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Community Foundation of Sarasota County Awards \$120,000 to Area Nonprofits

Grants support capacity building in nonprofits serving counties along the Suncoast

SARASOTA, FL – The Community Foundation of Sarasota County has awarded 20 local nonprofit organizations nearly \$120,000 through grant opportunities with the purpose of strengthening each organization’s capacity to fulfill its mission.

Most of the grants awarded will support organizations’ marketing and development efforts, a critical component for nonprofits to increase visibility, but an area that is often underfunded. Some of the grants support staff professional development and board development, which aim to help the nonprofits shape and implement thoughtful strategic plans. Other grants support expanding an organization’s impact through investing in their staff and volunteers.

“For most nonprofits, the lion’s share of the budget goes directly into the people and causes they serve,” said Kirsten Russell, Vice President of Community Impact at the Community Foundation. “Yet, operational investments are important as well—they can help expand their capacity to serve and to more widely communicate to audiences, from people who might fund the organizations to people who benefit from the services the organization is offering. Expanding reach can be difficult with small operational budgets, but it is still a critical piece of the work.”

Marketing, Communications, and Donor Management Support:

- [***The Mac Parkman Foundation for Adolescent Concussive Trauma***](#), which promotes healthy alternatives to concussive sports in young people.
- [***Mayor’s Feed the Hungry Program***](#), which provides food stability to people living in poverty and those who are unhoused.
- [***Honor Animal Rescue***](#), a no-kill animal adoption shelter that also provides spay/neuter clinics.
- [***Realize Bradenton***](#), which advances arts, culture, and community in public spaces in Bradenton, delivers entrepreneurship development programs, and fosters economic vitality.

- [*Sixteen Hands Horse Sanctuary*](#), a horse rescue facility that provides rehabilitation services.
- [*SaraSolo Productions*](#), a theater company that helps artists develop solo and small-cast plays that illuminate the human condition and create a space for inclusion.
- [*Soft Coated Wheaton Terrier Club of Greater Tampa Bay*](#), a rescue that rehomes wheaton terriers that must be given up.

Supporting Organizational Capacity, Professional Development and Board Leadership:

- [*Truly Valued*](#), which promotes self-esteem, confidence and character development through educating youth and families.
- [*Sarasota Strong*](#), which uses principles of trauma-informed community development to address social issues in Sarasota.
- [*The Paradise Center*](#), which enhances quality of life through providing lifestyle enrichment programs and accessible healthcare for seniors.
- [*The Hermitage Artist Retreat*](#), which inspires and fosters influential and culturally consequential art and artists of our time.
- [*Sugar's Gift*](#), which provides free in-home euthanasia services to terminally ill pets, as well as grief counseling to their caregivers.
- [*National League of American Pen Women – Sarasota Branch*](#), which promotes, encourages and recognizes the production of creative work in writing, visual arts, and music.
- [*Suncoast Youth for Christ*](#), which provides a positive faith-based community for youth and teens, especially at-risk youth who are or have been pregnant or incarcerated.
- [*Hope Seeds*](#), a Christian organization working to mitigate hunger through providing high-quality seeds to hungry communities worldwide and promoting sustainable food production skills.

Supporting Programmatic Reach:

- [*the Warehouse of Venice Inc.*](#), a youth development and character-building organization that promotes drug-free lifestyles and positive, healthy choices.
- [*Prospect Riding Center*](#), which offers horseback riding therapy and activities that benefit riders with special needs as well as instruction for recreational riding.
- [*Volunteers of America of Florida*](#), which provides support and housing assistance for people with psychiatric disabilities and/or substance abuse disorder through recovery programs.
- [*Project Light of Manatee, Inc.*](#), which has the mission of teaching adults English language skills that are necessary to function at home, on the job, and in the community.
- [*Azara Ballet*](#), which is a non-profit professional dance company with a focus on neurodivergence and body positivity that creates classical and contemporary works of art that depict the power of dance to transform all of our lives for the better.
- [*The Paradise Center*](#), which enhances the quality of life on Longboat Key by promoting accessible healthcare and providing year-round lifestyle enrichment programs.

As a partner to more than 700 nonprofit organizations serving Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte and DeSoto counties, a primary function of the Community Foundation is to enhance the organizations' autonomy and long-term operations. Grants like this one provide practical help to support that goal.

The Community Foundation also hosts [Giving Challenges](#), 24-hour giving events that draw visibility and tremendous community support to the nonprofit community. The next Giving Challenge will be noon to noon April 9-10, 2024. The last Giving Challenge, in 2022, raised \$16.2 million in unrestricted funds for nearly 700 participating nonprofits and has raised more than \$75 million since its inception in 2012.

Along with bolstering financial resources in the nonprofit sector, the Community Foundation hosts trainings and workshops designed to empower charitable organizations.

Grants under \$10,000 help improve a nonprofit's ability to fulfill its mission by strengthening its capacity. Open year-round, these applications are reviewed five times annually, in August, October, December, March, and May. To learn more about available grant opportunities, visit www.cfsarasota.org/nonprofits/grants.

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About the Community Foundation of Sarasota County: The Community Foundation of Sarasota County is a public charity founded in 1979 by the Southwest Florida Estate Planning Council as a resource for caring individuals and the causes they support, enabling them to make a charitable impact on the community. With assets of \$460 million in more than 1,570 charitable funds, the Community Foundation awarded grants and scholarships totaling \$45.3 million dollars last year in the areas of education, the arts, health and human services, civic engagement, animal welfare and the environment. Since its founding, the Community Foundation has been able to grant more than \$396 million to area nonprofit organizations in our community thanks to the generosity of charitable individuals, families, and businesses. For more information, visit www.CFSarasota.org or call (941) 955-3000.