November 2020—Info Kit for Awardees

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The Washington Youth Development Nonprofit Relief Fund was made possible by the CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act) and is being implemented by the Washington State Department of Commerce and School’s Out Washington. This one-time investment addresses the financial and programmatic challenges that have come with COVID-19—acknowledging that lost revenue combined with increased expenses to adhere to new safety measures, leave many organizations at risk of closing their programs or sites.

“As far as we’ve come together in combating COVID-19, we still have a long way to go. Nonprofit organizations are absolutely crucial for supporting and lifting up the children and youth most at risk of falling behind or suffering the physical and emotional impacts of this pandemic. But our community organizations can’t do their work without funding. We are in this together, and these grants are one way we can help keep our communities strong.”

Lisa Brown—Director
Washington State Department of Commerce

On November 5, $9.4 million was awarded to 421 youth development organizations. Awards were distributed across all areas of the state with a focus on organizations most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and which support priority populations (BIPOC, LGBTQ, migrant/immigrant, youth with disabilities and youth in poverty, among others). Awards range from $10,000 to $50,000 and will be distributed between mid-November and December 15, 2020.

"We really took a dive in the deep end and made a bunch of purchases and hires to make sure our kids could stay connected to class and curriculum during the pandemic. That includes some students in foster care or experiencing homelessness. This is going to go a long way in helping us out and to keeping kids connected to learning!"

Jon Luther, Development Specialist
Multicultural Child and Family Hope Center
About the Process

The Washington State Department of Commerce chose to work with School’s Out Washington because of our field expertise, equity lens, grant-making experience, and capacity to lead a complex process on an unusually fast timeline. The process was designed to break down barriers to funding for grassroots organizations around the state that directly support BIPOC youth, youth in poverty, and other priority youth populations.

The RFP was released on September 23, and over 600 applications were received by the deadline on October 6. The RFP was translated into 13 languages. Technical assistance was provided by contractors who partnered with the Department of Commerce to support applicants from every region in the state.

Peer reviewers from communities throughout Washington were recruited to read and score applications.

- 112 reviewers were selected from over 200 who expressed interest
- 55% of these reviewers identified as BIPOC
- 84% reported having lived experiences/identities connected to BIPOC youth and youth in poverty
- About a dozen youth/young adults were engaged as reviewers
- All reviewers were required to participate in anti-bias training and to examine the approach to application review, using the scoring rubric

Small groups of peer reviewers met to discuss and score the applications and provide feedback to School’s Out Washington. In addition to review groups’ recommendations, SOWA also considered equitable representation among priority populations statewide, and equitable geographic distribution. Final decisions were made in collaboration with the Department of Commerce. Awardees were notified on November 5.
About the Awardees

The COVID-19 outbreak, extended school closures, and social distancing have deepened inequities and hardships for young people across Washington. In response, youth development programs quickly adapted their services to provide supports for youth and families to whom they are deeply connected. Expanded or adapted offerings have included emergency childcare, social-emotional supports, academic mentoring, virtual programming, and basic needs supports. For many, these organizations have been a sustaining lifeline. By providing access to essential services and pivoting to offer expanded learning opportunities online, they have helped ensure that children and young people remain safe, engaged and supported.

On average, **88%** of youth served by awardees are in the Relief Fund’s priority populations (including BIPOC, LGBTQ, migrant/immigrant, youth experiencing homelessness and youth in poverty) and **48%** report serving **100%** priority youth.

**The full list of awardees can be found here.**

“During this unprecedented time of economic uncertainty, social upheaval and growing inequities, the organizations that received these funds have navigated great challenges to provide responsive support and connection for children and youth when they need it most. School’s Out Washington is dedicated to supporting and championing the work of youth development providers. But it was these organizations—in this moment—that demonstrated so clearly their essential role in the ecosystem of support for young people in our state. We hope this influx of financial resources helps them to maintain, recover and ultimately thrive.”

Elizabeth Whitford—CEO

**School’s Out Washington**
The Hawk Foundation for Research and Education in African Culture—The Wisdom of the Drum

“The Hawk Foundation for Research and Education in African Culture dedicates itself to the promotion of education, holistic health, and trauma healing in the African American community. Based in Olympia, their services include educational seminars, lectures, and workshops promoting culturally competent forms of education.” — Hawk Foundation mission statement

In light of this year’s Black Lives Matter protests and the recognition of systemic racism, the Hawk Foundation rallied to elevate their mission and offer expanded programming. The Wisdom of the Drum brings youth together alongside their families to learn more about African drumming, African American history, and multicultural arts. This program’s diverse group of trained educators facilitate free online classes in partnership with multiple county library systems.

