**For Immediate Release**

**Women’s Fund Highlights Community Needs**

From high-school robotics to equine-assisted psychotherapy, drought-tolerant landscaping for the library to new school clothes for disadvantaged children, the nonprofit funding needs on El Dorado County’s West Slope are as varied as they are pressing.

More than 190 members and guests of Women’s Fund El Dorado (WFED) had the opportunity to hear firsthand from representatives of 15 diverse organizations at its first-ever Ballot Showcase, held March 8 at the Cameron Park Community Center. The organizations were chosen from a total of forty-two groups that submitted proposals to WFED, a nonprofit collective giving organization that pools funds collected from members and leverages them in the form of grants.

WFED anticipates awarding a record $84,000 in 2018, bringing the grand total to $566,448 granted to 59 different local nonprofit programs since the organization was founded in 2007. Members can now vote for two Inspiration Grant recipients (totaling $60,000) and three Impact Grant recipients ($24,000). Online voting ends March 29 and final results will be announced on or about April 16.

A social hour allowed attendees to visit informational tables set up around the room’s periphery and staffed by representatives of the nine Impact Grant finalists. They also enjoyed appetizers served up by the Foothill Grill, El Dorado High School’s ROP Culinary Arts students, before the main program was
announced by Chair of the Grants Committee Kathy Witherow and Grants Committee member Ann Curtis. The Grants Committee evaluated all applicants and chose the finalists.

Education Committee Co-chairs Amy Andersen and Coleen Johnson introduced the six major Inspiration Grant finalists, each of whom presented a brief PowerPoint explanation of funding needs. This grant opportunity does not have a specific focus and is intended to inspire nonprofit agencies to identify and address the community’s most pressing needs.

The Inspiration Grant finalists (no one to be awarded more than $30,000) are 3Strands Global Foundation, Assistance League Sierra Foothills, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Club El Dorado County Western Slope, Marshall Medical Center and Oak Ridge High School.

The Ballot Showcase replaces the annual Community Needs Forum, which grew out of the organization’s desire to help its more than 400 members understand the community’s funding needs. “We have tried a variety of approaches and this year we have a new format, to allow you to hear directly from the grant applicants,” said WFED Vice Chair Dickson Schwarzbach. She pointed out that thanks to generous sponsorships, virtually all the money raised by WFED can be granted to deserving organizations or added to the endowment fund to ensure perpetuity of granting.

About WFED
Women’s Fund El Dorado, a fund of the El Dorado Community Foundation, is open to all for a donation of $200 a year or more. In addition to grants to local nonprofit programs, WFED also awards the annual Wickline Scholarship to women in need
pursuing higher education and provides financial assistance to meet the medical, mental health, dental, and optical needs of women and children through the LightHouse Fund. For details visit womensfundeldorado.org.

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