

**For Immediate Release:  
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**Junior League of Indianapolis awards \$125,000 to local nonprofits  
*Big Green Indianapolis receives largest grant, will use money in Perry Township Schools***

**INDIANAPOLIS** - Nine central Indiana organizations have more money to support their services thanks to the Junior League of Indianapolis (JLI). JLI awards grant money each December as part of its Community Assistance Grants program.

Three area nonprofits – Big Green Indianapolis, Indy Women in Tech (IWIT) and Visually Impaired Preschool Services (VIPS) – vied for the top spot in a pitch competition at JLI’s December membership meeting Thursday night. The winner earned \$50,000 and the two other organizations received \$20,000. JLI members voted for the grant recipients based on the project that best aligned with its current focus area of preparing students for academic success.

Big Green Indianapolis was this year’s top Community Assistance Grant winner. The organization, founded in 2011 by Kimbal Musk and Hugo Matheson, builds Learning Gardens, which are engaging outdoor classrooms that connect kids to real food, increase academic achievement and drive community engagement. Big Green Indianapolis will leverage JLI funds to build Learning Gardens at three Perry Township Elementary Schools and provide accompanying programmatic services. Its goal is to promote

youth wellness by building lifelong healthy eating habits for all children and prevent diet-related health disparities. The JLI’s grant will be matched by the Herbert Simon Family Foundation with an additional \$50,000, totaling \$100,000 towards Big Green’s services.



*Representatives from Big Green Indianapolis hold Community Assistance Grant check and stand with Junior League of Indianapolis members.*

“We are honored to receive the Community Assistance Grant from the Junior League of Indianapolis and the matching funds from the Herbert Simon Family Foundation,” said Megan Montague, Regional Executive Director for Big Green Indianapolis. “Simply put, people come together around food and we use that as an opportunity for education and growth with students and families. Big Green will use the money from the JLI to bring children together in our Learning Gardens and, paired with our robust educational programming, teach them how healthy eating leads to a healthier self.”

JLI’s \$20,000 grant awarded to IWIT will support two unique, highly engaging experiences for middle schoolers that spark students’ imaginations and lead to a love of science, technology, engineering and math - The Eureka Exchange and Ignite Your SuperPower.



JLI's \$20,000 grant awarded to VIPS will help create a Lending Library in the newly constructed VIPS Family Resource Center, where families can access education tools like storybooks written with tactile components, large print or braille.

Six other nonprofits received support from JLI's Community Assistance Grants Program:

- Fletcher Place Community Center - \$7,500
- Paws and Think, Inc - \$7,500
- Friends of Holliday Park, Inc. - \$5,000
- Indianapolis Public Library Foundation - \$5,000
- John Boner Neighborhood Centers - \$5,000
- St. Vincent Hospital Foundation - \$5,000

"JLI strives to be a catalyst for lasting change in the lives of children and their families in our community," said JLI president Patrice Dawson. "Since 2000, JLI has given more than \$1.89 million in Community Assistance Grants. This year's recipients are diverse organizations providing critical services to young people in central Indiana."

Click [here](#) to learn more about JLI's Community Assistance Grant program.

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#### **About Junior League of Indianapolis**

JLI is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.

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