



2022

# ANNUAL REPORT

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# Making Lives Better, TOGETHER.

Leaders Education Foundation is a non-profit 501 c3 organization that Gives Forward to our community. The Foundation unites community members and organizations to bring educational resources and opportunities to educators and students of all ages in West Tennessee.

Leaders Education Foundation provides educational grants, scholarships, and resources to our community that supports lifelong learning, workforce development, and education.

**We believe in empowering our community for good.**

GIVEFORWARD



## MEETING AGENDA

April 18, 2023

### CALL TO ORDER & INVOCATION

Ron Hill, Board Chair

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ron Hill, Board Chair

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Ron Hill, Board Chair

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Leigh Anne Bentley, President

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Spencer Pratt, Nominating  
Committee Chair

### CLOSING REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT

Ron Hill, Board Chair

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the President of Leaders Education Foundation, I am proud to share the progress toward our mission of Making Lives Better, Together.

Over the past year, we have continued to work tirelessly towards this goal, and I am pleased to report that we have made significant strides in expanding our reach and impact. Thanks to the dedication of our volunteer board, staff and community partners, we have provided access to education and resources to even more students, educators and community members.

One of our major accomplishments this year has been launching our new workforce readiness scholarship program. Through this initiative, we have been able to award scholarships to deserving students working on completing CTE programs and helping offset the cost of attending school. This is in addition to \$25,000 to collegiate scholarships distributed last April.

In addition to our scholarship programs, we have expanded our outreach efforts to include support for more organizations in our area of focus—programs such as The READ team, WestTeach, and the Future Star Youth Summit. We hosted the Creative Expressions Contest in February with the Jackson-Madison County Bicentennial Commission and spoke at the Education Summit held at the Ag Center. We partnered with The Jackson Arts Council to support their art box initiative, which provides students with free art supplies to use as tools for creativity and expression. And, of course, we continued our LEADS educator grant programs and awarded over \$20,000 to local teachers and their classrooms. These programs provide critical resources and support to those who need them most, and we are proud to see their impact on our communities.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the support of our donors, sponsors, and partners. Your generosity and commitment to our mission have been truly inspiring, and we are grateful for your continued support. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of countless students and families across our community.

We remain focused on our mission as we look ahead to the coming year. With your help, we are confident that we can continue to expand our reach and make an even greater impact in the years to come.

Thank you for your continued support of the Leaders Education Foundation.

Kind regards,

Leigh Anne Bentley

# LEADERSHIP

The leadership of Leaders Education Foundation is comprised of a volunteer board of directors, officers, and staff donating their time, talent and treasures. The Foundation is grateful for their service and commitment to help provide resources and opportunities to help launch educational opportunities for community members.

## OFFICERS & STAFF



**LEIGH ANNE BENTLEY**  
President



**LEIGH O'NEILL**  
Vice President



**SHEA BROWN**  
Director of  
Community Impact



**TAYLOR RISLEY**  
Assistant Treasurer



**EDIE WHITMAN**  
Assistant Secretary



**CATHERINE TEEL**  
Accounting



**KYLE WEST**  
Accounting



**SCOTT HEIT**  
Marketing

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**RON HILL**  
Board Chair



**EDDIE HAYES**  
Vice Chair &  
Secretary



**KAREN TAYLOR**  
Treasurer



**MARY LOU ADAMS**  
Board Member



**YVETTE BLUE**  
Board Member



**EDDIE MAE PIRTLE**  
Board Member



**STEPHANIE RILEY**  
Board Member



# 2022 LEADS GRANTS WINNERS



L.E.A.D.S. Grants are designed to assist educators who promote initiatives that help students Learn, Experience, Advocate, Dream, and Serve. Through the L.E.A.D.S. Educator Grant Program, West Tennessee educators are eligible to enter for an opportunity to win \$1,000.

Congratulations to the 20 finalists, winning a \$1,000 L.E.A.D.S. Educator Grant:

