A VISION FOR HILL COUNTRY

Health and Well-Being

CreateHealthy









2025

Community Report

CreateHealthy

OUR MISSION AND VISION

Create Healthy's mission is investing in wellness and empowering communities, and our vision is a Hill Country where all contribute and thrive.

OUR VALUES



Collaborative
An unwavering commitment to transparency, integrity, and accountability in all our interactions.



Trustworthy
Being open to new information and perspectives.



Courageous
Bravely explore and embrace challenges and opportunities.

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A Note From the Create Healthy Board Chair and President & CEO

Create Healthy was formed with a long view in mind: to invest permanent charitable resources into the enduring health of the Texas Hill Country. In 2025, that vision advanced through disciplined grantmaking and other philanthropic investments, strategic partnerships, and a shared commitment to regional health and well-being for the youngest of residents to the most senior.

Our strategy in 2025 remained centered on four funding priorities: mental health, early childhood development, health education, and healthy living. Collectively, these areas represent both immediate opportunity and long-term impact. They reflect what we have heard consistently from community and business leaders, educators, healthcare and social services professionals, and families as priority needs affecting Gillespie, Blanco, Llano, and Mason Counties, and the town of Comfort.

In 2025, through grants, sponsorships, scholarships, and other philanthropic giving, Create Healthy invested $7.2 million in organizations advancing this work. Each investment strengthens operational capacity, expands access, and generates measurable outcomes. The progress outlined in this report is the result of local expertise combined with focused philanthropic support.

This year's funded partner impact stories illustrate what is possible when community needs, strategy, and local leadership align. From expanding access to counseling and behavioral health resources and strengthening advocacy for children and families, to building rural healthcare career pathways and increasing access to green spaces, our partners are advancing meaningful change across the region.

2025 was also another year of expanding our vision and impact. Fuel to the Fire, in its third year, reinforced nonprofit sustainability through year-end matching grants. Scholarship investments opened doors for students pursuing careers in healthcare. Initiatives such as Healthy Together and the Hill Country Resources Directory strengthened the infrastructure that supports healthier communities. The Create Healthy Wellness Center advanced its expansion planning, reflecting the growing need in our community for accessible fitness options and health and wellness programming.

Community voices remain foundational to our approach. Insights gathered through the Community Health Needs Assessment and Community and Mental Health Summits inform our priorities and sharpen our focus. Listening to the region we serve ensures that our investments remain responsive, relevant, and forward-looking.

Nonprofit leaders, educators, healthcare and social services providers, volunteers, and civic partners continue to show what can be achieved through shared purpose and collective responsibility.

The long-term health of our region is shaped by the decisions we make today. We remain committed to investing wisely, leading responsibly, and strengthening the communities we call home.

On behalf of the Create Healthy Board of Directors and staff, thank you to our partners, grantees and other funded partners, and community members who continue to shape this work. Together, we are building a healthier Hill Country.



