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Local Mayors to Honor Community Volunteers on September 26th
Mayors of Blue Springs, Grain Valley, Independence, Lake Tapawingo, Lee’s Summit, Raytown, and Sugar Creek select Citizens of the Year

EASTERN JACKSON COUNTY, MO. (August 3, 2020) – Truman Heartland Community Foundation is pleased to present this year’s Citizen of the Year honorees, selected by area mayors. The recipients will be recognized during the 25th Annual Toast to Our Towns Gala, presented by CommunityAmerica Credit Union, online on Saturday, September 26, 2020 broadcast live at 7:00pm.

These local volunteers were chosen because they lend their time, talents and position to promote our communities. Areas of impact are varied, but all of the honorees are united by a common goal, improving and enriching the communities in our area.

Mayor Carson Ross, City of Blue Springs, Recognizes James L. May

James (Jim) L. May has been making a difference in the Blue Springs community for more than 35 years.

Jim is a Navy veteran and leader in the Blue Springs business community. He completed four years of service in the U.S. Navy, including two tours in Vietnam. He moved to Blue Springs in 1985, after selling his office supply and furniture company. Jim was part of the start-up staff for the Missouri Lottery, holding the title of Regional Sales Manager at retirement in 2006, and has been a real estate broker for Zuvers Real Estate since 1987.

In 2008, Jim became the first African American to serve on the city’s Planning commission, appointed by Mayor Ross and the Board of Directors for the Economic Development Council. Since then Jim has held many civic positions in Blue Springs, including an interim term on the City Council and as a planner in Out of the Blue, Into the Future citizen visioning process.

Jim is a graduate of the Blue Springs Citizens Police Academy and a member of the Blue Springs Citizens Academy Alumni Association. He currently serves as the Vice Chairman of the Board for Blue Springs Land Bank and has served as a member for the Blue Springs Board of Adjustment.
Mayor Mike Todd and Mayor Chuck Johnston, City of Grain Valley, Recognize Christina “Kiki” Claphan (posthumous)

A pillar in the Grain Valley community for over a decade, friends and family were shocked when Christina “Kiki” Claphan passed away suddenly in February 2020. Kiki’s legacy of kindness continues to make an impact throughout Eastern Jackson County.

During her life, Kiki’s joyful spirit helped her connect with and instill confidence in every child with whom she taught. A paraprofessional, Kiki spent the last ten years working with students with special needs in the Grain Valley School District. An active member of East Side Church in Independence, in 2017, Kiki developed and led a Sunday school class for children with special needs at the church.

Kiki was always willing to lend a hand at school and in the community. For several years, Kiki played the role of Mrs. Claus in Grain Valley’s annual Holiday Festival and in the summer months, she supervised teenagers who worked for the city’s Parks & Recreation Department. Kiki went above and beyond to make the programs fun and exciting for participants with her contagious sense of adventure and excitement. A thoughtful mentor, she went to great lengths to ensure that each child in attendance felt special and important.

Known for her big caring hugs, the Grain Valley community celebrated her life by championing the motto “Love Big, Hug On” and using #KindLikeKiki on shirts and social media.

Kiki’s siblings, Leslie Keys and Don Claphan, will accept the award on her behalf.

Mayor Eileen Weir, City of Independence, Recognizes Stan and Michele Crumbaugh

Lifelong residents of Independence, Stan and Michele Crumbaugh have had an indelible impact in the community as professional and philanthropic leaders.

Owners of the Party Patch, Independence Rent-All, Inc. and Beagles Rentals, the couple is actively engaged in the Independence business community and lend their expertise to support charitable events throughout the region, including the Truman Library Institute’s Wild About Harry, Drumm Farm’s Annual Dinner, Boys and Girls Club’s Dinner on Ice and Truman Heartland’s Toast to Our Towns Gala.

Over the years, both Stan and Michele have lent their support to many nonprofits in Eastern Jackson County. Stan served more than 20 years on the Board of the Drumm Farm Center for Children and is a past President of the Board of the American Rental Association. Michele is a member and past President of the Junior Service League of Independence. She has served in a variety of volunteer capacities for many nonprofit organizations, including the Missouri School

**Mayor Tom Goddard, City of Lake Tapawingo, Recognizes Brad Cloverdyke**

After a career as a financial services executive, Brad Cloverdyke is spending his retirement investing in the Lake Tapawingo community.

A second-generation resident, Brad’s family moved to the lake in 1960. Brad and his wife Lisa have lived in Lake Tapawingo since 1985 and enjoy the city’s inclusive nature and spirit of camaraderie.

In 2010, Brad retired as the vice president of Human Resources at American Century Investments, with more than three decades of leadership in the financial services industry. Passionate about creating a bright future for children in need, Brad became an avid volunteer.

