

Evanston Community Foundation announces 2013 grant recipients

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The Evanston Community Foundation celebrated its biggest year ever Thursday night with a presentation of its new slate of 29 grants.

The organization will award \$240,850 for its spring grants cycle, the most in its history and more than 10 percent higher than last year, when \$217,000 was awarded. The foundation also hopes to give more than \$800,000 by the end of the year.

More than 75 groups applied for grants, and ECF president Sara Schastok said the organization would have liked to give even more.

"This year it was really challenging," Schastok said. "We had more money than ever, but we didn't have enough, and the proposals were very strong this year so it was just a case of how far down the money would go."

The foundation awarded grants to 29 organizations that ranged from \$3,000 to \$13,000. The Midwest Child-Parent Centers Expansion, which offers educational support for low-income families with young children, received a \$15,000 grant as part of a special foundation initiative.

The foundation has a close relationship with Northwestern's Dance Marathon. It has been DM's secondary beneficiary for 16 years, and this year's marathon marked the passage of \$1,000,000 in total donations from DM to the foundation, with \$82,377 donated in 2013 alone.

Three of the 29 grants announced Thursday were funded with contributions from DM: \$3,000 to the Evanston School Children's Clothing Association, \$7,000 to Literacy Works and \$6,000 to the Children's Advocacy Center of North and Northwest Cook County.

DM's co-chairs for 2013 and 2014 attended Thursday's ceremony to announce the partnership will continue for DM and share the news that 2014's primary beneficiary will be Detroit-based Team Joseph, which seeks a cure for Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

"We're really proud to support what the Evanston Community Foundation does and also what all of you do," DM co-chair Anna Radoff, a Weinberg junior, said at the ceremony.

The DM co-chairs also serve on the foundation's 11-member grants committee. Committee co-chair Diana Cohen said DM brings a unique perspective to the grant process.

"It's immeasurable," Cohen said of DM's contributions to the foundation. "And it's not only the financial contribution, which is a very significant element of what we're able to do. The co-chairs bring a lot to the table. They really help focus some of the discussions and really do bring an important dimension to the rating."



Skylar Zhang/Daily Senior Staffer
Joan Gunzberg, the chair of the Evanston Community Foundation board, introduces ECF's 2013 grant awards Thursday evening at The North Shore Retirement Hotel. The foundation awarded 29 grants to different nonprofit organizations this year.