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Foundation makes awards to nine organizations

Anchorage, AK – A domestic violence shelter in Ketchikan, a behavioral health hub in Anchorage and an innovative research center in Fairbanks are among projects recently approved for grant awards or other investments by the Rasmuson Foundation board of directors.

The board affirmed that during these times, it is more important than ever to support organizations providing core services.

In all, the board approved grants and investments totaling $2.8 million to help eight nonprofit organizations and one workforce housing developer. Projects in Anchorage, Cooper Landing, Fairbanks, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Seattle and Wasilla are being supported. The whole list is found here.

In Ketchikan, Women in Safe Homes, or WISH, will receive $200,000 toward transforming a facility into a domestic violence shelter. The organization is partnering with the City of Ketchikan to renovate the former Ketchikan Regional Youth Facility into a shelter. Since 1980, WISH has been in the same building, an assemblage of additions and remodels that is nearing the end of its useful life as a shelter.

Alaska Behavioral Health (formerly known as Anchorage Community Mental Health Services) will receive $300,000 to help purchase and renovate a Midtown building that will serve as an Anchorage service hub for consumer-driven behavioral healthcare. It will be next to the organization’s existing Alaska Seeds of Change facility, where youth and young adults can get vocational training and learn workplace and interpersonal skills.

The Cold Climate Housing Research Center in Fairbanks is transitioning to a new, more sustainable structure. The Foundation board approved up to $200,000 in a low-cost loan to bridge any financial gaps as the center reorganizes into a partnership with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory based in Golden, Colorado. In addition, the board approved $250,000 for repairs and upgrades to the organization’s Research & Testing Facility in Fairbanks.
The docket of proposals at the board’s June 26 meeting was smaller than typical. As Foundation assets are impacted by disruptions in financial markets, we strive to support critical work and timely projects, sometimes in new ways. At a special meeting earlier this year, the Foundation board committed $2 million specifically to address the pandemic. We are redirecting some investments to focus on a response to COVID-19 and have paused routine applications for small grants, known as Tier 1 awards.

“We are pleased to support Alaska nonprofits for these important projects that truly improve life in Alaska,” said Diane Kaplan, Rasmuson Foundation president and CEO. “Organizations are finding ways even in trying times to meet needs, to survive financially and to partner with others in areas from healthcare to housing. We applaud all who are doing so much to adapt to our new normal.”

The Rasmuson Foundation board meets twice a year to consider initiatives and large grants.

**About the Foundation**

*Through grantmaking and initiatives, Rasmuson Foundation aims to promote a better life for all Alaskans. Main funding areas are housing, homelessness, education, health care, the arts and organizational and community development. The Foundation was created in 1955 by Jenny Rasmuson to honor her late husband, E.A. Rasmuson.*