

Community Fund approaching \$93 million mark in giving

By Danielle Harrison
Smoke Signals assistant editor/staff writer
Spirit Mountain Community Fund awarded more than \$1.4 million in grants on Wednesday, Dec. 14, during a 90-minute virtual check presentation event, bringing the Grand Ronde Tribe’s philanthropic giving since 1997 to more than \$92.8 million.

The Community Fund receives 6 percent of proceeds from Spirit Mountain Casino and awards that money to nonprofits in 11 northwest Oregon counties to fund efforts in the areas of arts and culture, environmental preservation, education, health, historic preservation and public safety, and to the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon under a Tribal Grants program.

The Community Fund was created as part of the Tribe’s gaming compact with the state of Oregon. It is supervised by an eight-member Board of Trustees that includes Tribal Council members Denise Harvey, Brenda Tuomi and Michael Cherry, who is also a former Community Fund director.

Cherry welcomed attendees to the virtual event.

“One of these days I hope we will all be together,” Cherry said. “I’m honored to host you today and look forward to seeing you in person soon. As 2022 comes to an end, I celebrate and acknowledge your perseverance and dedication to making Oregon a safer place for children and families. We applaud your generosity and gift of service.”

The event was the eighth virtual check presentation held by the Community Fund since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. It opened with a prayer and flute song from Tribal Lands Manager Jan Michael Looking Wolf Reibach.

Community Fund Director Angie Sears said that check presentations are a way to give thanks and celebrate the organizations’ achievements.

“We know you are super busy and have important work to do, but check presentations are an opportunity to come together to celebrate you,” Sears said. “We recognized our nonprofit organizations are continuing to step up and provide services to those in need.”

Sears also introduced Community Fund employees. They are Program Coordinator Angela Schlappie, Administrative Assistant Maris-



Angie Sears

sa Leno and Grants Coordinator Jesse Knight, who was unable to attend the virtual event. The approximately 66 people who attended watched a video on the history of the Tribe and then Schlappie announced the grant recipients.

Due to the virtual format, Schlappie gave every organization representative the opportunity to briefly speak about their programs.

During the check distribution portion, the Community Fund awarded 22 small grants worth \$148,000 and 30 large grants worth \$1.268 million.

Small grant recipients were:

- Adventure! Children’s Museum of Eugene, \$5,000, for its Museums for All initiative;
- ALS Association Oregon and Southwest Washington Chapter of Portland, \$5,000, for its medical support and care services program;
- Boom Arts Inc. of Portland, \$6,000, for its Okinum program;
- Color Outside the Lines of Portland, \$7,000, for its Native Youth Arts outreach program;
- Crag Law Center of Portland, \$5,000, for restoring and protecting critical estuarine habitat;
- Habitat for Humanity of Lincoln County, \$7,500, for its community home repair program;
- Lane Arts Council of Eugene, \$7,500, for its creative links arts integration program;
- Literary Arts Inc. of Portland, \$7,500, for its youth programs;
- Music Education & Performing Artists Association, \$7,500, for its music and arts center Americans With Disabilities Act bathroom;
- Open Adoption and Family Services of Portland, \$7,500, for its counseling support for informed reproductive choice and stable families;
- Oregon TRIO Association of Astoria, \$7,500, for general operations support;
- Rahab’s Sisters of Portland, \$7,500, for enhancing health of Portlanders marginalized by homelessness;
- Returning Veterans Project of Portland, \$7,500, for its volunteer provider expansion program;

- Sarah Bellum’s Bakery & Workshop, \$7,500, for promoting social well-being through work engagement after brain injury;
- Store to Door of Portland, \$5,000, for its food box delivery program expansion project;
- TEAM Eugene Aquatics, \$7,500, for low-income swim programs;
- The Boys & Girls Aid Society of Oregon in Portland, \$7,500, for its homeless prevention and education navigator series;
- Twilight Wish Foundation Inc. of Corvallis, \$5,000, for wish granting celebrations for low-income seniors;
- Volunteer Caregivers of Albany, \$7,500, for medical transportation for low-income seniors;
- Willamette University of Salem, \$7,500, Theatre 33’s 2023 summer new play festival;
- World Salmon Council Inc. of Portland, \$5,000, for its salmon watch program;
- Young Audiences of Portland, \$7,500, for equipping artists and teachers for effective arts integration in 2022-23.

