



# 40 Years of Great Ideas

2021 Annual Report

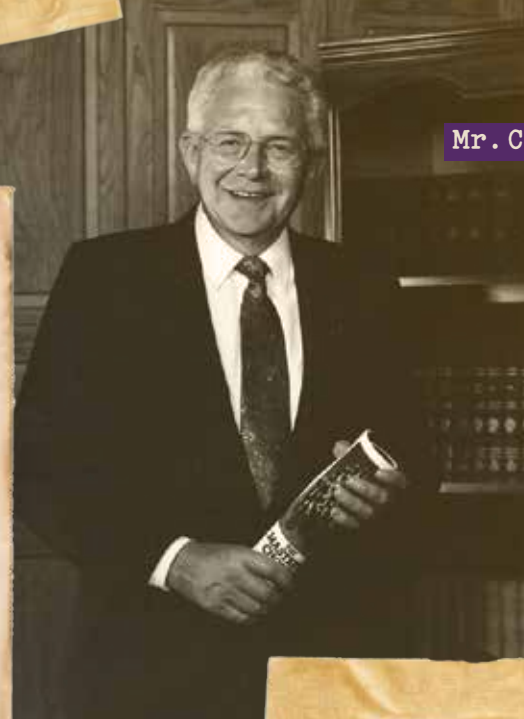
# From 40 to Forward.

Over 40 years (Yes! 40 years! We can't believe it, either!) we have seen a lot of great ideas for building knowledge, skills, and character in children and young people so they can be self-sufficient and grow up to achieve economic freedom.



SUCCESS  
EQUALS TALENT,  
HARD WORK,  
AND A LITTLE  
BIT OF LUCK.

Mr. Chester E. Dekko



For example, we've seen grantees from throughout our grantmaking priority areas in Indiana, Iowa, Alabama, and Minnesota:

- Take intentional steps to align early learning environments with the principles of child development.
- Create innovative programs that spark curiosity in elementary students and get them excited about learning.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for young people to take a deep dive into their passions and interests, so that they can connect the things that inspire them intellectually and emotionally with the world around them.
- Offer hands-on experiences to adolescents and entrust them to make tough decisions and shoulder real responsibility.
- Support high school students as they figure out what their next step after graduation will be.

And there have been many, many more great ideas that we've been privileged to invest in since Mr. Chester E. Dekko started his namesake foundation four decades ago, in 1981.

Back then, grantmaking often consisted of little more than Mr. Dekko reaching for his checkbook. It's amazing to think that in the 40 years since then, his philanthropic legacy has resulted in more than \$260 million in grants awarded to youth-serving organizations in 13 counties in four states.



## It Started with an Idea.

When Mr. Dekko was thinking of a mission for his foundation, he arrived at a simple, but profound, idea: fostering economic freedom through education. You see, Mr. Dekko was born in 1925 and grew up in the small community of Ada, Minnesota, during the Great Depression. His family experienced the hardships that were all too common for that time, and he resolved to rise above them and chart his own course.

After he graduated from high school in 1943, he enrolled in the Navy's V-12 program at the University of Minnesota. In just a few years, he earned bachelor's degrees in naval technology and mechanical engineering, as well as a master's degree in economics.




His first job out of college was with the Aluminum Company of America, or ALCOA. In 1950, he was transferred to Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he met his eventual business partner, Lyall Morrill. Working together at night in Mr. Morrill's den, they hit upon an idea that would transform the appliance industry: They would mass produce electric wiring harnesses for refrigerators.

Up until that point, all the wiring inside a refrigerator was placed by hand – a very time-consuming and inefficient process. In 1953, they incorporated Lyall Electric, Inc., and rented a vacant power plant in nearby Albion, Indiana, to manufacture the wiring harnesses. Their idea proved a success, and within just a few years, the business blossomed and grew.

By the 1980s, when Mr. Dekko bought out his partner and changed the name of the company to Group Dekko International, Inc., it had thousands of employees and manufacturing operations in northeast Indiana, south-central Iowa, Limestone County, Alabama, and elsewhere.

Mr. Dekko believed – and we still do today – that education is the creator of economic freedom. His lifelong love of learning was the cornerstone for his business success and philanthropic pursuits. Without his education and the experiences that molded and shaped him, he and Mr. Morrill might never have had the flash of insight that changed their lives and the lives of so many others.

A great idea has the power to change the world.



STARVE A  
PROBLEM AND  
FEED AN  
OPPORTUNITY.

– Mr. Chester E. Dekko



# “Dekko’s Discoveries”

After Mr. Dekko passed away in 1992, among the things found in his desk were small stacks of 3-by-5-inch cards held together with rubber bands. Some cards were worn and yellowed with age. Others were marked with brown rings after being used as a coaster for coffee cups. At the top of many of the cards, Mr. Dekko had written “Dekko’s Discoveries” or “D.D.”

On the cards, written in ink and pencil, were some of the ideas that Mr. Dekko had preserved as he led Group Dekko. A number of them were focused on problem solving, which had become a passion for Mr. Dekko. Ultimately, those ideas coalesced in the form of a handbook that he wrote, *Management According to Dekko*, that trained Group Dekko managers in identifying problems and devising solutions to them. In Mr. Dekko’s view, the role of any manager within the company was to solve problems in ways that helped the business achieve its goals.

D.D.

RESOLVE TO  
PERFORM WHAT YOU  
OUGHT — PERFORM  
WITHOUT FAIL WHAT  
YOU RESOLVE

We still have those cards and other personal artifacts from Mr. Dekko. Some of them are displayed in our new office at the Community Learning Center in Kendallville, Indiana. They serve as a connection to Mr. Dekko's legacy, and they help keep us grounded in the mission that he set forth for the foundation.

