



**November 10, 2016**

**To:** Sonoma Valley Fund Board of Directors

**From:** Barbara Hughes, Chair, SVF Grants Committee, Karin Demarest, Vice President for Programs, Community Foundation Sonoma County

**Subject:** Capacity Building Grant Recommendations

On behalf of the Grants Committee, we are pleased to present the following grant recommendations for the Sonoma Valley Fund Capacity Building grants program. All of the proposals represent a unique and critical funding opportunity targeted to building the internal capacity of the participating organizations. From building internal infrastructure, to a collaborative data collection project, this set of proposals represents over six months of work together as a learning cohort under the leadership of the consulting firm, Informing Change. We are proud to present our grant recommendations and particularly proud of the collaboration and connections that have been built among the grantees as a result of this grants

**1. Grant Recipient:** Art Escape

**Grant Amount Requested:** \$20,000

**Project Overview:** Art Escape is proposing a two-part capacity building effort for the 2017 project year. First, to build new operational systems and enhance management capacity, Art Escape will invest in its current administrative staff member—increasing her hours and providing professional development opportunities. Second, to develop fund development capacity, Art Escape will hire a part-time fund development professional to define fund development priorities and strategies and help with initial implementation.

**Grants Committee Recommendation:** This is a young, promising organization taking clearly defined steps to professionalizing their infrastructure. By investing in standardizing procedures and committing to hiring a part-time fund development professional, the organization is poised to build a stable foundation for growth. The Grants Committee recommends full funding for this proposal.

**Grant Amount Recommended:** \$20,000

**2. Grant Recipient:** La Luz Center

**Grant Amount Requested:** \$20,000

**Project Overview:** La Luz Center is proposing to use its capacity building support to enhance its data-driven culture. More specifically, these funds will allow the La Luz Center Program Director to create a data utilization plan that identifies what information needs to be collected to report on goals and outcomes, clarifies how and when the organization is already collecting these data, identifies what systems and tools need to be added or updated in order to collect all relevant data, and establishes processes for how to use the resulting information well.

**Grants Committee Recommendation:** This proposal supports the long-term stability of an important organization serving the most vulnerable population in the Springs area. Recognizing and prioritizing the need for a comprehensive data utilization plan will help La Luz increase programmatic effectiveness as well as increase fundraising capacity. The Grants Committee recommends full funding for this proposal.

**Grant Amount Recommended:** \$20,000

**3. Grant Recipient:** Sonoma Overnight Support (SOS)

**Grant Amount Requested:** \$20,000

**Project Overview:** Sonoma Overnight Support is proposing to use its capacity building support to attend to a neglected infrastructure need: to hire a Food Service Program Coordinator who will assess the longstanding SOS feeding program (aka Brown Baggers) and then design and implement an updated food delivery system that includes standards of practice and procedures for all aspects of the effort, from volunteer recruitment and training to food procurement and delivery.

**Grants Committee Recommendation:** This proposal specifically targets the most critical infrastructure needs of SOS and will allow them to create a plan that identifies specific steps for overall improvement. This grant has come at a critical juncture in the lifespan of this important organization and the process has been fully embraced by all involved. The Grants Committee recommends full funding for this proposal.

**Grant Amount Recommended:** \$20,000

**4. Grant Recipient:** Boys & Girls Club of Sonoma Valley, Teen Services Sonoma, Sonoma Valley Mentoring Alliance

**Grant Amount Requested:** \$60,000 (\$20,000 per organization)

**Project Overview:** The three organizations in this collaborative propose to hire a consultant together who will help them determine what meaningful data each organization needs to collect and analyze—and what data are beneficial to collect consistently across the three organizations—in order to judge the effectiveness of the respective programs, inform course-corrections where necessary, and demonstrate impact to key stakeholders.

**Grants Committee Recommendation:** For organizations that serve a similar demographic and have been considered competitors in our small community, this

proposal represents the power and potential of our capacity building model. Arising out of a genuine recognition that data is more efficient and illuminating when collected and analyzed in partnership, this proposal will strengthen the organizations programmatic work as well as inform donors and other stakeholders about their unique and shared goals. The Grants Committee recommends full funding for this proposal.

**Grant Amount Recommended:** \$20,000

**5. Grant Recipient:** Full Cohort

**Grant Amount Requested:** \$5,000

**Project Overview:** In order to leverage the meaningful connections that have been established among the staff and board leaders of the six organizations participating in the Sonoma Valley Capacity Building Learning Cohort, the Cohort requests funding for a collective effort. Together they will determine the specifics of how the funds will be spent during the program year, but they are committed to using the resources to build on the relationships they have forged and to extend those relationships to others within and across their organizations. For example, the funds could be used for a social/professional gathering of the Cohort members and others on their staff and board, a shared learning/professional development experience aimed at staff and/or board members, or a co-hosted community event designed to reach clients across organizations.

**Grants Committee Recommendation:** Prioritizing continued commitment to the learning cohort highlights the underlying successes of this grants program - organizations want to stay connected and want to share their learning with others. Rather than dividing these funds among the grantee partners, they have placed value on the health and continuity of the collective. The Grants Committee considers this request a success of the overall program and recommends full funding.

**Grant Amount Recommended:** \$5,000