

Contact: Kate Cherry
Director of Communications & Public Engagement
803-978-7816 | kate@yourfoundation.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

\$358,000 in Connected Communities Grants Awarded to 12 Midlands Nonprofits

Columbia, S.C. – Mar. 25, 2026 – Central Carolina Community Foundation announces the award of \$358,000 in Connected Communities grants to 12 Midlands nonprofits. The grants awarded this year will leverage at least \$97,600 in matching funds, expanding healthcare access, strengthening neighborhood safety, and creating new job opportunities. Connected Communities is the Foundation’s largest annual competitive grant program focused on the Midlands.

With this new round of grants, the Foundation surpasses \$18 million in total annual grantmaking since the start of the fiscal year on July 1, 2025, resulting in more than 2,415 grants and scholarships awarded to date. Central Carolina Community Foundation supports nonprofits through open competitive grant opportunities, like the Connected Communities grant program, as well as through donor advised funds that enable local philanthropists to give back through the Foundation.

“The Connected Communities grantees reflect our commitment to investing in projects that strengthen quality of life across the Midlands,” said Trimease Carter, Director of Community Investment at Central Carolina Community Foundation. “Each of these initiatives plays an important role in creating vibrant, welcoming, and connected communities. From expanding access to healthcare and housing to enhancing recreational spaces and the arts, we’re proud to support organizations that are making a meaningful difference and helping local communities thrive.”

The 2026 Connected Communities grantees and their projects are:

Access to Healthcare Facilities & Services

- **MedNeed of SC:** Providing free medical equipment for uninsured &/or low-income residents across the state
- **Our Place of Hope:** Bringing a community-driven, recovery-oriented program to bring hope to those living with mental illness
- **United Way of the Midlands:** Providing relocation of WellPartners Dental & Eye clinic, which is free for uninsured & low-income residents

Safe, Proximal, High-Quality Recreational Areas

- **Fairfield County School District Education Foundation:** Building a park for residents in an educator-only housing community
- **Palmetto Conservation Foundation:** Creating trails & community spaces near the Broad River & existing Alston Trailhead
- **Senior Resources, Inc.:** Expanding access & engagement for senior-involved programs at The Lourie Center

Safe Places to Live & Work

- **Crosswell Home for Children:** Implementing CarePortal Sumter to support at-risk children & families

Quality Arts & Cultural Events

- **Richland County Public Library:** Providing reading challenges & community events through the “Broader Bookshelf” program
- **South Carolina Philharmonic:** Providing a week of free concerts & events to Cayce & West Columbia through the “Music in My Neighborhood” program
- **Sumter Museum:** Hosting a free series of classical music concerts at Temple Sinai Jewish History Center with Jewish traditions & Holocaust-related themes

Affordable Housing

- **Midlands Housing Alliance:** Modernizing the elevator at Transitions Homeless Center for safe & ADA-compliant access

Quality Job Opportunities

- **South Carolina Community Health Worker Association:** Helping under-employed men become Certified Community Health Workers through the “Men Reaching Men” initiative

“It was a privilege to serve on this year’s grant review committee,” said Susan Cotter, Central Carolina Community Foundation Board Member and Chief External Relations Officer at the USC Business Partnership Foundation. “Behind every proposal is a story — people working to improve health and stability, create welcoming spaces, expand access to the arts, and strengthen the fabric of our communities. It is inspiring to see the care and creativity so many organizations bring to serving others, and I’m proud to support efforts that help our region thrive.”

The newest round of grants is made possible through the Foundation’s Community Impact Fund and other field of interest funds. Those who feel inspired to make a difference can contribute to the Community Impact Fund and other funds at YourFoundation.org.

###

About Central Carolina Community Foundation

Central Carolina Community Foundation connects and mobilizes people and resources to strengthen our community. The Foundation partners with donors to turn their passions into meaningful impact through charitable funds, strategic giving, and support for nonprofit organizations across the Midlands (Calhoun, Clarendon, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lee, Lexington, Newberry, Orangeburg, Richland, Saluda, and Sumter) and beyond. Through grants, partnerships, and community leadership, the Foundation advances solutions that address the region’s most pressing challenges. Founded in 1984, Central Carolina Community Foundation has awarded more than \$305 million in grants and is home to more than 500 charitable funds totaling over \$275 million.