preschool classroom
 - Parent involvement policies/requirements were solidified. This include the first ever Valentine's Dance
 - Launched Trunk-or-Treat
- 2017**
 - Added fourth preschool classroom
 - Launched Basketball Program
- 2019**
 - Added fifth preschool classroom
- 2020**
 - Pandemic - Distance Learning
 - Foundry reopens with 50 students
- 2021**
 - Request for an Early Start Program for one hundred 1-3 year olds



*If you plan for one year,
...plant rice.*

*If you plan for ten years,
...plant trees.*

*If you plan for one hundred years,
...teach.*

Chinese Proverb

1,523
donors support
The Foundry



We love
our donors



DONORS TO THE FOUNDRY

2015-2020

Donor levels are based on cumulative giving during fiscal years 2015 through 2020, from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2020. In addition to these wonderful donors who have given \$5,000 and more to The Foundry, we have been blessed to have 683 donors who have given from \$1 to \$4,999 for the same period. So many people care about the children and families we serve — and we are so thankful!

\$250,000 AND ABOVE

David Chandler
South Central District of the United Methodist Church

\$100,000 - \$249,999

Darrell and Gail Calvert
John Holland
United Way of Southern Kentucky
Confidential

\$25,000 - \$99,999

Broadway United Methodist Church
Christ United Methodist Church
Good Samaritan Foundation
John Higgins, Bluegrass Supply Chain Services, LLC
Juanita Hire
Linda Ellis Johnson
Kentucky Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church
Ann Pfisterer
Van Meter Contracting, Inc.
Anne Marie, Maclaine and Christiaan Volkert

\$5,000 - \$24,999

Jeannie and Danny Atwood
Sonja and Jim Blatchford
Gail and Gary Broady
Linda and Rich Cantrell
Anndee and Scott Crutcher
Phil Cunningham
Deana and Todd Douglas
Early Learning Center Broadway United Methodist Church
Fee Family Foundation
A.E.B. Inc., Gunn
Melanie and Frank Iannuzzi

Chris and Ken Jacobs
St. James United Methodist Church
Kiwanis Club of Bowling Green
Donna and Carol Lee
Eva and Jim Martens
Michelle and Richard McGahan
Mallory and Trapper Pendleton
Kim and Michael Simpson
Jan and Buster Stewart
Sandra and Nevil Speer
State Street United Methodist Church
Mark VanMeter
Evelyn and Gene Vaughn
Don Vitale
Vitale Family Fund
Wells Fargo Foundation
Women's Fund of South Central Kentucky

GOVERNMENT FUNDERS

Bowling Green Independent School District
Bowling Green Parks & Recreation
City of Bowling Green
Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services
Kentucky Department of Education
Kentucky Governor's Office of Early Childhood
United States Department of Agriculture
Warren County Public Schools

GIFTS-IN-KIND

Boys Scouts of America
Habitat for Humanity
Hillvue Heights Church
Journey Church
WKU School of Nursing



AARON'S STORY

I had to chuckle when I received Aaron's Brigance (kindergarten readiness scores). His teachers' comments were glowing – giving such remarks as "outstanding student." His Brigance score was 92/100, which was one of the highest in the class. My mind quickly drifted back to the opening of school last fall.

Aaron came to Mrs. Melanie's class – but he didn't want to be there. He had to be pulled from the arms of his mother and given over to someone he was supposed to love and trust immediately. He, like a lot of kids, threw a screaming fit – but the difference for him was that he never stopped

crying. The staff at our school tried numerous things, but nothing worked. Aaron would not stop crying, and he cried for nine weeks without ceasing. In addition to this crying, Aaron was more anxious when he didn't have a piece of dirty foam that he brought from home that he held and rubbed while he cried.

Thanks to a wonderful working relationship with Bowling Green Independent Schools, we had access to preschool experts that guided us every step of the way towards Aaron's success. They determined that he would need an evaluation for special services.

Slowly but surely, through continuing efforts and love and prayer, Aaron began to become invested in the class. He started recalling and naming all his letters and numbers, along with learning shapes and solving puzzles. One day, right out of the blue, the dirty piece of foam disappeared, and it was replaced with hugs for his teachers.

Eventually, the evaluation for special services was completed, and he qualified for public preschool at age 3. Aaron was able to attend public preschool for half the day and then attend The Foundry for the other half of the day. He loved preschool, and it became the best of both worlds for him.

Through all of this, Aaron's mom began to share with us that she had dropped out of school and didn't drive. That is why she

walked him to The Foundry every day. She was also consumed with anxiety and guilt from the embarrassment when her past came to light. Sometimes, as parents, we find the hardest tasks are the ones we know must be done. She wanted the very best for her son...but how to get that for him was beyond her.

The Foundry has helped her overcome her fears and learn to become a proactive mom. She has learned how to speak on her son's behalf, especially when it comes to school. Aaron's mom said, "When The Foundry staff accompanies me to school meetings, I know that things will come out well."



Susan McCloud
Former Education Director, The Foundry

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