

Queen of Hearts GEMS Grant Recipients

\$10,000 Grant Recipients

Boys and Girls Club of North Lake Tahoe was awarded funds to help establish a new after-school program site at Truckee Elementary, identified by TTUSD as the school most in need of after-school enrichment. The program will take place on TES campus from M-F until 6:30 pm, be available to all elementary-aged Truckee students with recruitment efforts focusing on at-risk students. Students participate in a required academic program that offers homework help, reading and writing assistance, and an enrichment activity.

Gateway Mountain Center received funds to combat an alarming regional increase in the number of youth suffering from symptoms of mental illness: younger adolescents with ER visits, an increase in self-harm behavior, and suicide rates that are double the national and state average. Growing from an innovative pilot program to a Placer County covered partner in just three years, Gateway Mountain Center's Whole Hearts, Minds, and Bodies serves youths in serious need of mental health care. Funding will be used to serve youth who do not otherwise qualify, nor can afford, therapeutic services.

Mountain Area Preservation received funds for an educational kiosk for the upcoming Trout Creek Pocket Park in historic downtown Truckee. MAP has taken the lead on resurrecting the park through a green sustainable site design that will improve water quality, run-off and erosion while re-vegetating the area and promoting education, recreation, and community events. Permits are now secured and construction is slated for Spring-Summer of 2015.

Tahoe-Pyramid Bikeway, honored regionally and nationally, received a grant toward developing a feasible plan for the trail segment between Hirschdale and Floriston, the last missing trail section between Truckee and Reno. A thorough planning effort is essential to obtaining Caltrans permits and to qualify for construction funding, estimated to be \$2-3 million and requiring more detailed engineering design than any of the previous trail sections.

\$2,500 Grant Winners

Learning Bridge of the Sierra serves students in our community by providing access to higher education with a focus on ensuring low-income and first generation students. With this funding, Learning Bridge will provide "bridge loans" to cover the initial costs and deposits for successfully enrolled students who have been awarded financial aid but do not have the ability to pay these upfront costs until after their aid comes through. Repayment of the loans goes back into the "Bridge the Gap" fund for future students' use.

North Tahoe Family Resource Center's grant funding will directly support a new teen component of the existing Latino Leadership Program, conceived and developed by the Latino community and with success demonstrated by the recent graduation of 58 community members. The workshop series is designed to bolster confidence, self-leadership, mentoring, life skills, teen couples leadership and teen parenting (if applicable). Facilitating the teens will be Estella Duque, a former member of the Colombian House of Representatives, a political refugee who works with Latinos to develop self-efficacy and leadership.

Tahoe Youth Ballet will apply its grant to purchase its own portable staging to be used at both the Art Haus Cinema and their summer outdoor performances. A major hurdle for local performing arts companies has been finding a quality venue and the attendant staging, lighting and sound equipment, this grant will help resolve this problem and channel saved rental fees to program expansion. TYB will also rent the equipment at a nominal fee to other art organizations.

Truckee Bike Park received funding towards building cross country trails and the intermediate to expert dirt jump zone portion of the popular bike park. The trails will be built by professional builders so that riders of all abilities (i.e., "little to big") can enjoy and learn in a safe environment by having varying levels of difficulty from which to choose as they make their way around the trails.