Over the years, he has served on the Board of Directors of the Genesis School, former Eastland Community Foundation, School of Economics, Junior Achievement of Middle America and the Mid-America Healthcare Coalition. Brad is the Board Chair for Children International, headquartered in Kansas City, but delivering programs and services in 10 different countries to help kids around the world break free from poverty.

**Mayor Bill Baird, City of Lee’s Summit, Recognizes Wyatt and Crystal Durgan**

Wyatt and Crystal Durgan have made an unforgettable mark on the Lee’s Summit community by inspiring a generation of students to use creativity and teamwork to succeed in whatever they pursue in life.

In 2009, the couple began volunteering with the Lee’s Summit High School robotics team when their son expressed interest in a robotics summer camp. Crystal, a project manager in clinical research, and Wyatt, an interface design and database developer, began devoting countless hours to expand the school’s program and help the team win multiple regionals and state championships.

Over the years, the couple has worked with hundreds of Lee’s Summit and surrounding area students of all ages. Through robotics, students gain hands-on experience in design and machining, communication, entrepreneurship and marketing. Under Wyatt and Crystal’s leadership, the team has continued to maintain and create valuable partnerships with local businesses, including places like Cerner, Honeywell and Black & Veatch.

The experience even inspired Wyatt to pursue a career change. Working towards a master’s degree in education, Wyatt now teaches engineering and creative design and technology for the Lee’s Summit
School District. Likewise, Wyatt is now the head coach for the robotics team. He is also active on the city’s Ignite Strategic Planning Committee.

**Mayor Michael McDonough, City of Raytown, Recognizes Carol Frevert and Mary Oyler**

When stay-at-home orders due to the coronavirus pandemic increased food insecurities in Raytown, Carol Frevert and Mary Oyler acted quickly to help children and families in the community.

Mary and Carol are co-directors of the Raytown Summer Lunch Ministry, which provides prepared lunches for children in the Raytown Quality School District for 6 weeks during the summer break. In response to COVID-19, the team developed a new plan and quickly organized supplies and volunteers to provide a bag of groceries each week to approximately 140 Raytown families. This effort began on March 24th and continued for 22 weeks.

In addition to leading the Raytown Summer Lunch Program, Mary and Carol have spent decades giving back to the community. Carol retired as the Director of Health Services at Avila University Student Health Clinic in 2017. She is the Outreach Ministry Chair at Raytown Christian Church and regularly volunteers to help in the classroom at Richardson Elementary School in Lee’s Summit. Mary was a Media Clerk at Laurel Hills Elementary School in Raytown and is a past President of the Raytown Educational Foundation Board of Trustees.

**Mayor Mike Larson, City of Sugar Creek, Recognizes Bill Haman**

A passionate conservationist and volunteer, Bill Haman has been helping Sugar Creek go green and stay clean for more than two decades.

Bill is a founding member of Go Sugar Creek, a community organization aimed at improving the city through a series of community projects, including conservation and renovation of La Benite Park. Over the years, Bill’s efforts at La Benite Park include organizing volunteers to rehab shelters, developing forests and trails and working with the Missouri Department of Conservation to improve boat ramps and roads at the park.

An active volunteer, Bill is a member of the Sugar Creek Community Development Committee, Parks Advisory Committee and helped establish the city’s Community Garden. Bill and his wife Carolyn have volunteered with the city’s Adopt-A-Street litter removal for over 20 years.

**About Toast to Our Towns Gala**

The 2020 Toast to Our Towns Gala is presented by CommunityAmerica Credit Union and benefits Truman Heartland Community Foundation. Broadcast support is provided by GEHA and TruckMovers.
Additional support is provided by Dana Forrester Watercolors/Melanie Moentmann, SS&C; Dunn Family Foundation; Edward Jones Advisors; Humphrey, Farrington & McClain; Midwest Trust; Speaks Chapels; and Stewardship Capital.

The Toast to Our Towns Gala will be held online on September 26, 2020. This one-hour celebration of philanthropy will start at 7:00 p.m. and broadcast to more than 40 different watch parties throughout Eastern Jackson County. Information about sponsoring a watch party is available at www.thcf.org/Gala.

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**Truman Heartland Community Foundation (THCF)** is a public charity committed to improving area communities by promoting and serving private giving for the public good. Founded in 1982, THCF serves the region with assets of more than $50 million and annual grants surpassing $4.8 million. THCF serves individuals who, through their private giving, wish to support the public good and helps them do it in the most tax-wise and effective manner. Through the Community Foundation, donors can set up their own donor advised funds, scholarship funds, field of interest funds, endowment funds, charitable gift annuities and many other charitable vehicles, which utilize shared resources of the Foundation to maximize the impact of their philanthropic dollars. In addition to donor services, the Community Foundation provides asset development for nonprofit organizations, awards grants to nonprofits, assists organizations in planned giving and serves as a leader in addressing community issues. For more information on charitable giving, visit www.thcf.org or call THCF at 816-836-8189.