



**MIDWEST CENTER**  
FOR NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP

## THE OLIVER AWARD

*Kansas City's Premier Recognition of Nonprofit Excellence*

**The Oliver Award** stands as Kansas City's highest honor for nonprofit excellence. It celebrates organizations that demonstrate exceptional performance, courageous leadership, and meaningful community impact across every dimension of organizational effectiveness.

Jointly sponsored by PLX and the Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, the award commemorates the life and legacy of **David Field Oliver (1952-2025)**. David was one of Kansas City's most dedicated civic and philanthropic champions, a leader whose wisdom, integrity, and lifelong commitment to "for purpose" organizations helped shape a stronger, more vibrant, and more just nonprofit ecosystem.

### Purpose and Process

The Oliver Award invites nonprofits of all missions and sizes to engage in a rigorous, yet supportive assessment process designed to deepen organizational insight, strengthen performance, and elevate excellence across the sector. Evaluation criteria span the essential dimensions of nonprofit effectiveness, including mission alignment, financial health, governance, technology, branding and communications, staffing, and crisis management.

Each applicant will receive a thoughtful, comprehensive review from a distinguished panel of leaders representing philanthropy, business, and government. Panelists will study organizational materials, conduct on-site visits, and offer meaningful feedback that

highlights strengths, identifies opportunities for growth, and illuminates overall organizational effectiveness.

This process not only recognizes exceptional performance but also provides each participating organization with insights that can strengthen its impact and advance its mission for years to come.

Applications for the inaugural cycle open **November 24, 2025**, and close **February 27, 2026**. Winners will be announced in spring 2026 and celebrated each November at the Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership's Annual Nonprofit Leadership Conference.

The highest-scoring organization in each category will also receive a cash award to support continued organizational development and impact sponsored by the Francis Family Foundation.

## Applicant Categories

To ensure equity and affirm the diversity of Kansas City's nonprofit landscape, organizations will be evaluated in three budget categories:

- Large Organizations: Over \$5 million
- Mid-Sized Organizations: \$1 million to \$5 million
- Small Organizations: Under \$1 million

Nonprofits across all missions, communities, and service areas are encouraged to apply.

To apply for The Oliver Award, click on the following link:

<https://info.umkc.edu/centers/mcnl/the-oliver-award/>

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## David Field Oliver

1952 - 2025

David Field Oliver was one of Kansas City's most dedicated civic and philanthropic leaders. Born and raised in Kansas City, David carried his love for this community into every chapter of his life. After a distinguished legal career, he co-founded PLX Corporation, where he helped strengthen and diversify nonprofit boards across the region.

He devoted his life to serving organizations in education, science, health, the arts, and nonprofit leadership, including MRI Global, UMKC, William Jewell College, De La Salle Charter High School, and Children's Mercy Hospital.

Known for his optimism, generosity, and love for Kansas City, David believed deeply in building stronger communities through courageous, mission-driven leadership.

In his final wishes, he offered a simple call to action:

**"When you think of me, do something for Kansas City."**

The Oliver Award honors that request by celebrating nonprofit excellence and strengthening the sector he believed in so passionately. Through this award, David's legacy of service, integrity, and love for community will continue to guide and inspire Kansas City for years to come.