

Introducing the 2016 Impact Grant recipients! This year was an incredibly competitive year—we awarded 63 Impact Grants totaling \$500,000, the most ever funded. Read on to learn how Elks will be serving their communities this coming year. [New projects are marked in blue.](#)

[Huntsville, Ala., Lodge No. 1648](#) hopes to be the go-to support organization for a local elementary school through its *Elks Growing Youth* project. Throughout the school year, the Lodge will provide a mentoring program, robotics program, gardening club for children in need, as well as execute a library beautification project with the help of the students.

Cahaba Valley, Ala., Lodge No. 1738 will continue to support hundreds of community members undergoing dialysis treatment with the *Expressing Loving Kindness and Support* project. Elks support patients and caregivers at seven treatment centers in the area by providing care packages filled with blankets, snacks, gifts and supplies. Elks also visit the centers each week, offering friendship and support to those receiving care.

Phoenix, Ariz., Lodge No. 335 will continue to be a lifeline for families through the *Single Parent Relief* project. Once a month, Elks welcome families to the Lodge for a healthy brunch and a well-deserved break. Elks provide childcare so parents can attend educational seminars arranged by the Elks. Each family is also provided with a bag of groceries and an invitation to return next month.

Mountain Home, Ark., Lodge No. 1714 will continue *Project Uplift*, a mentoring program for students at a local school. Elks volunteer as one-on-one mentors, and meet with students once a month. Each student also receives the school supplies they need to succeed.

Fayetteville-Springdale, Ark., Lodge No. 1987 will continue to partner with the VA and a local shelter to help formerly homeless veterans get back on their feet with the *Serving Those Who Served Us* project. Elks will continue to assist veterans and their families to find affordable housing, provide them with home supplies, assist in the search for employment, and act as an ongoing support system to help veterans flourish in their new homes.

Fresno, Calif., Lodge No. 439 will continue to teach at-risk teens the importance of community service through the *Mt. Olympus Challenge*. Elks partner with an alternative school to run the weekly program, and spend time with the youth each week designing, planning and presenting their ideas for serving the community. After judges choose the winning project, students come together and carry out the service project together.

[Santa Barbara, Calif., Lodge No. 613](#) hopes to be the go-to support organization for local veterans in need through the *Bring a Vet to Lunch* project. Elks provide a monthly lunch and support group for struggling veterans, which will include presentations by the VA and other organizations, needed supplies, gas cards and other support materials.

Orange, Calif., Lodge No. 1475 will increase literacy and reading skills among 4th graders in their community through *The Reading Promise!* project. In partnership with the local library, Elks will run a bi-annual book festival to book end their reading program, which seeks to sign up 400 families for new library cards and interactive reading initiatives.

Blythe, Calif., Lodge No. 1799 will help a local soup kitchen through their project, *Harmony Kitchen Support*. The Elks will provide a weekly meal to clients of the Harmony Kitchen, as well as monthly hygiene packs and general upkeep and maintenance for the kitchen.

San Clemente, Calif., Lodge No. 2068 will continue to help families in need make ends meet through the *Homeless Prevention Project*. Elks partner with a family resource center to distribute hygiene supplies to families at least once a month, ensuring that families can spend their funds on food and other essentials.

Bridgeport, Conn., Lodge No. 36 will continue to support veterans at a transitional home through the *Serving Those Who Served* project. Elks cook monthly meals for the vets, with plenty of leftovers to last through the week. Elks also partner with a local bank to provide financial education and provide veterans transitioning into homes with care packages and home supplies.

Naugatuck, Conn., Lodge No. 967 will continue to help seniors in need with the *Senior Home Work* project. Every Saturday the Elks are out and about town, repairing homes for seniors to help them stay independent. Elks have also forged a partnership with a local high school class for students with disabilities, and one morning each week students lend a hand while the Elks teach them about repair skills and service.

Dover, Del., Lodge No. 1903 will provide much needed supplies to about 300 individuals experiencing homelessness through the *Elks 1903 Pantry* project. The Elks will coordinate a mobile pantry with other organizations in the community, and travel weekly to meet and provide these supplies to homeless individuals who might not take advantage of shelters.

Tampa, Fla., Lodge No. 708 will team up to support at-risk teens through their *Club Chivalry for Successful Students* project. In partnership with a local high school and with help last year from a Gratitude Grant, the Lodge started a club for teens at-risk of dropping out. The club will include mentoring sessions with the Elks, field trips to local colleges, and other educational speaker opportunities throughout the school year.

Bradenton, Fla., Lodge No. 1511 will continue to provide youth in need with backpacks full of food each weekend. Thanks to the Lodge's long-running *Elks Feeding Empty Little Tummys* project, many children who are homeless and in need now have food for them and their families each Friday through Sunday.

