PRC 3-05-2026

Item No.4
2026-2027 Community Funding Grant Applications and Program Evaluation Process

Written Communications

Lindsay Nelson

From: Dennis Whittaker <denwhittak@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2026 6:58 PM
To: City of Cupertino Parks and Recreation Commission; Community Funding; Aurturo Thiele-Sardina; David Han
Subject: Speech for Grant Presentation from American Legion Post 642

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you for allowing our American Legion Stevens Creek Post 642 to Apply for theCity Grant.

Our Post has been supporting Cupertino and Veterans for 67 years. We are a 'not for profit' 501 C 19 organization.

For the past 10 years, our Post has sponsored the local "Wreaths Across America" program in conjunction with the nationwide celebration on the same December date set by the official Wreaths Across America organization.

Our event focuses on our military veterans who served and who have since passed on to a "Higher Mission," and who are buried at our local Gate of Heaven Cemetery.

Wreaths Across America, a nationally recognized program, commenced in December, 2008 at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington D.C.

Our Post became involved in 2015 when over 1100 cemeteries participated nationwide on the same December day. In 2026, it is expected that more than 5500+ cemeteries will be involved on December 19th.

This event involves wreaths, manufactured in New England, and then transported across our nation to participating cemeteries.

According to the Gate of Heaven Cemetery, there are 1935 veterans currently buried . The cost to cover all veteran's gravesites will exceed $32,000+ ($17.00 per wreath). For the past 10 years, we, on the average, have only raised $13,000+ with the exception of last year's event where we exceeded $16,000+ towards our goal.

We have previously advertised at our city's annual Veterans Day event at the Cupertino Veterans Memorial. We have promoted our event in various cities at Council Meetings. We have also applied , unsuccessfully , for a local grant. We have further requested and received funds from local community service clubs, local military-related non-profit organizations,local churches, our business community, and families of loved ones buried at the cemetery.

Due to our continued shortfall, and, in order to follow the Mission of the National Wreaths Across America program..."Remember, Honor, and Teach," we respectfully request help for this year's program to reach our ultimate goal of covering all veterans gravesites at our event.

We desire to honor those, who over the years, have sacrificed and "signed a contract with our nation with a blank check made payable to the United States of America for an amount of up to and including their life."

Thank you.

Lindsay Nelson

From: Ethan Hu <ethan.hu0405@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 8:05 AM
To: City of Cupertino Parks and Recreation Commission
Subject: Support for Teens Talk Grant Application

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Cupertino Parks and Recreation Commission,

I am writing as a participant of the 2025 CuperTeens Got Laughs event, which was organized by Teens Talk, to respectfully express my support for the approval of their application. I really enjoy performing at CuperTeens Got Laughs. (https://youtu.be/rw5aUREvNsY?si=l3iya3I5Z8j0-Jv9)

Teens Talk has created meaningful events for students in our community. Through events like CuperTeens Got Laughs, students can express themselves, talk about personal challenges, and support one another. Events like this are very valuable because they are organized by students, for students. They help young people feel heard and connected in a safe and supportive environment.

Because the program is student-led, covering the regular event rental fees for facilities can be very difficult. Many of the organizers are volunteers who are dedicating their time and energy simply because they care about helping their peers. If the organization must cover operational costs on its own, it may become too difficult for the program to continue operating.

Many participants, including myself, truly hope this program can continue. It has already made a positive impact on many students, and losing it would be a real loss for our community.

I respectfully ask the Commission to consider approving the Teens Talk Grant Application so that this valuable student-led program and CuperTeens Got Laughs events can continue serving Cupertino's youth this year.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Ethan Hu from Miller Middle School (CUSD)

Lindsay Nelson

From: Sillicon Valley Comedy Club <silliconvalleycomedyclub@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 8:46 AM
To: City of Cupertino Parks and Recreation Commission
Subject: Support for Teens Talk Grant Application

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Honorable Cupertino Parks and Recreation Commission,

My name is Richard Yan, and I had the pleasure of being a guest performer at the 2025 CuperTeens Got Laughs event organized by Teens Talk Foundation. I am writing to express my support for the approval of their grant. (https://youtu.be/flYbaWaMu5Q?si=iP1ZfupX_YzqBlEq)

Participating in the event was a wonderful experience. It brought together local teens and community members in a supportive environment. Events like this give young people a rare opportunity to express themselves creatively, build confidence, and connect with others in meaningful ways. Seeing so many students step onto the stage and share their talents showed how valuable this platform is for youth in our community.

