

Agenda



WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6

3:30 PM – 5:30 PM

REGISTRATION DESK OPEN

Participant check-in at this earlier time is optional.

 *Front Lobby, The Student Center*

THURSDAY, AUGUST 7

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

REGISTRATION DESK OPEN

Participant check-in

 *Front Lobby, The Student Center*

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

NETWORKING BREAKFAST

 *Gym, The Student Center*

8:00 AM – 11:30 AM

HELP DESK OPEN

Practice your elevator speech or ask general questions.

 *Cafeteria, The Student Center*

9:00 AM – 9:15 AM

PLENARY SESSION

Welcome and opening remarks

 *Gym, The Student Center*

9:15 AM – 10:15 AM

PLENARY SESSION

The art of storytelling

Telling your story can build trust, spark support for your organization, and strengthen your connection to the community. This plenary session will give you a simple, effective framework for sharing your impact.

SPEAKER EDDY SMITH, THARSEO GROUP

 *Gym, The Student Center*

10:15 AM – 10:30 AM

NETWORKING BREAK



 **Meet Mike Fernandez**

A proud Texan, Fernandez is a community bank leader focused on guiding customers on their financial journeys and maximizing the benefits to all Texas National Bank stakeholders through sound management and progressive decision making. Fernandez also serves as a trustee and director of The Meadows Foundation.



 **Meet Eddy Smith**

For more than 25 years, Smith has served as a change agent for companies, higher education, and nonprofits. Eddy is a strategic guide, facilitating organizations and individuals to plan with courage and lead with clarity.

Agenda



THURSDAY, AUGUST 7 (continued)

10:30 AM – 11:15 AM BREAKOUT SESSIONS BLOCK 1

+ From reactive to proactive: strategic development practices

Learn to cultivate resilience by diversifying revenue streams, implementing strategic development planning, environmental scanning, and budget flexibility. Explore practical tools that will help your organization thrive.

SPEAKERS LAUREN ANDERSON, THE UNLESS GROUP
CHRISTINE CURTIS-CARR, CURTIS-CARR CONSULTING

 Room 102, Graphics Building

+ Marketing is a contact sport

From first down to touchdown, what are the best communication strategies for your marketing playbook? Each organization is unique, and in this session participants will explore trending tactics and helpful resources.

SPEAKER EMERALD CASSIDY, COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

 Room 103, Graphics Building

+ No money, no mission

Master the basics, such as financial statements, budgets, internal controls, and audits. Learn what your reports say about your nonprofit (whether intended or not) and how to anticipate questions from funders. Bring your questions!

SPEAKER MICHELLE D. MONSE, M2 FOUNDATION SERVICES

 Room 104, Graphics Building

11:15 AM – 11:30 AM NETWORKING BREAK

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM PLENARY SESSION

Planting seeds for tomorrow

Leverage estate planning to build long-term sustainability to support your nonprofit's mission. Learn the basics of planned giving, how to start conversations with donors, and strategies tailored to rural communities.

SPEAKER KATIE ALFORD, COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

 Gym, The Student Center



 **Meet Lauren Anderson**

Anderson's passion for seeing communities thrive has led to a diverse fundraising background. From Giving Days to infrastructure federal grants, she has helped numerous nonprofit agencies reach their goals.



 **Meet Christine Curtis-Carr**

An experienced executive director now working as principal in her consulting firm, Curtis-Carr helps nonprofits transform their big ideas into funded realities with strategic grant writing and infrastructure building.



 **Meet Katie Alford**

Having 20 years of Foundation experience, Alford leads the Community Foundation of Abilene. In her tenure, assets have reached \$210M+ and cumulative grantmaking \$200M+.

Agenda



THURSDAY, AUGUST 7 (continued)

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM NETWORKING LUNCH

Gym, The Student Center

1:00 PM – 1:30 PM NETWORKING BREAK

1:30 PM – 2:15 PM BREAKOUT SESSIONS BLOCK 2

+ Sustainable grant writing

Participants in this session will explore the principles of sustainable grant writing, focusing on how to create compelling narratives that resonate with funders while demonstrating the impact of their programs.

SPEAKERS LAUREN ANDERSON, THE UNLESS GROUP
CHRISTINE CURTIS-CARR, CURTIS-CARR CONSULTING

Room 102, Graphics Building

+ Evaluating and communicating impact

Whether you're preparing reports, applying for funding, or simply looking to better understand and communicate your value, this session will help you move from collecting data to demonstrating and sharing your impact through storytelling.

SPEAKER COLTON STRAWSER, COLTON STRAWSER CONSULTING

Room 104, Graphics Building

+ 1st Annual BBQ Clay Shoot Gala-thon

RSVP to this session if your organization is thinking about hosting a special event. From luncheons to galas, online events like giving days or outdoor activities like golf tournaments, this session is a candid conversation on it all!

SPEAKERS EMERALD CASSIDY, COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
MISTI COLLIER, COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Room 103, Graphics Building

* for our Funders

+ Regional outlook on rural initiatives

Learn about the Foundation's rural grantmaking initiative, featuring rural insights from one of its award recipients.