Joel Junker

Joel Junker
Chair of the Board of Directors



Jayne Pope

Jayne Pope, RN
President & CEO

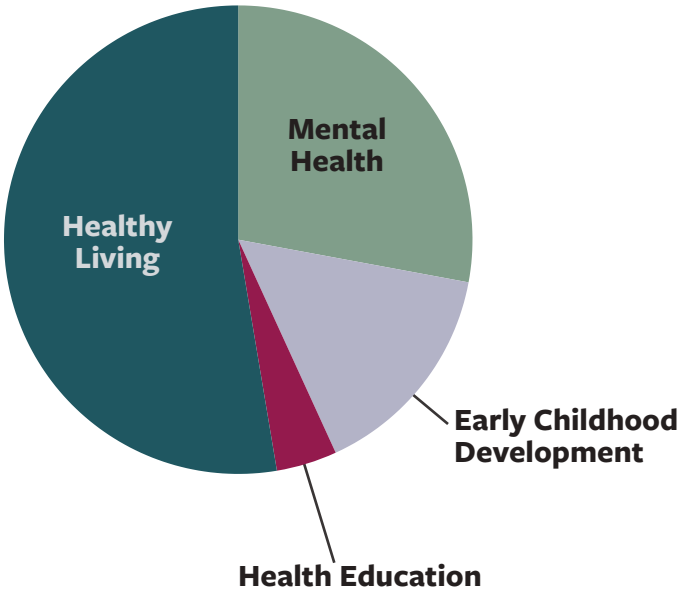
2025 Strategic Funding

Focused Investments. Stronger Communities.

Create Healthy's 2025 strategic funding priorities were shaped by a simple belief: improving health and well-being takes more than access to medical care alone. The conditions that shape a person's health and ability to thrive and participate in community life begin long before an encounter with the healthcare system and continue far beyond it. They are found in the strength of families, the stability and vibrancy of communities, and the opportunities people have to live well every day.

Our strategic funding priorities reflect a deliberate commitment to invest where support can create meaningful, lasting impact across the Hill Country. Together, they represent some of the most important building blocks of a healthier region.

The strategic funding priorities also give Create Healthy a clear framework for partnership. They help identify where investments can be most effective, where community organizations are already doing important work, and where collaboration can extend the reach of local solutions.



Mental Health
Total Invested: $2 million

From bilingual counseling services and specialized support for those in the hospitality industry, to youth-oriented mental health resources and trauma-informed care, each funded partner plays a vital role in expanding access to compassionate, accessible mental health resources for every neighbor in the Hill Country.

Early Childhood Development
Total Invested: $1.1 million

Create Healthy supports early childhood development programs across the Hill Country to build strong foundations for a healthy future. Grants and sponsorships expand childcare capacity and boost early education opportunities. By partnering with local organizations, we ensure children receive the support they need to learn, grow, and thrive.

Health Education
Total Invested: $300,000

Education is the foundation of lifelong wellness. That's why we support programs that equip people of all ages with the knowledge and resources to make informed decisions about their health.

Our funding helps deliver essential tools, like chronic disease prevention workshops, nutrition and fitness education, and community health fairs, to residents across the Hill Country. Whether it's teaching students about healthy habits or empowering seniors with tools to manage a chronic condition, each initiative strengthens our shared commitment to a more informed, healthier community.

Healthy Living
Total Invested: $3.8 million

We're paving the way for children, families, and seniors to have greater access to healthcare, nutritious food, physical activity, and safe living in the Hill Country. Whether ensuring kids have safe and engaging physical activities or enhancing mobility for older adults, each investment strengthens our shared commitment to a healthier, happier community.

Some grantees' projects fit multiple strategic funding categories, e.g. mental health and healthy living. In those cases, for reporting purposes, the grant is apportioned between the different categories.

