

Concord's Nature Connection receives \$100K grant



The Nature Connection is one of 100 local nonprofits to receive grants of \$100,000 each through Cummings Foundation's \$100K for 100 program. Pictured, from left: Jennifer Albanese, Nature Connection board member; Bill Cummings, founder of Cummings Foundation; and Sophie Wadsworth, Nature Connection executive director. Courtesy Photo

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The Concord-based organization was chosen from a total of 479 applicants during a competitive review process.

The Nature Connection Executive Director Sophie Wadsworth and board member Jennifer Albanese joined approximately 300 other guests at a June 9 reception at TradeCenter 128 in Woburn to celebrate the \$10 million infusion into Greater Boston's nonprofit sector. With the conclusion of this grant cycle, Cummings Foundation has now awarded more than \$140 million to local nonprofits alone.

"We are deeply grateful to Cummings Foundation for this generous capacity-building grant to The Nature Connection," said Wadsworth. "The Nature Connection is a grass roots nonprofit powered by over 125 volunteers. Our transformative nature programs ignite and build well-being in people of need of healing. We connect elders, people with disabilities, and at-risk youth to the inspirational power and beauty of the natural world. This grant from Cummings Foundation gives us critical leverage to scale up to reach more individuals in Greater Boston. This is an exciting time to be part of The Nature Connection's momentum, and a new leap forward with this terrific support."

The \$100K for 100 program supports nonprofits that are not only based in but also primarily serve Middlesex, Essex and Suffolk counties. This year, the program is benefiting 41 different cities and towns within the Commonwealth.

Through this place-based initiative, Cummings Foundation aims to give back in the area where it owns commercial buildings, all of which are managed, at no cost to the foundation, by its affiliate Cummings Properties. Founded in 1970 by Bill Cummings, of Winchester, the Woburn-based commercial real estate firm leases and manages more than 10 million square feet of space, the majority of which exclusively benefits the foundation.

"We admire and very much appreciate the important work that nonprofit organizations like The Nature Connection are doing in the local communities where our colleagues and clients live and work," said Joel Swets, Cummings Foundation executive director. "We are delighted to support their efforts."

This year's diverse group of grant recipients represents a wide variety of causes, including education, homelessness prevention, elder services, health care and food insecurity. Most of the grants will be paid over two to five years.

For the complete list of 100 grant winners: cummingsfoundation.org.

Source: Concord Journal June 15th 2016