BRAINERD FAMILY YMCA PARTNERS WITH OUTREACH PROGRAM

To date, over $70,000 in Brainerd Lakes Area Response Funds (BLARF) have been granted in COVID-19 response grants to local organizations. The Brainerd Family YMCA received the first grant of $15,000 for emergency daycare services for children of essential workers, which was established and began the first day local schools were closed.

The emergency grant is funding a day camp for working families, with the cost on a sliding fee based on income. The YMCA Kids Camp is from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays at its facilities in Brainerd and Camp Vanaeek in Baxter. Y staff are keeping the kids busy with outside activities for exercise and fresh air, group games, STEM activities and community projects like creating “Heroes Work Here” posters for local businesses.

Shane Riffle, Brainerd Family YMCA CEO stated, “Even if certain non-essential businesses and services shut down, we want to help support and provide essential services for everyone in the community.” That is where an unexpected partnership began and has turned into a great friendship of two organizations passionate about serving their communities. Riffle, after hearing the Brainerd School District was trying to provide food for students, reached out to Shawn Hansen at the Outreach Program of Brainerd Lakes, to collaborate to meet the food needs for the YMCA kids and Brainerd Schools’ students and their families.

Throughout the pandemic, The Outreach Program has provided thousands of meals for those most in need. With the support of a $6,000 BLARF and other grants, they have packed 477,144 meals this calendar year, already surpassing their impressive 2019 numbers. The program has followed social distancing guidelines with a consistent, core team of pack warriors (volunteers). From many area food shelves to the schools and YMCA food distribution program, The Outreach Program is doing heroic work to meet the food needs of many!

Y staff help daycampers with distance learning.

Shane Riffle, Brainerd Family YMCA
CEO

Years from now what will we remember from this past March when our world virtually shut down? I will remember how we rose up to support each other and asked, how can we help? Together, as a community we united and met immediate needs to take care of our community members and neighbors.”

- - Shane Riffle, CEO
Brainerd Family YMCA

CALLING ALL HEROES
Matching Funds Needed!

CTC Provides a $15,000 Challenge Gift to Combat Local Food Insecurities

Above, Kristi Westbrock, CEO of CTC, gives a socially-distanced high five to Executive Directors Karl Curns, BLACF and Shawn Hansen of The Outreach Program to celebrate the challenge gift.

Live up to HERO status - contribute at www.communitygiving.org/COVID-19 and select, “Brainerd Lakes Area Response Fund”
Organizations addressing mental health and wellness needs

**Crisis Line**

The Crisis Line and Referral Service is available 24/7 covering Aitkin, Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Wadena, and Todd counties. 218.828.HELP(4357), 800-482-5725. With the COVID-19 Pandemic, they are offering additional support with our Life Line Project. Heart Link, Created during Covid-19 is a free support group held daily at 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. via Zoom, meeting ID: 449 846 8853.

**MN Warm Line**

Peer Support Call Center Call or Text 866-727-4747

LSS Meals for Seniors

Ruby’s Pantry is a nonprofit food ministry serving communities on the second Tuesday of the month at the Journey North Community Church. There are no income guidelines to participate; Ruby’s Pantry is for everyone who eats. For a $20 donation, participants will receive a “share” with an abundance of groceries. The variety and amount of food varies each month. Participants normally would bring containers to put their food in, but during social distancing, food drops into vehicles is offered in the parking lot.

**Wellness in the Woods**

Wellness in the Woods (WITW), formed in 2013, is Minnesota’s largest mental health consumer-run organization. All staff and board members identify as having a mental health lived experience. Their mission is to be a voice of individuals with a mental health experience, and fortify opportunities that positively impact and inspire communities and support systems. The Peer Support Connection Warm-line is a MN Dept. of Human Services funded system available daily from 7pm to 9am. Trained peer staff answer anonymous calls to listen and support callers 1-844-739-6369 7 days a week.

In addition, WITW has 12 staff who are able to provide facilitation to individuals in creating a WRAP, a Wellness Recovery Action Plan. WRAP is a 15 hour, evidence based plan anyone can use for their own wellness.

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Blarf has been instrumental in funding, and working with WITW to enter into partnerships with Hubbard Broadcasting, Lakeland TV, community members and health providers to support one community in these difficult times. Additional information on WITW services and opportunities can be found at: www.mnwitw.org or email info@mnwitw.org.

