

## JUNIOR LEAGUE OF NEW ORLEANS AWARDS COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE FUND GRANTS

*Eight area nonprofits to receive combined \$47,500+*

*April 9, 2019 NEW ORLEANS, LA* – The Junior League of New Orleans (JLNO) has awarded funding to eight nonprofit organizations through its Community Assistance Fund (CAF) grant program. Girl Scouts Louisiana East, Louisiana Books 2 Prisoners, Luke’s House: A Clinic for Healing and Hope, Mercy Endeavors, Odyssey House Louisiana, Inc., Operation Spark, Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response, and Southern Rep will receive a combined \$47,500.

“Granting funds to other organizations is a natural extension of the Junior League’s mission to improve communities,” said JLNO President Alice Glenn. “We value impact and diversity, and the CAF program allows us to reach a wide array of constituents.”

Grant recipients share JLNO’s focus of Advancing the Wellbeing of Women in one or more of the following ways:

- Improving economic opportunities for women and supporting women’s potential to seize those opportunities
- Providing needed family support to alleviate the burdens on women caregivers
- Promoting information and resources for women’s health, allowing them to live healthy and happy lives

Since 1985, JLNO has awarded over \$800,000 in CAF grants to organizations in the Greater New Orleans area.

JLNO will recognize these eight organizations during an event at its Headquarters (4319 Carondelet) on Tuesday, May 21, 2019 from 10 to 11 am. The event is open to the public, and the media is welcome to attend.

### **About the CAF grant award winners:**

#### *Girl Scouts Louisiana East*

Girl Scouts was founded over 100 years ago to prepare girls for future roles as professional women and active citizens. Today, the Girl Scouts Louisiana East (GSLE) council is the foremost organization for leadership development of girls ages 5 to 18 in southeast Louisiana. It provides a full year of collaborative programs that last year served 13,011 girls and 5,509 adult volunteers. Add-on events include its annual Believe in Girls (B.I.G.) Event, which brings together more than 40 organizations offering presentations on STEM, healthy living, the arts, financial literacy, and more. It also puts on an annual 5K run for girls, sponsors a growing number of Girl Scout teams for the annual FIRST LEGO League robotics competition (eight last year alone), offers several summertime resident camps, and provides grant-funded Girl Scouting opportunities to low-income families through our outreach program.

#### *Louisiana Books 2 Prisoners*

Louisiana Books 2 Prisoners is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in New Orleans. LAB2P addresses educational needs of incarcerated people in state and federal detention facilities in Louisiana, Arkansas, Alabama, and Mississippi by providing them with free reading materials. Volunteers pull from a library of donated books to assemble and mail packages, free of charge, to individual inmates based on their requests. It hopes these books provide recipients with education, entertainment, and a connection to the outside world. In this way, its work impacts the lives of thousands of incarcerated people as well as their families and communities. Thanks to grant funding on the outside and word of mouth inside the prison system, it has been able to expand its services to include purchasing and distributing dictionaries and GED test-prep guides. Its steadily-increasing stream of requests allowed it to shrink its service area to specifically focus on its home state and surrounding states. 2017 was another record-breaking year for LAB2P. It shipped 2563 packages for a total output of over 7500 books. It remains the only Louisiana nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting prison literacy in this manner.

#### *Luke’s House: A Clinic for Healing and Hope*

Luke’s House Clinic is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization providing free medical care, health education, and patient navigation to those in need. Created in 2007 through a partnership between Rayne United Methodist Church (UMC) and Mt. Zion UMC, the clinic’s mission is to be a place of medical and spiritual hope, health, and healing for Greater New Orleans, to provide patient-centered volunteer experiences for students, and to open a doorway to long-term healthcare solutions. The clinic has grown a lot since those early days, and now has three full-time staff members and over 120 medical and lay volunteers who work to accomplish this mission.

#### *Mercy Endeavors*

Nearly one in every six seniors in America faces the threat of hunger and not being properly nourished. Social isolation has been linked to higher blood pressure, greater risk of heart disease and early onset of dementia. Mercy Endeavors Senior Center fills the void as a home away from home for over 100 struggling seniors by providing meals, transportation, social activities, celebrations, recreation, case management services, and much more. Presently, 100% of the seniors served by Mercy Endeavors are on fixed incomes, 96% are extremely low-income beneficiaries and the remaining 4% are low-income beneficiaries, as reported in compliance with the Housing and Community Development Act. Additionally, Mercy Endeavors serves seniors who are predominantly African American (94%), female head of household (82%), and disabled (66%). By providing a variety of high quality programs it can improve the mental and physical wellbeing of its senior citizens so that they may live thriving, independent lives.

#### *Odyssey House Louisiana, Inc.*

Established in 1973, the mission of Odyssey House Louisiana is to provide holistic and client-centered services in a safe environment that address the full continuum of special care needs for the state of Louisiana. The primary issue OHL addresses is substance abuse, and its encompassing system of care includes detox, treatment, behavioral and primary health care, life skills, counseling, and case management. Over the past 45 years, OHL has grown from a small, community-based rehab program into what is now the state's largest substance abuse treatment provider, serving approximately 900 clients per month across all programs. OHL's substance abuse treatment programs include Medically Supported Detox (2-7 days), Adult Residential (28 days), and Long-Term/Intensive Outpatient (up to 6 months of transitional housing at OHL with intensive treatment). In addition to addiction programs, OHL offers the Odyssey House Community Health Center, an on-site Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) that provides a medical home for its residential clients and the community. OHL also operates the only non-hospital based Medically Supported Detox program in New Orleans for indigent and Medicaid patients. In 2018, OHL broke ground on the \$17 million renovation of the former Bohn Ford building in Broadmoor, which will house OHL's expanded Adult Residential program when it opens in June 2019.

#### *Operation Spark*

Operation Spark is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide job-readiness training in software development for young adults in Greater New Orleans. Its training programs prepare opportunity youth from low-income backgrounds for employment in the high-demand, high-wage field of software development. Its programs are designed in tiers where students can find employment at the end of each level or continue on to increase their skill-set.

#### *Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response*

Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response, or STAR, began as the Baton Rouge Rape Crisis Center in 1975 where it operated as a division of the East Baton Rouge District Attorney's Office. In 2012, STAR incorporated into a 501(c)(3) non-profit to expand services to surrounding areas, increase education and outreach efforts, and ensure a level of confidentiality for its clients not available as a part of a governmental agency. Since then its mission has been to support survivors of sexual assault, improve systems response, and create social change to end sexual violence.

#### *Southern Rep Theatre*

Founded in 1986, Southern Rep Theatre's mission is to develop and produce new plays by American playwrights, to provide its audience with professional theatre of the highest artistic quality and achievement, and to establish a creative working environment that nurtures theatre professionals. As a leading performing arts organization in New Orleans, Southern Rep Theatre embraces a singular responsibility to provide local audiences with professional theatre of the highest caliber, and to serve the community through educational and outreach programs that foster increased participation in the arts among children and families in New Orleans. As of the 2018-19, we do so from our new permanent home on historic Bayou Road, New Orleans, in the former St. Rose de Lima church in the heart of our city.

*The Junior League of New Orleans is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.*

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