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Big Sky Community Goes “ALL IN”

Big Sky Community Organization announces major contributor, unveils name of multi-use recreation space, and announces groundbreaking event after raising \$18.8 million

BIG SKY, Mont. (July 15, 2019) – Today the Big Sky Community Organization (BSCO) announced three major achievements in its “ALL IN. BIG SKY” campaign to create a multi-use community center and parkland. BSCO—a not-for-profit with a twenty-plus-year history of successfully promoting and improving Big Sky’s public recreational and enrichment opportunities—has been raising money to build a community space on 3.3 acres of land it purchased in the heart of town. The community center will be a much-needed place for everyone to gather, learn, and recreate, for today and tomorrow.

\$18.8 million in 9 months. BSCO has been encouraging everyone in Big Sky to get involved in the community space’s creation—whether through fundraising, showing up to support the cause, or simply spreading awareness. With extensive support from area residents, part-time residents, private club members, and partner organizations, that goal of full community participation is becoming a reality. BSCO has raised \$18.8 million in less than 9 months.

“Every gift counts,” says Ciara Wolfe, BSCO, Chief Executive Officer. “In a community as diverse as Big Sky, we recognize that individuals who live here or own a vacation property here come from all over the world, with all different backgrounds. However, this campaign shows that we have all come here for the same reasons—recreation, environment, family, and community. These values are the top priorities for every Big Sky donor I spoke with, no matter their size of gift or their residency status.”

“Projects like these would not be possible without our growing, diverse population and thriving local economy,” notes Wolfe. “This project will provide Big Sky with a permanent community

space that serves everyone, year-round—and we need all of us going ‘ALL IN’ to make that happen.”

Woodman Family Goes ALL IN. The Woodman Family—full-time Big Sky residents who moved here last year to raise their family in the place they love most—have gifted \$4 million from the Jill and Nicholas Woodman Foundation. “Jill and Nicholas Woodman, founders of GoPro, value family, embrace community, and have a true sense of adventure. With gratitude for the opportunities life has given them, their giving focuses on causes and communities to which they are truly connected. Another priority for the Woodmans is having their three young sons experience the positive impact we can all have on our community,” says Wolfe.

“We feel so lucky to call Big Sky home and contribute to the community-wide effort to make this center possible. Our mountain is awesome, but it’s the people of Big Sky that make this such a magical place. Having a gathering place will only make our community stronger and we’re beyond grateful to be a part of this amazing effort the Big Sky Community Organization has organized. We can’t for the doors to open!” says Nick Woodman.

“The Woodman’s gift is a significant contribution to the overall project. It also allows us to double the planned size of the center’s climbing wall for a total of 1,300 sq ft with 20 different top rope routes and a dedicated bouldering area, creating an exciting climbing gym for all ages and abilities. It will be similar to what you can find in other resort communities with populations three times the size of ours,” explains Wolfe. “This expansion is a direct reflection of our community’s adventurous spirit.”

In addition to the Woodman’s gift, BSCO received four other charitable gifts of at least \$1 million each and a \$1.5 million grant of public funds from the Big Sky Resort Area Tax District. “This campaign represents how Big Sky has evolved from a sometimes desolate and seasonal resort destination to a thriving community of thousands of committed, year-round residents and compassionate part-time residents, all of whom truly love this place and its people,” shares Wolfe. “Watching everyone come together and give what they are able towards a community-wide dream has been inspiring and shows the devotion we all have to strengthening our connections and cultivating ways to care for each other. This truly is a community-defining project.”

Building the BASE with ALL IN Support. In recognition of the Woodman’s gift, the building will be named BASE. The name represents opportunities for every individual in Big Sky to lead a healthy, happy, engaged lifestyle, building the base of the community, and also describes the experiences that people will have at the BASE: Big Adventures, Safe Environment.

Groundbreaking for BASE Scheduled for Saturday, July 27, 11 am. Opportunities to be involved in the creation of the BASE will continue throughout the summer, including the project’s groundbreaking on Saturday, July 27, 2019, at 11 a.m. Groundbreaking festivities will take place at the future site in the Big Sky Town Center on the corner of Aspen Drive and Simkins Drive. “Everyone is invited to celebrate what this community has achieved thus far as

we look ahead to raising the remaining funds needed,” says Wolfe. “Light refreshments, fare and shovels will be provided.”

\$1.2 Million Remaining to Reach \$20 Million Stretch Goal. BSCO originally aimed to fundraise \$17.5 million with the launch of its campaign in 2018. However, with escalating construction costs and unexpected infrastructure improvements on the parkland, it appeared that parts of the project would have to be cut in order to keep the project budget under \$17.5 million. However, the community’s contributions have addressed these shortfalls.

“Thanks to the generosity of so many in our community, we only have \$1.2 million to go to reach our stretch goal of \$20 million. These funds will allow us to not only get started on the full project this summer, but also purchase an additional 2.6 acres for future recreation facilities in the community for potential indoor aquatics, courts or field space,” states Wolfe. “Land is the most valuable asset in our community, so it is important we plan for not just current needs, but also have the parkland secured for future community needs. Achieving our stretch goal of \$20 million will allow this to happen.”

The money being raised will benefit residents, visitors, and area nonprofits, ensuring that public access to public spaces and recreational amenities keeps pace with area development. With just over \$1 million left in the fundraising campaign, BSCO encourages everyone to go ALL IN and do their part, creating a community space that is truly by and for all of Big Sky. For more information and to learn ways to get involved, visit <https://www.bscomt.org/all-in-big-sky>.

About the Community-Defining Project. The Big Sky Community Organization recognized the community’s existing gap in services and amenities and convened a volunteer advisory committee of engaged community leaders to spearhead the planning, design, and construction of the much-needed civic center. It will include both parkland and an indoor year-round facility.

Through its facilities and the organizations housed therein, the center will provide local access to art, culture, and environmental education, while supporting physically and mentally healthy lifestyles.

The space will offer:

- Recreational areas to house and facilitate a variety of indoor and outdoor sports, and art programs, affordable for all income and ability levels.
- Common spaces, meeting rooms, and office spaces which will house nonprofits and community resources.
- Community spaces available for organizations, and the general public, to help them meet their missions.
- Safe, welcoming, substance-free year-round environment for youth, inclusive of positive behavior role models.

The benefits of the community center will include:

- Youth recreation programs and out-of-school programs while parents are working.

- Accessibility for individuals and families of all income levels and ethnicity to spend time together, participate in programs, and recreate indoors year-round.
- Indoor space for parents to gather with their young children, who are not yet old enough for the school.
- Safe and positive environment for teens and young adults to spend time together participating in scheduled activities, skills programs, or indoor and outdoor activities, surrounded by friends and mentors.
- Environment to address prevalent behavioral and mental health issues including substance abuse and suicide/depression prevention through the creation of an empowering support network of on-grounds counseling and community-wide resources.
- Common community space which will house a variety of community resources, in addition to opportunities to participate in health and wellness activities, regardless of age or income level.

About The Big Sky Community Organization

For more than 20 years, the Big Sky Community Organization has been striving to serve Big Sky by creating exceptional facilities, trails, public spaces and experiences through community collaborations and recreational opportunities. Its mission—to engage and lead people to recreational and enrichment opportunities through thoughtful development of partnerships, programs and places—has to come to fruition through multiple successful initiatives including: Ousel Falls Open Space Park & Trailhead, Big Sky Community Park, RT & Ralph's Beehive Preserve, expansive community trail system, Camp Big Sky and more. All of these projects started as ideas, realized through community leadership, collaboration and philanthropy. To learn more about the Big Sky Community Organization, visit bscomt.org.

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