

Gannett awards local nonprofits with grants

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Written by [Valerie Boateng](#) Staff Writer

COSHOCTON — Five local non-profit agencies received a boost in funding with grants received recently from the Gannett Foundation. Gannett is the parent company of the Coshocton Tribune.

The community grant program rewards nonprofit organizations in areas where Gannett Company Inc. has business activities.

“Our corporate parents are very, very good about investing back into our community,” said Tribune Advertising Manager Craig Patterson. “If it wasn’t for us being a part of the Gannett family we probably couldn’t do it just as the Tribune. We’re a small business and that’s a real advantage of having Gannett on our side.”

In 2012, the foundation made 970 grants totaling \$5.3 million. Coshocton County received a total of \$12,500 this year with \$5,000 presented to the Coshocton City/County Park District in October for the USA Weekend Make a Difference Day Playvillion cleanup and the \$7,500 awarded last week to The Mentoring Center of Coshocton County, Hope Clinic, Second Chance Homeless Shelter, Pregnancy Distress Center and Habitat for Humanity.

Gannett owns 82 daily newspapers — including USA Today — and 23 broadcasting stations.

“We are one of the smallest daily newspapers in the entire Gannett corporation, and yet they still choose to invest back into the community, and I think that’s just wonderful,” Patterson said.

Sheila Mayse, director of The Mentoring Center of Coshocton County, said the \$1,000 grant will be used to help pay for incentives and food for special events and publication materials such as pencils to distribute during presentations.

The center provides a variety mentoring programs for children and parents in the community. The agency is funded through the local United Way and fundraising events. The annual Bowling for Kids event is the biggest campaign, and this year a Festival of Trees was introduced to the community and raised \$550 for the agency.

“We only had about 10 trees for our first year but the folks who came through really seemed to like it and want us to do it again,” Mayse said.

Local businesses and groups donated decorated Christmas trees and incentives, which were then auctioned off to the highest bidder.

The Pregnancy Distress Center, an organization, which provides cribs and mattresses to young mothers who get pregnant and can't afford to buy one, will be using its \$1,000 grant to buy new cribs. The center also provides maternity and infant clothing and other donated necessities.

"The government has said we are no longer able to hand out used cribs (which don't meet safety guidelines)," Mary Tracy said. "What we have to do is buy new ones, and in order to do that we have to have funds because we have no income other than people donating. In order for us to continue we have to be able to buy new cribs."

The center distributes about 10 cribs a year, Tracy said, and with funding is expected to pay for about seven to 10 new cribs and mattresses.

"This is a blessing because we are down to two cribs," she said.

The center is open from 7 to 9 p.m. Tuesdays at 819 Main St.

The Second Chance Homeless Shelter will put its \$1,500 grant to use to cover expenses for general operations and to fund special programs for residents, such as its Dress for Success program, which helps residents get appropriate attire for job interviews or a new job.

"(The shelter is) a community effort and this (funding) just shows that it is," Biggers said.

Another program providing shelter for local residents, Habitat for Humanity of Coshocton County, received \$2,500 to buy materials to use on House 12 at 809 Orange St.

"(This house) is in conjunction with the Coshocton County Career Center Building Trades students who are doing hands on work on the house," said director Sue Hardesty. "It is an educational benefit for them because they are able to get real world experience there."

Habitat Houses require partner families to put in sweat equity hours, make a down payment before moving in and making a monthly payment to Habitat, which enables them to start work on the next house.

The Hope Clinic of Coshocton will be able to continue its mission of providing physical, spiritual, emotional and social needs to residents in the community who don't have health insurance with its \$1,500 grant.

The all-volunteer staff has returned \$605,625 worth of services to the community since opening to the community on Sept. 10, 2009. As of Dec. 13, the 175 volunteers have logged 16,176 clinic hours and served 3,289 patients.

"It gives all of us at the Tribune a great sense of pride to be able to give back to the community and the non-profit organizations selected this year," Tribune General Manager Ken Shelby said.

The Gannett Foundation also awarded \$1.4 million to charity through its matching programs.

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Tribune Advertising Manager Craig Patterson, left, and Assistant Editor Valerie Boateng, right, present Maureen Karl a \$1,500 check from the Gannett Foundation to help with expenses at the Hope Clinic. Gannett is the parent company of the Coshocton Tribune.