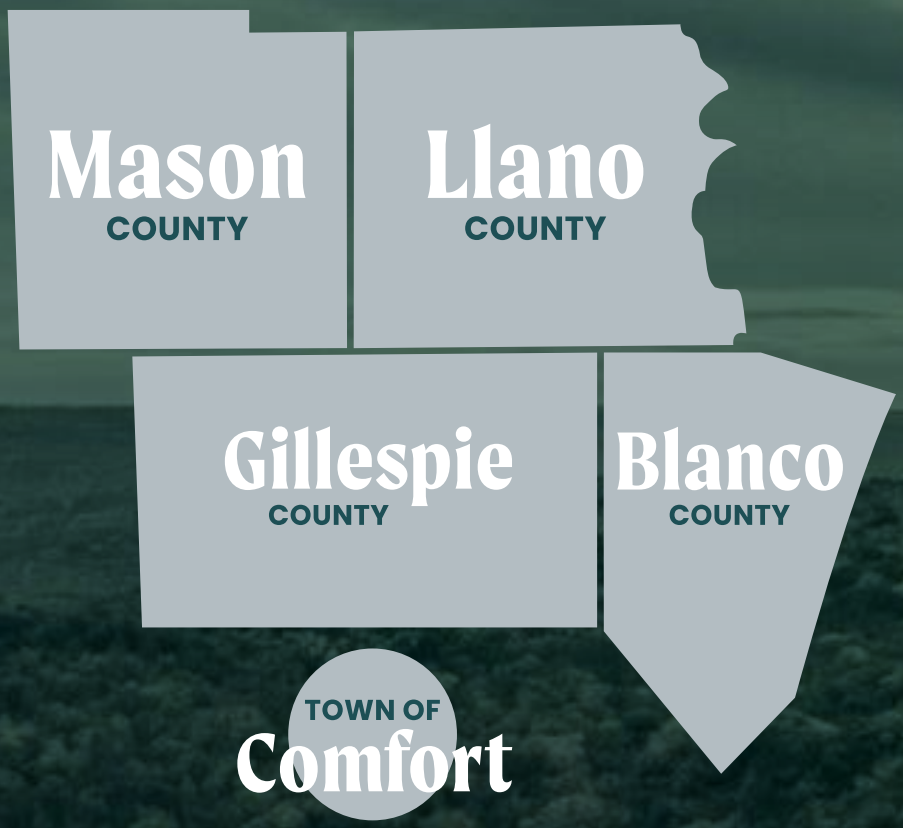
Create Healthy History & Grants Overview

History & Evolution

Create Healthy was founded in 2023, continuing a long tradition of Hill Country service, in a legacy of caring for each other in times of need and empowering each other to contribute and give back in times of plenty.

As one of the largest philanthropies serving our region, Create Healthy is the steward of the proceeds from the sale of Hill Country Memorial Hospital to new ownership in April 2023 and the assets held in trust of the former hospital's foundation. It is tasked with investing in the long-term health and wellbeing of Gillespie, Blanco, Llano, and Mason Counties and the town of Comfort.

With that legacy of neighbors helping neighbors, our work in 2025 centered on four strategic funding priorities: mental health, early childhood development, health education, and healthy living. Guided by collaboration, Create Healthy partners with local organizations and leaders to strengthen access to needed resources and services, support wellbeing, and build lasting health across every Hill Country community for generations to come.



Grants Overview

In 2025, Create Healthy continued its grantmaking work, soliciting applications from eligible nonprofit organizations working in our catchment area and in one of our four funding priority areas. Applications are accepted year-round and may be submitted at any time. Funding decisions are made quarterly. Our volunteer Grants Advisory Council reviews the applications with final award decisions made by the Board of Directors.

In 2025, Create Healthy invested $6.8 million in grant funding in eligible nonprofit organizations.

MENTAL HEALTH & HEALTHY LIVING

Expanding Access to Timely Healthcare in the Hill Country

Frontera Healthcare Network

Frontera Healthcare Network's work in Fredericksburg, Mason, and surrounding communities includes providing locally accessible health services for children, adults, and families. Through multiple grants, Create Healthy supported the renovation of its Mason Clinic and expansion of its behavioral health services, including hiring a full-time Head of Psychiatry and nurse with psychiatric specialization. In 2025, Frontera served 253 new, unduplicated patients in Fredericksburg and Mason through these expanded behavioral health services.

> "In rural communities, timely psychiatric care is not a small thing. It can mean earlier support, better follow-through, and fewer crises for children and families. Create Healthy's support helped us build that capacity locally and strengthen the behavioral health system across the Hill Country."



Dr. Cameron Culver
MPH, MHS, CPH, HMDC

Head of Psychiatry
Frontera Healthcare Network

















HEALTHY LIVING

Advocating for Children and Families in Gillespie County

Hill Country CASA

Hill Country Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)'s work in Gillespie County involves serving as an advocate for children and families from the time a child is removed from their family's care until the child is reunified with their family or placed in a permanent home. Create Healthy supports its work to recruit, train, and retain volunteers, which is core to its ability to ensure every child involved in the child welfare system has a trusted, reliable advocate.

