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Community Shares of Wisconsin: The Big Share was a big success Campaign supports nonprofits working for a just recovery

Madison, WI – On Tuesday, March 2, Community Shares of Wisconsin's seventh annual fundraising campaign, The Big Share® raised over \$698,601 for 70 member nonprofits that work for social and environmental justice. This year's campaign focused entirely on virtual events, personal fundraising webpages and outreach, and building on the urgency of community needs during the COVID crisis.

"While we are blown away by the generosity of donors, we see this as a clear message that people want to support efforts to rebuild from the COVID crisis in a way that makes equality, justice, and climate protection a priority," said Community Shares of Wisconsin Executive Director Cheri Dubiel. "This advocacy work is already being done by Community Shares member nonprofits and now they all have a boost of donations – large and small – to keep working for a just recovery."

The campaign raised significantly more than its goal of \$500,000. Donors are still contributing and will likely surpass \$700,000. The campaign's website will continue to be live to take donations through March 8. As of Wednesday afternoon, the campaign raised over \$698,601 from 4,726 donors who gave to 71 participating organizations, including Community Shares of Wisconsin. In 2020, the campaign raised \$456,135 from 3,091 individuals who gave to 65 participating organizations.

Fundraising records were shattered throughout the day as Community Shares held a virtual telethon online for The Big Share Live. The campaign's massive success was due to the efforts of individuals who set up personal fundraising pages at TheBigShare.org and asked their friends and family through social media, texts and emails to give. Fundraising prizes from sponsors gave a boost to participating nonprofits that raised the most and had the most individuals donate during Power Hours throughout the day. Match Minute dollar-for-dollar matching challenges as well as individual member organizations' matches encouraged more donors to give.

Grand prizes were awarded by Madison Community Foundation including \$1000 to Freedom, Inc for raising the most dollars during The Big Share at \$47,799.13 along with a \$500 grand prize awarded to GSAFE for having the most donors with 684 contributors.

This year, three new member groups participated in The Big Share for the first time. Urban Triage raised \$19,912, Natural Circles of Support raised \$2,873, and Inspire Barber College raised \$1,100 for their work. Summit Credit Union issued each group a \$500 matching challenge to support of reaching their fundraising goals.

"The Big Share has been a tremendous gift at the start of Community Shares' 50th anniversary year. We are proud to continue to be a hub for the social justice causes you care about most," said Dubiel.

The Big Share's 2021 presenting sponsor is Madison Community Foundation. Media sponsors included News 3 Now, Triple MMM 105.5, and Madison 365.

Since 1971, Community Shares of Wisconsin and its members have worked together to advance social justice and protect the environment in Wisconsin. Together they envision a future where people come together to ensure every member of their community is safe, healthy, and able to thrive.