Mr. Dekko's zeal for problem solving continues to inform what we do every day here at the Dekko Foundation. That's why, when we talk to grantseekers about their projects, we're always striving to understand the problem they're trying to solve, as well as how that will positively affect the lives of the children and young people they're serving.

ASK — WHOSE  
ARE THE BIG PROBLEMS?



# So Many Great Ideas

As we've grown and matured as a foundation, we've had a few ideas of our own about how education helps lead children and young people down the path to economic freedom:

- We believe that children and young people from birth through age 18 are naturally wired to achieve economic freedom through their own development and by being in learning environments that support their self-sufficiency.
- When they have opportunities to connect their skills and talents to careers, they further their ability to create goods and services for others within our democracy and free-enterprise system.
- By doing so, they can earn, build, use, and share their wealth in the manner they choose.

In short, they've achieved economic freedom.

*CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM BIRTH THROUGH AGE 18 ARE NATURALLY WIRED TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC FREEDOM THROUGH THEIR OWN DEVELOPMENT AND BY BEING IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS THAT SUPPORT THEIR SELF-SUFFICIENCY.*

Our mission of fostering economic freedom through education isn't possible without the dedicated and committed adults and youth-serving organizations that are willing to step back and consider what children and young people need to grow and develop. Because of their great ideas and hard work, children and young people in our grantmaking areas in Indiana, Iowa, Alabama, and Minnesota are bolstered in building knowledge, skills, and character that contribute to their self-sufficiency. They're also well on their way to achieving economic freedom as an adult.

In this, our 2021 annual report, you'll see the great ideas that our grantees had for serving children and young people. Interspersed with them are some of the discoveries that Mr. Dekko jotted down during a spare moment and some of the ideas that help drive our grantmaking and our work.





D.D.

A GOOD IDEA  
DOESN'T CARE  
WHO HAS IT.

We've also saved a card just for you, so you can write down your own discovery, just like Mr. Dekko. (You'll have to provide your own coffee stains, though.)

40 years. So many awesome ideas for supporting the healthy development of children and young people. We can't wait to hear all the great ideas that grantseekers come up with over our next 40 years.

# 2021 Grants Awarded

Early Childhood Development: Ages 0-5

Organization	Project Title	City	Amount	Together, We're Tracking:
Apple Tree Center	Operating Support	Kendallville, IN	\$45,000	The organization's increasing financial sustainability so leaders can focus more on child development.
Babe of Whitley County, Inc.	Operating Support	Columbia City, IN	\$5,000	The increasing number of clients enrolling in classes and services so that families are better supported and connected to resources within the community.
City of Kendallville	Kendallville Outdoor Recreation Complex (KORC) Phase II Endowment Fund	Kendallville, IN	\$250,000	The Kendallville Park & Recreation Department's increasing endowment, which will help the department provide quality facilities and experiences for community members at all park locations, programs, and events.
Cole Center Family YMCA	The First Tee Drive Golf Program	Kendallville, IN	\$2,500	Children's increasing engagement in meaningful programming so they develop skills and interests that can be fostered into healthy lifelong habits and hobbies.
Columbia City United Methodist Church Childcare	Parent Communication Tablet	Columbia City, IN	\$2,500	The organization's more effective communication with parents so they can better support their children's social, emotional, and educational well-being.
Community Action Partnership of North Alabama, Inc.	Tanner Early Learning Center - Kitchen Project	Decatur, AL	\$25,000	The school's increasing ability to serve meals and snacks to children so they have healthy options and are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits.
Healthier Moms and Babies, Inc.	Prenatal Home Visitation Program - Noble and DeKalb County	Fort Wayne, IN	\$1,000	The increasing number of high-risk mothers who receive prenatal education, support, and advocacy so that birth outcomes are improved and their babies have the best chance for healthy growth and development.
Joe's Kids, Inc.	Operating Support	Warsaw, IN	\$15,000	The organization's increasing number of child sponsors so the operating gap is reduced and young people receive therapy for identified needs in a timely manner.
Judy A. Morrill Recreation Center	JAM Center Operating Support 2020-2021	Garrett, IN	\$100,000	The organization's increasing high-quality interactions with children, as well as learning environments that support their developmental needs.
Kosciusko County Community Foundation, Inc.	LaunchPad Operations Year Three	Warsaw, IN	\$12,000	The increasing availability of child care so more children have a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment while their parents are at work.

Organization	Project Title	City	Amount	Together, We're Tracking:
Kosciusko County Community Foundation, Inc.	Supporting Children's Needs in Early Learning Programs	Warsaw, IN	\$24,135	The increasing number of early childhood educators who receive training and coaching in the HighScope curriculum and become proficient in their practice of developmentally appropriate early learning so that children can thrive.
LaGrange First Church of God	Lighthouse Teacher Training	LaGrange, IN	\$30,754	The increasing number of staff leaders who are certified in Montessori training so that suitable learning environments are prepared for children.
Lost Sparrows, Inc.	Trauma Conference	Winona Lake, IN	\$10,000	The college's increasing number of youth workers, staff, and students who receive education and supportive resources from nationally recognized speakers and professionals in the childhood trauma field.
Michiana Public Broadcasting Corporation/WNIT	Education Counts Michiana	South Bend, IN	\$10,000	The organization's increasing engagement with 22 school systems and early learning centers to actively participate in Education Counts conversations so educators are supported and connected to each other.
Oak Farm School, Inc.	Operating Support	Avilla, IN	\$2,325,000	The school's increasing enrollment and ability to provide high-quality education to all students.
Oak Farm School, Inc.	OFMS from Growth to Maturity FY2020	Avilla, IN	\$28,600	The school's improved administrative processes so leaders can be more effective in their work.
Oak Farm School, Inc.	Construction for Elementary Buildings and Community Athletic Fields	Avilla, IN	\$5,750,000	The school's increasing enrollment and its partnerships with community organization to maximize the use of the wellness center, athletic fields, and the farmhouse.
Stroh Church of Christ	2021 Teacher Training	Stroh, IN	\$20,032	The increasing number of staff leaders who are certified in Montessori principles so young people experience peaceful, independent, and creative learning that fosters the development of self-care and problem-solving skills.
The Vine Early Learning Center, Inc.	Professional Development Support	Angola, IN	\$30,754	The increasing number of teachers and administrators who are Montessori certified so they can prepare appropriate learning environments for the students to foster self-directed learning.