> "Children and families involved in the child welfare system need someone who will stay with them, speak up for their best interests, and keep showing up no matter how complicated the case becomes. That advocacy helped children and families move toward safer, more stable outcomes in 2025."



Stephanie Cash

Executive Director
Hill Country CASA

HEALTH EDUCATION

Investing in the Next Generation of Healthcare Professionals

Texas A&M Vashisht College of Medicine

By investing in every stage of education, the Texas A&M Vashisht College of Medicine is building a sustainable healthcare workforce for the Hill Country.

Early, hands-on healthcare learning opportunities; mentorship from current and other healthcare profession students; and seeing first-hand what is possible with a career in healthcare inspires young learners and provides real-world, actionable information and tactics that turn a dream into reality.

> "Create Healthy's support puts medical students in Llano, Mason, and Fredericksburg clinics and practices and brings healthcare fairs to life for young people. The impact happens in the Hill Country. The funds stay local and help build pathways for tomorrow's healthcare providers."



Curtis J. Donaldson

Executive Director
Texas A&M Rural Director

















HEALTHY LIVING

Supporting Independence and Healthy Living for People with Mobility Challenges

Texas Ramp Project

With continued Create Healthy support, the Texas Ramp Project built more home wheelchair ramps for low-income older adults and people with disabilities who depend on a wheelchair for mobility, helping expand access to safe home entry and egress for residents in the Hill Country and Comfort regions.

> "Something as simple as a safe way in and out of a home can change everything. A ramp can restore independence, reduce fear, ease the burden on caregivers, and help someone stay connected to the care and daily life they deserve."



Kay Champagne

Board Member
Texas Ramp Project

Community Support





Sponsorships

In 2025, Create Healthy contributed over $144,000 in event and organization sponsorships to support area nonprofit organizations in their fundraising and community education activities. These events are part of what make the Hill Country such a vibrant community and are a vital part of nonprofit organizations' fundraising efforts.

$144,000
Invested in Sponsorships

Honoring the people who help our communities thrive

Volunteer Appreciation Week Sponsorships

Volunteers are behind so much of the work that strengthens the Hill Country. They support children and families, serve neighbors in need, and help local organizations extend their reach every day.

To celebrate that impact, Create Healthy's Volunteer Appreciation Week Sponsorship initiative supports local nonprofits in recognizing and thanking their volunteers.

2025 was the second year of the initiative, and 14 local organizations received sponsorship support. Participating organizations also received added visibility through Create Healthy's website, digital platforms, and print promotions, helping spotlight both their missions and their volunteer opportunities.











Building the Next Generation of Hill Country Healthcare Leaders

Student Healthcare Scholarships

In 2025, Create Healthy committed $250,000 to eight scholarship organizations across the Hill Country to support students pursuing higher education and training in healthcare-related fields. This investment represents a strategic commitment to building a sustainable, homegrown healthcare workforce for the region.

Each organization identifies students who demonstrate academic dedication and commitment to a healthcare career from nursing and paramedicine to radiologic technology, laboratory sciences, behavioral health, and other essential roles that strengthen local access to care.

> "I've seen so many bright students with the heart to serve in healthcare but without the means to get there. This funding isn't just financial aid -- it's hope. It tells these students, 'We believe in you. Your future matters.'"

Erin Carter

Chair of the Create Healthy Scholarship Council

2025 SCHOLARSHIP PARTNERS

- Blanco Education Foundation
- Fredericksburg Academic Boosters Inc.
- Fredericksburg Rotary Club Foundation Inc.
- Comfort Gaddis United Methodist Church Pass It On Shop
- Harper ISD Parent Teacher Organization Inc.
- Johnson City Community Education Foundation
- Llano ISD Educational Foundation
- Mason ISD Scholarship Foundation

Uplifting & Investing in the Hill Country

Backing Hill Country Nonprofits Fuel to the Fire

In 2025, Create Healthy concluded another successful year of Fuel to the Fire, a strategic year-end matching grant initiative designed to strengthen nonprofit sustainability and amplify local giving across the Hill Country.

