

# Community Fund tops \$65 million in giving

By Dean Rhodes

*Smoke Signals editor*

The Grand Ronde Tribe's philanthropic arm, Spirit Mountain Community Fund, surpassed the \$65 million mark in giving on Wednesday, June 17, when it distributed 28 grants totaling \$682,785.

Since its formation in 1997, the Community Fund has distributed \$65,360,012.10 to charitable organizations in an 11-county area of western Oregon in the categories of arts and culture, education, environmental protection, health, historic preservation, problem gaming and public safety.

As part of the Tribe's gaming compact with the state of Oregon, the Community Fund receives 6 percent of Spirit Mountain Casino profits to fund its grants.

Held in the Governance Center Atrium, the check distribution started with Land and Culture staff members Jordan Mercier, Michael Karnosh, David Harrelson and Travis Stewart performing a drum song.

Community Fund Director Kathleen George introduced Tribal Council members in attendance: Vice Chair Jack Giffen Jr., Secretary Toby McClary, Tonya Gleason-Shepek, Chris Mercier and Ed Pearsall. McClary and Pearsall sit on the Community Fund's Board of Trustees along with Chairman Sho Dozono, who also attended the check distribution.

"We couldn't be more proud to support your work," George said. "You folks who are here today are truly our community champions, and I have to tell you that the Tribe is tremendously proud to invest in and empower your work."

McClary thanked grant recipients for driving to Grand Ronde to see that the Tribe is more than Spirit Mountain Casino.



Photo by Dean Rhodes

**Tribal Council Secretary Toby McClary shakes hands with Rachel Alston, executive director and founder of the PDX Diaper Bank, and hands her a \$2,500 check during the Spirit Mountain Community Fund quarterly check distribution held Wednesday, June 17, in the Governance Center Atrium. The grant will help the organization expand to serve the Native American community in Portland by providing free diapers to low-income individuals. In the background, Community Fund Director Kathleen George prepares the next check for McClary, who sits on the fund's Board of Trustees.**

George added that Spirit Mountain Community Fund has started concentrating on supporting underserved communities either geographically or demographically.

She said that Program Coordinator Louis King and Grants Coordinator Julia Willis have been visiting nonprofits in rural Oregon, giving grant trainings to seed those communities with people who can help acquire funding for worthwhile projects.

"One other way that Spirit Mountain Community Fund is trying to be conscientious about our work and about what we do with our funding ... we know that it is true that historically the philanthropic community has not invested in traditionally marginalized com-

munities," she said. "These may be communities of color. These may be our LGBT community. Maybe it's our disabled community who have not traditionally been invested in as much as needed and as much as is right."

George said that 59 percent of Community Fund grants in 2014 were awarded to applicants that serve communities of color or are located in rural areas to help remedy that situation.

After grant recipients watched a video about Tribal history and the Community Fund, King read the list of grants while McClary and George handed out checks.

Grant recipients this quarter included:

- Bay City Arts Center Inc. of Bay City, \$5,000 to support its Education and Outreach Program.
- Fish of Albany Inc. of Albany, \$3,610 for its Snack for Packs program.
- Florence Food Share of Florence, \$5,000 for its Culturally Diverse Food Project.
- MediaRites of Portland, \$5,000 for its Theatre Diaspora Project.
- Midcoast Watersheds Council of Newport, \$600 to make its meetings more productive and accessible.
- National Urban Housing and Economic Community Development Corp. of Molalla, \$2,500 for orientation and training for job readiness at its Tigard Covenant Affordable Housing Project.
- North End Senior Solutions and Adult Day Services of Otis, \$5,000 to support adult day service and transportation.
- PDX Diaper Bank of Portland, \$2,500 for its agency partnership expansion to serve the Native

American community.

- Tillamook Serenity Club of Tillamook, \$5,000 to expand its Recovery Outreach Program.
  - Trauma Healing Project Inc. of Eugene, \$5,000 to its Survivor Wellness Project.
  - A Family For Every Child of Eugene, \$50,000 for its Family Preservation Program.
  - Bradley Angle House of Portland, \$50,000 for its culturally specific programs for underserved populations.
  - Bridgeway House of Springfield, \$20,000 for its Social Group Program for children with autism.
  - Child Advocates Inc. of Oregon City, \$30,000 for A CASA For Every Child.
  - Doernbecher Children's Hospital Foundation of Portland, \$49,950 for its Dental Van Outreach Program.
  - My Sisters' Place of Newport, \$22,996 for a security upgrade for its shelter.
  - New Avenues for Youth, \$30,000 for its PDX Connect effort.
  - Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation Inc. of Portland, \$30,000 for its mobile health screening program "2020 Vision."
  - Partners For A Hunger Free Oregon of Portland, \$50,000 for child hunger prevention.
  - Portland Women's Crisis Line of Portland, \$18,000 for its Support & Empowerment Project.
  - Salem Schools Foundation of Salem, \$45,834 for its STEM Academy.
  - Salmon-Safe Inc. of Portland, \$41,795 for its Mayor's Challenge, which is inspiring Portland to become a salmon-safe city.
  - Tillamook County Women's Resource Center of Tillamook, \$30,000 for capacity building of its Sexual Assault Response and Advocacy Team.
  - University of Oregon Foundation of Eugene, \$50,000 for its 90 by 30 Child Abuse Prevention Initiative.
  - Upstream Public Health of Portland, \$35,000 for its Early Childhood Wellness program.
  - Western Rivers Conservancy of Portland, \$35,000 for re-establishing the Chahalpam site in partnership with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.
  - Willamette University of Salem, \$30,000 for its Native American Programs capacity building project.
  - And Youth Rights & Justice of Portland, \$25,000 for school works advocacy for children in the foster care and juvenile justice systems.
- At the conclusion of the ceremony, a drawing was held for three gifts and winners were the PDX Diaper Bank, Partners For A Hunger Free Oregon and Bay City Arts Center. ■

## Summer food service starts

A free lunch for any child from 1 to 18 years of age will be served beginning Monday, June 8, as part of the Summer Food Service.

Free lunch will be served through Aug. 14 at Tina Miller Park in Willamina from 11 to 11:30 a.m. and at Raven Loop Park in Grand Ronde from noon to 12:30 p.m.

Lunch also will be served at Willamina Elementary School to any student attending the Art Conspiracy in June and summer school in July and August. ■

## Artists Wanted

*The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde is looking for talented artist to design illustrations for the newly created 8th Grade Tribal History Curriculum.*

*This is a paid opportunity to contribute beautiful artwork and help tell the story of our ancestors.*

*For more information or to apply please contact Mercedes Reeves in the Adult Education Building or call 503-879-2282.*

## College Placement Testing offered

College Placement Testing is offered on-site at the Adult Education Building for Chemeketa Community College, Linn-Benton Community College and Mount Hood Community College. The Placement Test is one of the first steps to beginning college classes. Call 503-879-2282 to sign up for your placement test. ■