What makes this program especially meaningful is that it is organized largely by students. The organizers dedicate significant time and energy to creating positive opportunities for their peers. However, covering regular facility rental fees can be a major challenge for a student-led program.

I sincerely hope the Commission will consider approving the grant so that Teens Talk can continue hosting events like CuperTeens Got Laughs. These programs create positive spaces for teens and strengthen community connections.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard Yan

Lindsay Nelson

From: FOOD6U <food6u@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 9:01 AM
To: City of Cupertino Parks and Recreation Commission
Subject: Support for Teens Talk or CuperTeens Got Laughs Program Grant

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Parks and Recreation Commissioners,

I am a Cupertino resident, and I happened to see a flyer for this event at the Cupertino Library. Since it was a free program hosted at the library, our family decided to attend after our visit on Sunday, November 23, 2025.

We did not expect such a large turnout and were lucky to find seats before the Community Hall was full. The performances were truly impressive. We saw students from different organizations and school clubs take the stage, and many of them added humor and creative elements to their performances. It was inspiring to see how talented and imaginative our local teens are.

After the event, my child, a 9th grader who was very shy at Monta Vista High School, told me that she would love to participate in something like this in the future. It felt like discovering a hidden gem in our community.

We sincerely hope this wonderful program can continue in 2026 and beyond. I understand that the event relies on Cupertino City support to operate, and I respectfully write to express my hope that funding will be approved so this meaningful program can continue to benefit our community.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Best wishes,
Shasha Liao - Resident and Parent of a student in

Cupertino

Lindsay Nelson

From: Arturo Thiele-Sardina <arturo@cadiz.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 7:42 PM
To: Dennis Whittaker
Cc: City of Cupertino Parks and Recreation Commission; Community Funding; David Han
Subject: Re: Speech for Grant Presentation from American Legion Post 642
Attachments: Cupertino Parks and Recreation Grant Preso_Ver.C.pptx

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Dennis

This looks good, thanks for putting this together.

Here are a couple of changes in bold **red font**

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NEXT SLIDE

For the past 10 years, our Post has sponsored the local "Wreaths Across America" program in conjunction with the nationwide celebration on the same December date set by the official Wreaths Across America organization.

Our event focuses on our military veterans who served and who have since passed on to a "Higher Mission," and who are buried at our local Gate of Heaven Cemetery.

Wreaths Across America, a nationally recognized program, commenced in December, 2008 at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington D.C.

Our Post became involved in **2016** when over 1100 cemeteries participated nationwide on the same December day. In 2026, it is expected that more than 5500+ cemeteries will be involved on December 19th.

This event involves wreaths, manufactured in New England, and then transported across our nation to participating cemeteries.

According to the Gate of Heaven Cemetery, there are 1935 veterans currently buried .

NEXT SLIDE

The cost to cover all veteran's gravesites will exceed $32,000+ ($17.00 per wreath). For the past 10 years, we, on the average, have only raised $13,000+ with the exception of last year's event where we exceeded $16,000+ towards our goal.

We have previously advertised at our city's annual Veterans Day event at the Cupertino Veterans Memorial. We have promoted our event in various cities at Council Meetings. We have also applied , unsuccessfully , for a local grant. We have further requested and received funds from local community service clubs, local military-related non-profit organizations,local churches, our business community, and families of loved ones buried at the cemetery.

NEXT SLIDE

Due to our continued shortfall, and, in order to follow the Mission of the National Wreaths Across America program..."Remember, Honor, and Teach," we respectfully request help for this year's program to reach our ultimate goal of covering all veterans gravesites at our event.

We desire to honor those, who over the years, have sacrificed and "signed a contract with our nation with a blank check made payable to the United States of America for an amount of up to and including their life."

Thank you.

Regards,

ATS

On Tue, Mar 3, 2026 at 6:58 PM Dennis Whittaker <denwhittak@gmail.com> wrote:

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Thank you.

