



JOHNSON COUNTY
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

THE BRIEF

CONNECTING PEOPLE WHO CARE
WITH CAUSES THAT MATTER

AUGUST 2025 NEWSLETTER

IMPORTANT DATES

**FRANKLIN CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE
BUSINESS AFTER
HOURS EVENT**

Aug 21, 2025

RSVP to Joe Morris at
joem@jccf.org

**5TH ANNUAL JCCF
GOLF OUTING**
Sept 25, 2025

Contact Stephanie Marten
to sign up at
stephaniew@jccf.org

Email malloryc@jccf.org
to join our e-newsletter
list.

Learn how to support the
*Imagination
Library of
Johnson County*

COMMUNITY AT
HEART

Because at the core of everything we do,
it's the **love for this community that unites us all.**



Photo Credit: Cara Wagner

PRESIDENT'S POST

Kim Kasting
President & CEO of JCCF



This summer has been filled with collaboration and strategic progress at the Johnson County Community Foundation. As President & CEO, I'm proud to share some of the exciting work our team has been doing that reflects the spirit of thought leadership in our community.

One of the most impactful initiatives this season has been our support of the Imagination Library. To help ensure this beloved organization remains a permanent fixture in Johnson County, the Foundation has allocated \$500,000 to be used as a matching campaign. The goal is to help the Imagination Library raise \$500,000, which would create an endowment capable of generating approximately \$40,000 annually to sustain their work.

Our team had the opportunity to meet with the Imagination Library staff and Board of Directors to strategize how best to support their fundraising efforts. It's inspiring to see so many people committed to early childhood literacy, and we're honored to be part of this effort.

At the same time, we've been looking inward as well, focusing on the long-term vision of the Foundation. We are currently partnering with DSC Consulting to work on our new strategic plan. This process has been incredibly valuable, giving us the opportunity to assess our strengths, listen to our community, and map out a clear, bold path forward.

These initiatives are more than just projects, they are examples of how we are leading with purpose in Johnson County. Whether it's helping sustain essential programs like the Imagination Library or other similar initiatives, the JCCF is committed to making a lasting difference.

► RESERVE YOUR SPOT NOW! ◀

GOLF OUTING

JCCF'S 5TH ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

FOR MORE INFO, PLEASE CONTACT STEPHANIE MARTEN AT STEPHANIEW@JCCF.ORG!

SEPT 25, 2025
@ HILLVIEW COUNTRY CLUB



Your gift today. Their story tomorrow.

Help us Support the Imagination Library of Johnson County

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Johnson County (ILJC), a beloved program in our community, needs your help! ILJC sends free books to children from birth to age five. Following the recent passage of a budget bill by the Indiana General Assembly that eliminated state funding for the Imagination Library, the Foundation felt compelled to support ILJC in its fundraising efforts.

The Foundation's Board of Directors allocated \$500,000 to ILJC to use for a matching fundraising campaign in an effort to keep the organization sustainable in our community. The goal of this campaign is to build a \$1,000,000 endowment fund to benefit ILJC. This would generate an annual distribution of around \$40,000/year. The JCCF team met with the ILJC staff and their Board last month to discuss how to help raise funds for their matching campaign.

This is where you come in.

If you believe in the Imagination Library as much as we do, please consider donating to their matching campaign. Every dollar donated will be matched by the Foundation 1 to 1. Keep reading to learn more about the importance of early literacy and the ILJC.

Imagination Library of Johnson County Facts

- ▶ Cost per child per year: \$16
- ▶ To sponsor a child for all 5 years: \$80
- ▶ Total children enrolled in ILJC: 4,800
- ▶ Initial research data from the past 3 years show that Franklin Community Schools kindergartners enrolled in the Imagination Library for at least 4.5 years score higher on kindergarten literacy tests than the school district average.
- ▶ Since September 2017, ILJC has mailed over 213,000 books to Johnson County children.

