

Carlos Vega Fund for Social Justice Invites Applications for the 13th Round of Mini Grants

2024 marks the 13th year of The Carlos Vega Fund for Social Justice mini grants.

Local non-profits and individuals are invited to apply for funding between March 19th and the April 19th deadline, by completing the application form available at www.carlosvegafund.org. All applicants must have either 501(c)(3) status or be fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) organization.

For more than forty years, Carlos Vega fought for social justice in the Greater Holyoke area. In 2010, a small group of family and friends started the Fund to support the kind of social justice initiatives that were important to Carlos.

This year, the Carlos Vega Fund for Social Justice has increased the grant amount to up to \$2,000, used for a specific, one-time program or project that focuses on the fundamental primary causes of injustice, fosters change, and promotes self-help and empowerment.

The purpose of the grants is to support the efforts of those who are addressing issues of poverty and oppression, and involve people who are socially and economically marginalized in the Greater Holyoke area.

The CVFSJ has funded a wide variety of organizations and projects over the years. Here are just a few examples of the projects we have supported:

- The purchase of educational materials for migrants and refugees learning English at The Gray House in Springfield.
- The creation of a Puerto Rican and Latinx History, Culture, and Social Movements collection at the Holyoke Public Library.
- Holyoke Safe Neighborhood Initiative's Back To School event, which provides backpacks and school supplies to Holyoke youth.
- Plunge Arts, an arts summer camp for girls involved with Girls, Inc.
- Granby-To-Go, a food pantry for students in the Granby Public Schools.
- Support for a community garden remodeling project for Nuestras Raices.

Previous mini grants have supported a variety of other organizations including: Clinical and Support Options, Enchanted Circle Theater, Girls Inc. of the Valley and Plunge Arts, First Shift Productions, Granby Public Schools, The Gray House, Holyoke Public Schools, Holyoke Safe Neighborhood Initiative, Holyoke Senior Center and Western Mass Elder Care, Home City Development, OneHolyoke CDC, The Performance Project, Lorraine's Kitchen in Chicopee, Treehouse, Seeds of a Father, and Wistariahurst Museum.

The Carlos Vega Fund for Social Justice is administered through the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts and is overseen by an advisory committee. Since 2012, the Fund has awarded over \$63,000 to fifty-two organizations in the greater Holyoke area.

In addition to our spring grant cycle, the Carlos Vega Fund advisory board is looking to the fall of 2024 to name our 10th Carlos Vega Social Justice Award.

Our deadline for applications to be received is April 19th 2024 by 5pm. We expect to award grant funding on May 12, 2024. Grantees are expected to participate in the awards ceremony.

For further information and/or to obtain an application, please visit the Carlos Vega Fund for Social Justice website at <http://www.carlosvegafund.org/> or contact Aaron Vega at carlosvegafund.413@gmail.com.