Building is the heart of what Harold O’Shea Builders does. It’s a company that has spent decades building the infrastructure that helps sustain Springfield for today and improve it for tomorrow.

It is a plan of action that O’Shea isn’t limiting to bricks and mortar, foundations and roofs. The company is also striving to build a better future for area residents with the establishment of the **Bud and Helene O’Shea Fund** through the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln.

The donor-advised fund will focus on providing educational opportunities for area residents interested in construction-related careers.

“O’Shea is a company that has been blessed. It’s an opportunity to help others along that path,” said Mike O’Shea, President of Harold O’Shea Builders. “It’s an opportunity to help people better themselves and get opportunities, but this is also a strategy to help people get the training necessary to be in the construction business. People are retiring from construction faster than there are replacements. We need to do our part professionally to give back.”

Strengthening the community is a key factor in the fund’s creation. Government employment has long been the foundation for Springfield’s workforce, but other business sectors are striving to expand as government operations have streamlined the past several years.

“We’re fortunate to be in a community that has progressed in areas like health care,” O’Shea said. “If we invest in other sectors, we make each part of the community stronger. At the end of the day, we all need to be invested in our community.”

The fund is named after Mike O’Shea’s parents, Bud and Helene. Bud is still active at the company and will sit on the leadership group that will recommend grants. Helene O’Shea passed away two and a half years ago.
“They spent their whole life helping to build O’Shea into what it is today,” Mike O’Shea said. “This was a way to recognize them. (My dad) was very pleased.”

Joining Mike and Bud O’Shea on the leadership team will be employees Jana Ritchie, Tyler Cormeny, Todd Missle and Tom Fitch. The company hopes to distribute the first awards in the summer of 2010. O’Shea learned about the Community Foundation through community members and met with Community Foundation Executive Director John Stremsterfer to discuss creating a donor-advised fund.

“This was new to us and I thought this was a facet we should explore,” O’Shea said. “John came out and he was well prepared, gave us a good overview of the fund and he made it real easy.”