

Mental health focus of Vail CEO's donations

Agencies that deal with mental health are benefiting from the generosity of Vail Resorts CEO Rob Katz and his wife, Elana Amsterdam.

The couple created the a charitable organization in October with funding of approximately \$58 million.

Katz and Amsterdam worked with local community leaders and Vail Resorts employees to identify that mental health and drug and alcohol abuse were some of the most important issues that need to be addressed in these local towns, cities and counties.

Nationwide, suicide is the second leading cause of death in youth ages 14-25, and mountain resort communities are not immune to this disturbing trend. In surveys conducted in the resort communities by various organizations, many residents indicated they don't know where to turn for help if they have a mental health issue and if they did know where to turn for help, frequent barriers such as cost, perceived stigma and language prevented them from seeking treatment. Vail Resorts offers mental health and substance abuse counseling to all of its seasonal and year-round employees.

Beginning in the new year, the couple will be bringing on philanthropic advisors to help design a grant-making process, facilitate community engagement, and ensure the greatest impact for the resources available from the new charitable fund. A grant process for the charitable fund will be announced in the spring.

Until the, the charitable fund will be making contributions to the following nonprofits that focus on mental health issues in the communities where the company operates.

- \$55,000 – Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation in Truckee. This grant will fund the Community House Consolidation, community-based organizations that work to consolidate, maximize and streamline their mental health services; mental health vouchers for counseling services distributed through Family Resource Centers; What's Up Wellness, which provides depression screening and follow-up services to high school students; and Whole Hearts Through Gateway, a nature-based therapeutic program designed to support the most at-risk youth.
- \$100,000 – Boulder Community Health in Boulder, Colo.
- \$100,000 – Eagle County School District with MindSprings, Early Childhood Partners and Our Community Foundation in Eagle County, Colo.
- \$100,000 – The Summit Foundation in Summit County, Colo.
- \$100,000 – Jewish Family Service, Christian Center of Park City and the Summit County Health Department in Summit County, Utah.
- \$100,000 – Whistler Community Services Society in Whistler, B.C., Canada.
- \$100,000 – U.S. Ski & Snowboard, Park City, Utah.