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Outpost to present \$30K grant to Walnut Way Conservation Corp

[Milwaukee, WI] Outpost Natural Foods is excited to announce a \$30,000 grant to the Walnut Way Conservation Corp. The presentation of this grant will take place Saturday, October 1, between noon and 1:00, during Walnut Way's Harvest Day. The event, an annual celebration of the summer's harvest, will run from noon to 4 p.m. in the 2200 block of North 17th Street.

Serving the greater Milwaukee area since 1970, Outpost Natural Foods Cooperative operates three successful locations at 100 East Capitol Drive, Milwaukee, 7000 W. State St., Wauwatosa, and 2826 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., Milwaukee. Co-owned by nearly 16,000 individuals from Southeastern Wisconsin, it employs nearly 300 people, as well as publishes a food and dining magazine (GRAZE). Outpost is the fourth largest cooperatively owned natural foods grocer in the country by sales volume.

Outpost has long partnered with local organizations and businesses to help move it towards its vision of a healthy and diverse community. A number of non-profit groups have received donations from Outpost and its shoppers over the years through Outpost's Community Partners program. Outpost was a founding member of Our Milwaukee, a business group representing locally-owned independent businesses. This one-time grant is an opportunity for Outpost to extend its partnership with Walnut Way and to further contribute to efforts to strengthen the central city. For over six years, Outpost and Walnut Way have allied together, sharing a common interest in providing access to both locally grown and healthy food options.

Walnut Way is a nonprofit neighborhood organization founded by residents in 2000. Its offices are located at 2240 N 17th Street in a renovated, former drug house. Run by executive director Sharon Adams, this group has done incredible work in its neighborhood to reduce crime, increase home ownership, and educate their community on the benefits of home gardening and healthy living. This is exemplified by the community garden which includes a pear and peach orchard and bee hives. Walnut Way is also a partner with Outpost in its "Neighbor To Neighbor" program which allows residents who may not be able to afford to join Outpost, access to co-op ownership.

Walnut Way and other community development partners are pursuing a project called Wellness Commons. Wellness Commons will be a mixed-use common meeting place developed by and for community members. Located on the North Avenue block between 16th and 17th Streets, the Commons will be designed to celebrate neighborhood history and the rebirth of neighbor health and wellness. The facility will utilize the best ecological practices in architectural design and will incorporate craftsmanship in the use of superior materials. The Commons will foster "social connectivity" by bringing together neighbors committed to personal health goals and the utilization of new health and wellness resources. Common space will be used for community gatherings and trainings and become part of a "campus of wellness."

Outpost trusts that all grant money will be used as part of the development efforts of Wellness Commons and Neighbor to Neighbor and requires no reporting of how the money is being allocated.

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