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Grand Haven Area Community Foundation Supports Disability Equality Efforts in Ottawa County
GHACF Awards More Than \$500,000 in Final Round of Community Impact Grants for 2022

GRAND HAVEN, MICH., January 11, 2023 – The Grand Haven Area Community Foundation (GHACF) is pleased to announce 13 Community Impact Grant awards, totaling \$595,493, in support of Northwest Ottawa County and surrounding communities. The final grants of 2022 include \$90,827 to support disability equality efforts in Ottawa County. These for-impact organizations include Kenzie's Be Café, the Disability Network of the Lakeshore (DNL) and Eat Well Do Good.

The Community Impact grant program will be supporting all three organizations in their efforts to enhance our area's quality of life and promote a healthy, inclusive, collaborative and diverse community in Northwest Ottawa County. Specifically providing support, partnership, and opportunity to individuals with disabilities.

The Disability Network of the Lakeshore (DNL) will utilize grant funds to provide diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) training assessments at for-impact organizations throughout Northwest Ottawa County. This work educates organizations and their staff beyond standard ADA regulations and will ultimately improve inclusion and accessibility efforts, benefitting both employees and patrons of local for-impact organizations for years to come.

Northwest Ottawa County inclusion and accessibility efforts are further enhanced by the programming taking place at Kenzie's Be Café and Eat Well Do Good as both provide meaningful employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Kenzie's Be Café, a coffee shop, located in the historic Crescent Theater in Grand Haven's Eastown is a safe and enjoyable work environment for more than 20 individuals with intellectual and developmental delays along with other special needs. Grant funds will be utilized to purchase equipment that will support both employees and customers daily.

Eat Well Do Good, the charitable entity of Lake Effect Kitchen, will utilize a multi-year grant to support employees with disabilities and their "coaches" of the Lake Effect Trolley – a seasonal food truck in downtown Grand Haven. Eat Well Do Good strives to showcase an authentically inclusive workplace while providing training and education that individuals will be able to build-upon and apply at other area businesses.

All three organizations lend to the independence, dignity and community that is required of an inclusive environment.

Additional Community Impact Grants Include:

Grand Valley State University – Groundswell Grand Haven Area Partnership (\$24,446)

[Groundswell](#) is a K-12 environmental education program housed in Grand Valley State University's Center for Educational Partnerships in the College of Education and Community Innovation and provides teacher training and funding for student-led environmental projects in their communities. The organization will use the grant to continue programming, specifically in the Grand Haven Area Public Schools. At least three environmental stewardship projects are expected to happen over the project.

Goodwill Industries of West Michigan – HydroBlox Plastics Recycling (\$100,000)

[Goodwill of West Michigan](#) is partnering with [HydroBlox](#) to recycle plastics that would otherwise go to landfill in the west Michigan area. This grant is part of a capital campaign that will be used towards building and staffing a new manufacturing facility. The project will divert plastic goods from landfills to create high-value products that will be used to aid in storm water drainage. Plastics will come from Goodwill donations that cannot be sold, which is anticipated to be 1.5 million pounds from the region.

Michigan's Edge Mountain Biking Association (MEMBA) – Mosquito Creek Trail Expansion (\$25,000)

[MEMBA](#) will use this grant to expand the year-round, multi-use [Mosquito Creek Trails](#) and enhance the trailhead parking area. The expansion will add two miles of professionally designed trail to the current 11-mile trail system. The parking lot enhancements include additional parking spaces, lighting, storage, and a pavilion.

West Michigan Environmental Action Council Education Foundation (WMEAC) – Environmental Sustainability in Northern Ottawa County (\$15,000)

[WMEAC](#) will use this grant to support its existing environmental and sustainability initiatives in Grand Haven and Northern Ottawa County. These initiatives include Trash Talks (a series of workshops for individuals, businesses, and schools on reducing waste), expanding the Solar Up Network (SUN) project, which assembles people who are interested in solar into purchasing blocks to reduce their costs, and continue working on public messaging around clean energy and the cleanup of Harbor Island.

Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital – Pediatric Rehabilitation Hospital (\$100,000)

This grant is part of a capital campaign that will be used towards building a pediatric rehabilitation hospital. [Mary Free Bed](#) is partnering with Spectrum Health's Helen DeVos Children's Hospital to create the only children's rehabilitation hospital in the State of Michigan. The 67,000 sq. ft. hospital will include two stories and will be designed for children's specific needs. Construction is expected to be complete in December 2026.

No One Lives Alone, Inc. (NOLA) – Expand Access to Individualized Coaching and Support (\$15,200)

[NOLA](#) is the sole provider of sober living housing for women in northern Ottawa County. This grant will be used to create a confidential office space and further improve the private coaching sessions at the Grand Haven location, Bernice's House, owned by St. Patrick - St. Anthony Parish.

The Little Red House, Inc. – Strategic Marketing Plan (\$55,000/ 2 years)

[The Little Red House](#) works to help aging adults in the community live a more comfortable and safer lifestyle. This two-year grant will allow the organization to develop a new strategic marketing and brand strategy plan. The goal of this project is to support the sustainability and strategy of attracting and retaining staff, fundraising, client, staff, and board member recruitment through marketing.

Harbor Humane Society – Community Outreach Manager (\$40,000)

The [Harbor Humane Society](#) will use this grant towards a new Community Outreach Manager position. This new full-time position will focus on intake diversion and help connect pet owners with resources in times of need. The goal of this position will be to keep pets in homes and educate pet owners on free and low-cost resources available to them.

Chamber of Grand Haven, Spring Lake and Ferrysburg – Envisioning Our Communities' Future Speaker Series (\$125,000)

In partnership with the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation, the Chamber of Grand Haven, Spring Lake and Ferrysburg will use the grant to host a 6-part speaker series dedicated to encouraging area leaders, stakeholders and community members to learn more about key issues impacting Northwest Ottawa County and their role in creating a thriving community. Each session will include a neutral facilitator who will speak to a current interest in the community and provide non-confrontational education in addition to discussion and call to action.

Migrant Legal Aid (MLA) – Defending Against Hate Program Expansion (\$5,000)

[MLA](#) will use the grant to expand its Defending Against Hate Program into Ottawa County. The program is designed to protect migrant workers and reduce acts of hate directed towards legal and undocumented immigrants. Through education and working with local law enforcement and court systems, the program is intended to make the process of reporting hate crimes seamless and safe for migrant workers who are victims of crime.

The Grand Haven Area Community Foundation awarded over \$1.2 million dollars in Community Impact grants in 2022.

The pre-application for the first grant round of 2023 deadline has already passed. Preliminary applicants for the second grant round of 2023 are due February 8, 2023. For more information about the grant process, visit ghacf.org/grants.

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 9th 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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