## PROFESSOR MATT BARKER

Freed-Hardeman University

## ERIN OZMENT

Bartlett High School

## BRITTANY LEWIS

East Chester Elementary School

## SARA BILLINGSLEY

Madison Academic Magnet High School

## TEKIA BUNTYN

Jackson Central-Merry Middle School

## NICOLL BURLESON

Augustine School

## KELLY REA

Hillcrest Elementary School

## MISSI HARDIN

Community Montessori School

## CINDY EMISON

Arlington Elementary School

## DR. CALLIE DOLLAR

Community Montessori School



## KRISTEN ROBERSON

Freed-Hardeman University

## DR. PENNY WHITE

Bartlett High School

## RHONDA GRAMMER

Elmore Park Middle School

## JULIE CARTWRIGHT

Stigall Primary School

## DR. CALLANDRA ELLISON-WILLIAMSON

Lincoln Elementary School

## CHARO LOVINGS

Isaac Lane Elementary School

## MARCIE AUTRY

Community Montessori School

## LINDSEY BARNES

Community Montessori School

## DR. GEORG PINGEN

Union University

## CASSANDRA NICHOLS

Rivercrest Elementary School

# 2023 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Leaders Education Foundation Scholarship Program awarded twenty scholarships totaling \$25,000 to local high school seniors who displayed academic achievement and leadership in their school and community. We received 164 applications. The Financial Wellness Scholarship videos reached nearly 32,000 people.



**HANNAH PANKEY**  
\$2,500 Financial Wellness  
Video Scholarship  
Humboldt High School



**ELISE HAVERCAMP**  
\$2,000 Financial Wellness  
Video Scholarship  
Madison Academic High School



**CHLOE BRASFIELD**  
\$2,500 Leaders Credit Union  
Martha Britt Scholarship  
Jackson Christian School



**MADISON AGOMUO**  
\$1,000 JMCSS Founders Scholarship  
Jackson Central-Merry  
Early College High



**TAYLOR BRADFORD**  
\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
Dyer County  
Dyer County High School



**AUTUMN JONES**  
\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
Gibson County  
Milan High School



**AMIR DOUMITT**  
\$2,000 Leaders Credit Union  
Martha Britt Scholarship  
Madison Academic High School



**KAYLEIGH WILLIAMS**  
\$1,000 Town & Country  
Realtors Scholarship  
South Gibson County High School



**BRADEN NYE**  
\$1,000 Ellis Insurance  
Scholarship  
Madison Academic High School



**ALYSSA DURHAM**  
\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
Obion County  
Union City High School



**ELISABETH HANEY**  
\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
Shelby County  
Bartlett High School



**KATIE ALEXANDER**  
\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
West Tennessee  
Jackson Christian School



# 2023 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



**DOCIA BAKER**

\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
West Tennessee  
Trinity Christian Academy



**REAGAN DURKEE**

\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
West Tennessee  
Union City High School



**ADDISON FORSYTHE**

\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
West Tennessee  
North Side High School



**MAGGIE HUCKABY**

\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
West Tennessee  
Chester County High School



**BRIANA JORDAN**

\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
West Tennessee  
Peabody High School



**KAYLA MACKEY**

\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
West Tennessee  
North Side High School



**MARY ELLEN MONTGOMERY**

\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
West Tennessee  
Milan High School



**KATELIN RUTLEDGE**

\$1,000 Community Scholarship  
West Tennessee  
Westview High School

# WORKFORCE READINESS

## SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

**SHELBY BICKERSTAFF**

Jackson  
Jackson State CC

**MATTHEW MAREK**

Hornsby  
Jackson State CC

**MICAH BLAKEMORE**

Jackson  
TCAT Jackson

**AARON MARKHAM**

Jackson  
Jackson State CC

**SYDNEY DOUGLAS**

Newbern  
Jackson State CC

**ERICA REYNOLDS**

Humboldt  
Jackson State CC

**GRANT HOLLAND**

Jackson  
Jackson State CC

**ERRIKA STEPHENS**

Humboldt  
Jackson State CC

**CARESA HOLMES**

Jackson  
Jackson State CC

**JOHN TAYLOR**

Oakfield  
Jackson State CC



# NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

In accordance with our bylaws (available upon request), we are notifying our members that we recommend the expansion of the Board's size from seven (7) to nine (9) Directors with one (1) new Director serving an initial term of one (1) year and the other new Director serving an initial term of three (3) years in order to comply with the Bylaws' Director rotation requirements; and that the Board will have two (2) currently serving Directors' terms expiring at the Leaders Education Foundation's fourth annual meeting in April 2023. The second terms for these Directors shall be for three (3) years each.

In accordance with the Foundation's bylaws, Section 4.03, the Chair shall appoint before each annual meeting at least two (2) Board members and three (3) members from the general membership to serve on the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall submit to the full Board and membership a list of nominees not later than thirty (30) days prior to the annual meeting. Chair, Ron Hill, has appointed Yvette Blue and himself from the Board and Spencer Pratt, Seth Rudd, and Karen Freeman from the general membership to serve on the Nominating Committee for 2023. Board Chair Hill appointed Spencer Pratt as the 2023 Nominating Committee Chair.

The Nominating Committee has completed its' responsibility of providing the following as Director Nominees to be presented to the membership.