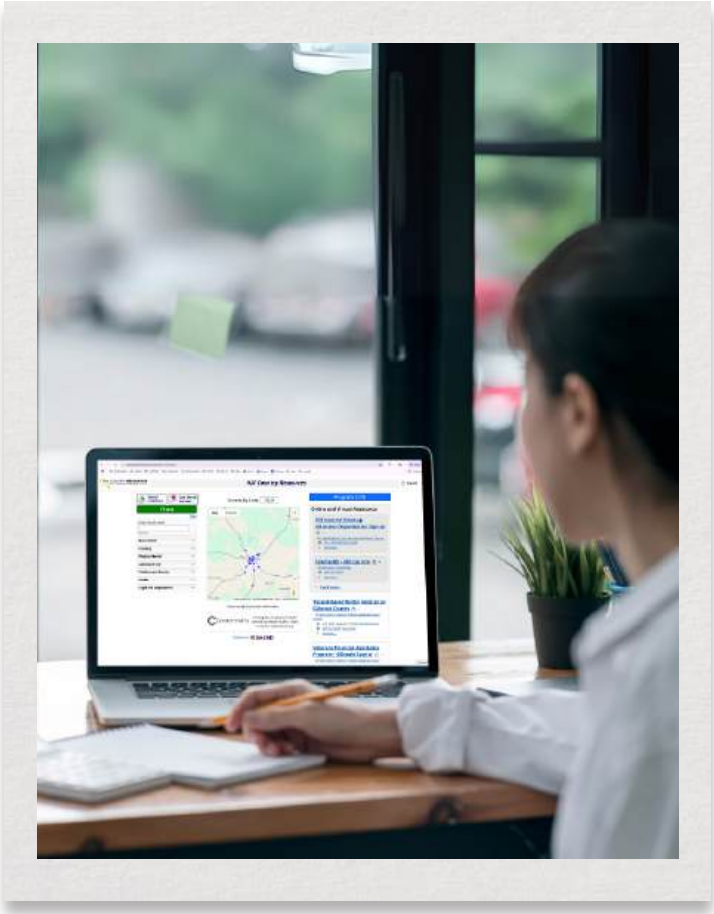
Through this initiative, Create Healthy invested $270,000 in matching funds, supporting 10 nonprofit organizations serving Gillespie, Llano, and Mason Counties and the community of Comfort. Each organization was eligible to receive up to $25,000 in dollar-for-dollar matching support, empowering local donors to multiply the impact of their contributions.

$270,000

Create Healthy invested in matching funds

2025 FUEL TO THE FIRE PARTNERS

- Boys & Girls Club of the Highland Lakes
- Boys & Girls Club of Texas Hill Country
- Friends of Enchanted Rock State Natural Area
- The Golden Hub Senior Center Foundation
- The Good Samaritan Center
- The Grace Center of Fredericksburg
- Hill Country Community Needs Council
- Mason County Food Pantry
- Zonta Club of Fredericksburg Foundation
- The Salvation Army of Fredericksburg



The Hill Country Mental Health Coalition

Initially convened in 2024, the Hill Country Mental Health Coalition is an ongoing forum to identify behavioral health care needs and service gaps, strengthen relationships, share data and information, and encourage collaboration. It brings together schools, law enforcement, social services organizations, behavioral health clinicians, and other community partners from across the region. With ongoing Create Healthy support, the Coalition met regularly in 2025 and commissioned a landscape survey to better understand prevalence of needs and service availability.

