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Major Grant Allows Idaho Diaper Bank to Expand to Idaho's Rural Population

MERIDIAN, Idaho – After extensive visits to the Meridian warehouse, research on the organization and determining the need for Idaho families, The Idaho Women's Charitable Foundation (IWCF) awarded the Idaho Diaper Bank (IDB) with a \$30,000 grant.

"Our organization strives to select projects that will make a significant impact within the region it serves," said Suzanne Groff Lierz, Idaho Woman's Charitable Foundation president. "Many of us are parents and grandparents so we know and understand the importance and need for families to have diapers. It is not a want, but rather a basic necessity, and the mission of the Idaho Diaper Bank to ensure that the lack of diapers does not cause a barrier for families trying to take their children to day care so they themselves can attend work or school, aligns with the interests of our charitable organization."

Projects are funded in five areas that reflect the breadth of members' interests. They include cultural arts, education, environment, financial stability and health.

"This grant allows the Idaho Diaper Bank the opportunity to distribute diapers to families in need in some of the more rural areas of southwest Idaho," said Shawna Walz, executive director of the Idaho Diaper Bank. "In rural areas, it can often be even more challenging for a mother to get the diapers she needs. There aren't any Costco stores, transportation can be an issue, and so parents end up buying their diapers in smaller quantities at the corner store which costs even more money."

The IWCF grant allows the IDB to develop a Warehouse on Wheels (WOW) program to demonstrate the viability of a virtual warehousing model, which will ensure diapers are distributed to rural families in need. The grant also provides funds for the IDB to create an online presence to engage businesses and organizations to help sustain ongoing access to diapers.

The Warehouse on Wheels (WOW) is a pilot program that targets 10 counties in southwest Idaho: Ada, Adams, Boise, Canyon, Elmore, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, Valley and Washington. Once it is serving those communities, Walz hopes to expand the WOW program from the 10 counties in its initial effort to additional rural counties in need. Businesses interested in becoming a WOW County Sponsor, and/or 501c3 organizations interested in receiving diapers through the WOW program are encouraged to contact the Idaho Diaper Bank for more information and application forms. WOW program execution is underway now with a goal to reach 3,000 new babies by June 2017.

“Increasing a families access to a supply of clean, dry diapers can truly have profound impacts,” said Walz. “A lack of diapers is often a hidden consequence of poverty. Many Idaho babies are being left in wet diapers all day, which is not only uncomfortable for a baby, but a real health risk. By giving families something as simple as a diaper, we are giving them a glimpse of hope and a chance to get back on track financially and hopefully, reduce overall family stress.”

For more information on the Idaho Diaper Bank, visit IdahoDiaperBank.org.

IDB welcomes donations of opened or new packages of disposable diapers, as well as gently used clean or new cloth diapers; The IDB also accepts donations of incontinence products for the elderly and/or disabled.

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By focusing on diaper need, the Idaho Diaper Bank works to meet the basic needs of children and families. Idaho Diaper Bank was established to provide diapers, diapering supplies and advocacy to families in need through partnership agencies. These agencies serve infants and families including childcare centers, crisis nurseries, domestic violence shelters, food pantries and faith based organizations. Idaho Diaper Bank seeks to engage Idaho communities to recognize that diapers are a basic need, along with food and shelter.