

# 2 Longmont groups get justice assistance grants

BY MAGDALENA WEGRZYN  
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LONGMONT — The Colorado Division of Criminal Justice has awarded grants worth nearly \$90,000 to two Longmont organizations dedicated to improving the criminal justice system.

The Longmont Ending Domestic Violence got a \$46,758 justice assistance grant, and the Longmont Community Justice Partnership received \$42,667.

A board of current and former criminal justice professionals reviewed applications and made grant recommendations to both

the executive director of the Colorado Department of Public Safety and the governor, who approved final amounts Thursday.

This year, nearly \$3.3 million was distributed to 57 organizations and projects — 12 statewide initiatives and 45 local ones — that are designed to improve the criminal justice system and reduce crime, said Lance Clem, spokesman for the Colorado Department of Public Safety.

Grant funds start Oct. 1.

LEVI project coordinator Kim Heard said the grant will help with general operating costs, prevention education and awareness-raising

campaigns. LEVI is a multi-agency collaborative initiative that works with existing organizations and the police to raise awareness about domestic violence and educate the public on violence prevention.

In June, for example, LEVI staff and volunteers hung large, white ribbons along Main Street to remind men to take a stand against violence directed at women and girls. Heard said the organization is now revving up for Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October. Both campaigns — and other LEVI events — are intended to show that domestic violence is a community issue and then make the community address the prob-

lem, Heard said.

“If we get the word out and we get people talking about it, we’re doing our job,” Heard said.

The grant to the Longmont Community Justice Partnership, formerly Teaching Peace, will go to the organization’s school-based restorative justice project, which trains teenagers to implement restorative justice programs in their schools. Restorative justice brings the victim and offender of a crime together to figure out a resolution that works for both parties.

LCJP’s pilot program this past school year trained 12 Longmont High students to facilitate restora-

tive justice between offenders and victims at both Longmont High and its feeder schools, Longs Peak and Westview middle schools. More than 100 students were referred to the project and more than 90 percent have successfully completed its requirements, said Laura Snider, coordinator of restorative practices in schools.

Next year, Snider anticipates adding another 10 to 12 teenagers to the student program.

“I couldn’t be prouder of the students,” she said.

*Magdalena Wegrzyn can be reached at 303-684-5274 or mwegrzyn@times-call.com.*