



Congratulations!

2026 National Philanthropy Day Award Recipients

Each year, National Philanthropy Day gives us the opportunity to celebrate the individuals, businesses and organizations whose generosity, leadership and commitment to philanthropy help strengthen Northwest Arkansas.

We are honored to recognize this year's recipients and the organizations who nominated them:

Ernie Lawrence Professional Advisor: **Ben McLintock**

Nominated by University of Arkansas

Legacy Award: **Jim Blair***

Nominated by University of Arkansas and Fayetteville Public Library

Lifetime Philanthropic Achievement: **Susan and Orville Hall***

Nominated by University of Arkansas

Outstanding Corporation: **Mars Snacking**

Nominated by Hope Cancer Resources

Outstanding Emerging Professional: **Nicole Benedict**

Nominated by Sunshine School & Development Center and Jones Center

Outstanding Foundation: **The Methodist Foundation for Arkansas**

Nominated by Jones Center

Outstanding Fundraising Executive: **Jamie Dietrich**

Nominated by Hope Cancer Resources

Outstanding Philanthropic Organization: **Arkansas Children's Northwest Auxiliary**

Nominated by Arkansas Children's Northwest

Outstanding Philanthropist: **Pat and Jim McClelland**

Nominated by Arkansas Children's Northwest

Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser: **Chris Thornton**

Nominated by Children's Safety Center of Washington County and Arisa Health

Youth in Philanthropy Group: **Fayetteville High School Ambassadors**

Nominated by Habitat for Humanity of Northwest Arkansas

Youth in Philanthropy Individual: **MacKenzie Maddy**

Nominated by Arkansas Children's Northwest

**We also recognize with deep gratitude the lasting legacies of Jim Blair and Orville Hall, who are being honored posthumously.*



Join us to celebrate these recipients at **National Philanthropy Day on Wednesday, November 4, 2026, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM** at the Fayetteville Public Library.

Sponsorship and Ticket Sales - September 1

Volunteers Needed - November 3 (Set Up) & November 4 (event day)
To Sign Up: Email Amy (amcgovern@methodistfoundationAR.org)

Faces of Fundraising

Steven Hinds, M.E.d., CFRE
AFP NWA Secretary & Treasurer

We are excited to share that **Steven Hinds** will serve as President-Elect of AFP Northwest Arkansas in 2027. Steven will continue serving as Secretary and Treasurer through the end of 2027 while stepping into this new leadership role. His commitment to AFP NWA, professional development, and the fundraising community will help carry our chapter forward.



For Steven, fundraising is about connecting people with opportunities that are meaningful to them. His leadership journey has reinforced the importance of understanding that every donor has unique interests and priorities, and that successful philanthropy starts with listening.

Steven believes strong fundraising leaders are willing to challenge the status quo, try new strategies, collaborate, and welcome constructive feedback. Professional development has played an important role in his own growth, with local and national conferences providing fresh ideas, valuable connections, and strategies he has put into practice.

That spirit of connection is also what makes AFP NWA meaningful to Steven. “It is important to give back to a community that has given me so much,” he says. He values the opportunity to network with fellow development and philanthropy professionals and is honored to serve as AFP NWA president-elect beginning in January 2027. His advice to emerging fundraisers is simple: get involved with AFP NWA and find a mentor who can answer questions, offer perspective, and provide encouragement.

Beyond his work as Senior Director of Philanthropy for the Single Parent Scholarship Fund of NWA, Steven stays energized by spending time with friends and family, traveling with his wife Christina, cheering on the Arkansas Razorbacks, and volunteering with the Arkansas Alumni Association and other organizations.



AFP NWA Board Opportunities

Applications for the AFP Northwest Arkansas Chapter's 2027 Board of Directors are **due August 31!** If you have interest in serving our fundraising community, growing your leadership skills, and helping shape the future of our chapter, be sure to submit your application by the deadline.

2027 Open Chair Opportunities (each serves in a two-year term):

- Membership Chair (1)
- Professional Development & Education Co-Chair (1)
- Collective Impact Fellowship Program Co-Chair (1)
- National Philanthropy Day Co-Chair (1)

[Learn More](#)



Save the Date

September 21
Members Only Session

October 7
Lunch & Learn

October 22-24
AFP LEAD

October 28
Education Session

November 4
National Philanthropy Day

Have You Checked Out Our New Website?

The new AFP Northwest Arkansas Chapter Member Page is live! We encourage members to log in and explore the new Chapter Member Page, designed to keep chapter resources and information right at your fingertips.

Take a look, and let us know what you think! If you experience any issues accessing your account or have questions, please reach out to afpnwa@gmail.com.

Visit our Website

Join us for our August Education Session!

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19
8:30 – 11:30 AM



Merritt Neil
Merrigan & Co



Monica Tiffany
Merrigan & Co

**Hour 1 | The Next Frontier for Nonprofits:
The Loneliness Epidemic & Stewardship**
Strengthen donor and community connections with practical, low-cost strategies.



REGISTER TODAY!



Jamie Dietrich
Hope Cancer Resources



Brittnee Harmon
Hope Cancer Resources

**Hour 2 | Beyond the Invitation:
Marketing Events for Every Donor**
Create mission-driven events that engage donors and keep them coming back.

A big thank you to our August Education Session speakers for sharing fresh ideas and practical strategies to strengthen our fundraising efforts!

Merritt Neil and **Monica Tiffany** of **Merrigan & Co.** explored the role fundraisers can play in addressing the growing loneliness epidemic. They encouraged us to think creatively about combating isolation and creating meaningful opportunities for donors to connect and get involved. As fundraisers, we are uniquely positioned to help people find purpose, connection, and a sense of agency through philanthropy.

Jamie Dietrich and **Brittnee Harmon** of **Hope Cancer Resources** took us beyond the invitation with strategies for creating memorable fundraising events. Key takeaways included designing experiences with your specific audience in mind, maintaining clear and consistent branding, and incorporating peer-to-peer fundraising to expand engagement and significantly increase event revenue.

Thank you to all four speakers for sharing their expertise, and thank you to everyone who joined us for another great AFP Northwest Arkansas education session!



Your gift to the AFP Foundation for Philanthropy will allow us to develop and implement new programs and enhance existing ones like scholarships, education and research. And don't forget, BE the CAUSE is a cooperative annual fund that also provides direct benefit to your local community through your AFP chapter.

Text to give: Text AFP to (571)749-2699

[Donate Here!](#)

Need to Join or Renew

The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) and the Northwest Arkansas Chapter of the AFP offer members the opportunity to connect with colleagues, engage in creative thinking, network with new friends and achieve great results in their work.

Membership Value Highlights

- AFP NWA Chapter Monthly Education Sessions
- AFP National Webinars
- Mentorships
- Networking with area fundraising professionals
- Monthly Chapter Newsletters
- Add more: AFP NWA Chapter

Website: <https://community.afpglobal.org/afparnorthwestchapter/home>

For questions about your membership, please contact
Amy McGovern, AFP President.

Join/Renew Now



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