# 2021 Grants Awarded

Middle Childhood Development: Ages 6–12

Organization	Project Title	City	Amount	Together, We're Tracking:
Ada-Borup-West School District	Auditorium Updates	Ada, MN	\$40,000	The increasing number of students who participate in performing arts programs such as theater, interactive media, band, and choir ensembles so they have the opportunity to work together to produce performances that teach them the value of hard work and build positive self-esteem.
Ardmore Public Library	Computer Area for Children's Room	Ardmore, TN	\$4,000	The increasing accessibility of resources for children to engage in learning through eBooks, audiobooks, research resources, and homework assistance so that they have supportive tools to strengthen their interests and classroom learning.
Athens City Schools	Let's Play! Orff Instruments for All	Athens, AL	\$7,000	Students' increasing confidence and skill development as they experience choice and deeper learning while creating their own melodies.
Athens City Schools	Piano Lab Project	Athens, AL	\$8,000	Students' increasing opportunities to engage their mind and body, build cognitive skills, and develop self-confidence through musical performance.
Baker Youth Club	Capital Projects	Warsaw, IN	\$125,000	The organization's increasing annual revenue so leaders can better serve young people through programs and services.
Camp Whitley, Inc.	Directors Cabin Replacement	Columbia City, IN	\$40,000	The camp's increasing number of participants who will gain confidence and leadership skills, and have positive relationships with adult mentors.
Cole Center Family YMCA	Camp Wethonkitha Summer Daycamp Support	Kendallville, IN	\$20,000	Campers' improved strengths assessment, which will help show their internal and external growth and development during camp.
Decatur County Conservation Board	Savanna Hills Learning Center	Leon, IA	\$100,000	The increasing number of young people and families who visit the Savanna Hills Learning Center each month and engage in interactive environmental education programs so they gain an appreciation and respect for the environment and increase participation in outdoor recreation.
East Noble School Corporation	Fifth-Grade Field Trip to Camp Potawatomi	Kendallville, IN	\$15,000	Students' increasing collaboration, communication, problem-solving, and creative-thinking skills so they grow in their perceptions of themselves.
East Noble School Corporation	Orff Instruments for South Side Elementary School	Kendallville, IN	\$4,520	Students' increasing opportunities to play musical instruments so they experience more meaningful skill development and learning.



Organization	Project Title	City	Amount	Together, We're Tracking:
Fort Wayne Zoological Society	ZSI 2.0 & More - Piloting the Next Generation of Zoo Programming in Schools	Fort Wayne, IN	\$5,675	Students' improved inquiry and critical-thinking skills and positive connection with the natural world, which can help lead to further independent exploration and learning.
Fort Wayne Zoological Society	Zoomobile Programming for the 2021-22 School Year	Fort Wayne, IN	\$28,265	Students' improved inquiry and critical-thinking skills while developing a positive connection with the natural world so that it may lead to further independent exploration and learning.
Fort Wayne Zoological Society	ZSI 2.0 Programming for the 2021-22 School Year	Fort Wayne, IN	\$56,234	Students' improved inquiry and critical-thinking skills while developing a positive connection with the natural world so that it may lead to further independent exploration and learning.
Freedom Academy, Inc.	Freedom Academy Tutoring Program	Kendallville, IN	\$65,373	The increasing number of young people who receive academic support and an individualized achievement plan so they gain knowledge, skills, and self-confidence to meet grade-level academic requirements and develop habits for lifelong learning.
Friendship United Methodist Church	Infant Classroom Remodel	Athens, AL	\$10,000	Children's increasing engagement and interest within their learning environment so they strengthen peer interactions, exploration skills, and creativity.
Harold W. McMillen Center for Health Education	Operating Support	Fort Wayne, IN	\$30,000	The increasing number of young people receiving preventative health education so they have the knowledge and ability to make healthy and responsible decisions that will directly affect their futures.
Indiana Youth Institute, Inc.	Professional Education for Youth-Serving Professionals and Organizations	Indianapolis, IN	\$130,000	Youth-serving professionals' increasing knowledge and skills so they are adequately equipped to help young people thrive and build strong futures.
LaGrange Baseball League	Baseball Field Complex	LaGrange, IN	\$75,000	Young people's increasing engagement with an improved facility so they feel supported and invested in.
Learn to Read Council of Athens & Limestone County, Inc.	Youth Literacy 2021	Athens, AL	\$20,000	Students' increasing reading, writing, and math proficiency so they stay on track at school.
Limestone County Schools	Limestone's After School Leaders	Athens, AL	\$40,000	Students' increasing sense they feel supported and cared for by teachers and adult mentors.

