



Illinois State Treasurer

MICHAEL FRERICHS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 20, 2026

Treasurer Michael Frerichs Announces Nearly \$180,000 in Grants for Small Nonprofits in Illinois

Funds Will Support Food and Work Readiness Programs in Champaign, Charleston, Chicago, Downers Grove, Murphysboro, West Frankfort, and Westmont

Key Points:

- Grant money awarded to small nonprofits that provide food and economic & workforce development programs
- Funding comes from fees that larger nonprofits pay to file annual reports – not from tax dollars
- Application period for next round of grants will begin January 1, 2027

Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs today announced nearly \$180,000 in Charitable Trust grants to 10 nonprofit organizations that help people in need by providing food and job training. The grants total \$178,210.

“These grants are important because they help nonprofits achieve their missions of serving others and strengthening communities,” Treasurer Frerichs said at a news conference at Synapse House, a Charitable Trust grant recipient in Downers Grove. “We recognize that people are struggling with increased inflation and higher living expenses, and that the federal government is failing to make things better. We are proud to partner with these organizations that offer a helping hand to Illinoisans in need.”

Where Is the Money Going?

The Charitable Trust Committee, an independent panel, chose 10 grant recipients from 75 applicants.

- **Champaign:** Feeding Our Kids - \$20,000
- **Charleston:** Standing Stone Community Center NFP - \$10,660

-MORE-

- **Chicago:** Center for Companies That Care - \$20,000
- **Chicago:** Chicago Filmmakers - \$20,000
- **Chicago:** LEAP Learning Systems - \$20,000
- **Chicago:** Plant Chicago - \$17,550
- **Downers Grove:** Synapse House - \$10,000
- **Murphysboro:** 724 Ministries NFP - \$20,000
- **West Frankfort:** Franklin County Senior Services Inc. - \$20,000
- **Westmont:** The ACE Project Inc. - \$20,000

What Are the Nonprofits Saying?

- “At Synapse House, we help individuals return to meaningful, paid employment following a brain injury or stroke. For many, this rehabilitation journey can take two to three years,” said Deborah Giesler, executive director of Synapse House in Downers Grove. “Funding from the Illinois Charitable Trust grant will be used to develop industry-specific training modules for careers in customer service, janitorial services, and food service. Returning to work is a critical step toward independence, allowing our clients to support themselves and their families while rebuilding purpose. We are deeply grateful for this support, which will help ensure our clients are equipped with the skills to achieve long-term success in the workforce.”
- “This award will help support our mission of providing weekend food to children throughout Champaign County,” said Alison Dupre, executive director of Feeding Our Kids in Champaign. “With food insecurity continuing to affect local families, this grant will make a meaningful difference as we work to ensure children have access to nutritious food when school is not in session. We currently provide food to children in 50 schools, and we are thankful for partners who share our commitment to helping kids thrive.”
- “724 Ministries provides a free, home-cooked dinner every Sunday to more than 100 guests from a melting pot of racial, social, and economic groups in a county with the second-highest poverty rate in Illinois,” said Ed O’Donnell, executive director of the nonprofit in Murphysboro. “This award will cover the difference between the cost of preparing and serving more than 5,000 meals to our underserved neighbors during 2027 and the financial support we are able to raise from local sources.”

What Are Charitable Trust Grants?

The Charitable Trust Stabilization Fund assists small nonprofits that have annual budgets of \$1 million or less and at least one full-time employee. Money in the fund comes from fees that not-for-profit corporations pay when filing annual reports with the Illinois Secretary of State — and not from personal or property tax dollars.

-MORE-

Charitable Trust grants help nonprofits fulfill their missions to serve people in need by providing housing, food, and workforce and economic development assistance. For the spring 2026 grant cycle, funds were awarded to nonprofits with programs in either of two categories: food and workforce/economic development.

An independent 11-member committee selects the grant recipients and oversees the management and guidelines of the fund. The maximum award amount is \$20,000 for each organization. Grant applicants located in an area with pervasive poverty, unemployment and economic distress will be given special attention. Previous grant recipients are eligible to apply if the term of their grant has been complete for at least one calendar year.

What Has the Impact Been?

Since being established in 2017, the Charitable Trust Stabilization Fund program has awarded \$5.4 million through 271 grants to 215 charitable organizations in 77 cities across Illinois. The program has impacted hundreds of thousands of people's lives for the better.

When Can Small Nonprofits Apply for a Grant?

The Charitable Trust Stabilization Fund's next grant application period will run from January 1 to March 31, 2027, and will award grants to nonprofit charitable programs in two categories: food and economic/workforce development. For more information, visit ilcharitabletrust.com or contact the Treasurer's Office at (217) 836-4590.

Media Contacts

Eric Krol 312.814.1252

Adriana Colindres 217.558.1920

About the Treasurer

The Illinois State Treasurer's Office is a powerful economic engine that invests in people to drive prosperity, development and growth throughout the state. As State Treasurer, Michael Frerichs (FRAIR'iks) is the state's Chief Investment and Banking Officer and actively manages approximately \$60 billion. The investments help families pay for college and trade school; workers save for a dignified retirement; and local governments process bill payments more efficiently so they can pass along the savings to taxpayers. The office provides financial institutions with money to loan to farmers, small business owners, and qualified individuals at below-market rates because better jobs create stronger communities. The office operates the state's largest consumer-protection initiative, the missing money ICash program, which has returned a record-breaking \$2.65 billion since Frerichs was elected.

-MORE-

For more news about the State Treasurer's Office, please sign up for our [newsletter](#) and follow Treasurer Frerichs on YouTube at [@TreasurerMichaelFrerichs](#), Instagram at [IL Treasurer](#), Threads [@iltreasurer](#), [LinkedIn](#) and on Facebook at [Invested in You – Treasurer Michael Frerichs](#).

-END-