**RON HILL**  
2nd Term  
April 2023–April 2026

**EDDIE HAYS**  
2nd Term  
April 2023–April 2026

**STAN SANDERS**  
1st Term  
April 2023–April 2024

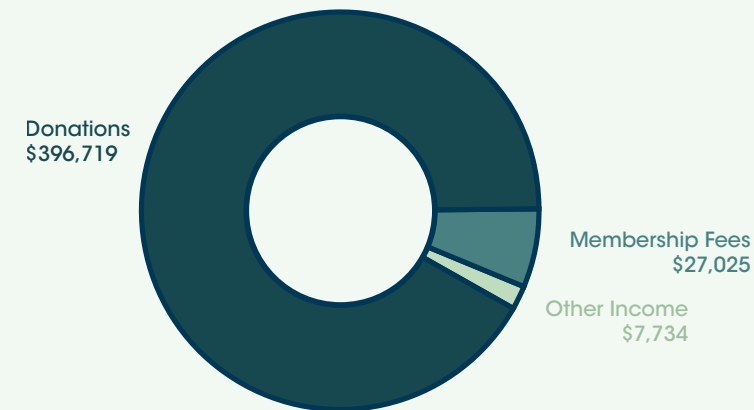
**GREG HAMMOND**  
1st Term  
April 2023–April 2026

Thank you for allowing us to serve as your 2023 Nominating Committee.

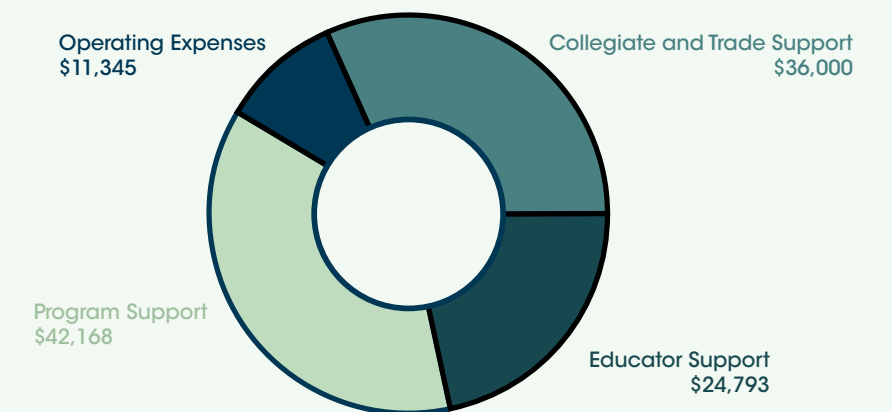
Spencer Pratt, Chair  
Ron Hill  
Yvette Blue  
Seth Rudd  
Karen Freeman

# 2022 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

## REVENUE



## EXPENSES





# 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

## APRIL 19, 2022

Chair Eddie Hays called the 3rd Annual Membership meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. at 1490 Union University Drive, Jackson, TN. He explained that due to the ongoing COVID-19 national pandemic, the meeting is being conducted virtually with a limited in-person audience.

Chair Hays led the invocation and welcomed the students from Arlington Elementary School. The students lead everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Hays next called upon Secretary Ron Hill to determine whether a quorum was present. Secretary Hill confirmed that a quorum was present.

Chair Hays called for the reading of the minutes of the 2nd Annual Membership meeting conducted on April 27, 2021. A motion was made to dispense with the reading of last year's minutes, which are in the 2022 Annual Report that is online. The motion carried, and the minutes were approved as presented.

Chair Hays introduced the other Foundation Board Members who are:

- Ron Hill, who also served as Vice-Chair and Secretary
- Karen Taylor, who also served as Treasurer
- Mary Lou Adams
- Yvette Blue
- Eddie Mae Pirtle
- Stephanie Riley

Chair Hays called upon Foundation President Leigh Anne Bentley for the President's Report.

President Bentley thanked Chair Hays and the Foundation Board for their leadership and service during the past year. She then reported that, in 2021, the Foundation participated in #GivingTuesday to help make a difference with the help of sponsors, members, and donors. She gave a brief overview on the different ways the Foundation supported the community in 2021, such as:

- Awarded \$15,000 in Scholarships to high school seniors in the Spring of 2021
- Awarded \$19,000 in L.E.A.D.S. Grants to Educators
- Donated \$1,000 to Humphreys County School System for Disaster Relief from the flooding it experienced in 2021
- Donated \$10,000 to West TN Imagination Library Chapters so they can provide books to participating children from birth to five years old

- Partnered financially with the United Way's READ Team to expand their services and resources, including taking books to different areas with their Words on Wheels (W.O.W.) Wagon
- Partnered with the Jackson Madison County Bicentennial to provide coloring books celebrating Jackson Madison County's history to 10,000 elementary school children
- Sponsored the Jackson Madison County Bicentennial Creative Expressions contest, which kicked off in the Fall of 2021 and had awards presented in February 2022 for preschool through high school children to submit coloring work, artwork, poems, and essays. The overall winners' submissions will be placed in the new Jackson Madison County time capsule
- Sponsored Twenty-One (21) 7th and 8th graders across West TN in the FutureStar Youth Summit hosted at UT Martin

President Bentley thanked the Foundation's current members and the over 1,700 new members in 2021 for uniting with the Foundation to support its mission of Making Lives Better, Together.

