

Small Grants That Have a Big Impact

The Community Foundation Blog – September 2018

The Community Foundation is committed to improving the lives of those that work and care about San Luis Obispo County. There are many ways we achieve this through the generosity of our donors, and one of the most impactful programs in place is our BUILD (building unity, infrastructure, leadership and development) Grants Program. The primary goal of the BUILD is to provide funding for agencies with a budget of less than \$300,000. The Foundation aims to strengthen nonprofit organizations with smaller operating budgets by supporting their efforts in building capacity and improving infrastructure.

In December of 2017, the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden was awarded a BUILD Grant in the amount of \$2,500. The funds were used to update the technical infrastructure through the purchase of three computers and new computer software to replace outdated hardware and software. This grant allowed their volunteers and staff to meet their objective to work more efficiently and provide more online educational content for our community.



With updated hardware and software, SLO Botanical Gardens will be able to take steps to increase online educational videos and provide at least one new video about drought tolerant and/or fire-safe landscaping plants and principles per month. By the end of the year, they expect to have 30,000 views of the garden's free online educational content. This is an example of sharing the joys of gardening with a larger online community, including those that may be homebound.

Through the BUILD Grants Program, organizations can offer programs to assist people in San Luis Obispo County in ways they might not have otherwise had access to. These smaller grants make an impact for seniors, disabled, homeless,

youth, animals, the environment and more. Although the grants are considered “small” in amount, they make a BIG difference.

Examples of other BUILD Grants making a big impact in San Luis Obispo County:

- Central Coast Autism Spectrum Center: to support the development and launch of a Spanish language website promoting the agency’s programs - \$2,500
- Environmental Center of SLO (ECOSLO): To support staffing costs for organizing and facilitating networking events for environmental organizations - \$1,450
- Point San Luis Lightkeepers: to support a Board development retreat, consulting services, communication software, and laptop purchase - \$2,490
- SLO Wind Orchestra – to support the redesign of agency website to allow event ticket purchasing and registration: \$2,500