

Cummings Foundation awards 60 grants of \$100,000 to not-for-profits

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Cummings Foundation, the principal beneficiary of the earnings of commercial real estate firm Cummings Properties, recently distributed 60 grants of \$100,000 each to a diverse group of greater Boston not-for-profits. The \$6 million in awards were made during the first grant cycle of OneWorld Boston, the Foundation's new grant-making affiliate.

According to Cummings Properties' president and CEO, Dennis Clarke, the aim is to give back to the areas where the firm operates and most of its employees live. The grants program directed funds to charities based primarily in eastern Middlesex County, with some funding going to organizations in southern Essex and Suffolk counties.

Founded by Bill Cummings in 1969, Cummings Properties manages more than 10 million s/f of office, lab, and medical space in 10 suburban Boston communities. Its largest and most well known campuses include the landmark TradeCenter 128 in Woburn and the 2 million s/f Cummings Center in Beverly.

Clarke said, "The funding comes from the real estate side of the organization, and so we feel strongly about supporting the communities and people who have supported Cummings Properties over the years."

Despite no formal announcement about the new grant-maker, it received 203 proposals between January and April. Due to this overwhelming number of requests for funding, OneWorld Boston awarded \$1 million more than originally planned for this year. The majority of the grants will be paid over one to three years.

A wide variety of causes were represented among the grant recipients, including healthcare, education, social justice, and underserved populations. (See sidebar for a complete list of all grant recipients.)

OneWorld Boston's next grant cycle will open this fall. Instructions and eligibility requirements are available at www.CummingsFoundation.org. Letters of inquiry will be accepted, and select organizations will then be invited to submit applications. In 2013, a total of \$10 million will be awarded through 100 grants of \$100,000 each.

Established by Bill Cummings and his wife, Joyce, in 1986, Cummings Foundation has grown to one of the largest charitable foundations in New England, with current assets just exceeding \$1 billion. In May 2011, the Cummings became the first family in Massachusetts to sign the Giving Pledge, joining the likes of Warren Buffett and Bill and Melinda Gates in publicly declaring to give away more than half their wealth to philanthropic causes.