SAM Initiative Reveals 2019 Grant Recipients

$255,000 Awarded to Local Organizations

By SARAH SHMERLING
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The SAM Initiative—a giving circle comprised mostly of Palisadians, founded by Kehillat Israel member Mindy Freedman—celebrated its sixth annual awards dinner by recognizing the work of its members and honoring this year’s grant recipients.

“Our fundamental belief is that we can have a far more meaningful impact together than we can alone,” Freedman shared.

SAM Initiative, which stands for sustainability, accountability, and movement, works to improve the lives of women, children, and families in Los Angeles through expanded philanthropy.

“I really enjoy being part of SAM … connecting with like-minded, philanthropic women and having a greater impact on our community by leveraging our resources,” Palisadian Ilana Koch shared with the Palisadian-Post. “We can see the difference that our investments make in the lives of so many.”

This year, grants were given to three causes. Creative Matters Agency received $30,000, which will be doubled by a matching grant, to support the organization’s work therapy program for recovered addicts in West Los Angeles.

A Sense of Home, which helps create more homes for aged out former foster youth with donated furniture and household items, received $53,000 to fund its Warehouse and Inventory Enhancement program. New Village Girls Academy received $90,000 to fund a science program at the California Science Center that will provide 90 girls “with an education that will give them the tools to lift them out of the cycle of poverty.”

The SAM Initiative also celebrated a partnership with UCLA Anderson and the advancement of social impact at UCLA’s Impact Week, bringing students and professions together to drive social and environmental change, with a grant of $82,000.

These organizations were selected because “they all help to empower vulnerable groups in the greater Los Angeles community, including former foster youth, recovering addicts and at-risk students.”

“The validations and belief in what we are doing demonstrated by this generous grant is incredible,” Jennifer Quinones, principal of New Village Girls Academy, shared. “It says you know that we at New Village can truly make a difference for the trajectory of our students’ lives.”

Since the inception of SAM Initiative in 2013, the group has given more than $1 million.

For more information, visit saminitiative.org.