



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -- West Springfield, MA

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**EASTERN STATES EXPOSITION DONATES \$240,198
TO THE BIG E/WEST SPRINGFIELD TRUST FUND**
Largest Donation to Date

Eastern States Exposition President and CEO, Eugene J. Cassidy presented a donation of \$240,198 to The Big E/West Springfield Trust Fund, in a special ceremony held at Town Hall April 18. The amount, the largest to date since the fund's inception in 1994, represents 1% of the Exposition's gross revenues for 2017.

Cassidy, said, "The Exposition is a long-time supporter of its hometown and maintains this fund to help youth and the elderly as well as benefit education for our children. I encourage every town agency or qualifying organization to apply for a Big E/West Springfield grant to defray the costs of important projects."

"Maintaining this fund for the betterment of the quality of life in our town is of the utmost importance to the Exposition. We hope more qualifying agencies, services, schools and centers apply for grant dollars to supplement their efforts."

Including this year's gift, Exposition contributions now total \$3,999,669. During the presentation of this year's check, Cassidy pledged a personal donation of \$331 to bring the total to an even \$4 million. Trustees of the Fund are: West Springfield Mayor William Reichelt, Cassidy, and Attorney Mary Paier Powers.

2017 grants totaled more than \$63,209 for 15 town organizations, schools and sports teams and more including:

- West Springfield Boys & Girls Club for indoor program space, renovations & improvement
- West Springfield Park & Recreation for sports registration fee waivers for participants who show a need
- Ecumenical Outreach for monthly and holiday meals; care packages for the homeless
- Lions Club for a tribute to Veterans, flags and scholarships
- St. Thomas the Apostle School to update library, three computers and encyclopedia
- West Springfield Alternative School for a field trip to Salem, Mass.
- West Springfield High School for matching basketball sneakers for all levels, AED trainer, Girls Varsity Track & Field uniforms and equipment
- YMCA of Greater Springfield for Birch Park amenities and activities

2017 ESE town payments totaled \$1,629,504:

Real Estate Taxes	\$	414,616
Police Protection		452,515
Fire Protection & Ambulance Service		313,596
Water & Sewer Fees		152,777
Licenses & Fees		63,543
Inspectors		9,324
Excise Taxes		1,748
	\$	<u>1,408,119</u>
2017 Big E/W. Springfield Trust Fund donation (1% of 2016 revenues)	\$	<u>221,385</u>
Total	\$	1,629,504

In 2017, the Exposition waived rental and parking fees for horse and agricultural shows as well as special events such as West Springfield High School graduation and the town's Summer Concert Series on Storowton Village Green. Town residents also receive free parking for year-round events.

In-kind services and donations include providing free Big E admission for all town students on West Springfield Day, a value of over \$53,580. In addition, ESE loans and transported its ticket booths to the town for use by the Rotary Club and Town of West Springfield at West Side's Taste of the Valley and provided sponsorship and marketing support.

Grant applications are due May 7 and are available online at TownofWestSpringfield.org, or in the Mayor's Office, 26 Central Street, Second Floor, West Springfield, Mass.

Eastern States Exposition is a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit federally designated corporation committed to excellence in providing year-round opportunities for the development and promotion of agriculture, education, industry and family entertainment. It is host to more than 100 annual events and the largest fair in the Northeast.

Dates for the 2018 Big E are Sept. 14-30. Visit TheBigE.com for information, join our mailing list, and follow us on social media.