

Grants night cancelled, but power of endowment lets granting go on



SDCF granting dollars were awarded to CRAFT – Community Reinforcement And Family Training - a program born out of a made-in-Selkirk program called START, now exists in four other communities. Pictured left to right, Kathy Burke (Clerk), Donna Henderson (CRAFT Coordinator), Tammy Thompson (Program Manager) and Cheryl Fathers (START Coordinator)

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There was a strangeness about last week for the folks at the Selkirk and District Community Foundation (SDCF), and while some of it could be attributed to the extreme overnight temperatures we all had to endure, much of it was due to the absence of the annual grants awards night.

Due to COVID-19, the May 13th awards night had to be cancelled – it was the right decision because the health and safety of our communities is the most important thing.

Still, when last Wednesday came, SDCF Chairman Aaron Martyniw couldn't help but feel a little like something was missing.

“The grants awards night is a special night. It's a time of community and a time of celebration of all the good people in our community, who year in and year out, do good work to make our communities great,” Martyniw said.

“So it was obviously disappointing to have to cancel the evening, but at this time the health and safety of all our citizens is most important. The SDCF is ‘Here for Good’, and we look forward to seeing everyone next year.”

A cancelled event did not mean the cancellation of good news – the SDCF gave \$430,178 in grants to 86 different community projects. The grants were made possible through the generosity of the SDCF's donors and their belief in the power of endowment.

“We are always in awe of the commitment this community has to the Foundation and the people's belief in endowment,” Martyniw said.

“It's a staggering amount of money that goes to so many good, local projects each year, and for that, we must congratulate those who keep the Foundation in their thoughts and who make the decision to support not only the Foundation, but the organizations and people these grants support.”

Among the worthy recipients of a grant this year was the Legacy of Love art installation that will be constructed at the Gaynor Family Regional Library.

The project will be located in the library's Urban Prairie Garden, a terrific outdoor space that is home to native plants and grasses.

The library received \$12,500 from the Selkirk and District Community Foundation for Legacy of Love, which will take direction from Elders and community leaders. The Project Manager is Jeannie Red Eagle.

The installation will take the shape of a turtle, an important icon in Indigenous culture. In oral traditions, the turtle represents many things including life, the earth and a deep respect for the environment.

"The Library is very excited to be involved in this important community project. The Legacy of Love art installation will provide a place for the community to remember and recognize the missing and murdered Indigenous women," said Ken Kuryliw, Director of Library Services.

"It will be a spot for families to remember, and for the community all to understand. The project is inspired by Turtle Island, traditional teachings and our link to the Red River."

Legacy of Love will encompass about 350 square yards and the silhouette of the turtle will be defined by large, granite field stones.

A mural wall will circle the central gathering area and will include imagery for those looking from the outside as well as those inside.

CRAFT is an acronym for Community Reinforcement And Family Training, and is a program for loved ones of people who are using substances. The SDCF granted CRAFT \$3,650 in funding.

"CRAFT is a counselling program, one on one counselling, to help create some positive strategies around how to handle the difficult situation of having a loved one who's using substances," said Tammy Thompson, program manager.

CRAFT was born out of a made-in-Selkirk program called START – Selkirk Team for At Risk Teens – which began 18 years ago and spawned not only CRAFT but RESTART. The START model now exists in four other communities – Dauphin, Stonewall, Gimli and Steinbach.

START works with youth aged 11 -21 and RESTART with adults aged 18 – 29.

Thompson says START is all about building community and it brings together the key players – RCMP, Child and Family Services, Lord Selkirk School Division and

Probation Services – who work together to affect change in the lives of the teens, adults and families it works with.

“We came together because we felt we could serve our clients more effectively by working collaboratively,” Thompson said.

“But we’ve grown a lot in the last 18 years and now it’s spreading across the province.”

Selkirk & District Community Foundation is one of 50+ Community Foundations from across the province. SDCF *creates* different ways for people to give back to their community, *connects* donors with community wishes and dreams and *provides grants* that touch a lot of people. This means the Foundation works with thoughtful community minded donors, who believe in the power of endowment, that provides financial support to other charitable and non-profit community organizations. In its 24th year the Foundation has given in excess of \$2.4 million to more than 125 local charities and community organizations. This volunteer board and staff along with donors from all walks of life - work together so the community is “Here for Good”. For more details contact SDCF Executive Director Bev Clegg at 204.785.0547.