

## Caesars Foundation of Floyd County gives away \$318,247

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By JENNIFER R. WYATT— Residents of Floyd County can thank Caesars Indiana for more than slot machines, poker games, concerts and a Friday night seafood buffet.

The Caesars Foundation of Floyd County on Monday gave away 30 grants to nonprofit Floyd County organizations, totaling \$318,247 at the Providence Retirement Home Activities Center.

“We are giving away almost \$320,000 to charitable organizations to help them continue the good work they give to Floyd County,” said Jerry Finn, Caesars Foundation executive director.

Fifty organizations applied for grants, but only 30 could be awarded, and in those 30, the foundation contributed to the betterment of the community’s youth, elderly, families in need and history.

Cub Scout Pack 4036, Brandon’s House, Junior Achievement of Kentuckiana and public and private schools were a few of the organizations awarded grants to benefit the community’s youth.

New Albany-Floyd County Consolidated School Corp. and its schools also were given several grants.

Fairmont Elementary, S. Ellen Jones and the Children’s Academy of New Albany were awarded \$20,000 to maintain their summer camp program called “Bridge to Success.”

Georgetown Elementary School and Pine View Elementary School also received grants. The corporation itself was given \$14,000 to provide resources to counselors to help increase developmental assets in students.

The Muhammad Ali Center and Ogle Center at IU Southeast were awarded grants to provide Floyd County students with tours at the Muhammad Ali Center and free admission to performances held at the Ogle Center.

“We’re so pleased,” said Teresa Perkins, assistant superintendent for NA-FC schools. “I don’t think New Albany-Floyd County Schools has had a year with the Caesars Foundation this strong. We’re just so grateful to the foundation, they really help us help kids.”

The elderly, disabled and needy families gained help from the foundation through groups such as LifeSpan Resources Inc., LifeSprings, New Albany Floyd County Habitat for Humanity and New Directions Housing Corp., who were all awarded with grant money.

After investing in the community’s people, the foundation looked to invest in the community’s history by awarding four grants to organizations whose goals involve preserving historical locations or educating the community of its history.

For the first time, the Floyd County Historical Society received a grant from the foundation. The organization had applied before, but had not been accepted until Monday’s event.

“After four tries I was very, very excited,” said Dave Barksdale, president of the Floyd County Historical Society. “We’re receiving funding to help with the cost of two Indiana State Historical Markers. The two markers we applied for through the Indiana Historical Bureau were approved and the first one is going to be placed at the Children’s Academy, the site of an African-American School that was hit by the 1917 tornado in New Albany.”

The other marker will be at Culbertson Avenue and Pearl Street to remember one of the first railroads in Indiana — the New Albany-Salem Railroad.

In five years, Caesars Indiana has given the foundation \$20 million and the foundation has contributed \$10.1 million to the community through grants. The foundation also helps the community with scholarships and community initiatives.

“We’re so grateful to Caesar’s Indiana,” Finn said. “Without their funding, we wouldn’t be able to provide grants like this to the community. They’ve been a great corporate partner in so many ways, not just funding. “There are volunteers on my board who are really deeply committed. You can give away a lot of money but without the commitment of leaders we wouldn’t be able to do half of what we do.”

Caesar’s Foundation Grant Recipients

1. Cub Scout Pack 4036
2. Floyd County Historical Society
3. Friends of Division Street School
4. Indiana Youth Institute
5. Mary Anderson Center
6. Piankeshaw Chapter DAR
7. Carnegie Center for Art and History
8. Georgetown Elementary School
9. Southern Indiana YMCA DIAMONDS
10. Develop New Albany
11. Holy Family School
12. Brandon's House Counseling Center
13. Pine View Elementary School
14. Muhammad Ali Center
15. Friends of the Culbertson Mansion
16. Junior Achievement of Kentuckiana
17. Floyd County CAPE Project
18. Floyd County Juvenile Probation
19. St. Paul's Episcopal Church
20. New Albany Floyd County School Corporation
21. Hispanic Ministry of New Albany
22. Rauch, Inc.
23. Ogle Center at IUS
24. LifeSpan Resources, Inc.
25. Life Spring, Inc.
26. Floyd County Youth Services Bureau
27. St. Elizabeth's Catholic Charities
28. New Albany Floyd County Habitat for Humanity
29. New Directions Housing Corp.
30. Children's Academy, Fairmont, S. Ellen Jones Schools

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#### Photos



Vic Megenity, right, and Jim Adams of Friends of Division Street accept a grant from Beverly Crump on behalf of the Caesars Foundation Monday evening inside the new activities center at Providence Retirement Home. Staff photo by Kevin McGloshen