Organization	Project Title	City	Amount	Together, We're Tracking:
Matilda J. Gibson Memorial Library	Summer Reading Program 2021	Creston, IA	\$2,500	The organization's growing programming so more young people in Union County can build knowledge and skills.
Noble County Public Library	StoryWalks	Albion, IN	\$3,060	The increasing number of StoryWalks available in the library's service area so that children and their family members can engage in a learning activity together while exploring nature.
Steuben County Community Foundation, Inc.	Future Leaders In Philanthropy (F.L.I.P.)	Angola, IN	\$4,000	Fifth-graders' increasing awareness of philanthropy so they feel empowered to share their time, talent, and treasure with others and pledge to be more involved in service projects in their community.
Stone's Trace Historical Society	Repair of Tavern Exterior	Ligonier, IN	\$2,294	Students' increasing understanding of local history, as well as the knowledge and skills used by pioneers to build communities.
The Center for Whitley County Youth, Inc.	Fighting for Connection and Support for Young People	Columbia City, IN	\$172,000	The increasing number of youth who participate in collaborative programs and enrichment activities so they feel supported and build a positive identity as they pursue their future.
The Crew	The Crew Lawn Care	Kendallville, IN	\$20,000	Young people's increasing engagement in the Crew Lawn Care program so they gain confidence, responsibility, and entrepreneurial skills.
The Learning Center of Southwest Iowa	Facility Remodel	Creston, IA	\$5,000	The increasing number of young people who will receive one-on-one academic support and a customized learning plan so they gain knowledge, skills, and self-confidence to meet grade-level academic requirements and develop habits for lifelong learning.
White's Residential and Family Services, Inc.	Program Support for Vocational Training and Workforce Development	Wabash, IN	\$10,000	Young people's increasing training and career development opportunities so they gain sustainable working skills, confidence in their area of expertise, and the ability to contribute to their communities through well-paying career paths.
YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne	YMCA Camp Potawatami Master Plan	Fort Wayne, IN	\$7,000	The camp's increasing sustainability by creating a master plan for expansion and renovations that support the growth and development of children and young people.
YMCA of Muncie/Camp Crosley	Camp Crosley Operating Support	Muncie, IN	\$100,000	Donors' increasing engagement and support so leaders can continue to provide experiences for young people that help build meaningful relationships and lifelong skills.

# 2021 Grants Awarded

Adolescent Development: Ages 13–18

Organization	Project Title	City	Amount	Together, We're Tracking:
Community Foundation of DeKalb County	VOICE Youth Philanthropy Operating Support	Auburn, IN	\$5,000	VOICE members' increasing understanding of philanthropy and their ability to practice it in their community.
Community Foundation of Noble County	PULSE Youth Philanthropy Operating Support	Ligonier, IN	\$32,000	PULSE members' increasing understanding of philanthropy and their ability to practice it in their community.
Community Foundation of Whitley County	HANDS Youth Philanthropy Operating Support	Columbia City, IN	\$7,600	HANDS members' increasing understanding of philanthropy and their mentoring of others about how they can help the community.
Fellowship of Christian Athletes	Youth Programming	Roanoke, IN	\$35,000	The increasing number of area character coaches who can assist leaders with impactfully engaging, equipping, and empowering 200 additional young people through personal, character, and leadership development.
Garrett-Keyser-Butler Community School District	The Career Development Program at Garrett High School	Garrett, IN	\$600,000	The increasing number of students in the Career Development Program who have earned a job readiness certification and a minimum of three industry recognized credentials in advanced manufacturing and/or construction trades.
Giving Gardens of Indiana	Bloom Health Initiative	Columbia City, IN	\$14,000	Young people's increasing knowledge of sustainable gardening so they understand how to make healthy food choices on a small budget, work collaboratively, and gain a sense of community.
Graceland University	AmeriCorps Youth Launch	Lamoni, IA	\$612,906	The increasing number of high-barrier children and young people who say they feel supported by caring mentors and are better prepared for their future through their participation in the Youth Launch program.
Indiana Alliance of YMCAs, Inc.	Indiana YMCA Youth and Government	Indianapolis, IN	\$120,000	The increasing number of middle and high school students involved in the Indiana YMCA Youth and Government program so they are exposed to experiential civic education.
J. Kruse Education Center, Inc.	Capacity Development	Auburn, IN	\$225,000	Students' increasing understanding of career and post-secondary options so they can decide their next steps after high school.

Organization	Project Title	City	Amount	Together, We're Tracking:
Kosciusko County Community Foundation, Inc.	KEYS Endowment Campaign	Warsaw, IN	\$12,500	The youth philanthropy group's increasing sustainability and members' fund development knowledge.
Lakeland Christian Academy	Dave Ramsey Curriculum	Winona Lake, IN	\$1,365	Students' increasing financial knowledge so they can make informed decisions in the future.
Lakeland School Corporation	LaGrange County Entrepreneurship Pathway	LaGrange, IN	\$5,000	Teachers' increasing training so they can engage and support students in exploring entrepreneurship and devising their own business start-up ideas.
Lakewood Park Christian School	Career Coaching	Auburn, IN	\$13,820	Students' increasing ability and confidence to articulate their next step after high school and how it fits with their career and college goals.
Limestone Area Community Foundation	TRAIL Youth Philanthropy Operating Support	Athens, AL	\$12,000	TRAIL members' increasing understanding of philanthropy and their ability to practice it in their community.
Limestone County Schools	FACS Industry Certification Program and Career Readiness Update	Athens, AL	\$25,000	Students' increasing culinary skills, as well as opportunities to earn industry certification, and connect their interests to entrepreneurial opportunities.
Ringgold County Conservation Board	Liberty Lake Cabin Development	Mount Ayr, IA	\$40,000	High school students' increasing knowledge and skill building through the construction of two primitive cabins at Liberty Lake.
South Central Iowa Community Foundation	CCOPS Youth Philanthropy Operating Support	Chariton, IA	\$16,550	CCOPS members' increasing understanding of philanthropy and their ability to practice it in their community.
South Central Iowa Community Foundation	HELP Youth Philanthropy Operating Support	Chariton, IA	\$15,000	HELP members' increasing understanding of philanthropy and their ability to practice it in their community.



