

2022

YEAR IN REVIEW



**HEARTLAND
FORWARD**

AN INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMIC RENEWAL

We are a nonpartisan, nonprofit “think and do tank” focused on improving the economic performance in the center of the United States by advocating for fact-based solutions to foster job creation, knowledge-based and inclusive growth, and improved health outcomes. Heartland Forward is based in Bentonville, Arkansas, but our work focuses on the entire heartland region which is comprised of 20 states.

Our four areas of focus are:



Innovation and entrepreneurship



Human capital and workforce development



Health and wellness

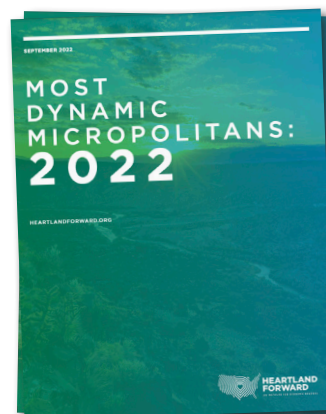


Regional competitiveness

RESEARCH

Over the course of 2022, Heartland Forward released cutting-edge research. The scope of research ranged from how to improve health outcomes in rural communities, to developing strong talent pipelines, ranking the most dynamic metros and micros in the U.S. and more. Most importantly, each report is heartland-centric and emphasizes solutions for policymakers to advance our communities.

2022 RESEARCH



2022 BLOGS



SURPRISE AND DELIGHT: NATIONAL RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Heartland Forward's *Research to Renewal: Advancing University Tech Transfer* [report](#) was featured during the primetime Florida vs Georgia football game in October, 2022.



Forbes

July 17, 2022

EDUCATION

New College Ranking Of Technology Transfer Has A Surprise Number Two

By Derek Newton



“With so many people wanting to say such negative things about our colleges and universities so often, getting the public to think, even for a moment, about the indispensable roles that these institutions play is important. That makes this particular list a real value.”

Pfizer cited our [report](#), *\$438 billion: Economic Savings Spurred by the COVID-19 Vaccines during their 2021 Q4 earnings report.*

COVID-19 Vaccinations: U.S. Patient and Economic Estimated Impact

Public Health Impact

>1 Million

Deaths prevented

As of December 2021, more than 1 million deaths have been prevented by COVID-19 vaccination among vaccinated people.⁽¹⁾

(1) Commonwealth Fund, December 2021



>10 Million

Hospitalizations prevented

More than 10 million hospitalizations have been prevented by COVID-19 vaccination among vaccinated people.⁽¹⁾ For vaccinated people, severe COVID-19-associated outcomes or death were rare.⁽²⁾

(1) Commonwealth Fund, December 2021
(2) Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) | CDC



Economic Impact



\$438B

Savings for the economy in 2021

COVID-19 vaccinations contributed to creating an estimated economic savings of \$438 billion in terms of 2021 U.S. real Gross Domestic Product gain, lessening the economic impact of the pandemic.⁽³⁾

(3) Heartland Forward, December 2021



2.3%

of 2021 U.S. real GDP

Assuming the 2021 U.S. real GDP to be \$19,416.17 billion⁽³⁾, the effect of COVID-19 vaccinations represented up to 2.3% of 2021 U.S. real GDP.

(3) Heartland Forward, December 2021

COMIRNATY: ~6 Out of 10 Doses Administered in U.S.⁽⁴⁾



Fourth Quarter 2021 Earnings

(4) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, February 2022, section "U.S. COVID-19 Vaccine Administration by Vaccine Type" accessed February 6, 2022. 58.7% of doses, or ~6 out of 10 doses, calculated as the number of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine doses administered, divided by the total number of doses administered of any COVID-19 vaccine. COMIRNATY (COVID-19 Vaccine, mRNA) is also known as the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine.

7

COMMUNITY GROWTH PROGRAM

Powered by Heartland Forward, the **Community Growth Program** is aimed at turning entrepreneurs' (we call them Builders!) ideas into reality.

Builders undergo a 90-day program that includes a 45-day Bootcamp to teach participants how to put ideas into action, followed by 45 days of actively executing their ideas through experiments with access of up to \$5,000 to use.

