

Community Fund awards \$706,996 in grants

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Spirit Mountain Community Fund awarded \$706,996 in grants on Wednesday, June 9, during its second virtual check presentation event, bringing the Grand Ronde Tribe's philanthropic giving since 1995 to \$85.74 million.

Spirit Mountain Community Fund receives 6 percent of proceeds from Spirit Mountain Casino and distributes those funds to non-profits in 11 northwestern Oregon counties to fund efforts in the areas of arts and culture, environmental preservation, education, health, historic preservation and public safety.

The Community Fund was created as part of the Tribe's gaming compact with the state of Oregon. It is supervised by a Board of Trustees that includes Tribal Council members Denise Harvey, Jack Giffen Jr. and Kathleen George.

The virtual event was the second check presentation held by the Community Fund since March 2020. It opened with a prayer by Tribal Council Secretary Jon A. George and video of Cultural Resources employees Jordan Mercier and Greg Archuleta performing a gathering song at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia rivers.

Executive Director Michael Cherry and Board of Trustees Chairman Chip Lazenby welcomed virtual attendees.

Cherry said she hopes the next quarterly check distribution will be conducted in-person, something that has not occurred since March 2020.

"Our check presentations are a way for us to get together as a

community to give thanks and celebrate and honor our grantees who work tirelessly to help those in need," Cherry said. "We wish we could be with you in person though I trust we will all be together very, very soon."

Lazenby, who has been on the Board of Trustees for 13 years, said he has underestimated the effect of the Tribe's philanthropic giving over the last 26 years.

"I've really underestimated what an impact it can have in our community," Lazenby said. "The amount of money that we have given out over the period of time is close to \$85 million. That is money going into our communities for people like you who are doing the work on the ground. While it is fun from our perspective as trustees to see the amazing work that you and people like you are doing in our communities, we realize that you're the ones who really make a difference. ... We are always here to be partners with you as we head forward into the future."

Grants Coordinator Jim Holmes showed the approximately 65 people who attended a video on the history of the Tribe.

Community Fund Program Coordinator Angela Sears announced the grant awards and allowed organization representatives to briefly speak.

Veterans Legacy Board of Directors Vice President and Air Force veteran Phillip Groshong discussed his organization's efforts to help homeless veterans in Lane County.

The nonprofit incorporated in 2016 to ensure that no veteran should be homeless and no veteran should commit suicide. The organization's 107-acre Camp Alma locat-

ed in Veneta between Eugene and the Oregon coast now features 16 cubicles to house veterans and will use the Community Fund's \$25,000 grant to open 16 more cubicles in another three months.

"Camp Alma is now ready to help veterans in need with their journey to recovery from homelessness, substance abuse and/or mental health challenges," Groshong said. "This grant is a huge step toward us opening our doors."

During the June 10 virtual check distribution, the Community Fund awarded 10 small grants and 20 large grants.

Small grants were awarded to:

- The Portland Urban Debate League, \$3,000, for expansion of its Urban Debate Program;
- Confluence of Multnomah County, \$4,000, for Native-led professional development workshops for Oregon teachers;
- Pathfinder Clubhouse of Benton County, \$5,000, to improve the mental and physical health of adults living with mental illness;
- National Alliance on Mental Illness of Lane County, \$7,500, to expand culturally responsive services for the LGBTQIA+ community;
- Playworks Education Energized of Marion County, \$5,000, for expansion of its Keeping Playing Virtual Support Service;
- Bradley Angle of Multnomah County, \$7,500, to fund its Healing Roots program;
- William Temple House of Multnomah County, \$7,500, to improve mental health in the community by providing affordable counseling services;
- St. John's Center for Opportunity of Multnomah County, \$5,000, to improve food access for the north Portland community;
- Children's Center of Clackamas County, \$7,500, to fund its prevention program;
- ALS Association of Oregon and Southwest Washington, \$5,000, to support medical and care services for those diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

In addition to the Veterans Legacy award, large grants were given to:

