



**MAXIMIZE
NWMO**

Dream big and grow together.

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

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Awards celebrated for vision and leadership in regional and local community development efforts

ST. JOSEPH, Mo., October 7, 2025—Maximize Northwest Missouri's Navigation Team recognized three individuals on September 24, 2025, at their 4th Annual Celebration Luncheon and Regional Roundtable Discussion held at The Comfort Inn & Suites in Chillicothe, MO. Mary Hinde, president/CEO of The Community Foundation of Northwest Missouri was chosen to receive the Maximize NWMO Vision Award. As a fourth generation regional resident (Buchanan and Daviess Counties), Hinde's wisdom and words of support provided to the Community Foundation's regional vitality initiative, Maximize NWMO since its inception in 2012, have been essential to the progress made toward the vision of a more connected region where communities and counties work together to maximize the shared potential as an exceptional place to live, learn, work, and play. Past Vision Award honorees include Lowell Kruse (Buchanan and Daviess Counties) in 2023 and Steve Wenger (Clay County) in 2024.

Jackie Spainhower (Worth County) received the Maximize NWMO Regional Navigator Award for her longtime commitment to improving the quality of life in Northwest Missouri through several professional roles and personal volunteerism. Spainhower currently serves as a community development specialist with the University of Missouri Extension, is the chairperson of Leadership Northwest Missouri, a board officer for Roots & Rounds, and is a member of Maximize NWMO's Navigation Team and Regional Partner Council. Past Regional Navigator Award honorees include Max Summers (Buchanan County) in 2023 and Rachel Kagay (DeKalb County) in 2024.

"We are grateful for how Jackie sees the big picture, helps people connect, and asks questions that lead to improved processes and results," said Maximize NWMO Director Christel Gollnick.

Caitlin Silver (DeKalb County) was presented with the Maximize NWMO Community Navigator Award. As an entrepreneur and volunteer, she uplifts the importance of small businesses and leadership development in her community and surrounding counties. Silver was a founding member of the Maysville Area Improvement Network [M.A.I.N.], is the vice president of the Maysville Area Chamber of Commerce, and is the current president of North Central Missouri Business Facilitation. Former Community Navigator honorees include Linda Place, Maximize Albany (Gentry County), in 2023, and Joe Gagnon, The Clinton County Initiative (Clinton County), in 2024.

Sandra Pottoff, Ph.D., who traveled from her home in Nisswa, MN as the national Communities of Resilience and Excellence, formerly Communities of Excellence 2026, mentor to Maximize NWMO, also received special recognition.

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More than 315 community leaders were listed as participants in Maximize NWMO's regional CollaborACTION Network across 18 counties. Several dozen luncheon attendees participated in a roundtable discussion to brainstorm a list of ideas that individuals can easily do to increase a sense of belonging – the key indicator of what determines a resident's decision to make a place their home.

Interested individuals can register at www.MaximizeNWMO.org to receive Maximize NWMO's eNewsletter. Information about events and community development leadership programs, and regional data helpful for decision-making can also be found on the website and Facebook. The next "Reaching Common Goals Faster" program is scheduled for October 29, 2025.

The key benefit of Maximize NWMO's programs is learning how to shift from a project-based mindset where success lives and dies on the shoulders of very few people to a much more sustainable big picture approach that includes many voices with responsibilities shared among a larger group.

Maximize NWMO serves the region by providing administrative, communications, data access, and coaching support on systems-thinking and community wealth building for individuals, communities and the region. The initiative's Navigation Team supports leaders and communities who want to *dream big, decide wisely, and maximize our region's potential by growing together*. Maximize NWMO is the regional vitality initiative of The Community Foundation of Northwest Missouri. It has been made possible over the last decade through partnerships with Communities of Resilience & Excellence (formerly Communities of Excellence 2026), Patterson Family Foundation, the United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA-RD), University of Missouri Extension, Missouri Department of Economic Development, and several other donors.
www.maximizenwmo.org and together@maximizenwmo.org

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PHOTOS ATTACHED:

1 – (L-R) Jackie Spainhower, Maximize NWMO Regional Navigator Award Honoree and Christel Gollnick, Maximize NWMO Director/JUPER Communications.

2 – (L-R) Caitlin Silver, Maximize NWMO Community Navigator Awards, Christel Gollnick, Maximize NWMO Director/JUPER Communications, and Rachel Kagay, Community Foundation of Northwest Missouri Board Chair.

3 – Regional Roundtable Discussion Participants. (Front Table L-R) Joe Hegeman, United Fiber, Scott Sharp, MO SBDC, and Kendra Pickering, Leadership Northwest Missouri.