

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cook County Community Foundation
Grand Marais, MN 55604
July 2023



**COOK COUNTY
COMMUNITY FUND**

*An affiliate of the Duluth Superior Area
Community Foundation*

**COOK COUNTY COMMUNITY FUND
ANNOUNCES 2023 GRANT RECIPIENTS**

Twelve deserving non-profit organizations are awarded more than \$42,500 in grants for projects to strengthen the Cook County community.

(GRAND MARAIS, MN – July 2023) – The Cook County Community Fund (CCCF) announced its 2023 grant recipients today with more than \$42,500 in funds being distributed to Cook County non-profit organizations for various community service initiatives. Grants are awarded through a competitive grant application process and recipients were determined as most impactful in the Cook County community by the Advisory Board of Directors of CCCF.

The 2023 grants awarded by the Cook County Community Fund include:

Cook County Higher Education will receive \$3,000 to provide mental health first aid training for youth and adults. At the end of the training, participants will be prepared to offer help to a person who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis.

The \$5,000 grant to the **Cook County Local Energy Project** will be used to reinforce and further build on the organization's leadership in educating and guiding the Cook County Community in climate emergency mobilization. The funding will strengthen their workforce development program that addresses community local climate response through building a robust clean energy workforce.

The \$3,234 grant given to **Cooperation Station** will be used to help fund the purchase of an ergonomic diaper changing station and children's outdoor gear for use on colder, rainy days in the spring and fall. The changing station will help alleviate staff back issues that have developed from repeatedly lifting toddlers onto current changing stations. The outdoor gear will extend the amount of time children can engage in outdoor education and play.

The \$5,000 grant to the **Duluth Area Family YMCA** will be used to help develop 26 two-week lesson plans specifically designed for infants and toddlers in Cook County. These easy-to-use plans will assist providers in increasing the quality of the early learning experiences for the children in their care.

Go Dog North Shore will receive \$2,500 to purchase materials to build a 500 footlong boardwalk in wet areas in the Grand Marais Dog Park. The boardwalk, which will be

installed by volunteers, will accommodate users with a wide range of physical abilities and improve water quality by reducing erosion and allowing water to follow its natural course.

Cook County has a need for safe and fun places for youth to go after school hours. A \$3,275 grant to **Grand Marais Arts** will be used to increase the number of after school art classes and designate a specific indoor community gathering space with increased formal and informal programs.

The **Grand Marais Playhouse** will offer after-school programming for youth in grades 3-12 beginning in the fall of 2023. The \$5,000 grant will fund program activities that range from general theatrical games and creative projects to specific performance and technical skills development thereby engaging youth in creative activity that is safe, inclusive, and nurturing.

The **Gunflint Trail Historical Society** will receive \$4,500 to enhance the visitor experience at the Chik-Wauk Museum and Nature Center through an interactive kiosk and artifact QR code enhancements in the Watercraft Exhibit Building. These enhancements will allow for greater interaction with exhibits and artifacts and allow for better engagement of teens.

The \$4,500 grant to **Legal Aid Services of Northeast Minnesota** will be used to support outreach and educational programming for legal aid services. These efforts will help families be aware of their legal rights relating to issues including housing, divorce, custody, domestic abuse, harassment, public benefits, and elder law.

North Shore Collaborative will receive \$1,000 to help fund their Learning Opportunities Through Stories (LOTS) program. LOTS helps provide young children with strong literacy education by promoting reading, getting children interested in reading at an early age, and helping prepare children for kindergarten.

Cook County is facing a critical shortage of health care workers. The **North Shore Health Care Foundation** \$5,000 grant will be used to convene local partners to jointly address the shortages and champion healthcare initiatives through innovative training, improved training tools, and removal of barriers to health care opportunities.

Sugarloaf: The North Shore Stewardship Association will receive \$1,000 to create content and deploy an audio tour platform at Sugarloaf Cove Nature Center. The audio tour, which can be downloaded onto visitors' smartphones without an internet connection, will allow visitors to engage more deeply with the natural environment, enhance their learning experience, and increase their understanding and appreciation of Sugarloaf Cove and the North Shore.

“We’re pleased to be able to provide financial support to all of these deserving programs which will enrich our community and region,” said Virginia Detrick Palmer, Chair of the Cook County Community Fund Advisory Board, “We thank these organizations and all that submitted grant requests for their dedication to improving Cook County.”

The Cook County Community Fund, created in 2003, is a regional affiliate of the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation, which makes grants to nonprofits and to individuals for scholarships and also provides leadership on important initiatives in northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin. Since its start in 1983, the Community Foundation has distributed more than \$60 million and holds more than 470 funds. Learn more at dsacommunityfoundation.com.

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