> "The Hill Country Mental Health Coalition fills a huge need in our region for collaboration, information and resource sharing, and planning for the future. With Create Healthy's support, we are able to bring together the agencies, organizations, and individuals who know the Hill Country's mental health needs best and work together to remove barriers to timely care."

Mikki Hand

Executive Director **- Frontera Healthcare Network**
Chair **- Hill Country Mental Health Coalition**

HILL COUNTRY RESOURCES
Powered by Create Healthy

Making Help Easier to Access Hill Country Resources

In 2025, the Hill Country Mental Health Coalition led the development of HillCountryResources.org, a free online directory to help Hill Country residents quickly locate local support close to home. Designed to remove friction when help is needed, HillCountryResources.org is available in English and Spanish, requires no login, and can be used anonymously by anyone. Users can search by ZIP code, browse verified listings, and find support across a wide range of needs, including food, mental health, healthcare, housing, legal aid, transportation, and work-related services. Schools, social services and healthcare providers, nonprofit staff, law enforcement, and other community partners also use the tool to help connect people to resources.

> "We use the Hill Country Resources Directory almost daily to help us connect members of our community with essential supports. It has proven a valuable addition to our toolbox to quickly and easily identify available local resources and providers that are ready and able to help."



James Kruse

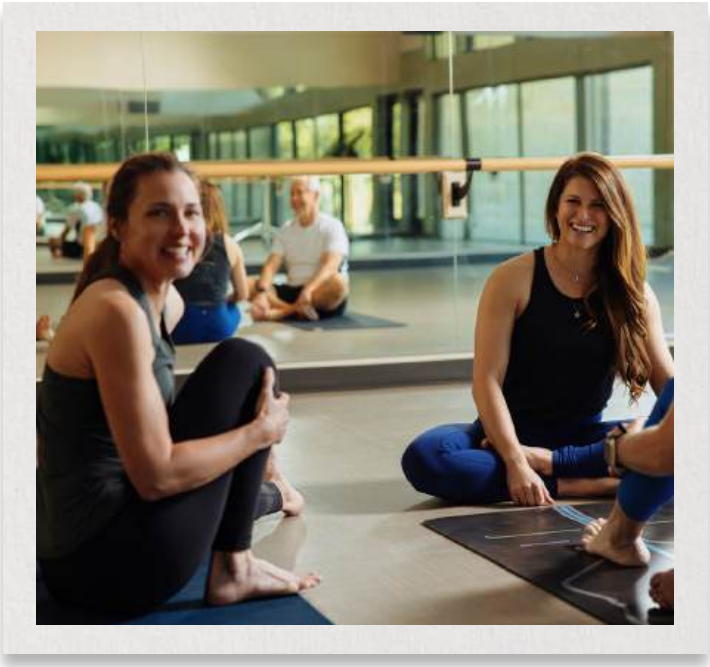
Mental Health Deputy
Gillespie County Sheriff's Office

Create Healthy Wellness Center

Promoting exercise, fitness, and nutrition to help our community live longer and healthier lives.

The Create Healthy Wellness Center offers a full array of fitness, education, and nutritional services to empower our community to live happier, healthier lives.

With free memberships for Fredericksburg first responders, 24-hour access, and always-evolving programming, the Create Healthy Wellness Center is a health hub for our community.



In 2025, the Create Healthy board of directors approved a plan to expand and renovate the Wellness Center to meet the community's needs for more fitness and wellness programs and to advance Create Healthy's mission to invest in wellness. That expansion will take place through 2026 and 2027.

> "The most rewarding part of the Create Healthy Wellness Center is the people I come across throughout my day. People of all walks of life, all ages, and all health levels that tell me the great things that the Wellness Center has done for their overall health and wellness journey."



