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CUNA MUTUAL RETIREMENT SOLUTIONS AWARDS GRANTS TO DESERVING ORGANIZATIONS

GREAT BEND, Kan. – CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions awarded several local organizations with a grant from their endowment fund, the CPI Great Bend and Barton County Donor Advised Fund, held at Golden Belt Community Foundation. These organizations were presented with a check and thanked for their contributions to our communities.

The CPI Great Bend and Barton County Donor Advised Fund was established in 2009 through the Golden Belt Community Foundation when CUNA Mutual Group acquired CPI Qualified Plan Consultants, Inc. (CPI) and made a generous donation establishing the corporate grantmaking fund. Since then, the fund has grown and CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions' Philanthropy committee members continue to review projects that will benefit Barton County.

To involve its employees in giving and to simplify the giving process, CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions chose to manage its giving through a donor-advised fund at the Golden Belt Community Foundation. Corporate donor-advised funds allow a company to make a charitable gift, establish a fund in the company's name, and remain involved by recommending grants to charitable agencies or projects. Each year employees accept grant applications and make grant recommendations to the foundation Board of Directors regarding the charitable agencies or projects they wish to benefit. With each grant awarded, CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions will further its corporate philanthropy and community involvement.

CUNA Mutual Retirement Solutions requested online grant proposals for funding with the intent of providing assistance to a local cause. Since the fund was established in 2009, it has paid out more than \$150,000 to Barton County organizations. They received several applications from deserving area organizations and three nonprofits were selected for funding.

CUNA Mutual awarded VMB Development Inc a \$2,400 grant to support their on-going efforts with children and autism. VMB Development provides one-on-one training exercises to redevelop, build and strengthen neurological connections to develop better integration between the mind, eyes and body to connect and enable them to work together more effectively. This grant will provide additional resources and the sessions needed for the children and parents.

CUNA Mutual also awarded USD 428 – Great Bend Public Schools a grant of \$4,899 to purchase an Imagination Playground for the 3 and 4-year-old pre-school students. The Imagination Playground (also known as Big Blue Blocks) is portable, easily moved in rolling totes, and creates endless opportunities for learning, social development, and movement. This portable playground system will serve over 400 preschool students annually. USD 428 staff members will be trained as "play associates" which ensures the Imagination Playground is properly implemented to support creativity and learning.

And the last grant for 2023 was awarded to BAM Barton Arts Movement for \$500. Barton Arts Movement is a grassroots volunteer group working to create community pride through public art in Barton County. The 'Welcome to Great Bend' mural was completed by Whitney Hayden (Murals by Whitney). Her specialty is the "Color Melt" technique which allows for a bright and vibrant mural which is located at the 10th and Washington St intersection in Great Bend, KS.

For questions, please call Golden Belt Community Foundation at 620-792-3000 or email gbcf@goldenbeltcf.org.

Golden Belt Community Foundation

At over \$30 million in total assets and more than 184 funds under management, the Golden Belt Community Foundation has been connecting people who care to causes that matter since 1996. Golden Belt Community Foundation exists to provide non-profit organizations in central Kansas with a permanent source of support and to serve as a vehicle for charitable giving for donors. GBCF serves the counties of Barton, Pawnee, Rush, and Stafford. For more information about Golden Belt Community Foundation, call (620) 792-3000 or visit their website at www.goldenbeltcf.org.

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