



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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L'Anse Area Schools and the Hornet Park Improvement Group Awarded \$25,000 from the Portage Health Foundation for Groundwork Softball Field Projects at the Sports and Recreation Complex in L'Anse

[Hancock, MI] The Portage Health Foundation recently awarded \$25,000 to L'Anse Area Schools and the Hornet Park Improvement Group for groundwork projects to assist in the construction of a softball field.

The school and park group co-applied for funding under the PHFoundation's adolescent health RFP. The foundation sought applications focused on programs and resources that promoted healthy adolescent behavior through the adoption of and/or access to community health, wellness, and prevention services.

The foundation earmarked up to \$100,000 for applications that came in under this adolescent health RFP. Many adolescents face daily oppression from such issues as obesity, bullying, or low self-esteem, which can potentially have harmful effects on their emotional and/or physical wellbeing. The foundation recognizes that through the adoption of healthy behaviors, such as access to recreational activities, many adolescents can overcome some of these difficult issues.

In order to offer resources that promote healthy behavior, L'Anse Area Schools and the Hornet Park Improvement Group are building a softball field at the school's sports and recreation complex. Once complete, the softball field will offer recreational and social opportunities for area youth such as participation on organized school and community little league teams. According to Susan Tollefson, interim superintendent of L'Anse Area Schools, "We are very appreciative of this grant as it allows us to progress one step closer toward completion of this athletic complex project. The overall community support of the project has been outstanding and this grant is an integral part of continuing that precedent of community support from a variety of groups. The project would not be possible without donations such as this."

The school and park group will use the grant money to lay dirt, topsoil, gravel mix, and seeding as well as install drainage storm pipes and manholes. Tollefson added, "Being able to provide updated facilities for our athletes and community members to use and enjoy is a wonderful asset to our school system." The school and park group anticipate that the softball field will be completed by next summer and will be ready to host high school softball games beginning in 2017.

According to Hilary Anderson, Grants Management Coordinator at the Portage Health Foundation, "PHF is committed to improving the overall health of the area, which means we are dedicated to providing recreational opportunities that will, in return, help better residents' lives and the communities where they reside. With the development of not only the softball field, but the entire sports complex, L'Anse Area Schools and the Hornet Park Improvement Group are offering valuable and important recreational opportunities to both students and residents."

The Portage Health Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that receives and contributes charitable donations, which support the health needs of the community through enhanced philanthropy and community collaboration in Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, and Ontonagon counties. The foundation is committed to ensuring its grant awards reach and support viable programs throughout its service area. Each county offers important programing and projects that are vital to the health of the region and the PHFoundation's outreach efforts.



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L to R: Hilary Anderson (PHF Grants Management Coordinator), Bernadette Yeoman-Ouellette (PHF Fund Development Committee Chair), Matt Elmlad (Hornet Park Improvement Group Vice Chair), Susan Tollefson (L'Anse Area Schools Interim Superintendent), and Kevin Store, (PHF Executive Director)

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