

For Immediate Release
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Community Foundation Grant Supports Crockery Township Park

The Board of the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation (GHACF) is pleased to announce four first-round grant awards, totaling \$142,760, in support of Northwest Ottawa County and our surrounding communities. This includes a \$30,000 grant to Crockery Township to develop Nunica Junction, a trailhead for the North Bank Trail.

The junction will include a parking area, green space, wetlands, picnic area, children's play area, gazebo, toilet facilities, and a RR caboose with historical information. The trailhead will serve as the intersection of the North Bank Trail and Spoonville Trail, both of which are part of the Greenway Project that aims to connect Grand Rapids to the Lakeshore.

"We couldn't be more happy or appreciative of the GHACF grant," said Leon Stille, Crockery Township Supervisor. "With it and other grants we've obtained or are seeking, a whole new Nunica Village horizon will be created. It is a vital step in revitalizing the center of Crockery Township. We're excited and grateful for all the support received, which is making this park and trail connection available."

The eighteen-mile North Bank Trail currently provides biking and non-motorized activities for everyone in West Michigan. By creating an entirely new park with play facilities, a family area, and access to miles of bike path, Crockery Township will have a new outdoor gathering place for youth and families. Construction is expected to begin this spring.

Other grants awarded:

Spring Lake Public Schools – \$58,898 for a new program focused on Social Emotional Learning. The program will provide sustainable training and tools to the students and staff of Spring Lake Public Schools regarding the development of healthy social-emotional life skills. The project includes two components: First, Mindful Schools, a nationally researched-based curriculum, for all K-6 students. Studies have shown that Mindful Schools can improve attention and emotional regulation among students, including decreased feelings of stress and anxiety. Second, Trauma-Informed Classroom training for all K-4 staff. A trauma-informed school is not only informed of, but sensitive to, trauma and provides a safe, stable, and understanding environment.

Out Side In, Inc. – \$33,862 for the expansion of their existing Heroes for Horses program, which uses equine-assisted psychotherapy to treat veterans suffering from PTSD and other mental health issues. Out Side In is the only veteran-focused mental health program in the Tri-Cities. It is provided at no cost to participants, does not require referrals, and Harbor Transit provides transportation for those who need it. The program also supports the rehabilitation of retired racehorses. Expansion will allow the program to double in size while enabling OSI to provide support to veteran’s families and to survivors of military sexual trauma.

West Michigan Academy of the Arts and Academics (WMAAA) – \$20,000 to expand their existing literacy program. The grant will allow WMAAA to expand their classroom libraries to increase the selection of relevant and interesting books; professional development for teachers with both the Teachers’ College Readers and Writers Program and the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District; and a summer reading program called Kids Read Now, all of which will help students meet the requirements in the Michigan Third Grade Reading Law.

ABOUT THE GHACF

The Grand Haven Area Community Foundation is a public, charitable organization serving the Northwest Ottawa County community since 1971. GHACF is regularly recognized as a top 100 Community Foundation in the nation and is the 8th largest community foundation in the State of Michigan. It encourages philanthropy by individuals, families, corporations, and organizations, and serves as a steward of their charitable funds and legacies. In addition to awarding grants, the Foundation offers technical support to nonprofits, convenes community leaders on issues of importance, and advocates for the nonprofit sector. For more information visit ghacf.org.

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