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People Helping People Awards: BECU Grants \$535,000 to Member-Nominated Nonprofits

SEATTLE (December 8, 2021) – After receiving nearly 650 nominations from its members, BECU announced the recipients of its 2021 [People Helping People Awards](#) program, granting \$535,000 in total. Now in the program's ninth year, last night's virtual event recognized more than 30 nonprofit organizations and BECU members that dedicate their time to helping others in BECU's service areas.

"Through this program, BECU's philanthropic focus is inspired by the 'people helping people' philosophy and directed toward the important issues our members care about, from homelessness and hunger to education and environmental welfare," said Jill Vicente, BECU's vice president of Social Impact and Financial Health Programs. "These member-nominated organizations embody that same philosophy and are committed to creating more inclusive and equitable opportunities in our communities."

BECU's 2021 People Helping People Award recipients include:

- **Member Volunteer of the Year (\$50,000):** John Vogan was selected as Member Volunteer of the Year for his service on the board of directors with [The QLAW Foundation of Washington](#). This organization promotes the dignity and respect of LGBTQ+ Washingtonians within the legal system through advocacy, education, and legal assistance.
- **People's Choice Winner (\$50,000):** [Bonney Lake Food Bank](#) was selected by popular vote from the community. The nonprofit's mission is to provide equitable access to nutritious food, with dignity, to those in the community facing food insecurity.
- **Employees' Choice Winner (\$30,000):** [Project Girl Mentoring](#) was recognized by popular vote among BECU employees. The organization works to foster the advancement of young women of color to make positive life choices and to maximize their authentic potential.
- **Past Recipients' Choice Winner (\$30,000):** [Camp Agape Northwest](#) was selected by popular vote among past People Helping People Award recipients. The organization is a cost-free, week-long camp for kids with cancer and their families located near Gig Harbor, Washington.
- **Community Benefit Winners (\$15,000):** [Bright Futures](#), [Cancer Lifeline](#), [Centro Cultural Mexicano](#), [Chinook Enterprises](#), [The Common Acre](#), [Environment Coalition of South Seattle](#), [Hispanic Business Professional Association](#), [Lahai Health](#), [LINC NW](#), [Pike Market Child Care and Preschool](#), [Port Jobs](#), [Sawhorse Revolution](#), [Scarlet Road](#) and [What's Next - Washington](#).
- **Black Community Development Project (BCDP):** Last month as part of its Nonprofit Capacity Building Grants, a total of \$150,000 was awarded to seven Black-led nonprofits nominated by members through the People Helping People Awards program. The recipients in each category include:
 - Advancing Education (Pre-K through College): [Educators for Antiracism](#)
 - Arts and Culture: [Tacoma Urban Performing Arts Center \(T.U.P.A.C.\)](#)
 - Preserving Health and Promoting Wellness: [Cierra Sisters](#)
 - Preserving or Restoring the Environment: [Our Climate Education Fund](#)
 - Providing Basic Human Needs: [Project Be Free](#)
 - Strengthening Communities: [Braided Seeds](#) and [Snohomish County Black Heritage Committee](#)

Previous program recipients are encouraged to apply for People Helping People Collaboration Grants, which recognize a joint opportunity for two or more organizations to collaborate on a project. The following three partnerships each received \$25,000 in Collaboration Grants this year:

- **City Fruit and Young Women Empowered:** Leading six workshops focused on fruit tree care and Seattle's local food system and educating young women on environmental stewardship and food justice.
- **Everyone for Veterans and The Beyond Project:** Empowering the lives of combat veterans and their families by providing access to dental services, mental health support, haircuts, a professional headshot and resume workshops for job interviews.
- **Open Doors for Multicultural Families and Benefits Law Center:** Lowering barriers in accessing services related to physical and mental healthcare, Social Security, civil legal matters, housing and more through case management and legal support that are both culturally and linguistically relevant.

In addition, all 2020 and 2021 award recipients will receive a glidepath grant of \$2,500 for the two years following their initial award (note that glidepath funding does not apply to BCDP or Collaboration Grant recipients). Since the program launched in 2013, BECU has donated more than \$3 million to over 120 local nonprofits.

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About BECU

BECU is federally insured by NCUA. With more than 1.28 million members and over \$26.8 billion in assets, BECU is the largest not-for-profit credit union in Washington and one of the top three financial cooperatives in the country. As a member-owned credit union, BECU is focused on helping increase the financial well-being of its members and communities through better rates, fewer fees, community partnerships and financial education. The credit union currently operates more than 50 locations in Washington and two financial centers in South Carolina. For more information, visit www.becu.org.