324 BUILDERS ACROSS 16 COMMUNITIES

Oxford, MS

- Oxford-Lafayette Chamber Foundation
- The City of Oxford
- Lafayette County
- The University of Mississippi

Iowa City, IA

- Iowa City Area Development Group

Tulsa, OK

- George Kaiser Family Foundation

Oklahoma City, OK

- Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce
- Inasmuch Foundation

Joplin, MO

- MOKAN Partnership
- Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce
- Arvest Bank-Joplin

Pine Bluff, AR

- Go Forward Pine Bluff
- Walton Family Foundation

Northwest Arkansas

- Walton Family Foundation

Grand Rapids, SD

- Elevate Rapid City

Helena-West Helena, AR

- Walton Family Foundation

Clarksdale, MS

- Walton Family Foundation

Duluth, MN

- Office of Mayor Emily Larson
- Northland Foundation
- Duluth Chamber of Commerce

Fort Worth, TX

- University of North Texas, Health Science Center at Fort Worth
- John Peter Smith Hospital

Durant, OK

- Durant Industrial Authority

Eastern Shawnee Tribe, OK

- Eastern Shawnee Tribe

Fargo, ND

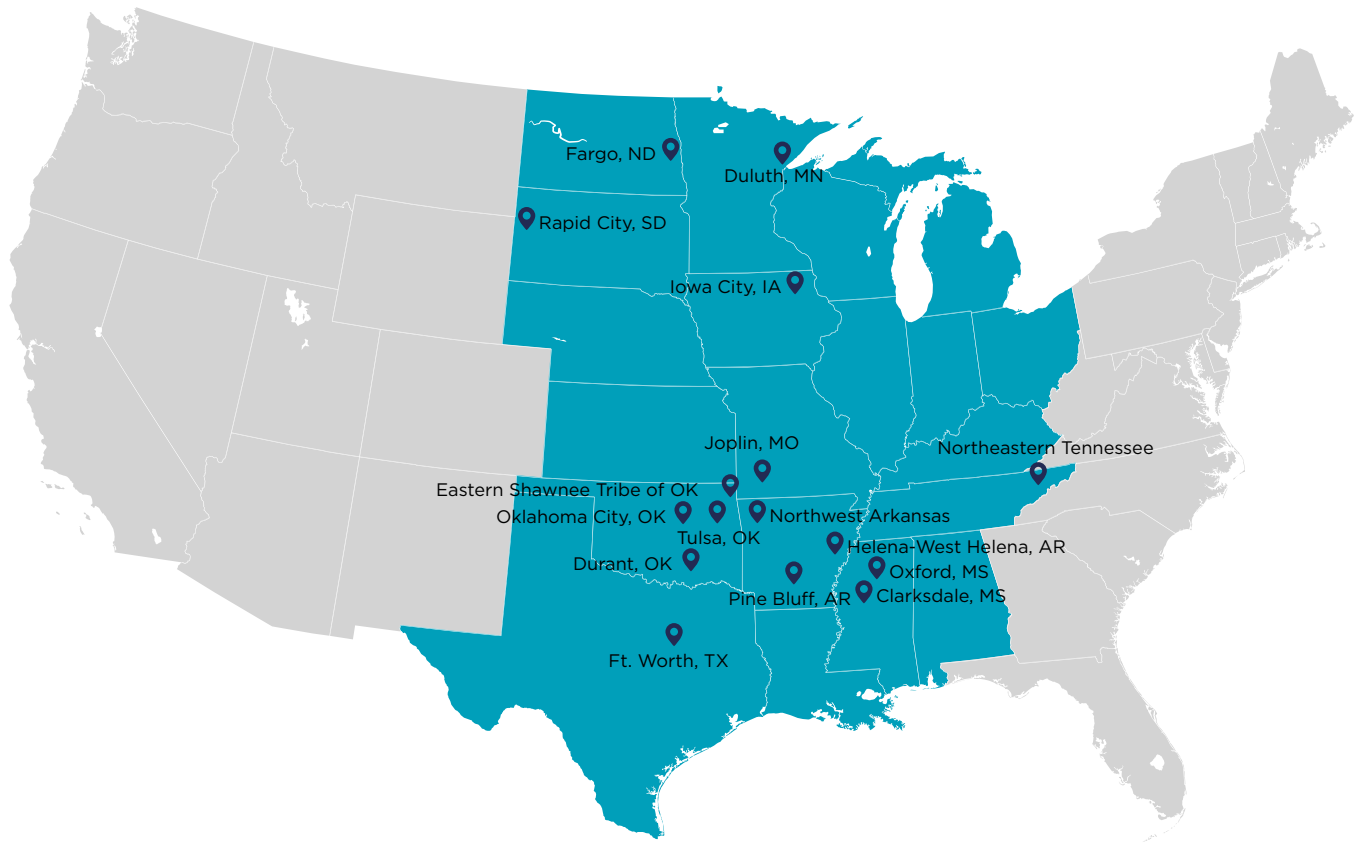
- Grand Farm

Rapid City, SD

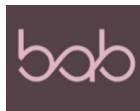
- Elevate Rapid City

Northeast, TN

- Niswonger Foundation



BUILDERS' VENTURES (SUMMER 2022)