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The 2020 Philanthropy recipients are Virginia and the late Kenneth Merrill of Crosslake, MN. The Merrills have displayed a passion for helping others and bettering our communities. They have assisted with the growth and development of Crosslake and the surrounding areas through supporting nonprofit organizations and the City of Crosslake operations. Kenneth and Virginia Merrill believed in community and through their generosity and exceptional leadership, they have significantly impacted those around them and the community at large. Karl Samp, executive director of BLACF, said: “There are too many charities to mention that have benefited from the Merrills generosity. The Brainerd Lakes and Crosslake Areas are better places because of their philanthropic giving. We are honored to name them as our 2020 recipients of the Award in Philanthropy.”

Virginia & Kenneth* MERRILL
BLACF 2020 Award in Philanthropy Recipients

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The legacy of heroes is the memory of a great name and the inheritance of a great example.” - Benjamin Disraeli

2020 LEGACY HEROES REMEMBERED

Millie Gjertson
2020 AWARD RECIPIENT

Mildred "Millie" Gjertson was an environmentalist and traveler, who in her lifetime visited all 50 states, all while keeping journals and keepsakes from her many trips. However, it is what Millie has given and left behind that will be her biggest legacy.

Before she passed away in 2018, Millie made substantial gifts to the Nisswa Lake Park for the creation of trails and a pavilion. Millie loved nature and the outdoors, and wanted others to enjoy it as well. Matthews Hill, Park Director for Nisswa stated, "It is because of Millie that Niswia Lake Park and Recreation Area has bloomed. Her donations allowed us to put in the trails, provide access to the Gulf Lake Chain of Lakes, and helped build a picnic pavilion. We are so thankful for Millie's involvement in Niswia Lake Park!"

After Millie passed, she left significant monetary gifts to First Congregational UCC, The (Brainerd) Senior Center, Northland Arboretum, the Brainerd Public Library, and provisions for gardens at Woodland Good Samaritan. Millie also created a scholarship fund at Bemidji State University and support for the Trust for Public Land and Nature Conservancy.

Millie's legacy will live on through her gifts for all who enjoy the projects she has helped support.

Consider being a Legacy Hero By Leaving a Lasting Gift

Dedication to the community can be demonstrated in several ways. There are those who are able to see the effects of the funds during their lifetime and others who make provisions to provide for the community in the future.

The Foundation's Legacy Society recognizes those individuals who have made a provision for a future gift to the Foundation through their will, trust, retirement or life insurance plan—as well as donors who have chosen to receive lifetime income, while providing for a future gift to their favorite causes, through a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust.

Linnea Anderson
2020 AWARD RECIPIENT

Linnea Anderson was a small person with a big heart. She always gravitated to the underdog. She had an uncanny ability to spot someone who was hurting and in need and get involved in helping them.

Just before her passing, Linnea, with help from her husband Jim, set up Linnea’s Helping Hands Fund as a lasting legacy to Linnea’s giving spirit and big heart. Linnea also set up a fund at church for service projects.

Children of all ages were her primary concern. She wanted them to have a chance for future happiness and success. She also wanted children to have the social skills and healthy living knowledge.

$24,000 in grants were distributed to local organizations this Spring from Linnea’s Helping Hands Fund, supporting organizations like Bridges of Hope, Salvation Army, Kinship Partners, Outreach Initiative, and more.

Linnea definitely lived out Mother Teresa’s quote, “Give your hands to serve, and your hearts to love.” May her legacy live on forever.

BRAINERD LAKES AREA WOMEN'S FUND

The Brainerd Lakes Area Women's Fund (BLAWF) was established in 2009 to enhance the lives of women and girls locally. The BLAWF offers educational workshops, fundraising events, and programming that assists women and girls in building on their strengths to reach their full potential.

WOMEN MAKING WAVES - Join us on September 9th for our annual dinner where BLAWF will recognize the 2020 Women Making Waves award recipient, Becky Twamley. Last year's award winner, Ruthie was also a great example of women positively impacting our community! The 2020 Grant recipients will also be recognized and awarded funding.

Register online at www.communitygiving.com/events.

JOIN THE 365 GIVING CIRCLE - With a $365 or larger gift, anyone wishing to support the BLAWF's grants and programs may join in creating change and taking part in the grantmaking process for the coming year.