Organization	Project Title	City	Amount	Together, We're Tracking:
South Central Iowa Community Foundation	SPLASH Youth Philanthropy Operating Support	Chariton, IA	\$35,000	SPLASH members' increasing understanding of philanthropy and their ability to practice it in their community.
Steuben County Economic Development Corporation, Inc.	EDC Pre-Manufacturing Academy	Angola, IN	\$24,000	Students' increasing ability to secure full-time employment in a northeast Indiana manufacturing industry after graduating from high school.
TROY Center	TROY School Strategic Planning	Columbia City, IN	\$4,120	The organization's increasing sustainability through the development of a three-year strategic plan.
Whitko Community School Corporation	Agriculture and Construction Trades Programs	Larwill, IN	\$150,000	Students' increasing opportunities to earn carpentry and electrical certifications, as well as take part in hands-on learning in food, plant, and soil science.

# 2021 Grants Awarded

## Community Development

Organization	Project Title	City	Amount	Together, We're Tracking:
City of Chariton	Chariton Splash Pad Project	Chariton, IA	\$150,000	The increasing number of opportunities local youth have to develop relationships and connect to their community through outdoor play.
City of Kendallville	KidCity	Kendallville, IN	\$15,000	Families' increasing awareness of service providers' resources so they can access and use those resources to engage their children's interests and support their learning and development.
City of Leon	Leon Swimming Pool Upgrades	Leon, IA	\$44,050	The pool's increasing use by community members and its financial sustainability.
Cole Center Family YMCA	Rebuilding After Pandemic	Kendallville, IN	\$410,000	The organization's increasing financial sustainability so it can continue to provide high-quality youth programming.
Common Grace Ministries	Common Grace Ministries / Noble New Way Integration	Kendallville, IN	\$4,000	Noble New Way's increasing sustainability so it can move forward strategically, secure funding, and operate under a sound financial structure while maintaining the stability of Common Grace Ministries.
Community Foundation of Whitley County	CFWC Building Project	Columbia City, IN	\$250,000	The community's increasing knowledge and understanding of the foundation's work so more grant dollars can be used to support local nonprofits, charitable projects, and students pursuing higher education.
Community Learning Center	Operating Support	Kendallville, IN	\$500,000	The center's increasing number of scheduled weekly programs in shared spaces so community members make meaningful connections and build skills that create self-sufficiency.

Organization	Project Title	City	Amount	Together, We're Tracking:
Community Learning Center	Capital Building Support	Kendallville, IN	\$500,000	The increasing number of students earning workforce certifications so they have the skills needed to advance in their careers.
Community Learning Center	Creating The Pottery	Kendallville, IN	\$16,000	The center's increasing programming opportunities that foster participants' development of new skills, friendships, and opportunities.
Creston Arts	Community Art Center Accessibility and Technology Access	Creston, IA	\$75,000	The increasing number of programs for children and young people so there are more opportunities for them to engage with the arts and there is increased collaboration among community organizations and businesses.
Diagonal Community Development Corporation	Diagonal Walkable Community Initiative	Diagonal, IA	\$72,500	Community members' increasing connections with outdoor recreation and other local amenities.
Freedom Academy, Inc.	Strategic Marketing and Recruiting Plan	Kendallville, IN	\$28,000	The organization's increasing sustainability through the development of a marketing plan to strengthen student, instructor, and client recruitment.
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy	Operating Support Rails-to-Trails Conservancy in Indiana	Washington, DC	\$100,000	The increasing awareness of, and support for, trails within Indiana through education and advocacy so that individuals and communities experience a connection of resources that promote physical and mental health as well as economic development.
United Way of Athens-Limestone County	Limestone County Philanthropy Center	Athens, AL	\$30,000	The organization's increasing ability to create a joint venture with the Limestone Area Community Foundation and form the Limestone County Philanthropy Center.



## One More Good Idea: Our Move

2021 marked a big change here at the Dekko Foundation. We moved into our new office on the third floor of the Community Learning Center in Kendallville, Indiana.

The CLC began as an idea shared by local organizations and community members. They wanted to find a new use for a historic school building, originally built in 1915 and located in the heart of the city. Working together, they envisioned a community hub offering collaborative programming to residents of all ages. With the support of city and school leaders, the Community Learning Center opened in 2019. Its mission is: Connecting Communities. Strengthening Lives. Securing Futures.



We moved from our former office on Baby Mountain in Kendallville – which had previously been Mr. Dekko's home – to the third floor of the CLC in April 2021. We did so because of the CLC's culture of collaboration, and because we believe working alongside other organizations that are striving to remove barriers to economic freedom will help make us a better funder.

We invite you to come see our office – as well as all the great ideas that are at work each day here at the Community Learning Center.

D.D.

DECISION MAKING IS  
CONVERTING POSSIBILITIES  
INTO PROBABILITIES  
AND THEN  
CERTAINTIES.

## Board of Directors

Erica Dekko

C.E. Dekko

Phil Salsbery

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Strategic Communication Officer

Abby Lindsey

Program Officer

Sarah Larkin

Program Officer

Payton Hart

Grants and Program Associate

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

We have audited the accompanying modified cash basis financial statements of Dekko Foundation, Inc. (Foundation), which comprise the statements of financial position – modified cash basis as of August 31, 2021 and 2020, and the related statements of activities and functional expenses – modified cash basis for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

### MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting described in Note 1; this includes determining that the modified cash basis of accounting is an acceptable basis for the preparation of the financial statements in the circumstances. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### AUDITOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether

due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Foundation's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Foundation's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### OPINION

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Dekko Foundation, Inc. as of August 31, 2021 and 2020, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting described in Note 1.

### BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

We draw attention to Note 1 of the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements are prepared on the modified cash basis of accounting, which is a basis of accounting other than the accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

**BKD, LLP**

Fort Wayne, Indiana | November 12, 2021

## STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

August 31, 2021 and 2020 Modified Cash Basis

ASSETS	2021	2020
Cash and cash equivalents	\$4,942,445	\$4,931,868
Investments	\$196,246,807	\$197,617,738
Note receivable, net	\$3,500,000	\$4,500,000
Property and equipment, net	\$676,004	\$171,079
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$205,365,256</b>	<b>\$207,220,685</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Payroll tax withholdings	\$4,404	\$4,770
<b>NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS</b>	<b>\$205,360,852</b>	<b>\$207,215,915</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$205,365,256</b>	<b>\$207,220,685</b>

## STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

Years Ended August 31, 2021 and 2020 Modified Cash Basis

	2021		2020	
RECEIPTS	TOTAL	% OF TOTAL	TOTAL	% OF TOTAL
Contributions	\$319,903	2.59%	\$319,903	1.78%
Interest and dividend income	\$2,759,986	22.33%	\$3,824,927	21.22%
Net realized gains on investments	\$9,163,466	74.13%	\$13,874,744	76.99%
Other	\$118,576	0.95%	\$1,995	0.01%
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>\$12,361,931</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>\$18,021,569</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

### DISBURSEMENTS & EXPENSES

Grants	\$12,552,134	88.26%	\$10,721,022	84.45%
Administrative	\$883,924	6.22%	\$839,372	6.61%
Library	\$447	0.01%	\$948	0.01%
Depreciation	\$29,234	0.21%	\$11,508	0.09%
Utilities	\$20,708	0.15%	\$20,292	0.16%
Office supplies	\$6,572	0.05%	\$3,350	0.03%
Equipment	\$26,105	0.18%	\$269	0.01%
Rent	\$26,480	0.19%	—	0.00%
Repair and maintenance	\$63,504	0.45%	\$73,911	0.58%
Dues and membership	\$26,845	0.19%	\$25,845	0.20%
Training	\$4,828	0.03%	\$41,204	0.32%
Travel	\$22,547	0.16%	\$38,038	0.31%
Postage	\$1,697	0.01%	\$4,613	0.04%
Insurance	\$23,530	0.17%	\$26,096	0.21%
Professional fees	\$369,728	2.60%	\$462,825	3.65%
Federal excise tax and unrelated business income tax	\$103,475	0.73%	\$372,118	2.93%
Other	\$55,236	0.39%	\$50,706	0.40%
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS &amp; EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$14,216,994</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>\$12,692,117</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	<b>(\$1,855,063)</b>	<b>\$5,329,452</b>
<b>UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$207,215,915</b>	<b>\$201,886,463</b>
<b>UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$205,360,852</b>	<b>\$207,215,915</b>

**STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES**

Years Ended August 31, 2021 and 2020  
Modified Cash Basis

	2021	
	PROGRAM SERVICES	MANAGEMENT & GENERAL
		TOTAL
Grants	\$12,552,492	—
Administrative	\$469,810	\$414,113
Library	\$237	\$210
Depreciation	\$15,494	\$13,740
Utilities	\$10,975	\$9,733
Office supplies	\$3,483	\$3,089
Equipment	\$13,836	\$12,270
Repair and maintenance	\$33,657	\$29,847
Rent	\$14,034	\$12,446
Dues and membership	\$14,228	\$12,617
Training	\$2,125	\$2,703
Travel	\$7,223	\$15,324
Postage	\$900	\$798
Insurance	\$12,471	\$11,059
Professional fees	\$330,542	\$39,186
Federal excise tax and unrelated business income tax	—	\$103,475
Other	\$6,834	\$48,043
	\$13,488,341	\$728,653
		\$14,216,994

	2020	
	PROGRAM SERVICES	MANAGEMENT & GENERAL
		TOTAL
Grants	\$10,721,022	—
Administrative	\$413,940	\$425,432
Library	\$465	\$483
Depreciation	\$5,639	\$5,869
Utilities	\$9,943	\$10,349
Office supplies	\$857	\$2,493
Equipment	\$132	\$137
Repair and maintenance	\$36,217	\$37,694
Dues and membership	\$12,664	\$13,181
Training	\$31,689	\$9,515
Travel	\$17,196	\$20,842
Postage	\$2,261	\$2,352
Insurance	\$12,787	\$13,309
Professional fees	\$329,318	\$133,507
Federal excise tax and unrelated business income tax	—	\$372,118
Other	\$8,539	\$42,167
	\$11,602,669	\$1,089,448
		\$12,692,117

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

August 31, 2021 and 2020 Modified Cash Basis

**NOTE 1: NATURE OF OPERATIONS AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES****NATURE OF OPERATIONS**

Dekko Foundation, Inc. (Foundation) was incorporated as a not-for-profit foundation in 1981, under the laws of the state of Indiana. The mission of the Foundation is to foster economic freedom through education in the areas where its founder, Mr. Chester E. Dekko, had an interest. For that reason, the Foundation focuses its grant making in portions of Alabama, Florida, Indiana, Iowa and Minnesota. Primary sources of revenue for the Foundation are estate contributions and investment income. Mr. Dekko's intent for his foundation was to give young people the opportunity for high-quality experiences that would lay the groundwork for the development of financial independence. To carry out that mission, the Dekko Foundation makes grants to not-for-profit organizations that promote developmentally appropriate experiences. The Foundation also invests in the capacity of youth and community development organizations to sustain and elevate their work.

