

The Bazaar Grants Committee met by Zoom on July 29, 2020. Each nominated organization was presented and then a vote taken. The committee decided to chose three organizations to receive this year's Bazaar proceeds, and the three that received the most votes were: (1) Serve & Connect; (2) MIRCI; and (3) Camp Cole Therapeutic Riding.

Serve & Connect is an organization founded by Kassy Alia Ray after her husband, police officer Greg Alia, was shot and killed in the line of duty. Serve & Connect addresses the disconnect between police officers and the communities they serve and strives to assist officers in bridging that gap by providing tools, resources, and knowledge to allow law enforcement to strengthen trust in the communities they serve. The organization will use funds it receives from the Bazaar to further these goals through its Compassionate Acts Program. This program has three components: Greg's Groceries which allows officers to provide a week's worth of groceries to a family of four; Warm the Winter which allows officers to provide new winter coats to people in need in the communities they serve; and Cool the Summer which allows officers to distribute bottled water, electric fans, and other items to people battling the summer heat.

The Mental Illness Recovery Center ("MIRCI") is a social rehabilitation program to assist recovering persons to become better adjusted and live independently in the community. MIRCI will use the funds it receives from the Bazaar for its Homeless Youth Drop-In Center which serves youth between the ages of 17-24 who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness. The Youth Drop-In Center provides access to basic needs, behavioral healthcare, and referral to community partners for further assistance such as for education and housing needs. It provides two meals a day to the youth as well as assists them in life skills such as applying for jobs, and it can also help with practical needs such as transportation to interviews or doctor appointments.

Camp Cole Therapeutic Riding program operates on the campus of Camp Cole, a nonprofit organization that is building a camp and retreat center for children, teens, and adults with illnesses, disabilities, and life challenges. Camp Cole Therapeutic Riding is the only therapeutic riding program in Richland County, and it promotes the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional well-being of people with disabilities and life challenges through therapeutic riding and equine activities. The program will use the funds it receives from the Bazaar proceeds to provide an opportunity for disabled youth to engage in experiential learning through 12 weeks of lessons at the facility. Participants will be taught horsemanship skills such as grooming, tacking, leading, riding, and feeding which encourages physical movements that stretch and strengthen muscles and promotes character-based learning.