Women's Fund Grants

To date, the BLAWF has provided over $100,000 in grants, supporting nonprofits assisting women and girls including: Girls in Sport Camp, New Pathways, Habitat for Humanity, and most recently, the Mid MN Women's Center, WeARE, and the Rising Hope Foundation with support for victims of sex trafficking.

Contact Karen Munstereteger 218-822-5166 for information or visit their website: communitygiving.org/blawf

BECKY TWAMLEY
2020 Women Making Waves Award Recipient

BECKY TWAMLEY
2020 Women Making Waves Award Recipient
Breathe Safely, Walk Safely, Touch Safely
Residents, visitors and businesses are stronger together.

www.lakecountrycares.com

Award in Philanthropy Event
Which HEROES will you bring to join you?

Registration Open for the 2020 BLACF Award in Philanthropy Dinner
Virtually and/or at Crosslake Lutheran Church (if able to do in person) on September 22, 2020; at 5:30 pm.

NEW THIS YEAR - Virtually and On-site Event Sponsorships & Tickets Available!
$400 Table sponsorships - 4 ppl. with social distancing or a Virtual Table for your 10 Heroes. $50 for individual tickets.

CONTACT – Karl Samp, Executive Director: 218-824-5633 · KSamp@CommunityGiving.org

We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It's easy to say "It's not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem." Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes.

- Fred Rogers

Funds You Can Support With Donations
- BKC/Petrikat Fund for Dogs
- BLACF Community Impact
- Brainerd Family YMCA
- Brainerd Kiwanis Club
- Brainerd Lakes Area Response
- Brainerd Lakes General (BLACF)
- Brainerd Public Schools Foundation
- Brainerd Public Schools Foundation Endowment
- Brainerd Rotary Foundation
- Brainerd Women’s
- Camp Confidence Endowment
- Crosslake Lutheran Endowment
- Family Services Collaborative of Crow Wing County
- Friends of Nisswa Lake Park
- Gull Lake Trail (Lakeshore or Fairview Township)
- ICL (In Christ’s Love)
- Kinship Partners Endowment
- Lakes Area Habitat for Humanity Endowment
- Lakes Area Music Festival Foundation
- Lakes Area Senior Center Endowment Flexible
- Let’s Go Viral
- Limnea’s Helping Hands
- Lutheran Church of the Cross Foundation
- MN Elks Youth Camp Agency
- Nisswa Enhanced Reading
- Nisswa Fire Department
- Ruttger’s Enhanced School Reading
- Salem Community Outreach Foundation
- Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen
- Ski Tall
- Spirit of Hope
- The Outreach Program
- United Way of Crow Wing and Southern Cass Counties

Gifts That Help You Now, Help Your Charities Later
A donor makes an irrevocable transfer of assets to your family fund at BLACF and in return receives a lifetime payment for a specified beneficiary (the donor, spouse, children or friends). Upon the death of the beneficiary, the assets are used for the charitable purposes of BLACF. The donor receives a current income tax charitable deduction for the remainder value of the charitable gift.

These gifts, known as life income gifts, include the following:
- Charitable Remainder Trust: Cash or property is transferred to a trust, which pays the beneficiary either a variable income equal to a fixed percentage of the trust’s fair market value as determined each year or a fixed annual amount. Upon the death of the beneficiary, BLACF receives the remaining assets assuring that they will be used for the purposes specified by the donor.
- Charitable Gift Annuities: Cash or other property is contributed to BLACF in exchange for a commitment to pay the donor, or other beneficiaries, a specified annual amount for the remainder of the beneficiary’s life.
- Deferred Gift Annuities: A deferred gift annuity is the same as a charitable gift annuity, but the payments of income are delayed until a pre-determined time.

WANT TO KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING AROUND THE BRAINERD AND CROSSLAKE AREAS?
Announcing the 2020 State of the Lakes Events
Attend an online State of the Lakes Area event to learn more about community resources and events in the area. Hear from community leaders in healthcare, education, safety, events, lake health, chambers and more. To register or view recordings after the events visit www.communitygiving.org/brainerd.
- Crosslake Area State of the Lakes - June 12th 10-12 am
- Brainerd Lakes Area State of the Lakes - June 19th 10-12 am

Karl Samp, Executive Director
KSamp@CommunityGiving.org
www.CommunityGiving.org/BLACF - 218-824-5633

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