



Gulf Breeze Will Do – 2023 Grant Finalists

Gulf Breeze Will Do is proud to announce the finalists for the 2023 grant cycle. Through the diligent work of our grant review committees, our participating Gulf Breeze Will Do members have narrowed the field to the following 10 finalists.

The vote to determine the winners will take place at the Gulf Breeze Will Do Annual Meeting on November 5, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. at the Gulf Breeze Presbyterian Church. **Each member will vote on their top three choices, regardless of category.**

If members are unable to attend, they may request an absentee ballot. All absentee ballots must be postmarked no later than October 30, 2023 to be counted. Absentee ballots may be requested by emailing admin@gulfbreezewilldo.org.

Finalists are presented in alphabetical order.

ART, RECREATION & SPORTS

Organization: Gulf Breeze High School

Project Title: Dumbbell Weights For Field House

Grant request: \$7,568.00

Project Summary:

The Gulf Breeze High School Physical Education Department has steadily grown over the past five years. We now have five teachers in the department and numerous weight training classes each period. We've grown to the extent that we have weight training classes that now meet in our field house across the street from the main campus of the high school. Currently, our weight room has 9 racks that have either 35- or 45-pound bars. We have students that sign up for weightlifting with little to no experience and are unable to lift the minimum bars and feel intimidated by Olympic style lifting practices. It would improve the weight room and service all students placed in the class if we had access to a rack of dumbbells. Any gym or weightroom that you visit has a rack of dumbbells to be inclusive to people who are at different steps in their fitness journey. It would greatly improve our weight room. We surveyed our PE students and 96% of students would utilize dumbbells if available. The PE department purchases new equipment each year, however, the price of this equipment is not an expense the department can manage.

ART, RECREATION & SPORTS (continued)

Organization: Gulf Breeze High School Lacrosse

Project Title: Heads Up For Helmets

Grant request: \$10,000.00

Project Summary:

Lacrosse is the fastest growing sport in our area and has gained particular popularity in the Gulf Breeze community. As with other sports, the chance for injury (particularly concussions) is greatly reduced with proper equipment. We are requesting funds to purchase new helmets for the boys varsity team. The lacrosse program is funded entirely through player's fees and fundraising with no money received from the school district or county. Each player pays \$400 to play. That cost covers payment to referees, field maintenance, travel expenses, uniforms, assistant coach's pay, meals, and other expenses. There are about 35 boys on the varsity team and 25 on JV. For safety reasons, we must have helmets reconditioned or purchased new every two years. The helmets must be sent to an off site company for reconditioning. Current JV helmets are from 2017 and the current varsity helmets are from 2021. Our hope is to get new helmets for Varsity and recondition the current varsity helmets for JV. We will need to order 38 helmets at \$339 each, totaling \$12,882. The team will raise funding for the remaining balance.

EDUCATION

Organization: Gulf Breeze Elementary School

Project Title: New Orff Instruments at Gulf Breeze Elementary

Grant request: \$6,935.00

Project Summary:

Student performance and presentation of musical instruments is integral to a well-rounded elementary music education. Classroom instruments range from rhythm sticks to ukulele, drums, to recorder, and egg shakers to xylophone. Playing an instrument is crucial to being able to show that students understand the music concepts taught in class. The old adage "If you write it down you are more likely to remember it" transfers beautifully; if we play it, we are more likely to remember it. Additionally, I feel that Orff instruments, specifically xylophones, are some of the most versatile instruments available to young musicians. The instruments that Gulf Breeze Elementary School currently have are estimated to be approximately 20 years old. Several of the instruments have already been taken off of school inventory and many are barely playable by students due to abuse and age. With the money from Gulf Breeze Will Do Foundation, Gulf Breeze Elementary School will purchase new Orff instruments for the Music Program. In total, eleven new xylophones would be purchased for student use. New Orff Instruments will have both students and teachers excited to play!

EDUCATION (continued)

Organization: Gulf Breeze Middle School

Project Title: Making Science Fun!!

Grant request: \$2,994.00

Project Summary:

It is always a challenge to review the considerable number of middle school science topics in an engaging manner. While all students will benefit from the MimioVote tool, it will particularly activate 8th grade learning, as they will need to prepare for state-wide testing of all middle school science standards. Being able to turn the review into a game that ALL students will be able to participate in will be a wonderful motivation tool. During the second semester, the students will enjoy regular review days to aid in standardized test preparation.

In looking for a variety of modalities to reinforce science topics, I find myself showing Bill Nye videos, from nearly 40 years ago! Generation Genius is the first option that is current and will hold the interest of the middle school population. The program will address standards across all grade levels and provide interactive opportunities. Students can watch science explanations come to life perform their own experiments, and have re-teachable moments to further their understanding. I have always found that when students are engaged (and entertained), they have a higher rate of learning!

Organization: Oriole Beach Elementary Library

Project Title: Is That A Book Vending Machine?!

Grant request: \$2,007.65

Project Summary:

This funding will be used to fill our book vending machine with books that will motivate students to earn tokens. Our school plans to use the book vending machine tokens to reward positive behavior, celebrate reaching goals, give joy to students who need a lift, and foster a positive literacy environment. The book vending machine was purchased in July 2023. We used school library funds for the initial purchase of books to fill the machine. This grant will allow us to continue buying new, appropriate, diverse books to keep our students interested and engaged.

ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC SAFETY

Organization: Escambia County Board of County Commissioners

Project Title: Lights Out! Sea Turtles Dig the Dark – Red Flashlight Campaign

Grant request: \$1,500.70

Project Summary:

The Escambia County Sea Turtle Conservation Program (STCP) is seeking \$1500.70 for purchase of 1236 red flashlights to provide as free giveaways to visitors and residents in support of our "Lights Out!" education campaign.

Both nesting and hatchling turtles rely on the natural light from the moon and stars to safely navigate to the Gulf. Bright artificial lights can disorient turtles, leading them away from the Gulf and into parking lots, swimming pools and busy roads. During the 2022 nesting season over 800 sea turtle hatchlings were disoriented by white artificial light, and on average, 60% of all hatchlings born on local beaches will experience disorientation. Hatchlings that don't reach the Gulf are at risk of death, dehydration, injury and predation. In addition to disorienting turtles on land, bright white light can also dissuade females from coming ashore to nest, further delaying critical nesting behavior.

Red flashlights provide an immediate and tangible alternative to white lights used for beachcombing, crabbing and other evening beach activities, are great conversation starters at community events about the importance of keeping our beaches dark and turtle-friendly.

Organization: Midway Fire District

Project Title: Ballistic Protection Vests

Grant request: \$7,296.00

Project Summary:

Our request is something we pray we will never use. However, we want to be ready if we are called to respond. Nationwide and around the globe, communities face increasing tragedies involving active shooter and/or hostile events. The need for an integrated preparedness is vital. In 2018, there were 27 mass killings or Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (ASHER) incidents in the United States, with three being in Florida. Just three days before submitting this grant request, there was an active shooter situation in Sandestin, just 38 miles to our east. Every mass casualty incident requires a fire/EMS response, putting all responders in dangerous situations. This project requests ballistic protection vests for all domestic or hostile conditions. Since fire and EMS responders are not armed, we rely heavily on protection from law enforcement. This grant request will give each on-duty firefighter/paramedic additional protection and security to make entry to remove victims or to be worn during incidents involving overdoses and domestic violence.

HARDSHIP SUPPORT SERVICES

Organization: The Arc Gateway, Inc.

Project Title: Unlimited Potential: Scholarships for Adults with Disabilities

Grant request: \$9,422.40

Project Summary:

Since 2018, The Arc Gateway's South Santa Rosa program has been a lifeline for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in the 32561 and 32563 zip codes. Our non-profit recognized a pressing need for meaningful daily education, skill-building, and community inclusion for individuals with IDD, so we invested substantially to bring programming to the area.

Now, we are seeking support from Gulf Breeze Will Do to ensure access to local services, thus eliminating the burden of costly and time-consuming travel in order to access programs farther away in Pensacola or Fort Walton Beach. With your funding, we will establish a scholarship program, allowing those enrolled only part time to take full advantage of our transformative programming Monday - Friday.

Currently, state budget constraints restrict many clients to attending our program only a few days a week, due to insufficient government funding. Many families are unable to afford out-of-pocket care for their loved one with disabilities. Establishing a need-based scholarship program will remove financial barriers, enabling these deserving individuals to access critical services that promote growth and self-determination - regardless of their ability to pay. Together, we can empower those with IDD to thrive and lead rich, meaningful lives.

Organization: Interfaith Ministries

Project Title: Building With a Purpose – Helping & Healing Those in Need

Grant request: \$9,839.00

Project summary:

The mission of Interfaith Ministries (IM) is to assist those in our community who have fallen on financial or medical hard times. This assistance comes from the Good Samaritan Clinic and the Thrift Store. The Thrift Store generates a consistent source of revenue towards this mission. It is in serious need of additional storage, parking and improvements to the rear of the store. In the back of the store are several features in need of support: A semi-trailer used for recycling materials containing items not sold in the store but saleable elsewhere; a dumpster for recyclable scrap metal; work area on the back dock, open to the elements. The large trucks, which come to pick up the trailer and dumpster, become stuck in the gravel parking area. There is insufficient room for customer parking in the front and volunteer /staff parking in the rear. The request from GBWD is for funds to build a concrete pad for the recycle trailer and dumpster, improve the back parking lot and close in the dock area. Estimated cost is \$9,839.

HARDSHIP SUPPORT SERVICES (continued)

Organization: The Weekend Food Program

Project Title: Gulf Breeze Weekend Food Program Support

Grant request: \$10,000.00

Project summary:

The Weekend Food Program was started in the spring of 2010 at the Gulf Breeze Presbyterian Church to address the problem of hunger and poor nutrition over the weekend for children from families who receive free lunches in South Santa Rosa County. The program has grown over the years in student participation as well as community involvement with volunteers from a consortium of Gulf Breeze civic organizations, individuals and churches actively supporting the program. A \$10,000 grant would cover approximately 13 weeks of the 36 week school year including 150 bags of food at \$5/bag. All five public schools in the 32561 and 32563 zip codes participate in the program. This year we have seen an increase in requests to participate, with Oriole Beach requests increasing over 50% to 105 bags/week.