Vero Beach, Fla., Lodge No. 1774 will continue their popular *Kids of Character* project. Elks provide 100 homeless students with uniforms and school supplies to start the year, and set up shop each month to help teachers celebrate students' successes through a character-building program that rewards hard-working students with school supplies and an Elks party.

Florida Keys, Fla., Lodge No. 1872 will continue to provide R&R to veterans in need with the *Vets on the Water* project. Elks partner with local veterans groups, the VA hospital and local boating groups to arrange fishing, kayaking and other trips for veterans struggling with stress, injuries, disabilities and PTSD.

Viera, Fla., Lodge No. 2817 will step up for children with physical disabilities through the *Wheel Chairs 4 Kids Support* project. The Lodge will make needed improvements on homes for 45 families that receive wheel chairs through the Wheel Chairs 4 Kids Foundation, and then put on events for these families throughout the year.

Covington, Ga., Lodge No. 1806 will provide reading and learning tools for children in need while they are on summer break through the *ECHO Children's Center* project. The Lodge will create a children center space at a local church to run a weekly reading literacy program throughout the summer. The program will include crafts, educational activities and healthy lunches and snacks to all participants.

Hilo, Hawaii, Lodge No. 759 will continue to help community members say aloha to fresh, homegrown fruits and vegetables through the *From the Garden* project. Elks partner with local health organization Hui Malama Ola Na `Oiwi to help community members with diabetes grow their own backyard gardens. Elks volunteers get together each Saturday to build and deliver garden beds, soil, fertilizer and seedlings to program participants.

Caldwell, Idaho, Lodge No. 1448 will continue to provide support and encouragement to children in the foster care system with the *Elks Care about Foster Care* project. Elks will hold monthly events for the youth, as well as provide them with school supplies, clothing and other essentials.

Princeton, Ill., Lodge No. 1461 will continue to serve weekly meals to community members in need through the *Elks Table* project. Each Thursday night, the Lodge welcomes as many as 170 people to the Lodge for a healthy meal and good conversation. All are welcome, and families, seniors and homeless individuals regularly stop by the Elks table.

Elmhurst, Ill., Lodge No. 1531 will support local food pantries with critical non-food items once a month through the *Elks Giving Families a Hand Up for Hygiene* project. The Elks will pack and deliver over 50 hygiene packs a month to area food pantries.

Augusta, Maine, Lodge No. 964 will continue to forge friendships with at-risk teens through the *Augusta Youth Elks Mentoring Project*. Elks partner with the local Boys and Girls Club to run a weekly mentoring program. From planning college visits to teaching woodworking classes, Elks ensure that all of the nearly 200 youth in the program are engaged and interested.

Beverly/Salem, Mass., Lodge No. 1309 will support kids in need through the *Tools for Schools* project. The Elks will provide much needed supplies to a local high school, specifically for kids in need, and conduct monthly events with the student population.

Traverse City, Mich., Lodge No. 323 ensures that families and children in need receive nutritious food through the *Healthy Family Meal Baskets* project. Four times a year, Elks provide healthy meal baskets to 100 families. Each basket will come with a detailed menu plan, and an invitation to attend Elks-taught cooking classes, which will focus on how to plan inexpensive, healthy meals.

Manistique, Mich., Lodge No. 632 will engage youth at the local high school, as well as the community at large, through the *Elks Service Park* project. The Elks will enlist help from local high school students to design and construct a much needed community park, and plan to use the project as a teaching and learning area for youth.

Minneapolis, Minn., Lodge No. 44 will continue to partner with a youth shelter to provide support for teens in need through the *Helping Hands for Homeless Teens* project. Elks cook monthly dinners; provide quarterly care packages, clothing and supplies, and mentor youth at the shelter.

Winona, Minn., Lodge No. 327 will continue to partner with a center for people with disabilities to promote therapeutic gardening with the *Healthy Eating and Gardening* project. Elks maintain accessible garden beds at the center, visit weekly to help take care of the garden, and teach regular cooking classes focusing on healthy snacks and meals.

Hopkins, Minn., Lodge No. 2221 will continue to be a support system for homeless teens with the *Teaming Up for Teens* project. Elks pack and deliver backpacks of hygiene supplies and other necessities to halfway houses, teen shelters, and social workers' offices, serving more than 100 youth each month. The Lodge holds outreach events and provides the teens with food, school supplies, winter clothes and more.

Columbia, Mo., Lodge No. 594 will continue to help homeless and underprivileged children at a local elementary school through the *Angel Food Pantry* project. Elks keep a food pantry fully stocked, and shop with children and their families each Friday to ensure that students have enough food to come back to school strong and healthy on Monday morning.

