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DuPage Foundation Sets New Record with Spring Grant Awards

Press Release—May 21, 2021—*Downers Grove, IL*: With health and human services needs in DuPage County at an all time high, DuPage Foundation is pleased to announce it has awarded a record \$702,860 in grants to 37 area not-for-profit organizations through its signature *Community Needs Grant Program (Community Needs or CNGP)*. The program awards grants each spring to not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charities in the County who apply and are working in the area of health and human services.

Not only is the amount awarded a record, but the amount contributed to the program budget by individual donors through their DuPage Foundation relationships is also a record. Donors invested an additional \$307,388 increasing the *Community Needs* grant budget by 78 percent, said DuPage Foundation Vice President for Programs Barb Szczepaniak. “The amount contributed by donors and donor-advisors through their DuPage Foundation funds was more than double the amount given in 2020. It allowed the Grant Committee to fund 76 percent of the applications received, compared to 66 percent in the past, and this is on top of increasing the maximum grant award allocation to \$25,000, a \$5,000 increase over past limits. We are so grateful and humbled by the community’s generosity and our donors’ concern for those in our community with the fewest resources,” she said.

Donor Earl Harbaugh, a long-time supporter of DuPage Foundation and one of the contributors who supported this grant cycle with additional funding, said, “With so much need in the community right now, those with more resources can really make a difference through DuPage Foundation. Doing so through this grant cycle and even outside the grant cycle is impactful as well.”

Martha J. Johnson was a first-time contributor to this grant cycle having recently set up her own donor-advised fund with the Foundation. She said, “I found an amazingly easy opportunity working together with DuPage Foundation to help local not-for-profits make a positive impact in the lives of so many vulnerable neighbors. The Foundation

identifies specific critical needs in the community and I feel confident in their advice and blessed to be able to support organizations most meaningful to me personally.”

Businesses also supported the grant cycle. Lisle-based Molex, Inc. Chief Executive Officer Joe Nelligan said, “We are thrilled to partner with DuPage Foundation in support of their mission to help those in need in our community. Through the *Community Needs Grant Program*, we’ll be able to provide critical services and resources to help make a difference and improve people’s lives.”

Szczepaniak explained, “The overall budget for the grant program comes from income generated by unrestricted and field-of-interest endowments that donors have established with the Foundation over the past 35 years including the *DuPage Forever Fund*. That, coupled with the additional contributions from the Foundation’s donor-advisors, makes a bigger impact on the great need in our community for everything from housing and shelter to mental health services and more.”

Indeed, Geri Kerger, executive director of NAMI DuPage, a grantee that delivers mental health services to DuPage County residents said, “Mental health needs have skyrocketed as a result of the pandemic, and there is no vaccine to prevent or reduce the impact of mental illness. Although cases of coronavirus are diminishing with time— anxiety, depression, and PTSD brought on by the virus may continue for weeks, months, even years for some people. We are so thankful for DuPage Foundation's support of our Peer Counseling program, which is even more important now. Medical experts have found peers provide a unique role in breaking isolation and modeling recovery, particularly for those experiencing anxiety and depression related to the pandemic. Peer counseling is a win, win, win: It is great for the counselor, the client and the community at large.”

A volunteer Grant Committee comprised of DuPage County residents with deep knowledge of the not-for-profit community is charged with decision-making regarding grant recipients and amounts. Volunteer Megan Shebik, chair of the Committee, said, “Each member of the Committee spends the time necessary to read, analyze and discuss the grant applications. The quality of the applications demonstrates the great need in our community. We’re pleased to see those with the greatest opportunity to impact lives get the funds they need. I’m appreciative of the Committee for all their dedication and hard work; they truly make a difference right where we live.”

Receiving DuPage Foundation *Community Needs* grants this cycle include:

360 Youth Services: \$25,000

Bridge Communities, Inc.: \$25,000

Care for Cars: \$15,000

Caring Network: \$9,300
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet: \$25,000
DayOne PACT: \$22,000
Donka, Inc.: \$7,500
DuPage Health Coalition: \$25,000
DuPage Senior Citizens Council: \$19,000
DuPage Sponsors: \$25,000
Elmhurst Walk-In Assistance Network: \$12,000
Evangelical Child & Family Agency: \$15,000
Friends for Therapeutic Equine Activities: \$15,000
Glen Ellyn Food Pantry: \$5,704
Hamdard Center for Health & Human Services: \$25,000
Healthcare Alternative Systems, Inc.: \$15,000
Little City Foundation: \$2,465
Loaves & Fishes Community Services: \$25,000
Metropolitan Family Services DuPage: \$25,000
National Alliance on Mental Illness DuPage: \$25,000
Neighborhood Food Pantries: \$25,000
Northeast DuPage Family and Youth Services: \$25,000
Northern Illinois Food Bank: \$25,000
Outreach Community Ministries: \$25,000
People's Resource Center: \$21,456
Play for All Playground & Garden Foundation: \$15,000
Ray Graham Association: \$24,835
Riverwalk Adult Day Services: \$10,000
Sharing Connections: \$20,000
Spectrios Institute for Low Vision: \$6,100

Teen Parent Connection: \$20,000

United Cerebral Palsy Seguin of Greater Chicago: \$25,000

Wellness House: \$2,500

West Suburban Community Pantry: \$25,000

World Relief Chicagoland: \$25,000

Youth Outlook: \$20,000

YWCA Metropolitan Chicago: \$25,000

About DuPage Foundation

DuPage Foundation, a 501(c)(3) community foundation, is the philanthropic leader in DuPage County, Illinois. DuPage Foundation manages more than \$110 million in assets and has awarded more than \$55 million in grants to not-for-profit organizations serving the residents of DuPage County and beyond since its founding in 1986. Individuals and organizations seeking to provide impactful support in DuPage County to address critical issues can create powerful, customizable gift solutions and partnerships through DuPage Foundation. More at dupagefoundation.org. *Doing a world of good in our own backyard.*[®]

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