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**AMY WELLNESS FOUNDATION AWARDS $2.5 MILLION IN ITS FIRST GRANT CYCLE**

The AMY Wellness Foundation is pleased to announce that $2.5 million has been awarded to nonprofits serving Avery, Mitchell and Yancey county residents.

The programs and work funded during this cycle support a wide range of social determinants of health (SDOH) issues including Transportation, Food Insecurity, Housing, Education, Interpersonal Violence, Toxic Stress, Social Cohesion and Access to Health.

“The grant applications from 39 non-profits in the 3-county area were reviewed by each of the 8 members of the Board of Trustees, who spent over 130 hours in their assessments. After intensive review and discussion, organizations submitting grants that were most relevant to the priorities, highlighted by our listening sessions, were awarded funds from our grant monies.” Dr. Randy S. Ellis, Board Chair, AMY Wellness Foundation.

Over the next few months, the Foundation staff invites organizations that applied and were not funded this cycle to discuss programs and initiatives that might be better aligned during the next grant cycle in 2020. More information will be provided including cycle dates and SDOH areas of interest in the new year on the Foundation’s website.

“The work nonprofits are doing in our three counties is not only exciting but extremely vital for our region. I am pleased to be a part of helping continue their great work and look forward to seeing the impact we can all make together.” John Blackburn, Vice-Chair, AMY Wellness Foundation. “My hope for the 2020 Grant Cycle, is that more organizations work in collaboration to solve upstream issues our communities face,” Blackburn said.

AMY Wellness Foundation is poised to partner with organizations that are working in innovative, collaborative and transformative ways to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals in our mountain communities. The staff is actively working on a plan to bring together organizations both public and nonprofit to form discussions around SDOH issues affecting residents in hopes to break systematic cycles that cause barriers to health and wellness.

“We look forward to our second grant cycle, in the spring of next year, to further hone our priorities and further the collaborative efforts of the hard-working non-profits in our counties.” Said Ellis.

AMY Wellness Foundation will be working closely with Grantees awarded funds to share stories of success and the impact these funds will provide to Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey counties.

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The AMY Wellness Foundation is dedicated to improving the health and wellness of Avery, Mitchell and Yancey counties. We serve to give back to our community by partnering with local nonprofits, fostering connections among services, and supporting programs that make our community a healthier place. For more information please visit <https://amywellnessfoundation.org/>