Blue Springs, Mo., Lodge No. 2509 will support local veterans in need through the *Dignity Pantry at St. Michael's Veterans Center* project. The Elks will establish and run a food and supply pantry at St. Michaels, and be there at least once a month to interact with residents.

Osage Community, Mo., Lodge No. 2705 will continue to be there for youth in need through the *School First Responders* project. Elk volunteers stay on call so they can provide youth with the supplies they need, when they need them. From clothes, shoes and winter jackets, to notebooks, pencils and hygiene supplies, students know they can count on the Elks. Elk volunteers work closely with teachers and school staff to respond quickly to students' needs, and help create a healthier, more stable learning environment.

Nashua, N.H., Lodge No. 720 will continue to support struggling community members with the *Feed the Hungry* project. Each Sunday night, Elks purchase and prepare food for nearly 200 people at the local soup kitchen. The Lodge teaches the value of community service by regularly recruiting high school and college students to help out.

Trenton, N.J., Lodge No. 105 will be partnering with a local organization, Age Out Angels, to provide much needed support and supplies for children aging out of the foster care system. Through the *Age-Out Support Initiative* project, Elks will serve as one-on-one mentors for these young adults, as well provide supplies, seminars and other educational opportunities.

Hightstown, N.J., Lodge No. 1955 will continue to spread their love of reading with the *Elks Book Club* project. Elks partner with a local center for youth in need to hold a monthly book club for pre-school age children and their families. Elks plan and lead the book club sessions and discussions, as well as provide a new book for each child every month, and a nutritious meal for all attendees.

Lockport, N.Y., Lodge No. 41 will continue to run a summer camp for over 150 children and adults with disabilities with the *Camp Happiness* project. Lodge members donate more than 1,000 hours of volunteer time to offer campers the chance to kayak, hike, rock climb, make crafts, take music lessons and more. For the campers, it's a great way to be active, independent, and have a great time with friends.

Mid-Westchester, N.Y., Lodge No. 535 will continue to provide social opportunities for teens with disabilities through the *Social Group for Teens* project. Twice a month, Elks assist the teens in attending sports games, planning movie nights, going to art fairs and more. The teens build their confidence, learn independent living skills, and get the chance to spend time with their peers.

Laughlin, Nev., Lodge No. 2872 will provide school supplies for students in need, as well as a reading/writing club and monthly family dinners at the Lodge, through the *Read to Succeed Program*.

Hickory, N.C., Lodge No. 1654 will continue to provide food and supplies for people in need with the *Helping Hands* project. Once a month, Elks provide a warm, healthy meal for as many as 200 people in need, along with a sack lunch for the next day. Elks also provide gifts for the many children that attend.

Morganton, N.C., Lodge No. 1852 will continue to support local students in need through the *No Hunger on Weekends* project. Each week, Elks will purchase, pack and deliver backpacks of food to 83 students in need at three local schools.

Hillsboro, Ohio, Lodge No. 361 will continue to help recent high school graduates with disabilities find jobs with the *Impact a Life* project. Elks teach the basics of finding and keeping a job—from interview skills, keeping a uniform clean, showing up on time, and more. Elks also partner with local businesses to hold job trainings.

Ashland, Ore., Lodge No. 944 will continue to support veterans in transition establish and remain in their new homes with the *Veterans No Place Like Home Kits* project. Elks partner with rehabilitation centers, clinics and halfway houses to provide veterans with supplies and support to land on their feet. Elks also regularly schedule visits with veterans to provide ongoing support in their recovery.

Corvallis, Ore., Lodge No. 1413 will continue their *Community Impact Brunch* project, which provides a hot meal to those in need when the soup kitchen is closed on Sunday. The Elks also provide much needed household supplies, hygiene products and haircuts.

Coos Bay, Ore., Lodge No. 1160 will continue to reach out to children in need with the *Weekend Share Bear Snack Pack* project. Each week, Elks purchase, pack and deliver 80 backpacks of food. Elks also partner with a larger organization to help pack thousands more snack packs for children in the community.

Burns, Ore., Lodge No. 1680 will continue to feed the hungry once a month with the *Harney County Chuckwagon* project. Elks serve more than 100 people at each meal, and more show up every month. The Lodge partners with local churches and organizations to promote the program, and recruits local high school and college students to help out.

Forest Grove, Ore., Lodge No. 2440 will be the go-to organization for kids in need during the summer by providing hot lunches and supplies to four summer program sites through the *Elks Summer Lunch & Back Pack Project*. The Lodge will extend the project into the school year by providing weekend snack packs to 30 families in need every week.

