



**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Karen Frost  
Tel: 512.451.7770  
Cell: 512.423.2406  
kfrost@frostmedia.com

## **IMPACT AUSTIN ANNOUNCES 2009 FINALISTS Five Out of Ten Austin-Area Nonprofits Will Receive a \$102,000 Grant**

**Austin, TX – May 19, 2009** – Impact Austin, a local philanthropic group of women, announces the ten finalists for its 2009 grant cycle. There are 510 women in Impact Austin for 2009, which results in five \$102,000 grants. On Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup> at Congregation Agudus Achim at the Dell Jewish Community Center, members will attend the annual meeting to determine the final five community partners, or grant recipients. With these grants, Impact Austin will have put over \$2 million to work in the community to benefit local area projects since 2004.

“When you think that in just six years, 20 Austin area nonprofits have received a grant of no less than \$100,000, it makes you stop and realize that the power of collective giving can be life changing for not just one life, but thousands,” said Rebecca Powers, Impact Austin’s founder and President.

Each year Impact Austin considers proposals in five focus areas: culture, education, environment, family, and health and wellness. The finalists are chosen by focus area committees who evaluate proposals and conduct site visits before making their recommendations to the general membership.

The check presentation for the five community partners will be throughout the day on Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup> at the headquarters of the five community partners.

The ten 2009 finalists and their proposed use of Impact Austin’s grant money are:

### **EDUCATION**

Organization: GENaustin

Project: clubGEN/Girls NOW!

GENaustin (the Girls Empowerment Network) aims to foster healthy self-esteem in girls by engaging them to explore and define their personal values and to build skills that empower them with confidence and courage to make wise choices. GENaustin seeks Impact Austin funds to expand to four additional middle schools in the area, where they will offer the clubGEN after-school program and the in-school Girls NOW! Speaker series.

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## **Education cont.**

Organization: Austin Children's Shelter

Project: New Library for Austin Children's Shelter

The Austin Children's Shelter is an emergency shelter offering a safe haven for children who are removed from their homes due to life-threatening abuse or neglect. The organization's goal is to reduce the emotional trauma suffered by these children and to lay a foundation of hope for a better future. The Austin's Children's Shelter will use Impact Austin funds to create a library for the young people in their care and to foster a successful learning environment, aiming to improve both reading skills and grades. The library will house a collection that provides leisure reading as well as supplementary material for their school curriculum.

## **CULTURE**

Organization: Boys and Girls Club Austin Area

Project: Art Attack

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Austin Area provides programs and services that promote and enhance the development of boys and girls by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and influence. The Boys & Girls Club organization will spend the Impact Austin funds to establish a new Fine Arts Program for providing an intensive, in-depth arts education for its members at 11 school sites and three neighborhood clubs. Members will gain knowledge and appreciation of visual arts, crafts, performing and literary arts and more and eventually can enter the regional and national Boys & Girls Clubs arts contests, as well as participate in exhibits at their clubs.

Organization: Ballet East Dance

Project: Eastside Dance Academy

Ballet East Dance Theatre brings art to the community and the community to the arts. The organization provides platforms for the development of dancers and choreographers, repertoire expansion and a reinvestment in the infrastructure of underserved communities through aggressive community programming, public and private partnerships.

Ballet East Dance Company seeks funding from Impact Austin to build a dance program at East Side Memorial High School which will help draw and hold students in school by offering them the opportunity to connect to a positive group activity, attract attention by acquiring the self-discipline, skills, and confidence to perform, and help them see and plan beyond their present circumstances.

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

Organization: Sustainable Food Center

Project: Sprouting Healthy Communities

Sustainable Food Center (SFC) cultivates a healthy community by strengthening the local food system and improving access to nutritious, affordable food. SFC will spend Impact Austin funds for Sprouting Healthy Communities, an expansion of their Sprouting Healthy Kids initiative. Using partner schools as hubs, SFC will expand services into the surrounding neighborhoods, establishing community gardens, providing food-gardening training, distributing gardening resources such as seeds and compost, facilitating distribution of excess produce through food pantries, leading healthy cooking classes and nutrition demonstrations, operating farm stands, coordinating inclusion of fresh local food in school cafeterias and providing in-class and after-school gardening and nutrition lessons and activities in underserved middle schools.