Dawn Bourgeois
Director
Create Healthy Wellness Center

2025 Wellness Center At A Glance

3,927
Members

287,992
Wellness Center Check-Ins

5,030
Youth Watch Childcare Check-Ins

Wellness Center Programs

Fit Kids Sports & Fitness Camps

Held annually during school breaks, Fit Kids Camp gives children ages 5–12 a fun, active, and enriching place to spend their time out of school. Through movement, games, field trips, and hands-on learning, the program encourages healthy habits, builds confidence, and creates meaningful opportunities for connection.





HealthyU

HealthyU is a free 12-month wellness program to support adults in improving their health. The program combines nutrition guidance, group classes, lifestyle coaching, health screenings, and regular follow-up to help participants build healthier routines with consistent support.

HealhtyU is an important part of the Wellness Center's broader commitment to long-term community health. Participation in HealthyU increased 95 percent in 2025, from 91 participants in 2024 to 177 participants in 2025. In response, Create Healthy expanded staffing to support continued interest and program growth.

1,339
Individual Swim Lessons

177
HealthyU Participants

771
Wildflower Run & Walk Participants

Create Healthy Wellness Center

Healthy Together Family Program

Healthy Together is a free, evidence-based curriculum to support children ages 7–11 and their families in building healthier habits together. The 12-week program focuses on nutrition, physical activity, and family engagement, helping participants establish routines that support long-term health.

Led by a registered dietitian and subsidized by Create Healthy, Healthy Together includes child exercise sessions, parent nutrition education, and family nutrition classes. Participating families also receive a six-month membership to the Create Healthy Wellness Center. Healthy Together reflects Create Healthy's commitment to prevention, family wellness, and early intervention.

In 2025, eight families and 11 children participated in Healthy Together. By the end of the program, three children had achieved weight loss, eight maintained their weight and avoided additional gain, and every child improved their fitness level.







The Gurrola Family

Healthy Together supported the Gurrola family in incorporating healthier habits into everyday family life. Through the program, mom Maricela and her children learned how to read food labels more closely, incorporate new vegetables, cook with whole grains, reduce soda and juice consumption, and make healthy changes together. From grocery shopping and meal preparation to movement and family wellness routines, Healthy Together offered the entire family tools they could use at home to make healthy choices.

> "We made baby steps and tried to have fun with it. My children help me cook, and it's great because this is so good for them to learn healthy habits. Healthy Together helped us better understand how to read food labels and the importance of being active."
>
> **Maricela Gurrola**
> **Healthy Together Participant**

Our Funded Partners

Mental Health

Frontera Healthcare Network
Fredericksburg Independent School District
Texas Wine Revolution
The Good Samaritan Center
The Grace Center
Hill Country MHDD
St. Mary's Catholic School

Early Childhood Development

Friends of Pioneer Memorial Library
City of Fredericksburg
Comfort Independent School District
First United Methodist Church, Mason
Little League Baseball, Inc.
Fredericksburg Independent School District
Holy Ghost Lutheran Church
Boys & Girls Club of the Texas Hill Country
Admiral Nimitz Foundation
Boys & Girls Club of the Highland Lakes
The Grace Center
Little Hearts Child Development Center
Fredericksburg Chamber of Commerce Events Foundation, Inc.
St. Mary's Catholic School
1Hope for Kids, Inc.
Junior Golf Foundation

Health Education

Blanco Education Foundation
Fredericksburg Academic Boosters
Fredericksburg Rotary Club Foundation
Gaddis United Methodist Church – Pass It On
Harper ISD Parent Teacher Organization, Inc.
Johnson City Community Education Foundation
Llano ISD Educational Foundation
Mason ISD Scholarship Foundation
Texas A&M Vashisht College of Medicine

