

CAUSES THAT MATTER



WYCF.ORG
WCF@WYCF.ORG
307-721-8300

Brokers of Joy

Supporting Wyoming Women Entrepreneurs

Multifund Grantmaking from WYCF

Picture this. It's a sunny summer afternoon in Laramie, Wyoming. You've had lunch downtown then take a walk by all the shops. You see a store, Works of Wyoming, and find handcrafted art all made by Wyoming artists.

Works of Wyoming is one of the many businesses the Wyoming Women's Business Center (WWBC) supports. The center connects entrepreneurs to resources and trainings to help them succeed.

As a WYCF grantee, the center helps build a better Wyoming by investing in small businesses.

"Women-owned businesses are revitalizing our downtowns," says

Wendy Fanning, Executive Director for WWBC. "Many stores on your main streets are owned by women."

Being a small business owner can be hard. Running a business in rural areas without support or knowing everything can feel overwhelming. WWBC knows this and has been that support for the last 25 years.

Life Beyond the Business – WWBC helps business owners with mental health

After connecting with WWBC, business owners meet one-on-one with a business counselor to find solutions to best fit their needs. Some people come in with

Continued on back page



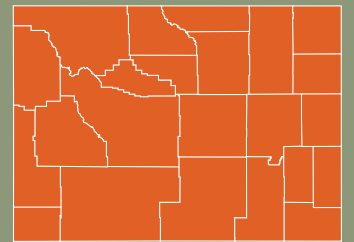
Wendy Fanning (Right) at Silver Sage Ceramics in Cheyenne, a WWBC client.

STATS & FACTS

In 2023 WWBC supported **1,134 Wyoming Entrepreneurs**



23 counties served



Over 70% of people who sign up for a business consultation continue into a WWBC program



Small Communities, Big Hearts

The Value of Giving Back

Gordon and Edna Sykes Endowment Fund

Rural communities are the heartbeat of Wyoming. Gordon and Edna Sykes knew this when they established the Gordon and Edna Sykes Endowment Fund (Sykes Fund) with the Wyoming Community Foundation (WYCF) nearly 20 years ago. They lived in Basin and wanted their community to thrive long after they were gone.

The fund was created to help community programs and educational opportunities in the southern region of Big Horn County.

When CJ Duncan, Mayor of Basin, sits down with his fellow Sykes Fund committee members, they ask “How much good can we do?” The committee

meets twice a year to make grants from the Sykes Fund to local Big Horn County nonprofits.

“The Sykes Fund brings people together and offers opportunities for connections in our small communities,” says Deb Craft, Big Horn County Commissioner and committee member. “We’re very thankful for the fund.”

Because of the generosity of people like Gordon and Edna Sykes, their fund at WYCF continues to leave a legacy in their community.

Youth Give Back in Big Horn

Youth in Big Horn County benefit from grants made from the fund. Gretchen “Gretty” Gasvoda is the Youth Development Educator for Big Horn County 4-H. The Big Horn County Extension Office provides hands on learning and growing opportunities through Ag Day. “It’s been phenomenal to be able to provide more opportunities for our kids,” says Gretty.

Giving back to the community is a huge part of 4-H. Grants from the Sykes Fund make this possible.

4-H youth in Big Horn County have a community garden, and the produce they grow goes to local food banks. Projects like the garden teach kids the value of giving back. “The gratitude and success of being able to plant something and take care of others is unexplainable for these kids,” Gretty says.

Sykes Supports Seniors

The town of Basin’s grant from the fund created the Lilac City Senior Activity Center in the old Riverside High School building. Seniors previously traveled to Greybull to that senior center. The center in Basin offers a comfortable space to play games, read, and connect. Fitness and art classes are held in the space. Seniors can use the hallways and gym to walk safely in the winter.

“We wanted to offer a fun place for seniors to socialize in Basin without having to travel to Greybull,” CJ says.

“We don’t have a lot here, so having these opportunities for our small communities has a huge impact,” Deb says. “I’m so thankful we can keep our families here rather than having to travel outside the county.”

Grants from the Sykes Fund at WYCF have helped fill other gaps in the area.

The Fund has helped upgrade the only county playground, bought safety equipment for volunteer firefighters, and brought therapy horses to dementia patients. “The Sykes have reached people in our community from 5-100 years old,” says Deb. “Without their fund, there would be a hole in the community.”

STATS & FACTS

The Sykes Fund has granted
\$824,712
since inception

Granted to
8 Big Horn nonprofits in 2023

250 Youth aged 8-18 involved in Big Horn 4-H

Lilac City Senior Center is open
5 days a week all year



Big Horn County 4-H hosted two horse clinics this spring. Kids got to learn from two different experts and had incredible growth over the course of the clinic.

Conserving Wyoming's Heritage

Public Education to Protect Raptors

Wyoming Wildlife Foundation

When Hannah Leonard, Program Director for Sporting Lead-Free (SLF), was out hunting she came across a golden eagle lying limp on the ground. She helped the raptor right away. "I knew it would die if it didn't get help," says Hannah. She was surprised when the director at a wildlife rehab facility told her the eagle had lead poisoning. Eagles are unintentionally eating fragments of lead bullets when they eat from gut piles left behind by hunters.