**USE OF ESTIMATES**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with the Foundation's modified cash basis of accounting requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of receipts and disbursements and other changes in net assets during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

**BASIS OF ACCOUNTING**

The financial statements have been prepared on a modified cash basis of accounting which differs from accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP) as follows:

- Cash paid to charitable organizations and vendors is expensed when paid, not when the grant is approved or when the obligation is incurred as required by GAAP.
- Investments are recorded at cost, not fair value, and investment income is recorded when received, not when earned, as required by GAAP. In addition, certain disclosures are not provided regarding the nature of certain investments, as required by GAAP.

**NET ASSET CLASSIFICATIONS**

The following class of net assets is maintained:  
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions – The net assets without donor restrictions class includes general assets and liabilities of the Foundation. The net assets without donor restrictions of the Foundation may be used at the discretion of management to support the Foundation's purposes and operations.

**CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS**

The Foundation considers all liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less to be cash equivalents. At August 31, 2021 and 2020, cash equivalents consisted primarily of money market accounts with brokers.

At August 31, 2021, the Foundation's cash accounts exceeded federally insured limits by approximately \$5,082,000.

**NOTES RECEIVABLE**

Notes receivable are stated at the outstanding principal amount, net of allowance for uncollectible notes. The Foundation provides an allowance for uncollectible notes, which is based upon a review of outstanding receivables, historical collection information and existing economic conditions (none at August 31, 2021 and 2020). Outstanding notes pay interest based on the terms of the respective note agreements. A note receivable is considered delinquent when the debtor has missed three or more payments.

**INVESTMENTS**

Marketable securities and other investments are recorded at cost or, if donated, at the fair value at the date of gift. Other investments are comprised of nonmarketable securities, such as private partnerships and limited liability corporations. Investment gains and losses are recognized upon realization using the specific-identification method.

**INCOME TAXES**

The Foundation is exempt from income taxes under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code and a similar provision of state law. The Foundation is considered to be a private foundation under Section 509(a) of the Code. The Foundation is subject to excise tax on investment income. In addition, the Internal Revenue Service requires that certain minimum distributions be made in accordance with a specified formula.

The Foundation files tax returns in the U.S. federal jurisdiction. With a few exceptions, the Foundation is no longer subject to U.S. federal examinations by tax authorities for years before 2018.

**PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT**

Expenditures for property and equipment and items, which substantially increase the useful lives of existing assets, are capitalized at cost. The Foundation provides for depreciation on the straight-line method at rates designed to depreciate the costs of assets over estimated useful lives as follows:

- Furnishings and equipment: 5-7 Years
- Buildings and improvements: 15-31 Years

**NOTE 2: INVESTMENTS**

The Foundation's investments are as follows:

	2021	
	COST	FAIR VALUE
U.S. Government and U.S. Government agency securities	\$20,468,963	\$22,246,725
Equities	\$130,590,910	\$203,012,117
Corporate and municipal bonds	\$12,829,220	\$13,189,085
Nonmarketable securities	\$32,357,714	\$53,996,674
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$196,246,807</b>	<b>\$292,444,601</b>

	2020	
	COST	FAIR VALUE
U.S. Government and U.S. Government agency securities	\$21,537,882	\$23,706,830
Equities	\$128,155,613	\$167,015,301
Corporate and municipal bonds	\$14,736,137	\$15,136,616
Nonmarketable securities	\$33,188,106	\$42,072,542
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$197,617,738</b>	<b>\$247,931,289</b>

**NOTE 3: PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT**

The Foundation's property and equipment are as follows:

	2020	2020
Buildings and improvements	\$956,356	\$561,027
Furnishings and equipment	\$402,485	\$202,936
Construction in progress	—	\$76,819
	\$1,358,841	\$840,782
Accumulated depreciation	(\$682,837)	(\$669,703)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$676,004</b>	<b>\$171,079</b>

The fair value is based on quoted prices in active markets, if available. In the absence of readily determinable fair values, the fair value of alternative investments is based on the net asset value of the fund either provided by the investment's fund manager or general partner or estimated by management based on audited financial statements received from the respective investment's fund manager or general partner. Investment securities, in general, are exposed to various risks, such as interest rate, credit and overall market volatility. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investment securities, it is reasonably possible that changes in the values of investment securities will occur in the near term and such changes could materially affect the amounts reported in the notes to the financial statements.

**NONMARKETABLE INVESTMENTS**

The fair value of nonmarketable investments have been estimated using the net asset value per share (or its equivalent) as a practical expedient. This category includes investments in private equity funds that pursue multiple strategies and investment options to maximize return while diversifying risks and reducing volatility. The nature of these investments is that distributions are received through liquidation of the underlying assets of the fund in accordance with the planned life cycle of the fund and its investment strategy. The amount of unfunded capital commitments is approximately \$12,997,000 and \$8,732,000 at August 31, 2021 and 2020, respectively.

**NOTE 4: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

The Foundation maintains a 403(b) defined-contribution plan for the benefit of substantially all of its employees, which allows for both employee and employer contributions. The Foundation's contribution consists of a discretionary contribution of 10 percent of eligible compensation, and a matching contribution of 100 percent of employee contributions, up to 5 percent of eligible employee compensation. The Foundation's contribution to the plan was \$96,250 and \$86,587 for 2021 and 2020, respectively.

**NOTE 5: RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

During 2021 and 2020, a portion of the Foundation's investments were managed by an investment advisor who is a related party of the Foundation in the amount (cost basis) of \$41,238,350 and \$40,962,581 as of August 31, 2021 and 2020, respectively. The investment advisory fee (which was paid to the brokerage firm, not the related party advisory firm) was \$291,620 and \$231,128 for the years ended August 31, 2021 and 2020, respectively.