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**Health and Wellness cont.:**

Organization: People’s Community Clinics

Project: Healthy Babies Initiative

People’s Community Clinic operates as a full-service primary care provider for adult services, family planning, prenatal, adolescent, and pediatric clients. The organization’s mission is to provide high quality medical, counseling and health education services at reasonable costs to individuals and families in the Austin area. People’s Community Clinic will use Impact Austin funds for the Healthy Babies Initiative which will expand their existing efforts to improve the health of the children in the community by providing weekly Saturday pediatric clinics and a program to increase the number of nursing mothers among their patients.

**FAMILY**

Organization: FamilyConnections

Project: Family Matters

FamilyConnections is a non-profit organization committed to improving the development of young children and building a strong foundation for their success by educating and supporting the adults in their lives - parents, child care providers, teachers and community leaders. FamilyConnections will use Impact Austin funding to establish the Family Matters Project. With the support and collaboration of the Travis County Sheriff’s Office, this project will serve incarcerated mothers and fathers by providing them parenting classes and supervised visits with their children.

Organization: Capital Idea

Project: Rural Workforce

Capital IDEA lifts working families out of poverty by sponsoring educational services that lead to life-long financial independence. Capital IDEA seeks funding from Impact Austin to expand their program to rural residents in Central Texas. The Rural Workforce project will transform the lives of up to 50 families living in poverty in rural Travis, Williamson, Bastrop and Hays counties by sponsoring education and providing personal development assistance to the heads of household so that they can obtain a degree or certification toward a career that pays a true living wage and offers benefits.

**ENVIRONMENT**

Organization: Youth Launch

Project: Urban Roots

YouthLaunch develops empowering service programs for young people through which they gain new knowledge and skills, form positive and influential bonds with peers and adult role models, improve their self-esteem, and develop a strong sense of social responsibility. YouthLaunch will use the Impact Austin funds to take their Urban Roots project from a pilot to a sustainable program positioned for future growth. Urban Roots is a youth development program using sustainable agriculture to affect lasting change for participants and to nourish East Austin residents with limited access to healthy foods. On an urban organic farm, Urban Roots provides employment, life and job skills, and service opportunities to underserved youth aged 14-18 in East Austin.

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**Environment cont.**

Organization: Travis Audubon Society

Project: Indiangrass Project: Reconnecting to the Blackland Prairie

Travis Audubon Society works to promote habitat and species protection, to educate the Central Texas community about the environment, its fragility and the pressures it faces from rapid growth, and to build partnerships to leverage and coordinate conservation and education efforts for the benefit of the Central Texas community. TAS seeks funding from Impact Austin for a pilot project to restore 20 acres of native Blackland prairie grassland on the City's 200-acre Indiangrass Wildlife Preserve in east Austin, a project that would be done in conjunction with the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department and the Native Prairie Association of Texas.

For interviews with the nonprofit community partners or Rebecca Powers, president and founder of Impact Austin, contact – Karen Frost, 512.451.7770 or [kfrost@frostmedia.com](mailto:kfrost@frostmedia.com).

*Impact Austin is a 501(c)(3) public charity made up of women seeking to transform lives in the Austin area through high-impact and lifelong giving. The only membership requirements are to be female and donate \$1,000 each year. Impact Austin combines the annual donations from members and gives large grants each year to local worthy causes selected by the members. Grant applications are accepted in each of the following focus areas: culture, environment, education, family, and health and wellness. Collectively, we are changing the face of philanthropy in Austin [www.impact-austin.org](http://www.impact-austin.org).*