SPOTLIGHT ON OUR ALUMNI

Our Builders go on to win more competitions, accelerators and grants:



Lisa Nelson of Joplin, Missouri, won the Joplin Regional Innovation & Technology Summit Pitch Competition for [Landmark Builds](#), which combines history with STEM skills to help youth and community connect with local landmarks.



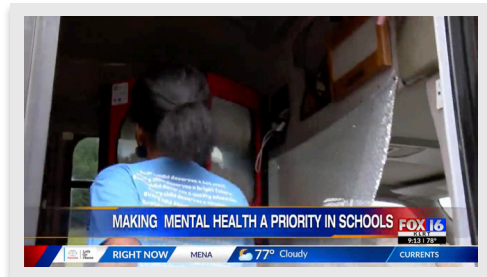
Britt Parrish of Tulsa, Oklahoma, won the Eventbrite #RECONVENE Accelerator program to bring her wildly popular [Plant.Sip.Vibe](#) events nationwide, as well as the Black Founders TikTok cohort.



Dady Mansaray of Iowa City, Iowa, was accepted into the National Immigrant Entrepreneurs Summit Business Pitch Competition for [FitMeReach](#), which enables students to build communities through sports and fitness.

BUILDERS IN THE NEWS:

In Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Kanesha Barnes-Adams' [Bearapy](#) helps heal the hearts and minds of children through books and bears. Kanesha's inspiring story of how she channeled the loss of her sister into a way to address the mental health of young people is covered by Fox16.



Tulsa's Sam Kurtz has developed the [Tulsa Policy Institute](#) to centralize information on government services. His work was covered by News on 6/ KOTV.

Britt Parrish was featured in [Better Homes and Gardens magazine](#). The "plant queen" of Tulsa is on a mission to make plant ownership accessible to all.

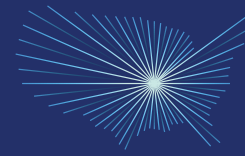


UP NEXT

Winter 2023 cohort launched in: Northwest Arkansas, The Delta (Helen/West Helena Arkansas + Clarksdale, Mississippi), Iowa City, The Eastern Shawnee Tribe in Oklahoma, Tulsa, West Tennessee, Montgomery, AL and a special workforce development cohort across the state of Alabama.

CONNECTING THE HEARTLAND

Connecting the Heartland is a multi-pronged, multi-state initiative dedicated to boosting affordable, high-speed internet access and adoption throughout America's heartland. We believe that when people have high-speed internet access, doors open to them — to everything from healthcare, employment, education and so much more.



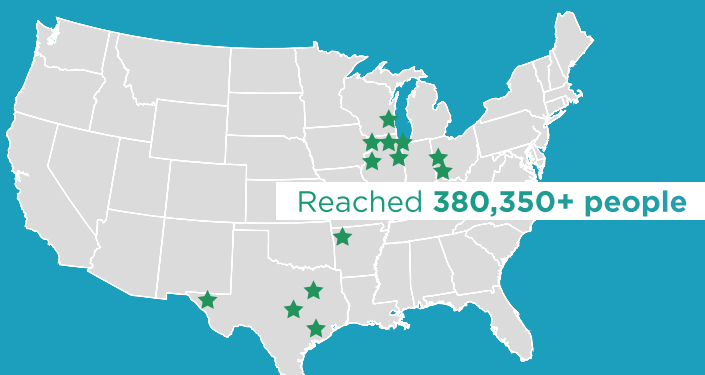
**CONNECTING
THE HEARTLAND**

This year, we made great strides in our work to bridge the digital divide in Arkansas, Illinois, Ohio and Tennessee:

- Launched the **Accelerate program**, with the **Benton Institute for Broadband and Society**, to **28 communities** across three states with 30 hours of expert counsel to teach community leaders how to develop broadband plans and access federal funding.
- Partnership with the **League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)** to reach over **380,350 people in Latino communities** with information about the Affordable Connectivity Program. Through local council-led events — at churches, grocery stores, festivals and more — we supported over **9,900 people in enrolling in ACP** to access affordable internet service and devices.



