

Community nonprofits to get \$40,000 in grants

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By Staff report

LAWRENCE - The Merrimack Valley General Fund, part of the Essex County Community Foundation, will distribute \$40,000 in grants to 15 local nonprofit agencies in an awards ceremony tomorrow.

The event will be held at 11:30 a.m. in the first-floor library of the Maria del Pilar Quintana Family Center at 404 Haverhill St, Lawrence (the former convent at St. Anne's School, one block west of the corner of Broadway and Haverhill Streets).

Peter Caruso, Sr., chairman of the Merrimack Valley General Fund, members of the Merrimack Valley General Fund Advisory Committee and the Trustees of the Essex County Community Foundation will be present to honor the award winners for their services, which reach the communities in the Eastern Merrimack Valley.

The organizations and projects to be honored include:

Big Brother-Big Sister of Greater Lawrence: To provide positive mentoring to children in need. \$1,000.

Blessed Stephen Bellesini, O.S.A. Academy, Lawrence: To support a weekly after-school art instruction program at the Essex Art Center. \$3,000.

Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence: To provide dance instruction and performance opportunities for approximately 50 Boys & Girls Club members a day to develop their creative talents while providing aerobic exercise and fun. \$3,000.

Elder Services of Merrimack Valley, Inc. Lawrence: To support a group of volunteers to provide transportation and accompany elders to a physician appointments, treatments or other medical events, and act advocates and/or surrogate family members for the elder, \$2,500.

Firehouse Center for the Arts, Newburyport: To expand the services at the Firehouse Center For the Arts to include physically and developmentally challenged youth a presentation of a Very Special Arts Festival. \$3,000.

Girl Scouts of Spar and Spindle Council, Inc, North Andover: To support the Girls Got Goals program at the Lawrence Girls and Boys Club. This program helps girls with self reliance and self sufficiency, career interests and job searching skills. \$2,500.

Greater Lawrence Council of Churches, Lawrence: To provide Manos Felices (Happy Hands), an after-school program for children in pre-school through fifth grade at the Hancock Housing Project. \$2,000.

Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center , Newburyport: To support the COVE program, which helps young victims of family violence overcome abuse and develop positive responses to trauma, \$3,000.

Lawrence Family Development & Education Fund, Inc.: To help immigrants living in the city of Lawrence acquire the English language skills they need to become productive members of our society and the knowledge necessary to pass the United States Citizenship Interview and Examination. \$4,000.

Lawrence Literacy Works: To build capacity in the community to provide financial literacy programming by offering train-the-trainer sessions for workshop facilitators from both the banking world and not-for-profit organizations, offering both content and teaching skills. \$3,000.

Merrimack Valley YMCA, Lawrence Branch: To support the Resource Educational Center, a multi-service collaboration that maximizes local resources to provide very low to low-income individuals intervention services and life skills training. \$1,000.

North Shore Youth Symphony Orchestra, Inc., Topsfield: To provide children from Lawrence with string instruction through after-school and Saturday group classes. \$2,000.

Northeast Independent Living, Lawrence: To assist youth with disabilities to locate jobs; to provide access to the arts and to promote a healthy lifestyle. \$3,000.

Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April, Haverhill: To support the 2007 Rebuilding Together Day, which provides housing rehabilitation services to people of low-income. \$4,000.

Trauma Intervention Program of Merrimack Valley, Methuen: To support the Spanish translation of Nat's Story, part of a coloring book series used by emergency responders to help children cope with a traumatic event. \$3,000.