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Impact Austin Grants \$426,000 to Five Community Partners

Check presentations to be made at Austin City Hall, Council Chambers, 10 a.m., Wednesday, June 15 on behalf of Impact Austin's 426 women philanthropists committed to effecting positive change for Central Texas

AUSTIN, TEXAS – June 9, 2016 – [Impact Austin](#), one of the largest women's philanthropy organizations in the United States, today announced the recipients of its \$50,000 Catalyst Grant and its four \$94,000 high-impact program grants. The five 2016 Community Partner grants total \$426,000, bringing the organization's to-date investment in Central Texas to \$5.5 million representing 56 grants awarded by Impact Austin's members since 2003.

On Wednesday, June 15, at 10 a.m., Impact Austin will host a check presentation ceremony at Austin City Hall. All five of its Community Partners will be present to receive their respective grant checks. The public is welcome to attend the check presentation ceremony, and may RSVP at <http://impactaustin2016.eventbrite.com>.

Chosen from more than 90 applicants, the four \$94,000 Focus Area Program Grants recipients include:

Environment – [TreeFolks](#) will plant trees to restore the riparian forest on more than 1,000 residential properties in Hays County devastated by the 2015 floods. Many homeowners lost shelter and possessions and need assistance replanting their lands. Impact Austin funding will provide landowner consultation and planting of 385,000 trees on 800 acres along the Blanco River. The project will improve the ecosystem and provide healthy growth for future protection against flood damage.

Culture – [The Arc of the Capital Area](#) (The Arc) each year empowers around 2,000 Central Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The Arc helps families adapt to life with a child with a disability and assists maturing adults with disabilities in gaining skills needed to become independent. The Impact Austin grant will fund The Arc of the Arts, where 83 students with I/DD will participate in arts education and sell their finished work at art shows and at The Arc of the Arts studio.

Family – [Partnerships for Children](#) provides critical resources to abused and neglected children in Central Texas who are in the care of Child Protective Services. The Heart Gallery is both a traveling portrait exhibit and outreach opportunity for individuals to learn more about children in the foster care system and the adoption process. The Heart Gallery has a 60% success rate of getting harder to

place children into permanent, loving homes. Before the establishment of Heart Galleries across the U.S. that number was less than 1 percent.

Education – [Capital IDEA](#) lifts working adults out of poverty and into living wage careers through education. The grant will support the Rural Single Mothers Education Project, serving 100 rural mothers by paying for their community college tuition and all associated expenses in order to guide them from dead-end jobs or unemployment to employment in skilled careers.

The \$50,000 Catalyst Grant was awarded to a well-qualified nonprofit organization that previously achieved finalist status during Impact Austin’s diligent grant review process.

Catalyst Grant - LifeWorks will use the Catalyst Grant to help solve a critical funding and sustainability issue for their mental health services. They are looking to transition or hybridize their current grants-based funding model to maximize Medicaid and insurance billing potential due to the recent changes in health insurance.

The 2015 community partners were the Council on At Risk Youth (CARY), Texas Advocacy Project, Drive-A-Senior, VSA Texas, Westcave Outdoor Discovery Center, and Catholic Charities of Central Texas.

“What a powerful year watching last year’s partners in action in our community. On behalf of our 426 members, we applaud our new 2016 Community Partners, and look forward to celebrating their successes alongside them,” says Rebekah Bonde, board president, Impact Austin. “These groups work tirelessly on a daily basis to improve the quality of life for thousands of Central Texans.”

“Through working together, our volunteer members have become deeply knowledgeable about the diverse philanthropic needs here in our community, and are closely involved in reviewing and selecting our community partners,” says Donna Benson-Chan, executive director, Impact Austin. “As our community evolves, so do the needs of organizations working to improve lives. We are proud of the collective voice we have in responding to these important needs.”

National research supports the idea that women will give more when they know the impact of their dollars. More than 80 percent of women philanthropists (n=911) surveyed by Brown University reported that they donate to giving networks because they understand how their gift can make a difference. And, 78 percent said their reason for giving was to make a difference in their community.

Membership applications for 2017 Impact Austin are being accepted. Membership is open to all women for an annual donation of \$1,250. Members may participate in the grant selection process including reviewing grant applications and making site visits. Other volunteer opportunities are available. Information is available at impactaustin.org.

About Impact Austin

Impact Austin is a 501(c)(3) public charity comprised of women seeking to transform lives in the Greater Austin area through high-impact and lifelong giving. Its only membership requirements are to be female and donate \$1,250 each year. Impact Austin combines the annual donations from members and awards large grants each year to local worthy causes selected by its members. Grant applications are accepted in each of the following areas: culture, environment, education, family, and health and wellness. In 2015, it also awarded its first Catalyst Grant that is awarded to organizations to improve their infrastructure and sustainability. Learn more at www.impactaustin.org.