Large grant recipients were:

- ABC House Inc. of Albany, \$25,000, for its trauma counseling program;
- Benton Habitat for Humanity of Corvallis, \$23,000, for its home repair initiative;
- Blanchet House of Hospitality in Portland, \$40,000, for its rural recovery program at Blanchet Farm;
- Boys & Girls Club of Salem, Marion and Polk Counties, \$50,000, for its Health & Dental Services Center;
- CASA Voices for Children of Corvallis, \$50,000, for success and equity for youth in care;
- Children’s Center of Oregon City, \$35,000, for its therapy program;
- Church at the Park of Salem, \$100,000, for its workforce development commercial kitchen;
- Classroom Law Project of Portland, \$20,000, for its civics reach program and education act;
- Columbia Slough Watershed Council of Portland, \$30,000, for its slough school;
- Community Outreach Through Radical Empowerment of Eugene, \$50,000, for a home for CORE;
- Friendly House of Portland, \$40,000, for school-aged children’s programs;
- Friends of the Children Portland, \$25,000, for its mental health therapy fund;
- Gleaners of Clackamas County Inc., \$40,000, for a walk-in refrigerator/freezer repair;
- Impact NW of Portland, \$50,000, for its parent-child development program;
- Make-A-Wish Foundation of Oregon Inc. of Portland, \$30,000, for its Rush Wish program;
- Marion-Polk Food Share of Sa-

- lem, \$55,760, for its AWARE Food Bank facility;
- My Father’s House, A Community Shelter Inc. of Gresham, \$25,000, for Landfill SOS;
- National Wildlife Federation of Sandy, \$30,000, for its Fish Eggs to Fry: Eco-Schools USA Salmon Stewards program;
- Northwest Youth Corps of Eugene, \$50,000, for its NW Oregon Youth Wildfire Prevention and Recovery Project;
- Olalla Center of Toledo, \$50,000, for its sensory therapy room;
- Oregon Environmental Council of Portland, \$15,000, for its Clean Water for All program;
- Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation Inc. of Portland, \$17,500, for its patient care program;
- Raphael House of Portland, \$20,000, for a shelter for domestic violence survivors and their children;
- Salem Free Clinics, \$50,000, for free access to care for uninsured/underinsured patients with diabetes;
- Samoa Pacific Development Corp. of Portland, \$50,000, for education support and cultural enrichment for Pacific Islander youth;
- Schoolhouse Supplies Inc. of Portland, \$25,000, for its free store for teachers;
- The Mental Health Association of Oregon, \$100,000, for its recovery campus;
- Vietnam War Memorial Fund of Salem, \$100,000, for its memorial on the Oregon State Capitol grounds project;
- Youth Empowerment Project-Pacific Northwest of Portland, \$24,309, for its Clear Creek Middle School pilot program;
- Youth Progress Association of Portland, \$45,000, for improving educational outcomes for youth in foster care.

Three beaded necklaces were raffled off to Twilight Wish Foundation, Gleaners of Clackamas County and the Youth Progress Association. An Ikanum saddle blanket designed by Travis Stewart went to Rahab’s Sisters.

Board of Trustees Vice Chairman Arnie Roblan gave closing remarks after the grant awardees were announced.

“One of the greatest honors of my life was being asked to serve on the Community Fund board,” Roblan said. “Listening to everyone talk today about the work they are doing, it is remarkable to hear. As you think about what you’ve heard today, please also think about Oregon and the nine Tribes who are here and have called it home since time immemorial. They continue to make their communities better.”

During the past 25 years, the Community Fund has awarded 3,167 grants totaling more than \$92.8 million. ■



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LOADING AND UNLOADING
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AND
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The Health & Wellness Center has additional access for patients during holiday weeks on Thursday mornings. The clinic will be scheduling patients at 8 a.m. every Thursday preceding or following a holiday closure. Urgent care also will be available during this time. ■