



# Investment Connection

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP

## Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Investment Connection Proposal

Proposal title	Expanding the NorthWest Project Model to Rural Communities Surrounding Springfield, MO
Contact	Amy Blansit
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Organization name	Community Foundation of the Ozarks
Mission statement	The mission of the Drew Lewis Foundation is to build strong and sustainable communities by engaging and connecting families with services, resources, and opportunities. The Drew Lewis Foundation provides continued support to empower families to lift themselves out of poverty and transform their lives and communities.
Overview of organization	<p>The Drew Lewis Foundation was established March 2013 by founders Amy Blansit and her husband, Drew Lewis, as a for-profit entity working toward building awareness and increasing efforts for improvements in health and wellness, healthcare access, and quality nutrition for the prevention of cancer. Blansit Investment Group, LLC, managing members Drew Lewis and Amy Blansit, purchased a blighted property in northwest Springfield that was previously a public elementary school - Fairbanks Elementary - originally built in 1906. In March 2014, Drew Lewis Foundation was granted 501(c) 3 status by the IRS and transferred all programming and agreements, including the Fairbanks land and commercial leases, to the Drew Lewis Foundation, Inc - a not-for-profit organization. With ongoing renovations, the Fairbanks now serves as a community hub and the site of NWP programming.</p> <p>The DLF is governed by an active Board of Directors that meets bimonthly and by detailed organization by laws. Amy Blansit is the founder of the organization and answers to the Board of Directors. A full list of the Board of Directors and bylaws of the organization is also available upon request. DLF currently employees 5 full- or part-time employees.</p>

	In 2015, the DLF was awarded a one million dollar grant over 5 years to implement the Northwest Project. As discussed through the proposal, the NWP is a collaboration between Missouri State University, Drury University, and DLF working to address poverty in northwest Springfield. The NWP focuses on creating community access by helping low-income families become more financially stable through professional services and programming.
Website	<a href="http://drewlewis.org/">http://drewlewis.org/</a>
Social media link(s)	<a href="http://drewlewis.org/">http://drewlewis.org/</a>
Location of project/activity	Christian Greene Webster
Geographic Impact	Multicounty
Support request	Investment/Grant
Requested amount	\$50,000 (or any portion of)
Proposal narrative	<p>The NWP is a collaboration between the Drew Lewis Foundation, Missouri State University, and Drury University working to address poverty in northwest Springfield with the goal to pilot strategies over a 5-year period to help families overcome the challenges that have kept them living in poverty and sustain their long-term success.</p> <p>Through the NWP, families focus on 10 key stability assets including: Job Training/Education; Quality Childcare; Financial Literacy; Resolution of Legal Issues; Accountability; Affordable Housing; Transportation; Parenting Skills; and Tax Related Opportunities.</p> <p>The NWP is funded by the Community Foundation of the Ozarks, Stanley &amp; Elaine Ball Foundation, Musgrave Foundation, and others. While this funding provides for key services, it does not account for emerging needs or expansion of programming. The purpose of this request is to solidify the model and curriculum of the NWP to be scalable and replicable in surrounding rural counties in Southern Missouri</p>
Issues addressed	Community Development Finance Community Facilities/Services Economic/Workforce Development Financial Access, Capability and Empowerment Neighborhood Revitalization and Stabilization
Target population/geography	The purpose of this request is to solidify the model and curriculum of the Northwest Project (NWP - described elsewhere in this proposal) to be scalable and replicable in surrounding rural counties in Southern Missouri including Webster, Christian, and rural Greene County.

	<p>Families participating in this program will reside in the vicinity of these rural southern Missouri regional hubs and will receive services that will empower families to be able to reduce the potential of generational poverty by improving the financial circumstances of their current household.</p> <p>Rates of poverty have historically been higher and job opportunities fewer in rural areas when compared to urban areas. Families living in rural areas tend to have less access to social services, exacerbating the effects of rural poverty. Young adults often leave for areas of greater economic opportunity, leading to declining populations, tax bases, and school systems and eroding industries.x</p>
<p>Population served including income</p>	<p>The populations served are the "working poor" - individuals and families with employment, but whose incomes leave them at or below federal poverty lines. Our service population is defined as having income lower than 200% of the Federal Poverty Line. Recent Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Reports show 44% of individuals in Webster County, 31.7% of people in Christian County, and 40.6% of Greene County living below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line.</p>
<p>Anticipated outcomes/impact</p>	<p>The goal of the project is to sustainably reduce the number of individuals in poverty in rural southern Missouri communities. Families participating in this program will reside in the vicinity of these rural southern Missouri regional hubs and will receive services that will empower families to be able to reduce the potential of generational poverty by improving the financial circumstances of their current household. This multiyear effort will work to align poverty reduction efforts in a thoughtful, multifaceted approach. Infrastructure and programmatic knowledge can be gleaned from current efforts to reduce poverty through the Northwest Project in Springfield.</p>
<p>Evaluation methods used to measure success</p>	<p>The overall NWP evaluation model is designed to capture essential service delivery and summative outcomes utilizing an 'empowerment evaluation' model approach. This model determines the potential of programming within complex and intersecting social problems, such as poverty. It consists of the following: (1) Participant Related Outcomes; (2) A discussion of stakeholder Recognition and Involvement; (3) A discussion of Community Collaborations and the value of these investments; (4) Improvements that have been made to programming based upon any barriers identified throughout the program implementation process; (5) Community Awareness on program related activities; (6)</p>

	Organizational Learning/Capacity Building; (7) Community Based Resource Capacity Building; and (8) Recommendations for Expansion Measurements and Recommendations for the potential for transferring the gains achieved to clients in other settings.
Project time frame	New Program 1-3 Years
Other significant partners in the proposal	Community Foundation of the Ozarks Funding <a href="http://cfozarks.org/">http://cfozarks.org/</a>  Drew Lewis Foundation Technical Assistance/Expertise <a href="http://drewlewis.org/">http://drewlewis.org/</a>  The Grantwell Technical Assistance/Expertise <a href="http://www.thegrantwell.com/">http://www.thegrantwell.com/</a>
Audit Report	<a href="M:\Dept\ComAff\Investment Connection\DLF_FinancialStatement.pdf">M:\Dept\ComAff\Investment Connection\DLF_FinancialStatement.pdf</a>
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