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From the Wichita Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/wichita/news/2019/11/15/outstanding-foundation-the-sunderland-foundation.html>

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# Outstanding Foundation: The Sunderland Foundation



**SUNDERLAND**  
F O U N D A T I O N



When family-owned Ash Grove Cement Company sold at a value of \$3.5 billion in late 2017, the Sunderland Foundation found itself with an almost endless amount of funds to give away.

And there didn't seem to be an end to the giving last year. The foundation out of Overland Park, run by the descendants of former Ash Grove President Lester T. Sunderland, granted more than \$105 million to non-profits in 11 states served by Ash Grove.

The Sunderland Foundation owned about one third of Ash Grove, a 135-year-old company, and collected more than \$1 billion from its sale to increase grants from \$30 million in 2017.

"My great-grandfather L.T., who set up the foundation, his mission was to do capital projects for building renovations that were not for profit," foundation President Kent Sunderland said. "... All of our projects have a capital component that involves a building or a reconstruction or renovation of some sort."

The Sunderland Foundation is the 2019 recipient of the Outstanding Foundation Award through the Wichita chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Many of Sunderland's 220-plus grants in 2018 were given to Wichita non-profits, including \$500,000 to the Kansas Food Bank and \$100,000 to the Boys & Girls Clubs of South Central Kansas. In total, Sunderland granted more than \$1.4 million in Wichita to 12 non-profits.

As incoming funds have increased, Sunderland's presence in Wichita has, also. In 2014, Sunderland gave \$100,000 of \$5.6 million to non-profits, but its giving here has increased steadily



“We’ve done several projects in Wichita over the years in the past,” Sunderland said. “But as you do projects, you become more known to the community. In the not-for-profit community, the word spreads about your foundation and more people become aware of you. That’s part of their job as fundraisers, to find dollars for their organization.

“Certainly, when they hear about Sunderland doing a project at a local university or a hospital, I’m sure they sit around looking for prospects and say, ‘Oh, let’s give the Sunderland Foundation a call.’”

In 2017, the Sunderland Foundation granted \$1.1 million to Wichita State for the Advanced Education in General Dentistry Building and for the Barton School of Business.

The foundation's grants go toward human services, arts and culture, health care and hospitals and higher education. It consistently gives to Newman and Friends, including \$100,000 to Friends last year.

The gift to WSU was one of the foundation's most substantial grants of 2017.

“We’ve done work with (WSU’s) engineering department on their engineering building a few years ago, and just other smaller projects,” Sunderland said.

“When they came to us with the business school, we had the funding available and they put together a good package.

“They were getting close to the end of their fundraising – they needed a fairly large gift to finish it off, and we gave them a million dollars to finish off the campaign.”

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OUTSTANDING FOUNDATION

