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Community Foundation Sonoma County Announces \$1million in Grants to Nonprofits Healing Community Trauma from North Bay Fires

September 6, 2018 (Santa Rosa, CA) Community Foundation Sonoma County is pleased to announce a \$1 million investment in community-wide healing efforts through grants to mental-health focused projects.

Long after the chaos of a disaster is resolved, the ongoing effects become clear. Today, nearly one year after the October 2017 fires, Sonoma County is in a critical stage of post-disaster recovery. The National Center for PTSD warns that this stage, Intermediate-Recovery brings with it “disillusionment: disappointment in the disaster response, and hopeful expectations may give way to resentment. This disillusionment can occur when outside relief workers leave and affected individuals realize that they are "on their own" with a lot of work left to be done.” **This aspect of the recovery process has been called the "second disaster" because it presents new adversity, loss, conflict, and potential trauma.**

Addressing the long term-effects of trauma is vitally important in addressing the overall health and resiliency of our community. Knowing this, Community Foundation Sonoma County has identified healing as one of three major focus areas of their long-term recovery Resilience Fund, along with helping individuals impacted by the fires, and housing solutions for our community.

“These healing grants support a wide spectrum of community needs from encouraging access to mental health care, providing sustainable training for providers to lead healing activities and workshops, and creating culturally-sensitive spaces that are welcoming and broadly accessible. At this critical juncture, we are honored to partner with and offer funding to the organizations doing this important work,” said Elizabeth Brown, president and CEO, Community Foundation Sonoma County.

Community Foundation Sonoma County 2018 Healing Grants:

A grant to **On The Move** will support the opening of **La Plaza**, a Latino-focused Center that has been developed by members of On The Verge, a cohort of primarily Latino/Latinx emerging leaders. La Plaza is ground-breaking in that it is one of the first Latino-designed and Latino-led mental health initiatives in Santa Rosa. La Plaza brings a new, culturally relevant wellness strategy to the Latino/Latinx community, built on the essential belief that culture heals – *Donde Nuestra Cultura Cura*.

“We are so grateful to the donors who have given so generously to help us create La Plaza. La Plaza will be a place that welcomes everyone from all walks of life, a place for safety and healing with food, dance, art, a place to gather and share stories remembering that we are not alone, a place that feels like home,” said members of the On The Verge Cohort 2017-18.

A grant to **Santa Rosa Community Health Center**’s to fund the **Sonoma Community Resilience Collaborative** in their effort to build a self-healing community by utilizing the curriculum and expertise of the Center for Mind Body Medicine (CMBM) and training people from a wide range of sectors to lead free community workshops which will support healing for 8,000 diverse residents.

"This grant is truly a visionary investment in the long-term healing of our community. Developing 300 residents into mind-body skills trainers and delivering community-based workshops will build our shared skillset and also strengthen our social connections. Evidence shows these community relationships are the number one predictor of post-disaster resilience and recovery," said Naomi Fuchs, CEO, Santa Rosa Community Health. "We're so grateful for this support."

A grant to **Healthcare Foundation Northern Sonoma County** will support the **Wildfire Mental Health Collaborative** to launch a public awareness campaign in both English and Spanish to help people identify signs of trauma, reduce the stigma of seeking support, and inform community members about mental health resources in the community.

"We are grateful to the Community Foundation for the support of this media campaign. We've spent a lot of time working to build free mental health resources for our community to access in English and Spanish and the media campaign will be our way of letting everyone know that we were all affected by the fires. It is important that everyone feel comfortable and have access to support for healing and becoming more resilient," said Debbie Mason, CEO, Healthcare Foundation Northern Sonoma County.

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About the Resilience Fund:

The Resilience Fund is the only long-term fire recovery fund in Sonoma County. As of August 2018, the fund has granted out over \$1.8 million for long-term recovery projects. Grants from the fund support nonprofit organizations working in three key focus areas: **helping** individuals impacted by the fires, **healing** the long-term impacts of trauma and **housing** solutions for our community. The fund has raised over \$14 million, with over 70 percent of donations from donors living outside of Sonoma County.

About Community Foundation Sonoma County:

Community Foundation Sonoma County is the hub of philanthropy for the county, connecting people, ideas, and resources to benefit all who live here. Founded in 1983, CFSC works with philanthropists to create plans that will make an impact in our community and become part of their family's legacy.

More information: sonomacf.org