**V.J. WILKINS FOUNDATION**

 **PRESS RELEASE FOR GRANT AWARDS 2023**

TheV.J. Wilkins Foundation, a private, not-for-profit Foundation, recently awarded grant monies totaling $508,200 for applications received in 2023.

Since inception in 2014, the Foundation has awarded gifts exceeding $4.6 million dollars to the community of Arkansas City.

The Foundation’s Mission is to assist the community of Arkansas City and Cowley County, Kansas in providing a quality cultural environment of Arts, Music, Language and other endeavors.

Recipients for 2023 include:

-USD 470- Assist in the purchase of original music, marching and concert instruments, guest performances, auditorium lighting & sound upgrades, and auditorium rigging

-Cowley College Theatre Department- Establish a Summer Professional Theater Program

-Arkansas City Area Arts Council/Burford Theatre Arts (2 awards given)- Bring quality entertainment to the Burford through the VJ Wilkins Concert Series, and assist in providing arts programming for youth and families

-Legacy Regional Foundation- Building of a new Early Childhood Impact Center in Cowley County

-Southwestern College- Southwestern Summer Music Festival

-Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration of Unity- Costs of the celebration, including a keynote speaker

-Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce- Creation of a new painted mural that celebrates Arkansas City

-Juneteenth Event- Musical performances, art and culture show, and fireworks

-Tacolalah- Costs of the celebration, including musical performances

-Music Theatre of Wichita- Children’s theater camp at the Burford

The current Board of Trustees for the Foundation includes James Wilkins and David Wilkins, both of Denver, and Karen Zeller, Jennifer Munson, and Tasha Bucher, all of Arkansas City.

Grant recipients must bein keeping with the Mission of the Foundation which is to financially assist organizations within the community having an IRS 501(c)(3) designation or organizations affiliated under an umbrella of an organization having charitable or philanthropic IRS designation or educational institutions.

Additional information can be obtained on the Foundation’s Website: [*www.vjwilkinsfoundation.org*](http://www.vjwilkinsfoundation.org). The deadline for 2024 grant applications is August 1, 2024.