Giving back: WabiSabi partners benefit from ‘banner spring’ at non-profit

September 07, 2017

WabiSabi’s eleven nonprofit partners recently received a total of $10,000 from the community thrift store’s spring proceeds. According to their nonprofit partners, WabiSabi’s support allows local organizations to focus on their missions, which range from afterschool programs to community health care and multicultural outreach.

Moab Solutions — an environmental stewardship and homeless assistance organization — is one of these nonprofit partners. Executive Director Sara Melnicoff called the WabiSabi partnership a “win-win situation” for local nonprofits and the overall community.

“[WabiSabi] turns donations into cash, which gets translated into love through the works of the partners,” Melnicoff said. “What could be better?”

WabiSabi aims to give at least half of their total proceeds to their nonprofit partners each year, according to their representatives. Because the store “had a banner spring,” executive director Mandy Turner said the organization could give more to their nonprofit partners.

“For staff, there’s a feeling of pride that when we do well, we can help these organizations more,” Turner said.

The Moab Valley Multicultural Center (MVMC) also receives WabiSabi’s funding. Executive Director Rhiana Medina says that their ten-year partnership has supported a wide variety of programs and services like English classes, crisis intervention and youth programs.

“The number of times WabiSabi and MVMC have swapped volunteers or donated to each other’s causes is too many to count,” Medina said. “We are grateful for their friendship and support of multiculturalism in Moab.”
Turner says WabiSabi partners with “organizations who we really believe in.” Those organizations are thoroughly vetted through what Turner calls “an intense application process” involving plenty of input from the board to see how they would fit as a partner.

“We’re here to support and network nonprofits here in town,” Turner said. “This is one of the essential programs from the very get go of WabiSabi … this is what we do.”

According to program director Nara Bopp-Williams, this funding mechanism allows WabiSabi to further their vision for Moab — a community “without need.”

“To achieve WabiSabi’s vision of a Moab without need, WabiSabi is dedicated to cultivating fertile ground for nonprofits to be successful and achieve their missions to meet need within the community,” Bopp-Williams said. “Our strategy is to nurture and mentor up-coming nonprofits, develop relationships with and amongst diverse nonprofits, and to stabilize growing nonprofits.”

This year, Melnicoff said Moab Solutions would use WabiSabi’s funding to “reinvigorate” their homeless outreach project, which actively searches for solutions to both homelessness and substance use disorders.

“We hope to find solutions to these difficult problems while doing street level outreach,” Melnicoff said. “Moab Solutions has a very small budget, so we are quite pleased to be supported by WabiSabi. Beyond the financial aid, there is a sense of community one gets from being a partner and interacting with the other non-profit partners.”

ByBy Molly Marcello

The Times-Independent