

Causes

What would local nonprofits do with \$1 million?

Is there a gift too big for your favorite nonprofit?

It's widely known that universities can accept very large donations and put them to work with a positive impact. Dozens, in fact, have launched and completed billion-dollar capital campaigns.



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For context, consider that it would take 1,000 donations of a million-dollars to achieve a \$1 billion campaign goal. But, if you're considering a larger donation to a local nonprofit — either now or through your estate — could they even use such a gift?

I decided to find out, so I asked executive directors what they would do with a gift of \$1 million. For most, it would be the largest contribution their organization has ever received, but that doesn't mean they couldn't put it to good use.

Here's a look at their responses:

Sam Skillern, Salem Leadership Foundation, writes that they'd give the first \$100,000 to other nonprofits be-

cause part of their mission is supporting other ministries. "With the remaining \$900,000, we'd add another 20 'CaN Centers' (churches serving as neighborhood centers) over the next five years, or expand the number of field staff (SLF Lightning Rods) into all 11 middle-school feeder neighborhoods (currently we staff the high-school areas).

Pam Vorachek, Antique Powerland Museum Association, says they "would use the gift to increase long-term revenue sustainability." She adds that, pending board discussion and approval, they "might use 55% as matching funds for a capital campaign to make improvements which would attract sustaining tourism; use 25% to endow staff positions to enable growth and sustainability, and invest 20% in an endowment to sustain the organization for long-term benefit."

Sue Bloom, Boys & Girls Club of Salem, Marion and Polk Counties, says, "The dollars would allow us to increase space at our neighborhood youth centers and sustain maximum youth served." She indicates the funds would further their work of "ensuring that children and teens in our community with the most needs have greater access to quality programs that focus on academic success,

character & citizenship and healthy lifestyles as well as services that will enhance their lives and shape their futures."

Debby Lute, Christian Community Placement Center, exclaimed, "Oh my, what we could do with a million dollars!" She continued, "CCPC would construct an additional residential facility on our campus to house at-risk teenagers who are seeking to avoid incarceration through our Project 180 program. And, since youth in our programs often lack access to community resources, we would increase their recreational and educational opportunities by building a basketball court and placing a new greenhouse in our community garden."

Zellee Allen, Partnerships in Community Living, said, "We would set up an Endowment where the proceeds go directly to help people find and fund housing that isn't dependent on below-poverty-level state and federal resources. This private money would help people living with developmental and intellectual disabilities reach life-improvement goals and, because the funds would be endowed, the benefits would continue on in perpetuity."

Jon Reeves, Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency, noted funds could go toward several potential projects that would "make a world of difference":

- Creating an overnight shelter for runaway and homeless youth
- Co-locating community services for a one-stop center to serve people in need
- Help 100 families experiencing homelessness find and maintain housing
- Add covered areas on 14 playgrounds serving infants, toddlers, and preschool children
- Increase mental health services directly in each of our programs serving youth, adults, and families.

BJ Andersen, Willamette Humane Society, said the funds would help attain their goal of a \$4 million endowment fund for long-term financial stability. "Pets and people in our community will always need help, and each \$1 million in the endowment would provide about \$50,000 annually — in perpetuity — to continue helping them the same way a good retirement plan ensures an individual's ability to meet their future needs."

Laura Agüero, Oregon Symphony Association in Salem, said such a gift, "would mean stability and a more secure future. OSAS would add to our endowment, expand our personnel, upgrade our office and office supplies, and offer more concerts to Salem and its outlying communities. We would also love to use that money to boost the award amounts for our music educator of the year as

well as our concerto competition winner."

Don Robison, Father Bernard Youth Center, indicated the gift would help launch a capital campaign to purchase their facilities that are currently being leased. "Over our first 10 years we've grown to the point we host more than 4,600 youth, young adults and their mentors annually, and are on-pace to host over 40,000 in the next decade. Ownership will help ensure we are able to continue providing critical programs to assist young people seeking to grow in love and service for one-another and our communities."

Alison Kelley, Liberty House, says they, "would be able to put \$750,000 into the endowment to ensure continuous funding, and use \$250,000 to assist in launching additional services to help underserved children in both Marion and Polk counties."

Linda Bowers, Elizabeth Bowers Zambia Education Fund, said the funds "would fulfill our dream of educating the Whole Girl in the remote rural village of Lumwana West in NW Zambia." EBZEF offers secondary school/college scholarships to girls, has built a fully-stocked library plus a pre-school, and hopes to build a secondary school in the community to complete the educational spectrum.

Pam Matthews, Willamette Valley Hospice, says such a gift "would establish an endowment fund to ensure Hospice's Edward F. Tokarski Adult Foster Home remains a community resource for future generations by creating a permanent, annual stream of income to support this home that exists to give patients who cannot be in their own home a place to spend their final weeks or months of life, cared for by professional staff that understand and practice outstanding end of life care."

Tim Rocak, Garten Services, cites "many needs that add up to more than a million. But our most constant is for equipment, including a semi-truck/trailer to haul recycling to market, vans to transport custodial workers and their equipment, a pallet wrapper to secure products to ship, and new washing machines for our laundry facility. All this keeps people with disabilities working, generating their own income, and offers them the dignity that being a contributor to our community brings."

See more responses online at j.mp/24uKn4V.

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