American Water Charitable Foundation and West Virginia American Water Announce 2024 Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Grant Recipients

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (Dec. 3, 2024) – The American Water Charitable Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization established by American Water, the largest regulated water and wastewater utility company in the U.S., along with West Virginia American Water announced today 13 recipients of the company's fourth annual Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Grant Program. The Foundation will provide $32,500 in State Strategic Impact grants to organizations seeking to develop and implement programs, training and community-related projects that promote and foster inclusion, diversity and equity (ID&E) in communities across West Virginia.

"Rainbow Pride of WV appreciates the American Water Charitable Foundation and West Virginia American Water's continued commitment to and investment in our organization and the region's LGBTQ+ community," said Chris Gosses, president of Rainbow Pride of WV, Inc. "American Water's support not only helps us continue our community building events, but also helps us create a more positive impact through our new community center, The Rainbow Pride Center. Through supportive programming, visibility and education, American Water is helping us create a more meaningful impact on our LGBTQ+ West Virginians, as well as our positive contribution to the communities in which we live."

Following are 13 organizations selected to receive $32,500 in Foundation funding:

- Angels Inspired: $2,500
    - The organization's mission is to provide tangible solutions that address the underlying causes of poverty, homelessness, substance abuse, and various factors that hinder the well-being and happiness of community members.
- Appalachian Center for Independent Living: $2,500
    - The organization is dedicated to empowering individuals with disabilities to achieve greater independence. ID&E Grant funds will be used to provide cooking lessons to individuals with disabilities.
- Coalfield Development: $2,500
    - ID&E Grant funds will be used to pilot a literary arts festival to provide a platform for underrepresented voices in southern WV to share their stories, fears, and hopes through creative writing and cultural expression and to provide professional development, education, connections, and resources for writers to develop their careers and stay in the region.
- Community Autism Resources & Education Systems (CARES): $2,500
    - ID&E Grant funds will allow CARES to expand inclusive monthly family events to better serve our older attendees with autism.

- Creating the Advantage: $2,500
    - The organization is a food pantry that provides assistance to the communities in and around Charleston. The ID&E Grant will help fill the food pantry.

- Exceptional Possibilities of West Virginia: $2,500
    - Built on the mission to empower individuals with disabilities by promoting, creating, and advocating for inclusive and accessible opportunities for all. The organization is constantly working to achieve this goal by creating community-based events to promote awareness, inclusion, and sharing resources to benefit individuals with disabilities and their families.

- Leadership West Virginia: $2,500
    - The organization will use its ID&E Grant to expand its commitment to inclusion, diversity, and equity by enhancing programming that attracts and supports diverse participants from all parts of West Virginia. The grant will allow Leadership West Virginia to incorporate ID&E-focused workshops, increase representation among speakers, and provide scholarships for underrepresented individuals.

- Mountaineer Food Bank: $2,500
    - The ID&E Grant will significantly enhance Mountaineer Food Bank's Veterans Table Program by promoting inclusion, diversity, and equity (ID&E) among one of West Virginia's most underserved populations—veterans. This program provides monthly food boxes to veterans in need, regardless of income, ensuring that no veteran is excluded from receiving vital nutritional support.

- Rainbow Pride of WV, Inc.: $2,500
    - The organization's mission is to organize LGBTQ+ social and educational events throughout the year while also providing a forum for issues important to the LGBTQ+ community and supporters. Through community participation and outreach, the organization aims to raise awareness involving social, scientific and health related information.

- Tamarack Foundation: $2,500
    - The organization will use the ID&E Grant to implement Ripple, a creative pacemaking program in Charleston's West Side. Ripple uses arts as a solution to address community challenges.

- The Spark of Love Foundation: $2,500
    - The organization originated to help children and families in need and relies on the support of generous individuals and agencies from within our communities to give back to the same communities as a way of keeping efforts local. The ID&E Grant will be used to provide children with a good holiday that their families may not be able to have due to familial circumstances.

- YMCA of Kanawha Valley: $2,500
    - The ID&E Grant will enable the YMCA of Kanawha Valley to further its mission of inclusion and diversity by providing specialized programming that supports individuals with disabilities. These programs will be designed to ensure that participants can fully engage in physical activities, social experiences, and personal development opportunities, regardless of their abilities.

- YWCA Center for Racial Equity & Inclusion: $2,500
    - The ID&E Grant funding will enhance the YWCA Center for Racial Equity & Inclusion's library collection on racial equity, inclusion and historical narratives, providing the community with accessible resources to foster understanding and address systemic inequities.

"At West Virginia American Water, fostering inclusion, diversity and equity is a core value," said Robert Burton, president of West Virginia American Water. "By partnering with the American Water Charitable Foundation to support community leaders and investing in local organizations, we are driving change and promoting ID&E in a meaningful and lasting way."

The State Strategic grant is part of the Foundation's 2024 Keep Communities Flowing Grant Program, focusing on three pillars of giving: Water, People and Communities. State Strategic grants support high-impact projects and initiatives throughout American Water's national footprint.

"The American Water Charitable Foundation is thrilled to support impactful organizations across the state and help strengthen West Virginia American Water's inclusion, diversity and equity principles by supporting organizations that help uplift and empower those they serve," said Carrie Williams, President, American Water Charitable Foundation.

Learn more about the American Water Charitable Foundation's grant program here.

About American Water

American Water (NYSE: AWK) is the largest regulated water and wastewater utility company in the United States. With a history dating back to 1886, We Keep Life Flowing® by providing safe, clean, reliable and affordable drinking water and wastewater services to more than 14 million people with regulated operations in 14 states and on 18 military installations. American Water's 6,500 talented professionals leverage their significant expertise and the company's national size and scale to achieve excellent outcomes for the benefit of customers, employees, investors and other stakeholders.

For more information, visit amwater.com and join American Water on LinkedIn, Facebook, X and Instagram.

About West Virginia American Water

West Virginia American Water, a subsidiary of American Water, is the largest regulated water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water services to approximately 600,000 people.

About American Water Charitable Foundation

The American Water Charitable Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides a formal way to demonstrate the company's ongoing commitment to be a good neighbor, citizen, and contributor to the communities where American Water and its employees live, work and operate. For more information, visit amwater.com/awcf.

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