

Community Fund surpasses \$62 million in giving

More than \$548,000 in grants awarded on June 18

By Ron Karten
Smoke Signals staff writer

Spirit Mountain Community Fund, the philanthropic arm of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, awarded 25 grants worth \$548,650 at its quarterly check presentation held on Wednesday, June 18, in the Tribal Governance Center.

The Community Fund has now donated \$62,127,046 through 2,063 grants since its inception in 1997.

The Community Fund receives 6 percent of Spirit Mountain Casino profits and uses the money to award grants to nonprofit organizations in 11 western Oregon counties and to the nine federally recognized Tribes across Oregon.

Grants are awarded in the categories of arts and culture, education, health, historic preservation, public safety, environmental preservation and problem gaming.

Second quarter gifts included four to arts and culture nonprofits for a total of \$28,000. Seven grants totaling 137,500 went to educational projects. Two grants totaling \$60,000 went to environmental preservation projects. Ten grants for a total of \$322,150 went to health projects. One \$1,000 grant went to historic preservation.

Spirit Mountain Community Fund Executive Director Kathleen George welcomed grant recipients and said, "It is a great day for us when we can share our Tribe's values just as our ancestors did."

The Community Fund continues the Native tradition of potlatch, she added.

Tribal members Brian Krehbiel, Bobby Mercier and Tina Lara welcomed the nonprofit representatives with drum and song.

Tribal Council Chairman Reyn Leno and Tribal Council members Denise Harvey, June Sherer and Ed Pearsall attended. Leno also serves on the Board of Trustees of Spirit



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Tribal Council member Denise Harvey poses for a picture with Darrell Yuen, director of development for Open Meadow Alternative School, during the Spirit Mountain Community Fund summer grant presentation held in Tribal Council Chambers on Wednesday, June 18. The nonprofit received a \$30,000 grant.

Mountain Community Fund.

Leno welcomed grant recipients to Grand Ronde and said he was on Tribal Council when the fund was formed 17 years ago.

"We like to have you come to the Governance Center where we can share the idea of taking care of people. The community took care of us for 30 years," Leno said about the years between 1954's Termination and 1983's Restoration. He also invited guests to visit the Tribe's Chachalu Museum & Cultural Center and to attend the Veterans Summit and Powwow being held July 10-13 at Uyxat Powwow Grounds.

Community Fund Program Coordinator Louis King announced the grant recipients and Harvey distributed the checks.

Among recipients, PlayWrite is a Portland program that offers one-on-one coaching to teach a group – from puberty to 25 years of age – to write a play. The 10-year-old program works with each of some 70 to 75 annual participants over three-week sessions.

Each participant writes a play

that afterward is performed by professional actors in front of a live audience, said founder and Executive Director Bruce Livingstone.

Most participants have a history of trauma or neglect, he said, but the results are astounding. The University of Oregon and Oregon Health & Science University conducted a study of four workshops with the same approach and found that 90 percent of participants completed the course and showed a marked improvement in hyperactivity, mood and emotional symptoms. Participants learned to manage anger and impulse responses.

The Community Fund also held a drawing for gifts that went to the Boys & Girls Club of Albany, Tillamook County Quilt Coalition and I Have a Dream Foundation.

Grant recipients during the June 18 presentation were:

- Advantage Smiles for Kids for its orthodontic treatment program for at-risk children: \$50,000;
- Boys & Girls Club of Albany for its free children's dental clinic: \$30,000;
- Center for Diversity & the Environment for its environment 2042 leadership program: \$40,000;
- Children Center of Clackamas County for a program aimed at breaking the cycle of child abuse related to domestic violence: \$40,000;
- Children's Advocacy Center of

Lincoln County for its community-focused child abuse prevention program: \$10,000;

- Children's Institute for a program called early works: transforming education together: \$40,000;
- Educate Ya Inc. for its HIV/AIDS health educator program: \$5,000;
- Forests Forever to help with the restoration of the Clatskanie Mountain fire lookout tower: \$1,000;
- Friends of Tyron Creek Park to help friends and neighbors for environmental diversity: \$20,000;
- I Have a Dream Foundation - Oregon for the Dreamer School Project Out of School Time Initiative: \$30,000;
- Kukatonon for Restoring Our Connections to African Culture: \$3,000;
- Liberty House for Providing Services to Children in Crisis: Funding a Specially-Trained Pediatrician: \$25,000;
- Living Yoga for program expansion: \$5,000;
- Northwest Kidney Kids Inc. for Kidney Camp 2014: \$5,000;
- Open Meadow Alternative Schools for its program Step Up to College: \$30,000;
- Oregon Food Bank for its school pantry expansion: \$30,000;
- Planned Parenthood of the Columbia Willamette Inc. for women's health equity: \$12,150;
- PlayWrite to help with programs as it starts its second decade: \$3,000;
- Shadow Project to help the nonprofit's efforts to collaborate to improve educational outcomes for special education students: \$20,000;
- The Northwest Catholic Counseling Center for essential mental health services for older, lower-income women: \$25,000;
- Tillamook County Quilt Coalition for the Tillamook County public mural program, phase II: \$2,000;
- Tryon Life Community Farm for its Hands on Sustainability program: \$2,500;
- Youth Music Project for its Rock 'n' Roll, Ready to Learn program serving at-risk students with the 3 Rs: \$20,000;
- Oregon Health & Science University Foundation for the Knight Cancer Challenge: \$100,000. ■

2014 Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Elder Honor Day
Tuesday, July 15
@Spirit Mountain Casino
 8 – 10:30 a.m. Registration
 8:30 – 10 a.m. Continental Breakfast
 11 a.m. Opening/ Welcome /Flag Presentation/Prayer
 1st Drawing (must be present for all drawings)
 11:15 a.m. Entertainment/ "Let's Make a Deal"
 12:30 p.m. Luncheon
 1:30 p.m. Games and Drawing of Gifts
 3 p.m. Bingo
 4 p.m. Drawing of Big Prize (must be present)
 Retire Flags
Wednesday, July 16
 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.
 Breakfast at Elder Activity Center 48940 Blacktail Drive
 (off Grand Ronde Rd on Tribal Campus.)

Ad created by George Valdez

Visit the Oregon Humane Society with YED

July 7th 8am-4:30pm

- We will be taking a tour of the facility, volunteering with the animals and learning about the services they provide!
- Enjoy lunch at an authentic Hawaiian restaurant!
- Be sure to wear long pants and tennis shoes!

Questions? Please contact Justine Colton at (503)879-1921 or justinecolton@grandronde.org