

GJ Lions Club awards more than \$60K through four grants

By NATHAN DEAL

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The Grand Junction Lions Club awarded \$62,700 in grants to four organizations Tuesday in a ceremony at Warehouse-25sixty-five Kitchen + Bar.

The first grant awarded was for \$25,000 to Prime-Health Plus, formerly Marillac, for its new health center building at 525 29½ Road. This grant matches another \$25,000 grant the provider received last year for the construction of this new center.

"We appreciate your grant of \$50,000," Prime-Health Plus Chief Development Officer Kristy Schmidt told attendees. "We were able to build a 27,000-square-foot new health clinic that's going to have our medical, dental, behavioral health and our brand-new pharmacy included. We're closing one site that's next to St. Mary's Hospital and we built this new one that's going to allow us to be able to serve 3,000 more patients than we already serve by having this new expanded space."

The next grant was a \$2,200 award to the Lower Valley Hospital Association, affiliated with Family Health West, for a defibrillator unit at Fruita Monument High School.

"We partnered with Fruita Monument High School to make sure we have enough defibrillators within the school to serve the population they have. Thanks to you guys' grant, we were able to do that," Family Health West Communications Director Eric Mello told attendees. "We're very grateful for everything and very much so appreciate it. Now, if you go into the lobby at Fruita Monument High School, you'll see a nice little Grand Junction Lions logo on the side of the AED (automated external defibrillator) there."

The third grant awarded was a \$5,500 award to EUREKA! McConnell Science Museum for its new cargo trailer.

"Thank you so much, Lions, for the support of our program and everything else we're able to do," said EUREKA! Environmental Institute Director Erika Williams. "We are able to take six-year-olds all the way through high-schoolers camping. As they get older, we get further and further out. We bought the trailer in May, so we were able to use it the entire summer season for all of our camping gear, so we were able to take 15 kids at a time out camping. This year, we

went as far as the Redwoods (National Park) for one trip with the high-schoolers. We're so grateful for the community support that we're able to connect with youth and get them outside to connect with each other."

The final award was a \$30,000 grant to Museums of Western Colorado for an exhibit gallery.

"Our traveling exhibit gallery is beautiful and amazing. Please come by and check it out. We demolished some walls and re-did flooring. Right now, we have an exhibit called the Ute Leaders and Legacy exhibit. It's an absolutely gorgeous exhibit full of portraits and photographs from the late 1800s and early 1900s of the Ute people. We also have some interactives," said Museums of Western Colorado Executive Director Shenna Hayden.

"This fall, in that gallery, we're excited to bring in Gear Up, which is a traveling exhibit that's STEM-oriented. It's all about how bicycles work. Lots of hands-on activities). Kids can figure out how those gears work. We're also going to layer in the history of cycling in the Grand Valley, which we have a lot of here."

Museums of Western Colorado Director of Developments Mollie Shepardson added: "It makes a huge difference in our community in terms of what we can do to feed and be a healthy part of our local economy.... Museums can sometimes be stagnant when you're just looking at a permanent exhibit for years and years. We were able to take a look at things and say, 'You know what? A traveling exhibit space allows us to bring in at least three different exhibits through each year and invite kids from schools to come out and experience something they might not have ever seen before.' " "We recognize that we're the largest museum system between Salt Lake and Denver, and that's not really very impactful if you're not bringing additional programming through on a regular basis."



Representatives with various organizations pose Tuesday for photos with donation checks totaling more than \$60,000 and donated by the Grand Junction Lion's Club during a meeting at the Warehouse 25Sixty-Five. Recipients of donations from left: Museums of Western Colorado; PrimeHealth Plus, formerly Marillac; EUREKA! McConnell Science Museum; and Lower Valley Hospital Association, affiliated with Family Health West.

Photos by LARRY ROBINSON/ The Daily Sentinel



Kristy Schmidt smiles Tuesday at the Warehouse 25Sixty-Five after accepting a check donation on behalf of PrimeHealth Plus, formerly Marillac, for its new health center building from the Grand Junction Lion's Club.