President Bentley then reported that Leaders Education Foundation's Scholarship Program, which launched in early 2020, has increased each year the total number and dollar amount of its scholarships to high school seniors who displayed academic achievement and leadership in their schools and communities. At its last meeting and in accordance with the Bylaws, the Foundation's Board reviewed and accepted the Scholarship Committee's Report and recommendation to award 18 scholarships totaling \$25,000. Before announcing the 2022 recipients, President Bentley introduced and thanked the Scholarship Committee members for their service. The Committee members were Director Adams, who served as the Committee's Chair; Director Riley; Director Blue; and Foundation member Linda Rizzuto. President Bentley then individually recognized each recipient, all of whom were featured in the 2021 Annual Report with their picture, their name, the scholarship's name and amount, and their high school name. President Bentley reported the Foundation awarded 19 L.E.A.D.S. Educator Grants of \$1,000 each in 2021. L.E.A.D.S. Grants are designed to assist educators who promote initiatives to help students Learn, Experience, Advocate, Dream, and Serve. The 2021 recipients, who are listed in the 2021 Annual Report, were recognized and presented checks at a reception in their honor in October 2021.

President Bentley reported that the Foundation also joined in an "Imagine the Possibilities" campaign with the Imagination Library Chapters in Madison, Haywood, and Chester Counties to Give Forward. The Foundation pledged to give \$60 for each new Foundation member or a donation of \$10 or more made in honor of a participating Imagination Library. Based on the "Imagine the Possibilities" campaign, the Foundation donated \$7,000 to the participating Imagination Libraries.

President Bentley then introduced Director Hill, who was appointed the 2022 Nominating Committee Chair by Foundation Board Chair Hays. Committee Chair Hill began by recognizing his fellow 2022 Nominating Committee members: Director Blue and Foundation members Mr. Spencer Pratt, Mr. Seth Rudd, and Mrs. Karen Freeman. He reported that at this time and based on the Board's approval, the Nominating Committee submits to the membership the following slate of Nominees for the Foundation Board of Directors:

- Eddie Mae Pirtle - 2nd term (3 years) April 2022 – April 2025
- Karen Taylor - 2nd term (3 years) April 2022 – April 2025
- Stephanie Riley - 2nd term (3 years) April 2022 – April 2025

Chair Hays thanked the 2022 Nominating Committee, and as there were no further nominations, he asked for a motion to accept the slate of Nominees. A motion and a second were made to accept the slate of Nominees, and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Hays then thanked those members joining in-person and virtually for the 3rd Annual Membership meeting and thanked the students of Arlington Elementary School for leading everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. He also thanked all the Foundation's sponsors, members, donors and volunteer staff for supporting the Foundation's mission of Making Lives Better, Together.

Chair Hays encouraged everyone to continue donating and, if not a member, to join the Foundation. With no other business to be discussed, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Hill, Secretary  
Eddie Hays, Chair

# BECOME A MEMBER

When an individual or organization chooses to give to the Leaders Education Foundation, their impact can last a lifetime.

Becoming a member of the Leaders Education Foundation means you will make an impact in your community. As a member, your contribution gives you the unique opportunity to participate in the Annual Meeting of the Foundation's membership, as our volunteer Board of Directors outlines how we plan to Give Forward. You will be updated through our newsletter and social media with how your membership is directly impacting your local community. You will also have direct access to share the Foundation's scholarships and grants to students or educators who would benefit from these valuable opportunities.

**To become a member of the Leaders Education Foundation, visit [leadersgives.org](https://leadersgives.org) and select "Give."** Donations of all sizes are appreciated, and you automatically become a member with a one-time \$10 donation. Donations over the \$10 membership fee may be given in honor or in memory of a loved one.

**"Always walk through life as if you have something new to learn, and you will."**

**-VERNON HOWARD**

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& BYRD**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
PLLC  
JESSI BELL PRUETT



# LEADERS

EDUCATION FOUNDATION

**LEADERSGIVES.ORG**

info@leadersgives.org  
731.664.1784 ext. 1121



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