Statistics about Literacy

- ▶ Nationally in 2024, 69% of fourth graders scored below proficient on readings tests. For Indiana specifically, the number was 66%.¹
- ▶ Low literacy costs the US economy an estimated \$2.2 trillion each year.²
- ▶ A child's chance of academic success is directly related to the number of books in their home, regardless of their parents' income, education, or occupation.³

¹https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reports/reading/2024/q4_8/?grade=4

²<https://www.theglobalstatistics.com/literacy-rate-in-the-united-states/>

³<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2010.01.002>

About Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Johnson County

The Imagination Library program in Johnson County, Indiana, began in July 2017 in response to low kindergarten readiness rates in the area. When children start school with few literacy skills, they are at a disadvantage academically, and they have only a few years to catch up. Low literacy rates have been linked to a greater likelihood of students dropping out of high school and to higher rates of poverty, unemployment, incarceration, and hospitalization. The U.S. Department of Education, for example, reports that 85% of juvenile offenders have difficulty reading. In addition, 43% of adults with low literacy skills live in poverty, and 70% of welfare recipients struggle with reading, according to the National Institute for Literacy.

IMAGINATION LIBRARY JOHNSON COUNTY



The program began just in Franklin but now serves all Johnson County communities. In 2020, the Imagination Library of Johnson County became an official 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization.

Information taken from imaginationlibraryjoco.org



DONATE TODAY!

How to Make a Donation: Scan the QR code to donate online or mail a check to:

ATTN: Imagination Library of Johnson County
Johnson County Community Foundation
398 South Main Street, Franklin, IN 46131

We can help you plan your giving!

There are many ways to give. The key is to find the best option for you. The Foundation offers different options to suit your particular needs and wishes – and to accomplish your giving goals and dreams.

WAYS TO GIVE

- ♥ **Bequests** (make a long-lasting gift that creates a charitable fund through your will)
- ♥ **Cash**
- ♥ **Charitable Remainder Trusts or Charitable Lead Trusts** (there are a variety of trust options available for donors – consult your financial planner, estate attorney or the JCCF staff for information)
- ♥ **Checks**
- ♥ **Grain**
- ♥ **Life Insurance** (designate the Foundation as the owner and/or beneficiary of a policy you no longer need)
- ♥ **Marketable Real Estate**
- ♥ **Marketable Securities or Stocks**
- ♥ **Retirement Funds** (designate the Foundation as a beneficiary and create a “future fund” with us)

Because at the core of everything we do, it's the love for this community that unites us all.

Contact Stephanie Marten, VP of Development, at stephaniew@jccf.org or (317) 738-2213.

“Children enrolled in the Imagination Library program are more than 2.3 times more likely to be interested in reading after receiving their first 10 books.”

- Dr. Claire Galea, Head of Research at United Way Australia

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DIAMOND



PLATINUM



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This year's winner of the Christopher L. Magness Memorial Fund is Juan Pablo Rendon, a Southport High School student. Juan says, "Receiving this means I get a head start on preparing myself for joining the Carpenters Union. I greatly appreciate the donors for this opportunity and gift to set me up for success."

Pictured from left: Brad Magness (Chris Magness's brother), Frank Worman (Construction Trades Instructor), Juan Pablo Rendon (recipient), Larry Magness (Chris Magness's brother)

The Christopher L. Magness Memorial Fund was established in memory of Christopher Lee Magness, 40, of Beech Grove, Indiana, who passed away on May 2, 2023. Born on July 10, 1982, Chris discovered his passion for construction early in life. His talent blossomed while attending the Construction Trades program at Central 9 Career Center. Chris built a successful career in commercial construction, spending 11 years as a senior project manager with Cushman and Wakefield. The Christopher L. Magness Memorial Fund supports students at Central Nine Career Center by helping cover unfunded or unmet needs, ensuring they have the resources to succeed during their time at the center or as they pursue further education.

Impact Stories

FEATURED FUND: Christopher L. Magness Memorial Fund

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