

Facebook Live event features Spirit Mountain Community Fund

By Sherron Lumley
Smoke Signals staff writer

Spirit Mountain Community Fund, the philanthropic arm of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, awarded \$3,958,133 in grants in 2023.

The total was announced during a Facebook Live event held Wednesday, Dec. 20.

“Our members need to know we are not only helping our own people,” Tribal Council Chairwoman Cheryle A. Kennedy said.

Spirit Mountain Community Fund Executive Director Angie Sears said that \$96,795,589 in philanthropic funding has been awarded since the fund was created in 1997. The fund’s first grants were awarded to the Portland Art Museum and Life Flight Network.

Sears was joined for the Facebook Live presentation by Spirit Mountain Community Fund staff members. They are Grants Coordinator Jesse Knight, Program Coordinator Angela Schlappie and Administrative Assistant Pamala Warren-Chase. During the 45-minute live event, Schlappie and Knight delivered a presentation outlining priority funding areas for the Tribe and the total number of grants funded in each area for the year.

Six percent of the Tribe’s gaming revenue goes to the fund in lieu of state taxes through a compact negotiated with the state in January 1997. Grant recipients are nonprofits in northwest Oregon, the nine federally recognized Tribes of Oregon and county government

agencies.

Ninety-one grants went toward priority funding areas in 2023 for a total of \$2,762,913, representing 69.8 percent of the year’s awards. These priority funding areas include arts and culture, education, environmental preservation, health, historic preservation and public safety.

Approximately half of all funding awarded in 2023 went to 66 health grants at 50.81 percent or \$2,011,212. The second greatest area of the fund’s awards were education grants, which totaled 31.37 percent or \$1,241,615 of the total. The arts and culture priority area received 14 grants, \$403,240 in all, which was 10.2 percent of the year’s total. There were \$700,000 in grants to federally recognized Oregon Tribes.

Within the priority area of education, emphasis is placed on pre-kindergarten, ready-for-school and effective education for all, focused on school-age youth. Within the environmental justice category, river health is a priority.

“Our rivers are the lifeblood of our lands,” Schlappie said.

In April 2023, the fund added youth homelessness and support services as a priority in the health category.

Spirit Mountain Community Fund is guided by a Board of Trustees that makes all funding decisions. Tribal Council member Brenda Tuomi is the board chair, Oregon Rep. Julie Fahey is vice chair and Tribal Council member

Denise Harvey is secretary. Spirit Mountain Casino Chief Executive Officer Camille Mercier, attorney Victoria Ernst, former Multnomah County Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey, Clackamas County Commissioner Martha Schrader and Tribal Council member and former Community Fund Director Michael Cherry also are trustees.

“This is my favorite position,” Tuomi said. “Giving is healing.”

Grant requests range from less than \$7,500 to \$100,000. Oregon Tribes may receive \$100,000 in a 12-month period.

In addition to its philanthropic giving, Spirit Mountain Community Fund leads the Mark O. Hatfield Fellowship, established in 1998 to honor the former Oregon governor. The Tribe sponsors a Native Amer-

ican from among the nine Tribes of Oregon to serve as the Hatfield fellow. They serve as an intern in a congressional office for an eight-month term and are provided a stipend, and relocation and travel expenses.

Since the program began there have been 24 fellows, including 11 Grand Ronde Tribal members. The current fellow is Klamath Tribal member Jordan Harrington, who is interning in Sen. Ron Wyden’s office.

Applications for 2024-25 will be available in March. Applicants must be at least 21 years old and have completed their bachelor’s degree by June 2024.

To watch the entire Facebook Live event, visit The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Facebook page. ■



Are you frustrated with your diabetes control?

Do you have questions about diabetes?

Do you need help managing your diabetes?

If so...

Call the Medical Clinic today at 503-879-2002

To schedule an individual diabetes education appointment



TRIBAL VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

Scheduled Appointments Only	Walk-In Day
Monday	Thursday
Tuesday	

To schedule an appointment:

Call (503) 879-1424 or

CTGR Tribal VSO@GrandRonde.Org

NOVEMBER 30, 2023 - MARCH 30, 2024

IKANUM



STORIES FROM THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST





WIC IN GRAND RONDE

Welcoming pregnant & postpartum people

Infants & toddlers

Children up to age 5

Walk in appointments welcome!

First & last Friday of every month

10:00–2:00 at Adult Education

For info contact: (503) 434-6740

Please bring:

Oregon Health Plan card (if you have one)

A form of ID (driver’s license, tribal ID, birth certificate, vaccination record, WIC ID, etc.)

Proof you reside in Oregon (a piece of mail with your name and address on it)

Paystubs for the last 30 days (if you have them)

