

For immediate release – Central Okanagan and South Okanagan

Record response for local Youth Initiative Grants

April 19, 2021 – Every year, the Central Okanagan Foundation and United Way’s GenNext put out a call for applications for youth-led projects that support people or programs in the community. This year proved to be very competitive with a record number of applications. Five projects based in the Central Okanagan and South Okanagan have been selected.

“The many applications we received for excellent, creative youth-led projects speaks to the outstanding commitment that young people throughout the region have for their communities,” says Sherry Ferronato, Director of Community Investment & Wellness at United Way Southern Interior BC. “The support that GenNext and Central Okanagan Foundation youth volunteers provide to make the Youth Initiative Grants possible, is a further testament to the outstanding contribution that young people are making locally.”

The Youth Initiative Grant recipients for 2021 are:

- Amazing Race, CRIS Adaptive Adventures
- Composting Project, Okanagan Mission Secondary (Central Okanagan Public Schools/SD #23)
- Increasing Inclusion and Awareness through Arts, South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services
- Penticton Overdose Response Project, UBC Okanagan Campus Health in collaboration with Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy
- Westside Learning Centre Farm Initiative, Central Okanagan Public Schools/SD #23

“It is inspiring to see the drive and passion youth have to make meaningful differences in our community,” says Abbie Norrish, Coordinator of Grants & Community Initiatives at the Central Okanagan Foundation. “The diversity, creativity and thoughtfulness of this years’ applications was truly incredible.”

These grants are available to young people up to age 25 who are partnering with an organization to create positive change in their local community. A committee comprising of youth representatives from the Central Okanagan Foundation and GenNext Kelowna met in late March to review the applications and make funding decisions.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.centralokanaganfoundation.org/grants/youth-initiative-grants/>

or <https://unitedwaysibc.com/how-we-help/kids/youth-initiative-grants/>

Youth Initiative Grant funding will be available again in early 2022.

About the Central Okanagan Foundation: The Central Okanagan Foundation is a community foundation that has been supporting local registered charities since 1977. We contribute to the quality of life in the Central Okanagan through the raising and stewardship of entrusted funds, innovative and diverse funding, and active community leadership. In 2002, the Central Okanagan Foundation for Youth fund was created to encourage youth engagement through supporting projects which are youth-led, volunteer based and beneficial to both youth and the whole community.

For more info: <http://www.centralokanaganfoundation.org/>

About United Way Southern Interior BC (SIBC):

The United Way mission is to improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action. For 70 years, we've been working to create opportunities for a better life for everyone in the Okanagan, Columbia, Shuswap and Similkameen. Every dollar raised here stays in our community and touches the lives of over 85,000 vulnerable children, families and seniors every year. For more info, visit: www.unitedwaysibc.com or call 1-855-232-1321.

About GenNext: GenNext is an affinity group of United Way SIBC consisting of young, emerging leaders who are looking to support our community in a meaningful way. GenNext's Board of Directors is made up of professionals who are passionate about volunteerism and furthering the United Way's mission. For more information about GenNext Kelowna, visit: <http://gennextkelowna.com>

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