Healthy Living

Blanco County Emergency Services Auxiliary
Comfort Golden Age Center Foundation
Fredericksburg Rotary Club Foundation
The Golden Hub Community Center
Comfort Volunteer Fire Department
FBG Friends of the Field
Fredericksburg Volunteer Fire Department
Star Bright Foundation
The Good Samaritan Center
Frontera Healthcare Network
Heart of the Hills Pregnancy Resources
Llano Crawfish Open, Inc.
OneStar Foundation
Fredericksburg High school Project Graduation, Inc.
Llano Volunteer Fire Department Fund
Fredericksburg Tennis Center Foundation
Blanco Education Foundation
First United Methodist Church, Mason
Fredericksburg ISD Education Foundation
Friends of the Written Word, Inc.
Gillespie County Committee on Aging
Gillespie Extension, Inc.
Harper Library
Hill Country Community Needs Council
Round Mountain Volunteer Fire Department
San Antonio Food Bank (Mobile food markets: Mason County and Comfort)
Tierra Linda Volunteer Fire Department
Johnson City Volunteer Fire Department
Mason Volunteer Fire Department
Willow City Volunteer Fire & Rescue, Inc.
Fredericksburg Independent School District
Hill Country CASA, Inc.
Fredericksburg Police Department Foundation Fund
Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country
Doss Volunteer Fire Department
Harper Community Park
Lights Spectacular Hill Country Style, Inc.
Christian Men's Life Skills of Kerr County
Fredericksburg Morning Rotary Club
Fredericksburg Parks Foundation
Harper Volunteer Fire Department
Holy Ghost Lutheran Church
Round Mountain Volunteer Fire Department
Stonewall Volunteer Fire Department
Texas Ramp Project

2025 Financial Stewardship

Total Revenue	$15,272,855
- Total Expenses	$13,929,514
Net Income	$1,343,341
Total Assets	$227,804,058

Leadership Team

2026 Board of Directors

The Board of Create Healthy is composed of community and business leaders committed to furthering Create Healthy's mission to invest in wellness and empower its communities.

Joel Junker
Board Chair
Senior Vice President/Partner
Cameron Brooks

Todd Willingham
Vice Chair
President
Bierschwale-Rees Insurance Agency

John Ramsay, MD
Secretary
Family Practice Physician
Cornerstone Clinic

Chris Schoessow
Board Member
Attorney/Owner
The Schoessow Law Firm, PLLC

Melany Canfield, M.Ed.
Board Member
School Counselor (Retired)
Mason ISD

John Hutcherson, PhD
Board Member
Retired Financial Advisor

Bonnie Stewart, M.Ed.
Board Member
Superintendent
Harper ISD

The Create Healthy board and staff extend their gratitude to Jenny Wieser, PhD, who served as the organization's inaugural board chair. She completed her board service at the end of 2025.

Councils

Through our four advisory councils, Hill Country leaders provide feedback and insight into our work, ensuring it reflects the values and priorities of the communities we serve.

Impact Council

- Allen Ersch - Chair
- Dr. Andrea Bray
- Wanda Orta Detmar
- Zuleima Hernandez
- Liz Tynan
- John Ramsay, M.D.*
- Chris Schoessow*

Grant Council

- Laura Cook - Chair
- Jon Crenwelge
- Lauren Kordzik
- Griffin Kott
- Bonnie Stewart*
- Melany Canfield*

Scholarship Council

- Erin Carter - Chair
- Barbara Heinen
- Sheryl Jacks
- Karen Oestreich
- Amy Stuewe
- Todd Willingham*

Investment Council

- Jody Donovan - Chair
- Kyle Frey
- Dan Kemp
- John Hutcherson*

*serves as the Create Healthy Board of Directors liaison to the Advisory Council

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP



Jayne Pope, RN, MBA, FACHE
President & CEO



Amanda M. Stevens, MBA, FAHP, CFRE
Vice President of Strategic Philanthropy



Chris Semmler
Vice President of Finance

Together, we are advancing a shared commitment to a *healthier, stronger Hill Country* where everyone has the opportunity to live well and thrive.

@WeCreateHealthy @CreateHealthy @CreatingHealthy

Stay in the Loop
With Our Newsletter



CreateHealthy.org