**NOTE 6: LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY**

Financial assets available for general expenditure, that is, without donor or other restrictions limiting their use, within one year of August 31, 2021 and 2020, comprise the following:

	2021	2020
Cash	\$4,942,445	\$4,931,868
Investments	\$189,110,667	\$189,165,802
Financial assets available to meet cash needs for general expenditures within one year	\$194,053,112	\$194,097,670

While the Organization does not anticipate liquidity concerns, the Organization does have a highly involved Board of Directors who monitors liquidity throughout the year. The entity's primary expenses are grant disbursements that are decided upon by the Board of Directors. If liquidity concerns were to appear, the Board of Directors would be able to limit disbursements on an as needed basis and maintain sufficient levels of liquidity.

Cash is monitored daily and a monthly review is performed at the management level.

**NOTE 7: OPERATING LEASE**

The Foundation leases a building under an operating lease arrangement. The lease expires in December 2025. Rental expense for this lease included in the statement of activities for the year ended August 31, 2021, was \$26,480. No such lease expense existed for the year ended August 31, 2020. Future minimum lease payments required under the operating lease with remaining terms in excess of one year as of August 31, 2021, are as follows:

<b>2022</b>	\$63,552
<b>2023</b>	\$63,552
<b>2024</b>	\$63,552
<b>2025</b>	\$63,552
<b>2026</b>	\$21,184
	\$275,392

**NOTE 8: SUBSEQUENT EVENTS**

Subsequent events have been evaluated through November 12, 2021, which is the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

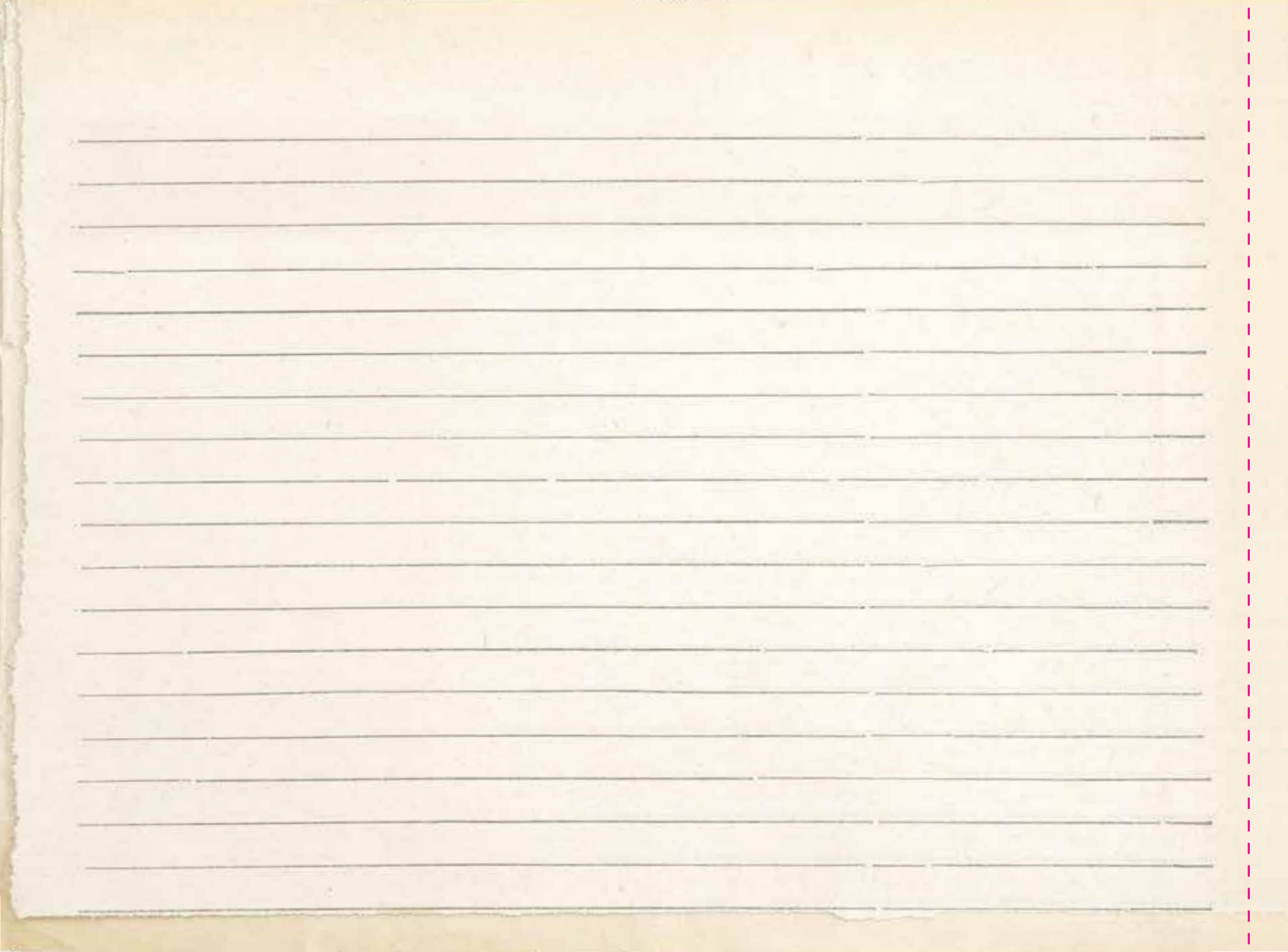


# What's Your Big Idea?

Our founder, Mr. Chester E. Dekko, was fond of writing his ideas on note cards. So here's a card you can use to jot down your own thoughts about building knowledge, skills, and character in children and young people.



If you'd like, take a picture of your idea and share it with us on Facebook. #From40toForward





WHEN ADULTS STEP BACK,  
CHILDREN STEP FORWARD.



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