

## PRESS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Chaffee County Community Foundation Names Awardees in Inaugural Impact Grants**

(CHAFFEE COUNTY, CO) May 30, 2023 – The [Chaffee County Community Foundation \(CCCF\)](#) today announced it has awarded \$51,000 to three local nonprofit organizations from the Impact Grant Program designed to inspire community-wide innovation on two important issues: Housing & Environmental Sustainability. Awardees include:

#### Housing Impact Grant:

Chaffee Housing Trust: \$25,000

Chaffee Hospitality: \$10,000

The Housing Innovation Grant includes innovative housing approaches that will facilitate measurable change on housing accessibility in Chaffee County.

Chaffee Housing Trust will use the award to support construction of six new homes at the M&3rd Project and administer housing counseling services including assistance to clean up or repair their credit history, create a household budget and action plan, and apply for mortgage financing in hopes of future homeownership.

Chaffee Hospitality will use the award for emergency motel stays for adults without children in our community, believing that emergency stays are essential for the physical and mental health of an important percentage of residents within our county. The organization works in partnership with Chaffee Housing Authority and Chaffee Health and Human Services to secure sustainable housing for individuals using the shelter.

As a review committee member voiced during the decision making process "We recognize that both projects are two spokes on the same wheel of sustainable housing solutions. Support is needed to assist people in the transition from being completely unsheltered as much as it is needed when they are ready to move into a stable home."

#### Environmental Impact Grant:

The Greater Arkansas River Nature Association (GARNA): \$16,000

The Environmental Innovation Grant, funded in part by CCCF's partnership with event production company Bonfire Entertainment, hosts of the Renewal Festival featuring Billy Strings in Buena Vista, centers on innovative projects or programs focused on clean water, environmental stewardship, and recycling or waste reduction efforts.

This partnership is specifically designed both to encourage environmental innovation within the county and to provide widespread support for local nonprofit organizations by helping to fund their capacity building efforts.

GARNA will use the funds to strengthen its statewide waste diversion goals, aimed to more than double the state's current recycling rate to 45 percent by 2036 including oversight at Festivals and events and training and education programs.

The review committee noted that they were impressed with the immediate environmental benefits of GARNA's comprehensive approach as well as the long term impact the program will have on Chaffee County in the organization's efforts to change behaviors and attitudes in waste diversion with specific metrics.

To conduct a community reviewed process, CCCF convened volunteer review committees for each of the grant opportunities consisting of community members from across Chaffee County with expertise in housing and the environment. In all of the grantmaking CCCF undertakes with its partners, it is committed to a transparent, non-biased grant process that is focused on high-impact grant making that increases the capacity of our hard working local nonprofit organizations.

The grant application questions and evaluation rubric were shared with applicants while they developed their applications. The review process incorporated follow-up interviews to clarify aspects of the application, and a combined scoring and discussion approach to ensure good projects, not just good grant writers, are recommended for funding. In recognizing that Chaffee County is a very interconnected community, a recusal process is used to ensure there are no conflicts of interest in the review process.

"We are grateful for the community partners and donors that contributed to these two funds to enact housing and environmental solutions in Chaffee County," shared Betsy Dittenber, Executive Director, CCCF. "It is inspiring to see donors stepping up with individual contributions to the Environmental and Housing Funds, giving our local nonprofits opportunities to approach solutions for change."

Donors interested in contributing to housing and environmental solutions across our community can make a tax deductible gift at <https://www.chaffeecommunity.org/invest-now>.

#### **About Chaffee County Community Foundation**

Founded in 2018, Chaffee County Community Foundation is a public, nonprofit organization established

to promote and facilitate philanthropy in Chaffee County, created by and for the people in that area. CCCF acts as a catalyst to inspire positive change through the power of philanthropy to enrich the lives of all people within the county. Its goals are to make informed philanthropy accessible to all, build local nonprofit capacity, and enable community conversations. Since 2018, CCCF has actively supported nonprofit organizations for the betterment of Chaffee County and the local communities. To learn more, visit [www.chaffeecommunity.org](http://www.chaffeecommunity.org).

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