The impact of this program is not only to offer a creative outlet for youth during a pandemic, but also a direct connection to community and culture.

Northeast Youth and Family Services (NEYFS)—Parkview Enrichment Program

Northeast Youth and Family Services (NEYFS) is “committed to empowering two generations by providing access and support to children and their families in North East Spokane.” NEYFS approaches their work through a racial equity lens for and by the community. Families gain skills essential to raising healthy children while maintaining their own physical, mental, and social health. All receive appropriate assistance to access various programs, strengthening their ability to thrive and connect with their community.

NEYFS hosts the Parkview Enrichment Program which serves youth, ages 5-13. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, what started as a summer and out-of-school program is now a full-time care and virtual learning program. The Parkview Enrichment Program offers a full curriculum that is growing to include more STEM, arts, and physical health components.

NEYFS exemplifies how organizations are quickly adapting their programs for the benefit of the community during this crisis.
The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Snohomish County (BGCSC) is to “enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.” BGCSC was formed in 1946 and currently operates 26 clubs that serve over 29,000 youth in Snohomish, Island, Kitsap and Okanogan Counties in Washington—as well as on tribal land in Washington and Oregon. The award from the Relief Fund will support their programs at the Brewster Boys & Girls Club in Okanogan County.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Virtual Learning Labs were established at the Brewster Boys & Girls Club. This program is designed to help all kids access the internet and participate in distance learning. Club staff help youth manage online schedules, assist with school work, and ensure that kids are engaged. The Club provides WiFi, headphones, space, adult help, and access to Chromebooks. Staff work directly with the school district to make sure that kids are on track and keeping up with assignments.

Youth are also given meals and snacks to stay full and focused. Gym activities, arts and crafts, and social emotional learning programs are incorporated throughout the day to ensure that kids are also having fun and have an outlet for stress and anxiety.

Youth are supported holistically through academics, nutrition and recreational activities. One million snacks and meals were distributed to participants from March to October alone.
Next Steps

Access your funds!

Grant payments will be issued electronically through Automated Clearing House (ACH). In your grant application, you specified contact information for the individual who will be completing the required W-9 and ACH forms.

1. Your W-9/ACH contact person should look for an email from Liz Director via DocuSign. This email will include a W-9 form and an ACH form.
2. These forms must be completed within 7 days of receipt in order to access your funds.
3. Payments will be issued between late November and mid-December.
4. After your payment is issued you will be emailed and asked to verify receipt of funds. Please reply promptly to this email.

As noted in your grant application, please remember that by accepting the award, you agree to provide School’s Out Washington the right of access to your 990 and other financial records at all reasonable times for six years following the award date to confirm the financial information presented in your application.

Share the good news with your community

School’s Out Washington is asking that you share news of your award with your networks and supporters. We recommend the following activities:

- **Send an email blast**—You can include any of the information in this document in your own announcement.
- **Post on social media**—Post on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, or any platform where you regularly engage online. You can also re-post whatever SOWA is sharing. Don’t forget to @ fellow awardees in your community! The full list of awardees can be viewed here.

Be sure to use these hashtags so that we can connect with each other:

- #schoolsoutwashington
- #youthdevfundswa
- #youthdevstrong

**School’s Out Washington’s on social media:**

Facebook | Instagram | Twitter
Join Elevate Washington and share your data

Later this month, you will receive an email directly from Elevate Washington (info@elevatewashington.org) inviting you to create a user account and access your organization's profiles in the Elevate member system.

Powered by School's Out Washington, Elevate Washington is a community resource that captures and maintains critical data on youth-serving programs. As stated in the application, your organization, site and program information have been entered into the member system and can now be found in the Elevate's youth program directory (confidential sites are not listed).

The member system maintains information that youth program providers share with us. From demographics, to funding streams, to program content, these data show us who's being served and where gaps exist. An overview of what we ask for can be viewed here.

If you’d like to provide details about your programming right away, you can create your user account now and then claim your organization. We hope the process is straightforward, but here’s a quick start guide, just in case you have questions.

If you are already a member, simply log in and update your information. You might notice some big changes as we just launched an all-new member system.

Questions? Don’t hesitate to contact the Elevate Washington data team: info@elevatewashington.org