LATINO OUTREACH



WORKSHOP AT UNFINISHED LIVE

HEARTLAND FORWARD UNFINISHEDLIVE 2022

WORKSHOP // ADDRESSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Innovative Solutions from the Heartland

September 22
1:00 PM EDT
The Shed
(in the MacCourt
Project Liberty
Generation Lounge)

 Angie Cooper Chief Program Officer Heartland Forward	 Hosea Born American Connection Corps Fellow Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District	 Allison Dougan American Connection Corps Fellow Forward Arkansas	 Hannah Maurice American Connection Corps Fellow Knoxville Chamber of Commerce
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- Formed the **Arkansas Connectivity Coalition** with **15 partners and government leadership** to expand digital equity and broadband workforce opportunities.
- Co-founded **Opportunity Broadband** with **Pew Charitable Trusts** to help shape the policy strategy for organizations working on expanding connectivity.

- Kicked off the second year with a cohort of **14 American Connection Corps (ACC) fellows** with a Hill Day in Washington D.C. Launched a **digital equity mini-grant program** for the fellows to pilot highly tailored, innovative digital skills training models.

MEDIA



Local organizations strive to close Arkansas digital divide

by: Rebecca Brown
Posted: Jul 14, 2022 / 06:58 PM CDT
Updated: Jul 14, 2022 / 08:45 PM CDT



Heartland Forward launches new coalition to bridge 'digital divide' throughout Arkansas

Author: Sade Seymour
Published: 3:10 PM CDT July 14, 2022
Updated: 9:02 AM CDT July 15, 2022



New coalition launches to help close Arkansas' digital divide

by Paul Gatling (pgatling@nwabj.com) | July 14, 2022 6:01 am | 722 views



MEET THE ACC FELLOWS VIDEO



MEETING SENATOR BOOZMAN (WITH OUR ARKANSAS ACC FELLOWS) IN WASHINGTON D.C.

COMMUNICATIONS

WE MADE HEADLINES THIS YEAR!



1,327 to be exact

HERE ARE SOME OF OUR FAVORITES:

THE OXFORD EAGLE

Ten Oxford Entrepreneurs begin National Accelerator Program

Published 3:40 pm Tuesday, January 11, 2022



Illinois communities getting broadband infrastructure assistance

(WTVG)
By KWOC Staff
Published: Jan. 19, 2022 at 9:15 PM GMT-5 |

UF News

UF first among US public universities in tech transfer for economic return

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

OTHER VIEWS COMMENTARY

Now is the time to close the Latino digital divide

Only 67% of Hispanic adults reported owning a computer and only 65% said they have internet service at home. The federal Affordable Connectivity Program is underutilized, but that's a problem we can solve.
By Sindy M. Benavides and Angie Cooper | Jun 23, 2022, 5:41pm GMT-5

AXIOS Columbus

Feb 23, 2022 - News

Coastal workers migrating to Ohio

CitiesToday
Connecting the world's urban leaders

How the next wave of tech hubs can be more inclusive

29 March 2022
by Sarah Wray

FORTUNE

LIFESTYLE · U.S. CITIES

Low-cost tech hubs are emerging as America's most dynamic cities

BY TRISTAN BOVE
April 7, 2022 at 7:32 AM GMT-5

FASTCOMPANY

05-03-22 | WORLD CHANGING IDEAS

These 39 companies are doing corporate social responsibility right

See the full list of honorees of Fast Company's 2022 World Changing Ideas Awards in the corporate social responsibility category.



MIKE DEWINE
GOVERNOR OF OHIO

Governor DeWine Announces BroadbandOhio Community Accelerator Cohort

**MEET US IN THE MIDDLE PODCAST
BROADCAST 8 EPISODES, FEATURING
CONVERSATIONS WITH:**

- Wendy Guerrero, president of the Bentonville Film Festival and BFFoundation



- Matt Wadiak, Founder and CEO of Cooks Venture.



