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## **Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation Giving Groups Announce 2023 Grants**

OAK PARK, IL (July 20, 2023) — The Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation announced today that two of its collective giving groups, Women Leaders in Philanthropy (WLIP) and NextGen Leaders in Philanthropy, have selected the recipients of their grants for the 2023-24 grant cycle.

“The Community Foundation’s giving groups are a wonderful way for individuals in Oak Park, River Forest and surrounding communities to practice philanthropy with others who share the same interests,” said WLIP chair Mary Kay Martire. “By consolidating our donations we are able to make a greater impact on issues and organizations we care about than we might be able to on our own.”

### **Women Leaders in Philanthropy**

The vision of the Women Leaders in Philanthropy giving group is to empower, cultivate and recognize women as philanthropic leaders and volunteers within our communities. This year, WLIP looked to the Foundation’s Community Voices report to better understand the community’s needs and priorities. Then, in an effort to fully democratize the process to select this year’s focus areas, WLIP implemented ranked choice voting. With this new system, WLIP selected three causes for its latest round of grants: mental health interventions and/or preventative services; reducing gun violence; and high quality early childhood education and/or early childhood developmental services and interventions. The following organizations received \$10,000 grants:

- Children’s Research Triangle (mental health)
- The Nehemiah Community Project (mental health)
- Defy Ventures (gun violence)
- Institute for Nonviolence Chicago (gun violence)
- Collaboration for Early Childhood (childhood education)

In addition, WLIP introduced a new seed grant program in 2023, which awarded two grants of \$6,000 each to support Cornerstone Academy and Real Foods Collective’s initiatives addressing food insecurity and/or food deserts. Seed grants are radically entrepreneurial in spirit and will support new programs, initiatives, or organizations.

### **NextGen Leaders in Philanthropy**

NextGen Leaders in Philanthropy is a giving group for emerging professionals in the Oak Park-River Forest area whose mission is to make a positive impact on the community and to develop its members into lifelong philanthropists. Each year the group awards capacity-building grants for small organizations or projects with operating budgets of less than \$1 million to increase their operational effectiveness and help them reach the next level of growth.

This year, NextGen has awarded \$2,500 grants to Wonder Works Children's Museum and Revolutionary Youth Action League (ROYAL).

To learn more about the collective giving groups at the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation, Helen Morales at [hmorales@oprfcf.org](mailto:hmorales@oprfcf.org) or (708) 848-1560.

### **About the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation**

Founded in 1959, The Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation has built lasting, impactful connections among area residents and locally-based service programs. Today as an integral presence in the community, the Foundation's mission is to unite community members and mobilize resources to advance a racially just society and equitable outcomes for residents of Oak Park, River Forest and surrounding neighborhoods in western Cook County. Learn more about the Foundation's programs and services online at [oprfcf.org](http://oprfcf.org).

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