

Nonprofits selected for annual Great Fish Community Challenge

Whitefish Pilot

The Whitefish Community Foundation has selected 45 nonprofits to participate in its 2017 Great Fish Community Challenge.

The third annual giving campaign begins with a \$200,000 match fund. The community foundation organizes the challenge and provides the matching funds to inspire the community to give to the participating nonprofits in order to help them receive a matching grant.

The foundation will launch the Great Fish on Thursday, July 20 with a Great Fish Kickoff/ Gone Fishin' event at First Interstate Bank. The challenge runs 10 weeks culminating with a Community Celebration Sept. 9 at Depot Park with the Great Fish 5K Color Run and nonprofit fair.

Last year the challenge raised over \$1.4 million for the 40 participating nonprofits and the final match came out to 55 percent and was applied to the first \$15,000 raised by each nonprofit.

This year the Community Foundation has increased the match to the first \$20,000 raised and will continue to grow the Match Fund. The final match percentage will be announced at the awards celebration Oct. 12 at Casey's. The Match Fund is established by the foundation's Circle of Giving donors. Additional funds come from Great Fish challengers who give directly to the Match Fund through the campaign. When donors give to the match they are essentially giving to all 45 participating nonprofits.

Whitefish Community Foundation organizes the campaign free of charge to the participating nonprofits. Even the credit card fees are covered by the foundation with help from the major sponsor BNSF Railway and the six title sponsors.

Donors can be assured that when they give through the Great Fish Community Challenge that 100 percent of their gift will go to the designated nonprofits, according to the foundation.

The Community Foundation created the campaign to inspire a giving season and promote awareness about the work our local nonprofits do in our community. The campaign helps large and small nonprofits raise the vital support they need

to do their work. The majority of the nonprofits have limited staff and resources for fundraising. The campaign provides the resources for them to raise money.

Whitefish Community Foundation handles the gifts and processes the tax letters for the donors. A donor can give to several charities with just one check or credit card transaction. Gifts of appreciated securities and even IRA charitable roll over distributions can be used to benefit the charities by working through the foundation.

Donors can start making gifts on July 20 online at www.greatfishchallenge.org, or by sending in an official donor form, which will be available throughout the summer at the Whitefish Community Foundation office, local downtown businesses, Whitefish Chamber of Commerce, and from participating nonprofits.

The website will also feature a leader board updated daily to show how much money the nonprofits have raised and how many donations they have received. Incentive grants will be awarded throughout the campaign based on the number of donors and the amount raised by each nonprofit. Donors are encouraged to donate early to help their favorite nonprofits earn even more money. The campaign will officially end on Sept. 15 at 5 p.m.

The chosen nonprofit organizations are, Abbie Shelter, Backpack Assistance Program, Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation, CASA for

Kids, Inc, Center for Restorative Youth Justice, Columbia Falls-Whitefish high school swim teams, Child Bridge, Dream Adaptive Recreation, Inc., Farm Hands - Nourish the Flathead, Flathead Area Mountain Bikers, Inc., Flathead Cancer Aid Services, Flathead Land Trust, Inc., Flathead Rapids, Flathead Shelter Friends, Flathead Valley Community College Foundation, Flathead Valley Skiing Foundation, Flathead Youth Homes, Friends of Flathead Avalanche Center, Glacier Institute, Glacier National Park Conservancy, Glacier Nordic Club, Inc., Glacier Symphony and Chorale, Habitat for Humanity, Intermountain, Nate Chute Foundation, North Valley Food Bank, North Valley Hospital Foundation, North Valley Music School, Project Whitefish Kids, Samaritan House, Inc., Shepherd's Hand Free Clinic, Sparrow's Nest of Northwest Montana, Stumptown Art Studio, Tamarack Grief Resource Center, WAG-Whitefish Animal Group, Whitefish Firefighters Association, Whitefish Lake Institute, Whitefish Legacy Partners, Whitefish Review, Inc., Whitefish Rotary Charitable Fund, Whitefish Sports Facilities Foundation, Whitefish Theatre Co., Whitefish Veterans Support Team, Whitefish School District Education Foundation, and Whitefish Winter Carnival

For more information, visit www.whitefishcommunityfoundation.org or call 406-863-1781.