Allegheny, Pa., Lodge No. 339 will help low income families maintain a clean, safe, healthy home through the *Yellow Glove Project*. The Lodge will work with the Food Pantry Advisors to identify and provide items not covered by food stamps but deemed necessary for household management and personal care, to food pantries in the area twice a month.

Wilkins, Pa., Lodge No. 577 will support veterans experiencing homelessness with the *Transitions* project. The Elks will partner with the Veterans Place for Homeless Veterans to provide essential supplies for veterans leaving the program and transitioning to permanent housing. The Lodge will also provide one-on-one mentoring, weekly seminars and group meetings.

Woonsocket, R.I., Lodge No. 850 will provide much needed support to the clients of three local food pantries through the *From the Heart of the Woonsocket Elks* project. At least monthly, the Elks will provide food and basic essentials, including diapers and school supplies to families utilizing three local food pantries.

Bristol County, R.I., Lodge No. 1860 will continue to tackle hunger with the *East Bay Cares* project. Elks work with local food pantries, churches, shelters and soup kitchens to deliver emergency food supplies, food baskets, educational resources and more to residents in need. Elks also run “Healthy Cooking with Pantry Foods” classes at local food pantries.

South Kingston, R.I., Lodge No. 1899 will continue to help local seniors, families in need and individuals with disabilities care for their homes through the *Home Maintenance and Repair Assistance* project. Elks help with repairs, construction, yard work and more, allowing community members to safely live in their own homes.

Pendleton, S.C., Lodge No. 2861 will continue to partner with a community center to host quarterly intellectual boot camps for underprivileged youth. Through the *On a Mission* project, Elks arrange for educational speakers, organize field trips, and mentor students in a local after-school program.

Dallas, Texas, Lodge No. 71 will support a local women’s rehabilitation center on a monthly basis with supplies and facility upkeep through the *Magdalen House Drug and Alcohol Rehab* project.

San Antonio, Texas, Lodge No. 216 will provide local veterans a much needed outlet for exercise and physical activity through the *San Antonio Fitness Club for Veterans* program. The Lodge will create an *Elks Fitness and Running Tribe* to provide personal trainers, a running club and 5K race opportunities for local veterans suffering from PTSD.

Marshall, Texas, Lodge No. 683 will continue to partner with the Boys and Girls Club to help high school students become college students through the *Believe it Forward* project. Elks mentor teens, encourage them to submit college applications, take students on campus visits, and help students with financial aid and scholarship applications.

Wichita Falls, Texas, Lodge No. 1105 will continue to partner with the local ARC center for people with disabilities to run the *Service and Companion Project*. Elks hold twice-monthly activities at the Lodge to provide social opportunities for ARC residents.

Garland, Texas, Lodge No. 1984 will continue to help families living in poverty through the *Food Pantry and Clothes Closet* project. Elks keep a full-stocked pantry at the Lodge, and open it up twice a month to provide families with food baskets, school supplies, shoes, toiletries and more.

Kerrville, Texas, Lodge No. 2081 will support community members with mental illness through the *Bridging the Gap* project. Elks will serve monthly meals and plan monthly activities for individuals living at a local group home, helping residents improve their social interaction and community participation skills.

St. George 'Dixie,' Utah, Lodge No. 1743 will continue to reach out to three groups of students in need with the *Youth in Crisis* project. Elks support teenage parents and their children, foster children, children in state care, and students with disabilities. Elks provide students with food, hygiene and school supplies and more. Elks also mentor students, teach independent living skills, and offer support to help students stay in school.

Tacoma, Wash., Lodge No. 174 will serve kids in need experiencing hunger through the *Tacoma Elks for Kids* project. The Elks will start a backpack program providing a backpack full of food for the weekend, as well as a special hot chocolate treat and age-appropriate book, to 50 underprivileged students every Friday at a local elementary school.

Fond Du Lac, Wis., Lodge No. 57 will combat a growing community drug problem with *Project Recovery*. In partnership with local law enforcement, the Lodge will organize a comprehensive plan that completes the Prevention Pillar aspect of the "Four Pillar" drug coalition. The Elks will be the leader in organizing and supervising events and activities to identify and engage individuals who either suffer from addiction or want to provide assistance.

Wheeling, W.V., Lodge No. 28 will continue to ensure Wednesday nights at the soup kitchen are family friendly with the *Just for Kids* project. Elks cook a kid-friendly meal each Wednesday night, and invite children in need to stop by for a night of food and fun. Elks mentor the children, help with homework, and always arrange an educational speaker or activity.

The Elks National Foundation helps Lodges serve their communities in significant and ongoing ways by awarding Impact Grants of up to \$10,000. Any Lodge can apply for these competitive grants. To find out more about Impact Grants and the Community Investments Program, visit www.elks.org/enf/community.