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OREGON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION INVESTS MORE THAN $1.5 MILLION TO ADVANCE EDUCATION ACROSS OREGON

Grants boost Black Student Success, rural communities, child care and STEM education

PORTLAND, Ore. – Oregon Community Foundation is investing more than $1.5 million in education initiatives designed to strengthen student success, expand STEM learning opportunities and support the child care workforce.

The investments include grants supporting Black Student Success programs across Oregon; funding for Oregon's regional STEM Hubs and support for statewide scholarships that help child care providers access training and professional development.

Black Student Success Network Organization Share $480,000

Oregon Community Foundation awarded $480,000 in grants across the Black Student Success Network, a statewide coalition of more than two dozen Black-led organizations.

The network — slated to expand this year — brings together organizations that are advancing equitable educational opportunities for Black students through collaboration, shared learning and community-rooted strategies. Leaders from participating organizations meet regularly to share knowledge, strengthen partnerships and develop statewide solutions that support Black students from early learning through postsecondary education and career pathways.

The Black Student Success Network was formed six years ago and has expanded its reach into rural communities in Eastern and Southern Oregon while continuing to strengthen partnerships statewide.

“We’re pleased to continue to support organizations in the Network as they elevate best practices that eliminate disparities affecting Black students and forge statewide partnerships on behalf of improving educational outcomes,” said John Chang, OCF Director of Culturally Responsive Programs.

Chang noted that the grants come as the Black Student Success Program welcomes a new leader, with Dorian Smith joining OCF as the Senior Program Officer.

“Dorian brings 15 years of experience advancing Black student success and statewide education equity initiatives at Oregon State University,” Chang said. “He is widely respected by education leaders across the state for his ability to build strong partnerships spanning K–12 and post-secondary education to meaningfully serve urban and rural students.”

Smith said: “It is an honor to serve in this role and work with the state’s most innovative programs as they improve educational equity and academic performance in their communities.”

Black Student Success Network organizations include:

BASE Oregon

Beaverton Black Peoples Union

Black Educational Achievement Movement

Black Parent Initiative

Black Southern Oregon Alliance

Black United Fund of Oregon

Center for Black Student Excellence

Hermiston Cultural Awareness Coalition

HOLLA Mentors

Oregon State University Foundation

KairosPDX

KinCultivate

Self Enhancement, Inc.

African Youth & Community Organization

Oregon Alliance of Black School Educators

Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center

Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization

The Father's Group

Youth Organized and United to Help (Y.O.U.T.H.)

Elevate Oregon

Bridge-Pamoja

REAP Inc.

Alumni Association of the University of Oregon

A Composer's Heart

Albina Head Start

OCF Invests Nearly $1 Million in Oregon STEM Hubs

The Oracle STEM Education Grants Fund of Oregon Community Foundation awarded $975,000 in grants to Oregon's regional STEM Hubs, with each Hub receiving a $75,000 grant and targeted technical assistance support.

As a statewide network of regional partnerships, Oregon's STEM Hubs connect schools, industry and community organizations to provide hands-on science, technology, engineering, arts and math learning opportunities. The Hubs focus on expanding access for students who have historically been underserved, including rural students, students from low-income families, students of color and girls.

"The grants prioritize long-term sustainability and ecosystem strengthening across the Hub network," said Belle Cantor, Senior Program Officer for Education and Youth Development. "Funding will help regional STEM Hubs build organizational capacity, strengthen community partnerships and expand donor support to ensure students across Oregon continue to have access to career-connected STEM learning opportunities."

OCF Supports Child Care Workforce Through Betty Gray Scholarship Program

The Betty Gray Endowment Fund at Oregon Community Foundation also awarded $100,000 to the Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care and

Education in support of the Betty Gray Statewide Scholarship for Child Care Provider Training and Certification.

For nearly 25 years, OCF's Early Childhood Program has prioritized professional development for Oregon's early child care and education workforce. Since 2002, the scholarship program has helped thousands of child care providers access training, coursework, credentials and professional development opportunities that strengthen Oregon's early childhood education system.

The scholarship program has served more than 13,500 participants statewide. Nearly half of scholarship applicants identify as Latine, and the program also prioritizes outreach to Black, Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander educators, rural providers, immigrant and refugee educators and family child care providers.

The program supports early-career educators and helps providers working in licensed or regulated settings access conferences, coursework, credentialing opportunities and other professional development resources that improve the quality of care available to Oregon children and families.

About Oregon Community Foundation

Since 1973, Oregon Community Foundation has worked to improve the lives of all Oregonians through the power of philanthropy. Each year, OCF distributes more than $200 million in grants and scholarships statewide in partnership with donors and volunteers. Individuals, families, businesses and organizations can work with OCF to create charitable funds to support causes important to them. To learn more, visit oregoncf.org.

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