



Contact: Autumn Kersey-Camilovic
Marketing & Communications Manager
autumn@idahocf.org
208.342.3535, Ext. 16
Cell: 208.283.5699

June 17, 2024

Photo credit: iStock, Riverstone Park Coeur d'Alene

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Filling the Gap: How Idahoans Are Stepping Up to Address Social Needs

As Idaho continues to grow, so does the demand for essential social services. However, state and city government funding for these services often falls short, leaving critical needs unmet. In response, nonprofit organizations, supported by community foundations like The Idaho Community Foundation and generous local donors, are stepping in to fill these gaps. This article explores the indispensable role these entities play in sustaining and enhancing Idaho's social services landscape.

Overview of the Funding Gap

Idaho, like many states, faces budgetary constraints that limit the government's ability to fund social services adequately. Additionally, Idaho's vast geographical landscape and predominantly rural communities stretch government dollars even tighter. Programs related to healthcare, education, housing, and food security often suffer, impacting the Idahoans who rely on these services. Data from recent state budgets show a consistent trend of underfunding in these areas, with significant consequences for the 11% of Idahoans living below the federal poverty rate. However, that statistic only tells a small part of the story; the [2024 Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed \(ALICE\) Report](#), shared by the United Way of North Idaho, revealed that 42% of North Idaho households struggle to meet basic needs.

Role of Community Foundations

Community foundations are pivotal in addressing these shortfalls. The Idaho Community Foundation (ICF) is a prime example, mobilizing community-minded,

issue-focused donors and connecting those resources to support a wide range of nonprofit organizations providing vital services across the state.

- **Grant Programs:** ICF runs several regional and donor-advised grant programs targeting areas such as education, health, and community development. These grants enable nonprofits to initiate or sustain projects that would otherwise lack funding.
- **Collective Giving:** ICF hosts several Idaho affiliates and giving circles, including the newly established affiliate, the Greater Coeur d'Alene Community Foundation, and the Women's Gift Alliance giving circle. Through the power of collective giving, all Idahoans can participate in philanthropic initiatives that improve their communities.
- **Capacity Building:** Beyond direct funding, ICF partners with the Idaho Nonprofit Center (INC), a statewide association with a mission to elevate Idaho's nonprofit sector. Through INC, nonprofit leaders have access to training and resources to enhance their effectiveness and sustainability.

Impact of Donors

Idaho donors play a crucial role in this ecosystem. Philanthropic contributions from individuals, families, and corporations ensure that nonprofits have the financial support needed to continue their work. Philanthropy is at the heart of Idaho values, and one need only stroll through a neighborhood park, appreciate a piece of public art, or admire the College and University campuses across our state to understand that Idaho was built by community-minded Idahoans, many of whom have entrusted The Idaho Community Foundation to steward their philanthropy. Over the past 35 years, ICF has granted more than \$177 million throughout all 44 Idaho counties. In the 10 North Idaho counties grants exceed \$25 million, with a promise of more to come.

The collective efforts of nonprofits, community foundations, and donors are crucial in maintaining the social safety net in Idaho. However, there is a pressing need for more sustainable support. Idaho's longstanding tradition of independence relies on upholding a complementary tradition of philanthropy. By establishing a relationship with community foundations like The Idaho Community Foundation, Idahoans will continue to care for their communities, support vital services, and enhance the quality of life for all.

The Idaho Community Foundation is currently hosting The Giving Station at the Kroc Center in Coeur d'Alene through June 30, 2024. Twenty-four North Idaho nonprofit organizations will receive funds through The Giving Station. If you'd like to know more, please contact Autumn Kersey-Camilovic.