



SOUTH CUMBERLAND COMMUNITY FUND

NOVEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER



Students at Coalmont Elementary proudly display checks for their prize-winning Make a Difference projects.

Make a Difference Contest Awards \$4,000 for Community Projects

Four creative projects, conceived and proposed by young people in our communities, were awarded \$1,000 grants by the South Cumberland Community Fund in late October. The Make A Difference contest invited youth to submit their ideas for a project that would make a difference in their community. Projects were submitted in three age groups: Kindergarten – fourth grade; fifth – eighth grade; and ninth – twelfth grade. Students came up with more than two dozen creative ideas. We had online voting and more than 600 people participated. The winners are:

Grades K-4: “Fruit Tree Orchard” — Our class thinks a community fruit tree orchard would be a wonderful contribution to Sewanee. We want cherry, apple, peach, plum, and pear trees planted.
How this will make your community a better place: An orchard provides a good source of fresh fruit for people. The able will swap work for fruit. The elderly and poor will receive free fruit.

Grades 5-8 (tie)

“Coalmont Community Garden” — Planting Broccoli, greens, squash, and gourds, and cultivating and preparing planting beds.

How this will make your community a better place: Healthy food and teach students their types of foods and provide the community with good food.

“Little Free Libraries” — The project is to build Little Free Libraries and place them at several schools in the county. Books would be provided by donations/purchases.

How this will make your community a better place: Our Little Free Library is a place where you can share books, encouraging people to read.

Grades 9-12: “Advertising Fiery Gizzard’s Reroute” — We would fund an advertisement campaign, creating awareness of the need for volunteers and funds for the South Cumberland State Parks.

How this will make your community a better place: This project will bring the local and state-wide community together, increase the likelihood of Fiery Gizzard reopening by spring, and help secure tourist dollars.

Every student participating in a project received a specially designed SCCF/Make A Difference T-shirt and each winning group was recognized at their school with the award of a “big” check designed for the project.

“The eyes of all the students lit up when we brought in the giant checks,” said Laura Willis, SCCF’s new executive director. At each of the schools that houses a winning project – Coalmont Elementary, Sewanee Elementary, and St. Andrew’s-Sewanee School – the student organizers were happy to accept the check and the responsibility of their project. Watch in the community as these projects start to take shape and look for updates in the Spring.

Willis Joins the South Cumberland Community Fund

Welcome to the next stage in the life of the South Cumberland Community Fund! It is an exciting time at SCCF – we continue our successful grants program, the capacity-building activities are gaining momentum, we had a successful Make A Difference contest that awarded grants to young people for their vision of the future. Most importantly, however, is that SCCF is in the process of becoming an independent nonprofit organization and will have its first full-time paid staff, ensuring its place on this Mountain for many, many years to come.

The Community Fund couldn't be at this turning point without great support and encouragement from dozens of people across this Plateau. Thank you to all of our donors, partner organizations, committee members, encouragers, community meeting participants, board members, and friends: it takes lots of folks in lots of places to start something new and sustain it so beautifully.

When the Community Fund was established in 2012, the organizers dreamed it would be a way to cultivate leadership and resources across the Plateau. And in its short history it has done so. SCCF works to improve the quality of life by making grants available for new and important projects, by supporting nonprofits as they grow, and by developing innovative ways for collaboration. Already the Community Fund has made more than \$500,000 in grants and support for area organizations, all for the benefit of people on this Mountain. SCCF's board is committed to a Plateau that is a place of hope and prosperity for all its residents and communities.

No pessimist ever discovered the secret of the stars, or sailed to an uncharted land, or opened a new doorway to the human spirit. —Helen Keller

I am a relentless optimist. I believe optimism is essential to living in community on this Mountain. I want to see the best in people, to celebrate the good things that happen and to believe in the positive power of the future. I honor the past, but I always look ahead. SCCF shares these principles: honoring the past, looking ahead, and seeking out the best in all people. I am delighted to be a part of the Community Fund. If you haven't already done so, please join us in supporting the 2015 campaign with a year-end gift to the Community Fund. I can promise you that there will be a multitude of benefits from that investment that will care for our community today, and tomorrow.

-- Laura L. Willis

Join the 2015 Opportunity Campaign!

If you have already made your gift to the Community Fund in 2015, thank you! If not, will you join us today? Our collective support helps the people and nonprofits of our region. Join the hundreds who have already said "yes!" and give our region the support it needs and deserves for a brighter future for all.

For questions about the Opportunity Campaign, please contact Norm Carl (Annual Fund Chair) or Leah Rhys (Development Chair) at info@southcumberlandcommunityfund.org, or Bill Davis (Endowment Chair) at endowment@southcumberlandcommunityfund.org. We would be delighted to share more about how crucial your gift is to the Community Fund's work.

southcumberlandcommunityfund.org





Strategic Planning Workshop: With generous funding from the Dan & Margaret Maddox Charitable Fund, the Community Fund was able to present a strategic planning class on November 3rd in the Claiborne House at Otey Parish in Sewanee.

Capacity-Building: Innovative Partnerships with Local Nonprofits

As part of SCCF's capacity building effort, the Fund is making available classes from the Center for Nonprofit Management (CNM) in Nashville for our community partners.

While we can help partners go to classes at the CNM office, we have found that travel and time constraints make this a challenge. Participation in early local workshops has been so strong that we decided to bring CNM to the Mountain.

With generous funding from the Dan & Margaret Maddox Charitable Fund, we were able to contract with CNM to present a strategic planning class on

November 3rd in the Claiborne House at Otey Parish in Sewanee.

The one-day workshop attracted 27 participants, including directors, board members and community leaders representing 19 different organizations. We were especially glad to welcome the Mayor of Tracy City to the session. Thanks to SCCF board member Norm Carl for his leadership in securing the Maddox funding.

The Fund continues to provide direct organizational development assistance with the Grundy County Food Bank, Mountain T.O.P., and Folks at Home.



Arvind Singhal, a leader in the area of organizational communication and social organizing, gave a two-day workshop in Sewanee for 44 leaders representing local community organizations.

Please visit southcumberlandcommunityfund.org/capacity-building/ for more information on our VISTAs and VISTA program. Want to volunteer with SCCF by offering a workshop on marketing, fundraising, grant writing? Contact sccfvista@gmail.com.

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Winners in the K-4 category of the 2015 Make a Difference Contest, the "Fruit Tree Orchard" Project from Mrs. Wall's 2nd-grade class at Sewanee Elementary School. The class is pictured with, from left, Nicky Hamilton, Director of the SCCF Capacity Building Initiative; Alicia Wall, teacher; and Bonnie McCardell, SCCF board member and Communications Chair.

Get involved, support the Community Fund

- 1 SIGN UP** for our emails on our website or Facebook page.
- 2 LIKE** us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter (@sccfund).
- 3 DONATE** to the Community Fund through our website.
- 4 TELL** your friends about the Fund's work. Forward our emails, like & share our Facebook page.
- 5 HOST** a gathering at your home, office, or group to share information about us.



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