SPEAKERS MEAGAN HARRIS, COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
BRITTANY WILLIAMS, COLLEGIATE EDU-NATION

Boardroom, Lance Sears Building



Meet Emerald Cassidy

With 15 years of experience, Cassidy specializes in marketing, branding, news media, and public relations. Her work involves storytelling of the Community Foundation of Abilene's impact through multichannel communication strategies.



Meet Misti Collier

New to Foundations after 18 years in banking, Collier has a track record of stewarding donors, nonprofits, and businesses. Collier leads the Foundation's annual giving day, Abilene Gives, which raised \$2.3M this year.



Meet Meagan Harris

Harris has worked in grantmaking for eight years. Since 2022, her focus at the Foundation has been on empowering rural communities through strategic funding and program development.

Agenda



THURSDAY, AUGUST 7 (continued)

2:15 PM – 2:30 PM NETWORKING BREAK

2:30 PM – 3:15 PM BREAKOUT SESSIONS BLOCK 3

+ Sustainable grant writing

Participants in this session will explore the principles of sustainable grant writing, focusing on how to create compelling narratives that resonate with funders while demonstrating the impact of their programs.

SPEAKERS LAUREN ANDERSON, THE UNLESS GROUP
CHRISTINE CURTIS-CARR, CURTIS-CARR CONSULTING

Room 102, Graphics Building

+ Governance essentials for nonprofit boards

An engaged and effective board is critical to the success of any nonprofit. This session explores roles and responsibilities, recruitment and onboarding, best practices, and how to foster a culture of accountability and collaboration.

SPEAKER COLTON STRAWSER, COLTON STRAWSER CONSULTING

Room 104, Graphics Building

+ Strategic planning

Whether you are creating a new plan or refining an old one, the basics in this session will give you what you need for successful planning and keeping your organization focused and ready for what's next.

SPEAKER EDDY SMITH, THARSEO GROUP

Room 103, Graphics Building

* for our Funders

+ Not just hammers and nails

When nonprofits are struggling financially to meet growing community needs, funders can reach for additional tools. This session will cover non-grant approaches to achieving foundations' missions while helping their communities.

SPEAKER MICHELLE D. MONSE, M2 FOUNDATION SERVICES

Boardroom, Lance Sears Building



Meet Brittany Williams

Williams seeks to revitalize rural Texas by working to align rural school districts, higher education institutions, and businesses to instill a will to be lifelong learners in students and produce a more viable workforce while helping to sustain rural communities.



Meet Colton Strawser, Ph.D.

Founder and president of his nonprofit consulting practice, Strawser is a philanthropic coach helping organizations develop the data, funding, and leadership skills necessary to influence change.



Meet Michelle D. Monse

Retired after 20 years with the King Foundation in Dallas, Texas, Monse is now the acting principal of M2 Foundation Services, an agency supporting nonprofit capacity building and fund development.

3:15 PM – 3:30 PM NETWORKING BREAK

Agenda



THURSDAY, AUGUST 7 (continued)

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

NETWORKING SOCIAL

Graze and gather

A Windham Fund grant recipient, the National Wasp WWII Museum is host to SPUR's conference after hours event. Take a tour, enjoy complimentary sips and bites, and continue making connections. Parking available on-site.

National WASP WWII Museum
210 Avenger Field Rd, Sweetwater, TX 79556
waspmuseum.org • 325-235-0099



Meet Dr. Kelty Garbee

Dr. Garbee serves as Executive Director of Texas Rural Funders and has more than 20 years of experience with nonprofits, state government, and philanthropy. Her passion for ensuring equity and access in rural Texas is fueled by her upbringing in the Blue Ridge Mountains in Lynchburg, Virginia, and her work in communities across Texas.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 8

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

HELP DESK OPEN

Practice your elevator speech or ask general questions.

Cafeteria, The Student Center

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM

NETWORKING BREAKFAST

Seminar room, The Student Center



Meet Evan Wolstencroft

Wolstencroft has over a decade of experience working with philanthropy and nonprofits. Prior to joining Texas Rural Funders, he was the Deputy Director of Development for Educate Texas at Communities Foundation of Texas.

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM

PLENARY SESSION

Mobilizing philanthropy to strengthen rural Texas

Meet Texas Rural Funders, an organization helping funders generate resources and attention toward rural communities. Honoring, strengthening, and preserving rural communities, because when they succeed, Texas as a whole succeeds.

SPEAKERS DR. KELTY GARBEE, TEXAS RURAL FUNDERS
EVAN WOLSTENCROFT, TEXAS RURAL FUNDERS

Seminar room, The Student Center

**** Funders welcome to join***

9:30 AM – 9:45 AM

NETWORKING BREAK

Agenda

FRIDAY, AUGUST 8 *(continued)*

9:45 AM – 12:00 PM

FUNDER ROUNDTABLES

Nonprofit and funder sessions

Representatives from funding organizations and nonprofit organizations will have an opportunity to meet face to face to discuss whether there are possible matches between the funder's giving or grant priorities, and the nonprofit's needs.

Funders will be seated at tables in the seminar room. Each roundtable session will be about 20 minutes long, followed by a short interval to enable nonprofits to move to a *different* or *next scheduled* table. There will be up to five rotations over the course of the morning.

 Seminar room, The Student Center

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

NETWORKING LUNCH

 Seminar room, The Student Center

1:00 PM

CONFERENCE ADJOURNED

Thank you, sponsors

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