COOKS VENTURE
THE FUTURE OF FOOD IS REGENERATIVE

- Phil Graves, CEO of Wild Idea Buffalo



- Professor Richard Florida



PODCAST
Meet Us in the Middle
HeartlandForward

TEDxFARGO

ROSS DEVOL AT TEDxFARGO

Heartland states must focus more effort on supporting entrepreneurs start and scale up their companies to promote economic growth and job creation across the heartland.”



THE HEARTLAND SUMMIT



This year's Heartland Summit featured a diverse mix of some of the brightest minds across sectors, geographies and generations. 350 businesses, policymakers, entrepreneurs, investors, philanthropy and thought leaders united by a shared sense of purpose.

Stay tuned for the [2023 Heartland Summit!](#)



GIVING GUIDE

As a nonpartisan 501c3 charitable “think” and “do” tank, we depend on the generosity of our supporters to carry out our important work.

Here are several ways you can fuel our mission:

- **Join our Giving Circle:** an annual \$25,000 gift for three years will help our organization grow and evolve
- **Support a Builder:** \$7,000 will support a Builder in our Idea Accelerator
- **Sponsor a Program Launch:** \$10,000, \$25,000 or \$50,000, will support human capital and workforce development and our health and wellness programs
- **Co-sponsor a Report:** \$25,000 or more to help support an annual or biennial report like [Most Dynamic Metros](#) and [Most Dynamic Micros](#)
- **Support [Connecting the Heartland](#)** to high speed internet
- **Host a Heartland Reception:** \$5,000 or more to join as a brand ambassador
- **Sponsor our flagship event: [Heartland Summit](#)**
- **Sponsor [Meet Us in the Middle Podcast](#):** \$2,500 for each interview
- **Sponsor Heartland Happenings:** our monthly newsletter for \$2,500 per month

Of course, we welcome gifts of any size to help further our mission.

Give online or reach out to Paige Jernigan, director of development.
jernigan@heartlandforward.org
917-847-4212

Thank you for the generous support from our donors in 2022! You keep the **“heart”** in the **heartland**, and for that, we are grateful.

WE THANK OUR GENEROUS DONORS

- Aaron and Rebecca Burkes
- Accenture
- Amanda Crumley
- Arkansas Community Fdn (Arkansas Impact Philanthropy)
- Arkansas Community Foundation
- Arkansas Electric Cooperatives
- Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation
- Arvest
- BDT Capital Partners LLC
- Bethany Culpepper
- Betsy Gage
- Bike Rack Beer
- Carley Chastain
- Caryl Stern
- Chelsea Miller
- Claiborne and Elaine Deming
- Clete and Tammy Brewer
- COX Commuications
- Craig Gardenswartz
- David Snow
- Delta Dirt Distilleries
- Diamond State Networks
- Durant Industrial Authority
- Eastern Shawnee Tribe
- Eileen Hyde
- Elevate Rapid City
- Emerging Prairie
- Ford Motor Co Fund
- Forward Arkansas
- George Kaiser Family Foundation
- GoForward Pine Bluff
- Grand Farm
- Hank Henderson
- Inasmuch Foundation
- Iowa City Area Development Group (ICAD)
- J. Alan Lewis and Nancy Martin
- Jill Wagar
- John Frederick Brekelbaum
- Jonathan Bailly
- Joplin Area Chamber Foundation
- Jordan Carlisle
- JP Morgan Chase
- Kalene Griffith
- Kathryn G. Carlisle
- Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
- Kristen Boozman
- Lamar Steiger
- Laura Levine
- Laurie Smalling
- Marlon Blackwell
- Martin Smith
- McKenna and Associates
- Mike and Jill Cooper
- Nishwonger Foundation
- Norris Krueger
- Northern Trust Bank
- Northland Foundation
- Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce
- Oklahoma State University
- Ozark Beer Company
- People for Bikes - Jenn Dice
- Philbro Animal Health Corp
- Ramsay Ball
- Reed and MaryAnn Greenwood
- Renee Swindell
- Robert Burns
- Ross and Mimi DeVol
- Scott McGuinn
- Shannon Jasch
- Simmons Foods
- Smiley Technologies
- Terri Milligan
- The Lawrence Group- Gaylon Lawrence
- Tracy Lee Lieberman
- Tyson Foods
- Unfinished
- University of North Texas
- Walmart Global Policy
- Walton Family Foundation
- Warren A. Stephens
- Wayne and Blake Woolsey
- Wes and Erin Wiggins
- Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation
- Yaupon Brothers American Tea Co.



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