Cupertino Community Funding Grant Program

American Legion Post 642 (Stevens Creek) Cupertino

Wreaths Across America (WAA) Ceremony

Dennis Whittaker-WAA Chairperson

Our Organization

- Post 642 was founded in 1959
- Non profit 501C (19) Organization
- Has been financially supporting Veterans and community in the following areas
  - Boy Scout Troops
  - Local High School Juniors for the American Legion Boys/Girls State Summer Program
  - De Anza College Student Veterans Scholarships and food pantry
  - Fisher House and Defenders Lodge at Palo Alto VA
  - 10 Kirk Ave. Homeless Veterans Site
  - Veterans Day Program at Cupertino Memorial Park
  - California Veterans Home in Yountville, CA
  - Paws for Purple Hearts

AMERICAN LEGION

WREATHS across AMERICA

Wreaths Across America Ceremony

- Since 2016 Post 642 has locally sponsored “Wreaths Across America“
- Honors Military Veterans who served and are buried at our local Gate of Heaven Cemetery
- Wreaths Across America, started December 2008 at Arlington National Cemetery
- Our first year (2016), only 1100 cemeteries across the nation participated on the same December day.
- In 2025 over 1,100 wreaths placed at Gate of Heaven by local scout units and community volunteers
- In 2026 projected 5400+ cemeteries will be involved in the event
- Wreaths are manufactured in Maine, transported to all participating ceremonies by volunteer truckers
- Currently 1935 Veterans are buried at Gate of Heaven Cemetery

AMERICAN LEGION

WREATHS across AMERICA

Wreaths Across America Funding

- Total cost for Wreaths is $32,895
  - $17 per wreath x 1985 = $32,895
  - $5 of wreath costs returned to Post and spent on Veterans and Veteran programs in the community

- Historically donations are $13,000 yearly, last year we received $16,000

- Past and present local and community sponsors have been:
  - Plumbers, Steamfitters and Refrigeration Fitters UA Local Union 393
  - Vietnams Veterans of America Inc #201
  - Cupertino DeAnza Lions Charities, Inc
  - Cupertino Rotary
  - Knights of Columbus St. Francis of Assisi Council #4981
  - VFW Mission Santa Clara Post 3982
  - United Veterans Council of Santa Clara County

- Goal is to place wreaths on all Veterans graves, and therefore are seeking assistance through your grant program

AMERICAN LEGION

WREATHS across AMERICA

Wreaths Across America Funding

- Marketing and Communications Strategy
  - Previously advertised at the annual Veterans Day event at the Cupertino Veterans Memorial
  - Have spoken publicly at various city council meetings
  - Applied unsuccessfully for other local grants.
  - Requested funds from families of loved ones at the cemetery
  - Seeking help throughout our business community
  - Publicized event and donations via
    - Post Web Site
    - Flyers
    - Next Door
    - Local publications
    - Social Media
    - Veteran, Church and community organizations

AMERICAN LEGION

WREATHS across AMERICA

Wreaths Across America

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- We respectfully offer our grant request to help this year's program reach the ultimate goal to cover all veterans gravesites at this year's December 19th event.

- We want to honor all who , over the years, have "sacrificed and signed a contract with our Nation with a blank check made payable to the United States of America for an amount of up to and including their life.

AMERICAN LEGION

WREATHS across AMERICA

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WREATHS across AMERICA

From:	Dennis Whittaker
To:	Aurturo Thiele-Sardina; City of Cupertino Parks and Recreation Commission; CupertinoFunding@cupertino.gov
Subject:	Fwd: WAA Slide Deck for Cupertino Community Funding Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting
Date:	Wednesday, March 4, 2026 8:33:16 PM
Attachments:	Cupertino Parks and Recreation Grant Preso_Final_Version.pptx

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---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Arturo Thiele-Sardina** <arturo@cadiz.com>
Date: Wed, Mar 4, 2026 at 8:25 PM
Subject: WAA Slide Deck for Cupertino Community Funding Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting
To: <denwhittak@gmail.com>

Dennis

Attached is the final version of the slide deck for tomorrow's meeting. Please forward this to the Parks and Recreation Commission for the WAA presentation tomorrow.

Regards,

Arturo

Cupertino Community Funding Grant Program

American Legion Post 642 (Stevens Creek) Cupertino

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