

**For Immediate Release**

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**Community Foundation Grant Lifts Up Program for Latinx Leaders**

The Board of the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation (GHACF) is pleased to announce four third-round Community Impact grant awards, totaling \$275,000, in support of Northwest Ottawa County and our surrounding communities. This includes a \$40,000 grant to Tri-Cities Puentes Initiative for “LEADeres Lakeshore,” a leadership and professional development program for Latinx professionals and leaders in the lakeshore area.

LEADeres is a Latinx-centric, Latinx-lead leadership program. The curriculum explores the Latinx experience in general but particularly examines the question, “What does it mean to be Latinx in a multicultural workplace?” It is centered on the lived experiences of those who have paved the professional path for others so they can learn from those experiences and pass that information to future generations. Cohorts are typically comprised of 15 to 20 participants, and the program is modeled after the sustainable Grand Rapids LEADeres program of Ferris State University.

“Tri-Cities Puentes Initiative is excited to partner with Ferris State University in launching LEADeres in the Latinx communities in the Tri-Cities, Holland/Zeeland and Muskegon,” said Reyna Masko, Tri-Cities Puentes Initiative Co-Chair. “LEADeres’ mission is to develop high-performing Latinx professionals, much like the many already in these communities. However,

with the support of the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation, we will grow these numbers exponentially for the benefit of the entire community."

Masko added, "In the next ten years we will see the number of Latinx professionals grow, [as well as] increased upward mobility, more Latinx policy makers, [and] Latinx elected officials."

Cohorts of professionals learn and grow together over a six-month period, engaging with seasoned leaders and working in a team environment, to identify creative solutions to a community or business problem. LEADeres emphasizes identity formation and personal development in the areas of innovation, cultural intelligence, leadership, professional development, and community and civic engagement. Personal narratives are incorporated to illuminate concepts and create opportunities for reflection, and guest speakers share their individual stories about cultural identity and their professional life journeys.

"The foundation has supported numerous leadership development programs over the years," said GHACF President Hadley Streng. "The Tri-Cities Puentes Initiative and Ferris University have developed a well-established program and we feel it's important to help make it available to Latinx professionals in our community."

*Additional Community Impact grants include:*

**Muskegon Museum of Art Foundation** — \$125,000 for "Shaping the Future," a campaign for museum expansion. The goals of the campaign are to transform the MMA to a destination museum for West Michigan by adding three galleries (one 5,000 square foot for major touring exhibitions and two rotating exhibition galleries) as well as two new classrooms/family activity area, and more collections storage. Additionally, the current building will be turned entirely over to permanent collection.

**Ottawa County Parks Foundation Inc.** — \$35,000 for "Expanding Nature Education Access," to expand access to Ottawa County Parks and its programs for all residents, particularly for those that may have difficulty attending programs in person due to economic concerns, transportation

issues, disabilities, etc. This program includes two initiatives: 1) purchase equipment needed to produce and live-stream programs at the Nature Center, and 2) offer a one-year "Parks for All" pilot program that would provide transportation & program fees for all 4th Grade public school students in Northern Ottawa County.

**West Michigan Symphony** – \$75,000 for “Play Your Part,” a campaign that aims to focus on long-term, strategic activities and programming. The symphony provides music education programs for all ages, including Link Up, which is currently serving local students at 12 area schools within Grand Haven Area Public Schools, Spring Lake Public Schools, St. Mary's Catholic School, Walden Green Montessori, and West Michigan Academy of Arts & Academics. *(Note: this grant was awarded in May 2021 during the quiet fundraising stage of the campaign.)*

The pre-application for the next grant deadline has already passed. Preliminary applications for the first grant round of 2022 are due November 17, 2021, and the grant deadline is December 29, 2021.

#### ABOUT THE GHACF

The Grand Haven Area Community Foundation is a public, charitable organization serving the Northwest Ottawa County community since 1971. GHACF is regularly recognized as a top 100 Community Foundation in the nation and is the 9th largest community foundation in the State of Michigan. It encourages philanthropy by individuals, families, corporations, and organizations, and serves as a steward of their charitable funds and legacies. In addition to awarding grants, the Foundation offers technical support to nonprofits, convenes community leaders on issues of importance, and advocates for the nonprofit sector. For more information visit [ghacf.org](http://ghacf.org).

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