Sporting Lead-Free, an initiative of the Teton Raptor Center, is focused on teaching about the risk of lead poisoning to raptors.

After a lead bullet hits an animal, it breaks apart, leaving tiny lead fragments in the animal. Raptors may eat those pieces when feeding on the carcass that is left behind. Similarly, lead fishing tackle can get stuck or swallowed by fish. When raptors eat these fish, the lead poisons them.

Thanks to your support, a grant from the Wyoming Wildlife Foundation (WWF), priority fund of WYCF, makes this possible.

"We are creating a community of hunters and anglers who believe in the mission and share the message with their friends and family," says Bryan Bedrosian, Founder of SLF.

Hannah, pictured holding a Golden Eagle, shares how she loves to talk with people from all different backgrounds and get them excited about what she cares about.

Wyoming's 22 raptor species are vital for our healthy ecosystem, and they are some of our most iconic wildlife. Bryan has tracked lead levels in eagles before, during, and after hunting season and sees much higher lead levels during hunting season. "There are so few issues these days where there's such a clear answer," says Bryan. "Every person I talk to who switches to lead-free ammunition is immediately saving eagles."

SLF partners with both hunting and conservation groups who want to make a change.

"It's all about keeping things positive and proactive," Bryan says. "Hunters are the solution to this, not the problem. That's the strength in what we've built so far, bringing folks together, not dividing."

Because of donors like you who have

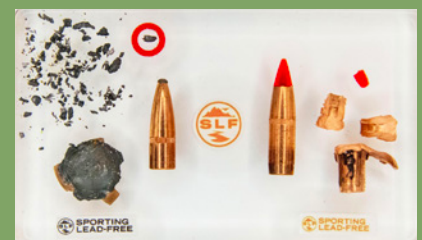
given to WWF, Bryan and Hannah can educate Wyomingites of all ages about lead poisoning.

A simple switch can make a big difference. SLF helps with the annual Kids Fishing Day and has been able to hand out hundreds of lead-free tackle kits to families across the state.

Continued on back page

STATS & FACTS

SLF makes displays to show why switching to lead-free in the field saves raptors. In the sample below, the bullet on the left is made of lead and breaks into many tiny fragments that scatter throughout the path of the bullet through the animal. The red circle shows 20 milligrams of lead, which is enough to kill an adult bald eagle. It's about the size of a grain of rice or the weight of a ladybug! In contrast, the bullet on the right is made of copper and stays together. It doesn't break into tiny pieces which means no harmful fragments spread into the meat for raptors to eat.



Continued from front page

just a dream to start a business, while others need help setting up online sales. “It’s important to us to meet people where they are, whatever phase of life. What you do in your personal life affects your business, and your business affects your personal life,” says Rachel Truett, Mental Health Director at WWBC.

Thanks to donors like you, with a WYCF grant the center recently launched a Mental Wellness Program to offer mental health services to their clients.

“We want to be there for them [women] and create an environment where they feel safe,” Wendy says.

Rachel recalls a single mom who wanted

to open a small business to support her family. Thanks to help from WWBC, she was able to open her business and soon bought a safe car for her family. “A reliable car for your kids is unparalleled. We are helping sustain families and helping dreams come true,” Rachel says.

The next time you take a walk downtown, stop into an art gallery. Pick up some groceries at the family-owned market, or flowers from a local flower shop. Your visit in the store could mean all the difference to the owner, who may have gotten help from WWBC to make your experience a good one.

Your support of small businesses is helping Wyoming communities thrive.

“Conserving Wyoming’s Heritage” continued

They also work with partners to get their message into hunter safety classes, high school science classrooms, and wildlife centers.

Your support of the Wyoming Wildlife Foundation helps educate hunters and anglers so Wyomingites can continue our sporting heritage.



Bryan explains that SLF can be a bridge between the environmental and firearm groups who both want the same thing: healthy wildlife.

Follow us on Social Media!



UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 10-13

Wyoming Women’s Antelope Hunt

The Ranch at Ucross

Watch for the Hunt Recap Video

Premiere in the first week

of November at

WyomingWomensAntelopeHunt.org

OCTOBER 11-12

Early Childhood Collaborative Conference, Riverton

Central Wyoming College

WyAfterschoolAlliance.org/workshops-webinars/

OCTOBER 21-27

National Estate Planning Awareness Week

Officially the best week of the year to plan for your future, and the future of causes you care about.

NOVEMBER 12-14

Wyoming Governor’s Business Forum, Laramie

University of Wyoming



Thank you! Consider a year end gift to the Wyoming Community Fund.

Your support will help nonprofits statewide succeed today and overcome hardships they may face tomorrow. To learn more about how you can help build stronger Wyoming communities contact Rachel Bailey, Director of Philanthropy, at rachel@wycg.org.

1472 N. 5th Street, Suite 201
Laramie, WY 82072
wcf@wycf.org
wycf.org
307.721.8300