Richmond Mayor’s Community Fund Awards $14,000 in Grants to Local Youth Sports Teams and Leagues

RICHMOND, Calif. – Richmond Mayor Tom Butt’s Community Fund provided 12 local youth sports teams and leagues with grant funds totaling $14,070. The funds will help the teams and leagues pay for a wide variety of needs, including equipment, tournament registration and airline tickets to attend the College World Series in Nebraska.

“Youth sports programs are a valuable asset to our community,” Mayor Butt said. “In addition to being enjoyable, participating in youth sports gives kids an opportunity to learn structure, engage in physical activity, enjoy interacting with other youth, develop valuable life skills like teamwork and sportsmanship, and improve their physical and mental health.”

Grant awards ranged from $500 to $2,000 and were awarded exclusively to youth sports teams and leagues in Richmond. A wide variety of sports teams received grants from the community fund, including baseball, basketball, flag football, futsal, golf, martial arts, soccer, softball, swimming and tennis. Organizations selected to receive funds were chosen by a steering committee of community representatives.

Five Richmond youth playing with the Wheelhouse Academy of Baseball just returned from Cuba where they competed with a local team on a community field. “Aside from winning 4-1 against impressive local talent, the students experienced a profound cultural exchange and many donated their cleats, gloves, bats and other needed equipment to the youth in Cuba.” said Shiva Gaskins, Director of the Academy.

A Mayor’s Community Fund grant will go towards the team’s next trip, this time to Omaha Nebraska to see the NCAA Baseball World Series. Seven Richmond students will go on the 6-day trip which will include campus tours and full immersion in the Division I championship series. Gaskins says “our goal at Wheelhouse Academy is to inspire kids through the framework of baseball, to go to college. The purpose of this trip is to expose them to college life with the hopes that they will make the choice to pursue higher education themselves.”

Mayor Butt relaunched the Mayor’s Community Fund last year with the aim of supporting community needs not otherwise met by the City of Richmond or other funders. Support for this round of grant funding from the fund was largely derived from the Mayor’s Golf Tournament, which occurred in
September 2015. Local corporate sponsors supporting the event included Chevron, Laconia Development, Pacific Infinity Group, RBC Capital Markets and Republic Services.

“For the past 100 years, community foundations across the country have worked locally to build funds that address community needs,” said Jim Becker, president and CEO of the Richmond Community Fund, which served as the fiscal sponsor for the Mayor’s Community Fund. “We are excited to help award more than $14,000 to local youth-serving organizations, and we look forward to continue working with Mayor Butt to continue developing this new philanthropic resource for the Richmond community.”

Grants were awarded to the following organizations and teams:

Contra Costa County Service Integration Family Service Center – Baseball League
EM Downer Family YMCA – Multiple Sports
Hilltop Family YMCA – Tae Kwon Do
Multi-Cultural Family Resource Center at Crescent Park – Martial Arts
Richmond Swims
Richmond Tennis Association
Richmond United Soccer Club
RPAL – Little League and Girl’s Softball Team
The East Bay Soldiers – Basketball
The First Tee of Contra Costa – Golf
Totally Led Ministries – Basketball
Wheelhouse Academy of Baseball

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