- Southwestern Polk County Fire District, \$21,950, to purchase an extrication system to save those trapped in vehicles after crashes;
- Legacy Health Foundation of Washington County, \$47,750, to fund a regional COVID-19 vaccination program;
- American Military Encouragement Network, \$17,750, to fund basic food relief for veterans, military families and children;
- Wayside Friends Church of Yamhill County, \$27,750, to fund its Newberg Distance Learning

support program;

- Boys & Girls Club of Salem, Marion & Polk Counties, \$47,750, to fund a full-day educational program for youths in need;
 - All Hands Raised of Multnomah County, \$22,750, to improve educational outcomes through student engagement;
 - Old Mill Center for Children & Families of Benton County, \$22,750, for youth coping with mental health issues during and after the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - Prevent Child Abuse Oregon of Clackamas County, \$17,750, to fund resiliency during COVID for families and children;
 - Parenting Now of Lane County, \$47,100, for parenting education to prevent child abuse and improve school readiness;
 - Food Roots of Tillamook County, \$37,750, for its Farm to School program;
 - Horses of Hope Oregon of Marion County, \$13,400, to build human resiliency to combat adverse childhood experiences through horses and healing;
 - Together We Are Greater Than of east Multnomah County, \$45,500, to fund COVID-19 response for equitable education in underserved communities;
 - Friends of the Children Portland, \$22,750, for essential relationships and healing-centered mentoring;
 - Salem Free Clinics, \$38,119, for mental health counseling and medication management for the uninsured;
 - Relief Nursery Inc. of Lane County, \$50,000, to fund Native outreach and a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion coordinator;
 - Clackamas Women's Services, \$25,000, to expand culturally responsive youth advocacy and support;
 - ChickTech of Multnomah County, \$25,000, to increase STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) learning for high school youth;
 - Doulas Latinas International of Washington County, \$50,000, for maternal child emotional health equality;
 - Native American Youth & Family Center of Multnomah County, \$44,177, to fund its cultural education and wellness after-school program.
- The virtual event closed with Giffen raffling off three beaded necklaces and an Ikanum saddle blanket respectively to Food Roots, Bradley Angle, Friends of the Children Portland and Relief Nursery, and Harvey making a closing statement.
- "I am so appreciative of the work that you do in our communities," Harvey said. ■

2021 SUMMER STUDENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAININGS

JUNE 15 • BASIC FINANCES
Learn how to manage money, learn more about checking accounts, credit cards and much more.

JUNE 22 • CULTURE PRESENTATION
Learn more about the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. This is one you don't want to miss!

JUNE 29 • COLLEGE & CAREERS
Learn about your next steps in life, what you can do now to prepare and opportunities you can take advantage of now.

JULY 6 • EMPLOYMENT
Learn practical tips of how to get a job and keep a job.

JULY 20 • 21 TRUST FUNDS
This workshop is for CTGR Tribal member students ages, 18 – 20.

Four professional development workshops will be offered this summer for all Native students currently in grades 9 - 12th. The fifth and last workshop will be for Tribal member students ages 18-20.

All sessions are approximately one hour and there will be a raffle prize at the end of each session! Workshops will be held at the CTGR Employment building lower floor conference rooms and all sessions start at 1 p.m. Be sure to sign up below on the link provided for one or all classes. There are limited openings in each workshop, don't delay and sign-up today. If you have questions, please email YouthEnrichment@grandronde.org or call 503-879-2101. We hope to see you there!

Please note: Students will be required to health screen in (temperature check and basic health questions) prior to entering workshop. Masks are required and social distancing for each session.

<http://bit.ly/summer2021professionaldevelopment>

Ad by Samuel Briggs III

St. Michael's offers brunch

St. Michael's Catholic Church offers an open house brunch every Sunday following Mass. The brunch is free to the community. Brunch begins at about 11:30 a.m. following the 10:30 a.m. Mass. Mass attendance is not required for brunch attendance. For more information or for kitchen and hall rental, contact Janelle Justen at 503-550-0923. ■