**Small CIP Grants for Mankind**

When the CIP was founded in 2005, giving over $10,000 in grants seemed as distant a dream as putting someone on the moon was in the 1960s.

With a budget of $350,000 and a dream of uniting the forces of the Order into a mighty army for the service of mankind, the CIP could not have imagined how much it would grow over the next 19 years.

But, the new $500 Gratitude Grant bonus for 2024-25, which will be awarded to Lodges that increase their fundraising by 10 percent over the previous year, isn’t just another small step for the CIP.

“With the new bonus, Lodges will be able to earn $10,000 in small CIP grants alone,” says ENF Assistant Director Debbie Doles. “It’s been a dream of ours to get the CIP to this point. In the past decade, the program has quadrupled.”

Now with a budget of nearly $16 million, CIP grants are helping Elks build stronger communities like never before. In 2022-23, the CIP approved 4,340 grants, with 83 percent of Lodges receiving at least one grant.

Often used to combat food insecurity, support people experiencing homelessness, serve veterans and military members in need, promote youth community service, and meet other unique needs in their communities, CIP grants are a vital part of uniting the forces of the Order into a mighty army for the service of mankind.

While the Gratitude Grant, Beacon Grant and Spotlight Grants can be used for three different projects, spreading them out is not always the best way to make a substantial difference in the community.

“The most successful CIP Lodges combine their small grants to address one need in their community,” says Doles. “$10,000 goes a long way toward meeting a need. Becoming an expert in a certain area of aid is a great step toward finding your Lodge’s niche and receiving an Impact Grant.”

Though the Impact Grant is not available for every Lodge, this new bonus allows Lodges to make the same, meaningful difference in their communities.

This new milestone might be a small step in the continued growth of the CIP, but it’s a giant leap for the service of mankind.

*For 2023-24, the Elks National Foundation allocated nearly $16 million to fund*

*the Community Investments Program. Lodges meet local needs through CIP grants*

*that offer Elks opportunities to serve their community in ways that will raise the*

*Lodge’s profile, energize the membership, encourage former members to return to the*

*fold, and gain the notice of people who want to be part of an organization that’s*

*doing great things. To learn more about the Community Investments Program,*

*please visit* ***elks.org/CIP****.*