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NINE NORTHERN MICHIGAN INITIATIVES RECEIVE ROTARY GRANTS TOTALING \$430,000

Rotary Charities of Traverse City announces recipients of Fall 2023 Grant Awards

Rotary Charities of Traverse City is proud to announce the recipients of our Fall 2023 Grant Awards, a total investment of \$430,000 in nine regional nonprofits and collaboratives.

Seven of the grants were awarded through Rotary Charities' Assets for Thriving Communities grant program, which provides support to initiatives that develop, strengthen, or build community assets that are available to all, or make an existing asset more widely available.

Two grants were awarded through our Systems Change Accelerator grant program, which provides support to collaborative initiatives targeting the root causes of complex community problems.

Learn more about these and other grant opportunities at RotaryCharities.org/Grants

"These grants represent a strategic investment in community well-being, aligning with our vision of communities that are adaptive and thriving for everyone," said Sakura Takano, CEO of Rotary Charities. "This funding will strengthen essential services, enhance access to recreational spaces, and address complex community challenges, ensuring improved services and access to vital resources. By addressing the unique needs of our communities, we aim to create lasting positive change, promoting overall community health and resilience."

Dolly Parton Imagination Library Grand Traverse Region

Books from Birth: Antrim County Expansion — \$25,000 Assets for Thriving Communities grant

Aiming to increase kindergarten readiness across the 5-county region and inspire a love of reading and learning, the Books from Birth initiative combines the strengths of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library with Born to Read, a signature project of the Traverse Bay Sunrise Rotary Club. Currently serving 2,709 children in Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau counties, the initiative will expand its reach through a partnership with Munson Medical Center to enroll Antrim County babies in the program.

Frankfort Area Community Land Trust

Grove Place Homes Phase II — \$50,000 Assets for Thriving Communities grant

With a focus on bridging the housing gap in the community, Frankfort Area Community Land Trust will move forward with the construction of two single-family homes at Grove Place, each offering 1,176 sq ft of living space with three bedrooms and two full baths. These homes will be sold at a subsidized cost to income-qualified individuals or families, addressing the shortage of attainable housing in the Frankfort and Benzie

County area. Through its unique Community Land Trust model, the project ensures that the homes remain reserved for year-round residents, preventing them from being converted into second homes or short-term rentals.

Grand Traverse Industries

Field of Dreams — \$40,000 Assets for Thriving Communities grant

The "Field of Dreams" project by Grand Traverse Industries, Inc. will create an inclusive and ADA-accessible outdoor recreational space tailored for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). This project aims to improve the physical and mental well-being of the IDD population by offering therapeutic activities in a thoughtfully designed space including art therapy areas, sound gardens, wheelchair swings, raised garden beds, a basketball court, and nature paths.

Grand Traverse Conservation District

Ottaway Crossing Footbridge — \$50,000 Assets for Thriving Communities grant

With a mission to protect diverse ecosystems, promote sustainable land use practices, and provide environmental education, the Grand Traverse Conservation District seeks to construct a footbridge that will span 160 feet across the Boardman-Ottaway River. The proposed footbridge, situated along the Boardman-Ottaway River Trail, will reestablish connections lost during the removal of the Sabin Dam, providing safe and non-motorized access to the Keystone Soccer Complex, the Great Lakes Incubator Farm, and miles of existing trails on the east side of the river. The Conservation District's long-term vision is a transformative project that positively impacts non-motorized transportation choices, access to recreation, and the physical and mental health of the community.

Grow Benzie

Collaborative Capacity Building Initiative: A Force Multiplier for Good — \$75,000 Systems Change Accelerator grant

The Collaborative Capacity Building Initiative aims to provide essential support to overcome challenges affecting childcare, education, youth mental health, social services, and broadband access within Benzie County by coordinating efforts of five county initiatives including BEST Benzie County, the Benzie Human Services Collaborative Body, the Benzie Area Youth Initiative, Childcare Access and Resources for Everyone for Benzie, and the Benzie Broadband Initiative. The Initiative addresses the challenge of limited capacity experienced by rural organizations by encouraging mutual learning, coordination of services and resources, and providing opportunities for alignment between organizations.

Leland Township Public Library

Library Renovation & Expansion Project — \$25,000 Assets for Thriving Communities grant

Serving as a vital community hub, the Leland Township Public Library will undergo a major renovation and expansion project. The planned improvements will address structural challenges and allow for anticipated growth in library services, including space for increased attendance for children's programs, a dedicated space for teens, improved support for remote work, increased availability for community meetings, and enhanced accessibility to staff.

Northwest Community Health Innovation Region Behavioral Health Initiative

Creating a More Robust Behavioral Health System — \$100,000 Systems Change Accelerator grant

Seeking to improve the capacity of the Grand Traverse Region's behavioral health system to meet the expanding and urgent behavioral health needs across the region, the Northwest Community Health Innovation Region's Behavioral Health Initiative will work to target capacity issues within the system. The Initiative will enact a constellation of actions, including developing service system maps to illustrate the current continuum of care and gaps within the system, identifying referral partnerships and practices to ensure effective care coordination, and establishing shared metrics and learning to monitor service efficacy and client outcomes. The initiative aims to reduce the behavioral health crisis in the region by making it easier for people to access quality, coordinated services and support.

The Leelanau Conservancy

Palmer Woods Addition Project — \$40,000 Assets for Thriving Communities grant

The Leelanau Conservancy will acquire a 80-acre addition its largest natural area, the Palmer Woods Forest Reserve. This expansion will bring the Forest Reserve's total size to 1,155 acres, further securing a healthy native northern hardwood forest, providing a habitat corridor for diverse wildlife, and expanding recreational trails for the public. A long-term stewardship plan ensures that the natural areas under The Leelanau Conservancy's care thrive while balancing public recreation, reinforcing the organization's commitment to preserving the region's natural beauty for current and future generations.

United Way of Northwest Michigan

United We Smile Community Health Worker — \$25,000 Assets for Thriving Communities grant

Aiming to fill a significant gap in dental care for the region's vulnerable populations, United We Smile is a dental center serving veterans, children, pregnant women, and individuals with developmental or cognitive disabilities. The initiative will hire a Community Health Worker who will connect patients with essential resources and services, empowering the initiative to provide comprehensive care by addressing not just dental needs, but also the broader health and well-being of patients.

About Rotary Charities:

Following the 1976 discovery of oil and natural gas reserves on property owned by the Traverse City Rotary Club, Rotary Charities of Traverse City was established as the steward of these resources. Since that time, over \$68 million in grants have been awarded to nonprofits, municipalities, networks, and tribal nations in Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Leelanau counties.

Working in partnership with changemakers, Rotary Charities provides funding, learning, and connections to address our region's complex problems and create community assets for all. In recent years, Rotary Charities has evolved from a traditional grantmaking organization to a regional changemaking organization that envisions communities that are adaptive and thriving for everyone. Learn more at RotaryCharities.org

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