

## Deadline nearing to join Impact

Women's philanthropic group makes difference

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The deadline for joining Impact 100 Pensacola Bay Area is March 1. Ladies, if you're on the fence about joining the women-only philanthropic group and wondering just how much impact Impact packs, consider:

- » At the Miracle League of Pensacola, young people and adults with physical and mental disabilities get to play baseball more than ever before because an Impact grant paid for an additional field. Before the Miracle League's third field was built, games had time limits and participants had less playing time.
- » An Impact grant for the Leaning Post Ranch, an equine-therapy organization for people with disabilities, paid for a covered arena to keep the clients and horses out of the elements, allowing therapy sessions to continue rain or shine.



**A rider at the covered arena at the Leaning Post Ranch.**

- » The Santa Rosa Creek Indian Tribe will soon begin building a Native American Cultural Center with the funds from a 2016 grant - the second Impact grant the group has received since Impact was founded in 2003. The Cultural Center will serve as a focal point for Native American heritage in the two-county area and will eventually be home to more than 3,000 Native American artifacts. A 2014 grant helped the tribe build infrastructure on its 95-acre tribal grounds.

Since it was founded in 2003 by a small group of women, Impact 100 Pensacola has given more than \$8.3 million to more than 60 area organizations. Grants are given in amounts of at least \$100,000. Impact 100 membership costs \$1,000. Last year, there

were 1,082 Impact 100 Pensacola members, allowing the organization to award 10 grants of \$108,200 each. The Impact Pensacola group is the biggest and most successful in the world, with more members than any other city, meaning more grants and more money for area non-profits.

“Without Impact, we would not have that field,” said Larry Thompson, president of Miracle League of Pensacola, where more than 200 young people play baseball. “Now, we can play longer and the players get more opportunities. Every child benefits. It’s meant a lot. We should be proud of what those women do for our community.” There are about 220 players in the Miracle League of Pensacola. Impact officials said they hope grants will allow organizations to do things they would normally not be able to do.

“We want to give nonprofit organizations the opportunity to Dream Big – pursue a project they never thought in their wildest dreams they’d be able to afford to do, that could transform their mission, the clients they serve, and ultimately the community in which we all live, work and play,” said Meri DeSalvo-Asmar, president of Impact 100 Pensacola. “ After 13 years of giving, the evidence of our contributions can be seen all over town where IMPACT logos adorn museums, playgrounds, educational buildings, social service facilities, medical clinics, historical buildings, buses, vans, blood mobiles, search and rescue boats, musical instruments, science centers, you name it – it makes us incredibly proud to see that child or that adult getting what they need to enjoy a better quality of life.”

At the Leaning Post Ranch, a \$113,333 grant in 2006 transformed the facility. “I don’t know how we survived before,” said Fran Gersin, founder and director of the facility in Molino. “Because now, we use (the covered arena) continuously. If there’s rain, we don’t have to stop. We don’t have to have our students out in the hot sun.” Gersin urged other organizations to apply for Impact grants. “They were so easy to work with and make it so easy to apply for grants,” she said. “We can’t thank them enough for helping us and really changing our facility.”

To join or for more information on Impact 100 Pensacola Bay Area, go to [www.impact100pensacola.org](http://www.impact100pensacola.org).