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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 7, 2018

20 Local Projects Awarded First Grants from Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Legacy Fund for Youth Sports

Rochester Area Community Foundation is awarding \$329,000 in grants to 20 local youth sports and recreation programs from the **Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Legacy Fund for Youth Sports**.

The grants range from \$5,500 to \$25,000 and support projects that will have a direct impact on more than 6,500 youth in Monroe, Ontario, Seneca, and Wayne counties. Eighty-two proposals were received — 19 from outside Monroe County — and requested a combined total of more than \$1.5 million.

“The amount of interest in this first grant round for youth sports was impressive,” says Jennifer Leonard, president and CEO of the Community Foundation. “We are honored to further Ralph Wilson’s love of sports by introducing new and improved opportunities to as many children as possible.”

These inaugural grants were made possible by the \$5 million endowed fund established by the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation at the Community Foundation. Starting this year, the fund will provide annual and ongoing grants to support and strengthen the quality, quantity and accessibility of regional youth sports and recreation programs.

“This first round of grants will be a game-changer for programs that do great work with small budgets,” said Simeon Banister, interim vice president of community programs at the Community Foundation. “We expect to distribute more than \$400,000 next year with hopes that more programs will be offered, more youth will be able to participate and that the benefits of training coaches will pay off.”

The 20 nonprofits receiving funding for youth sports-related programs and projects are:

AutismUp: A “Youth Sports Series” will provide 60 youth with autism and related disabilities a chance to learn the language, rules, and skills of a variety of sports (basketball, soccer, swimming) at their own pace and with individualized support. Coaches will be trained to support the unique learning and behavior needs of participants. \$5,500



Boys & Girls Clubs of Rochester, Inc: The “Weekend Free Play Zone” program on Saturdays will provide youth the chance to participate in alternative sports and activities to that are often times inaccessible due to fee-based restrictions. These activities will include dance instruction, golf lessons, bowling, fencing, tennis, and many others. The Genesee Street clubs also will allow non-members to access Saturday programming to encourage them to join. \$24,850

Center for Disability Rights: Support for the Rochester Rookies, a wheelchair and ambulatory track and field sports program for disabled athletes (5 to 23 years old) that provides a customized approach focusing on each athlete's interests. \$15,356

Coordinated Child Development Program, Inc.: A “Partnership for Play” program allows sharing of the CCDP school-age program in Canandaigua, Ontario County, and the Salvation Army school-age program less than a mile away. During 42 weeks of the school year, nine different sports will be offered at both locations to introduce sport sampling and free play to 68 children. \$7,698

EquiCenter, Inc.: The “Horseplay” program will provide a non-traditional recreation program to 117 youth ages 5-14 years old at this Mendon ranch, combining life lessons and skills using interactive play and learning with horses. This approach combines equine-assisted learning with the exploration of nature, along with structured and free play. \$24,500

Girl Scouts of Western NY Inc.: Offers 550 girls the chance to experience and participate in archery and a ropes course, with certified instructors, during their time at Camp Piperwood in Perinton. Also includes archery and ropes training for Girl Scout leaders to address a shortage of trained instructors. \$25,000

HOPE Academy: Based out of the city of Rochester’s Flint Street Recreation Center, this program will provide at least 10 scholarships for athletes ages 8 to 16 from low-income households in the city to participate in Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) basketball for 12 months, and cover the necessary expenses to participate. \$9,910

Ibero-American Development Corporation: Providing play activities in the El Camino neighborhood, including six weeks of supervised play (three hours a day, five days each week) at Conkey Corner Park and pop-up play at several pre-identified streets and sites. A neighborhood survey will provide data on interests and utilization by area youth and families. \$14,720

NYSARC, Inc. Wayne County Chapter: Based on the “Rec on the Move” model used by the City of Rochester’s Department of Recreation and Youth Services, the Free Activities and Sports Trailer Program (FAST) will be a trailer fully stocked with equipment to create an inclusive mobile sports and activities center to serve 2,400 high-needs youth, ages 7 to 15, across Wayne County. These recreation opportunities would include collaboration with 12 partner agencies. \$25,000



Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc.: Refurbish 530 football helmets to increase youth safety for the Rochester Rams from Rochester's School 33. Also includes coaching football certification costs and transportation for youth to games. \$25,000

ROC E6, Inc.: In partnership with the Rochester Knighthawks and several other lacrosse groups, this community youth sports program will provide 200 youth ages 6-18 in the city of Rochester with the opportunity to play lacrosse through four different sessions throughout the year, while also providing mentoring and educational tools. \$8,975

Rochester Area Fencing Foundation, Inc.: This program, in collaboration with the Rochester Fencing Club, will provide 24 weeks of after-school fencing instruction to 40 students from Canandaigua Academy and Middle School during the 2018-19 school year. Also includes purchase of equipment and substantial discount for entry to two tournaments. \$25,000

ROcovery Fitness Inc.: Provides addiction recovery support through development of a youth fitness program for 25 to 50 youth, ages 13 to 21 in collaboration with Villa of Hope. The activities will include hikes, bike riding, group running, basketball, soccer, baseball, and yoga. \$15,040

St. John Bosco Schools: Enhance the athletic program in this East Rochester-based Catholic school so that students can participate in Section Five sports and adults can receive coaching, First Aid, CPR, and injury prevention training. The project also includes the purchase of sports equipment and materials needed for competitive play. \$14,749

St. John Fisher College: Introduce a "Teaching to Initiate Play" pilot program to empower youth to develop skills for engaging in independent play and for organizing team play with peers through the college's summer basketball camp and in fifth- and sixth-grade physical education classes in the Gates Chili Central School district. About 830 youth will participate. Scholarships will be provided for youth from low-income households to participate in the college's summer program, including support for transportation. \$21,650

St. Paul's Lutheran School: Encourage sport sampling with opportunities for free play for 100 to 140 youth ages 4-14 in North Greece, Hilton and Hamlin areas in partnership with the local town recreation departments. \$20,000

Seneca Falls Development Corporation: The "Team Active8 Youth Program" will provide a series of non-traditional sports, games and activities for up to 80 youth in third through fifth grades in Seneca Falls, Seneca County, over an eight-week span in Fall 2018 and again in Spring 2019. Activities will be overseen by the recreation and community center staff. \$5,840

Seneca Sailing Academy, Inc.: Supports 13 scholarships for youth sailing lessons on Seneca Lake, including transportation and lunch. Plan also includes launching a community outreach campaign to promote these opportunities. \$6,524



South East Area Coalition: Work with Rochester neighborhood groups to paint playful sidewalks around two parks, which will act as a natural way to lead area youth to play spaces. At the park will be a toy library with balls, bases, Frisbees, jump ropes, and other toys for youth and families to engage in play together. \$8,690

Village of Phelps: Supports building a safe and innovative playground for 1,375 youth, ages 2 to 13, to experience free play by replacing the deteriorating and outdated playground equipment on the grounds of the community center and library. \$25,000

About Rochester Area Community Foundation:

Rochester Area Community Foundation, in partnership with generous philanthropists and community partners, works to improve the quality of life for people who live in the eight-county region through its leadership and strategic grantmaking. Known as the steward of charitable funds and endowments, the Community Foundation connects donors with the region's current and evolving needs. As a leading grantmaker, the Foundation focuses on two broad goals — creating an equitable community and strengthening our region's vitality. The Community Foundation has distributed more than \$440 million in grants and scholarships since its founding in 1972. For more, visit www.racf.org.

About the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation:

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation is a grantmaking organization dedicated primarily to sustained investment in the quality of life of the people of Southeast Michigan and Western New York. The two areas reflect Ralph C. Wilson, Jr.'s devotion to his hometown of Detroit and greater Buffalo, home of his Buffalo Bills franchise. Prior to his passing in 2014, Mr. Wilson requested that a significant share of his estate be used to continue a life-long generosity of spirit by funding the Foundation that bears his name. The Foundation has a grantmaking capacity of \$1.2 billion over a 20-year period, which expires January 8, 2035. This structure is consistent with Mr. Wilson's desire for the Foundation's impact to be immediate, substantial, measurable and overseen by those who knew him best. For more information visit www.rcwjrf.org.