

Bicentennial Fund Awards 2020

The Board of Outreach is pleased to submit a proposal for the 2020 Bicentennial Fund awards. We received four applications for support, and after careful deliberation, we have chosen three organizations whose values and mission we feel are consistent with those of our church and who have specific needs that can be addressed by a small grant. With the current public health and economic crisis, our social safety net is in tatters. There are many wonderful organizations deserving of our support and we fully expect to allocate some of our annual budget towards additional community needs.

The full applications are included in this mailing for your review. Below is a summary of each request:

- **\$2,000 to Headrest for technology upgrade**

Prior to the pandemic, Headrest was in desperate need for a technology upgrade, and the current crisis has intensified this need. Upgrades to their computers and server will help providers maintain contact with their clients. Losing personal visits with service providers is devastating to people already in delicate situations. The ability to substitute a face to face online experience is critical. This award will fund one new laptop for Headrest.

- **\$600 to The Family Place for Activity Bags**

With childcare centers closed and schools offering distance learning, many families are struggling to meet their children's needs for structured play and learning. For many families living in poverty, stress has increased in these challenging times, and the support of The Family Place can be a critical lifeline. This grant would be used to create activity kits for customized home learning and would contain age appropriate hands-on activity suggestions and toys and supplies. The kits would be mailed and delivered to the homes of clients of The Family Place. This donation would fund approximately 30 kits.

- **\$500 to The Early Care and Education Association (ECEA -- ecea.vt.edu) for funding to support free financial consulting to child care centers**

By strengthening early care and education in the region, ECEA is a leader in the coordinated effort of support for children and families of the Upper Valley. Concerned about the well-being of child care centers in the region, particularly related to the financial impact of the COVID crisis, they are providing one-on-one practical budget assistance (education and mentoring) to child care center leaders as they navigate how to stay open. In order to meet the needs of families returning to work, the goal is to have centers reopen with no decrease in childcare placements.

