

The Board of Directors of American Pilgrims on the Camino is pleased to report the results of the 2018 Camino Infrastructure Grants Program. Our Grants Program is one of the ways that our members can give back to the Camino and fulfill our mission as an organization to develop and improve the infrastructure of the Camino. Since 2008, membership dues have enabled American Pilgrims to make grants well exceeding \$300,000 in support of a variety of Camino projects. Thank you for supporting this program with your membership dues!

In 2018, American Pilgrims approved six grant requests totaling \$30,000. Assisted by external reviewers, applications that met program qualifications were reviewed and recommendations for the most needed and well planned projects were made to the Board. The reviewers were all American Pilgrims members and included former board members, *hospitaleros*, Chapter coordinators, Gathering presenters and other active members.

Grants awarded by American Pilgrims on the Camino during the 2018 grant cycle:

Camino Aragónés

\$4,200 was granted to the *Federación Española for Albergue Arrés* to purchase eight bunk beds with railings and ladders to access the upper bunks, sanitized pillow coverings and sanitized, fire-retardant, anti-insect mattress covers.

This is a *donativo* albergue, operated by the *Federación*, consistent with the tradition and spirit of the Camino. The albergue is generally staffed by two volunteer *hospitaleros* and is located in a remote part of the lesser traveled Camino Aragónés, which is increasing in popularity. American Pilgrims also granted funding to this albergue in 2011 to improve the kitchen and bathroom. The Federation places most of the American Pilgrims trained *hospitaleros* each year.

Camino Francés

\$6,000 was granted to the *Asociación Hospital de San Antón* to purchase and install a 10,000 liter water tank to provide a reliable water source for the approximately 1,000 pilgrims and the *hospitaleros* who stay there annually and the 15,000 visitors. This *donativo* albergue currently relies on water from a spring that is running dry due to severe chronic ongoing draught.

Camino Mozárabe

\$6,000 was granted to the *Asociación Jacobea de Almería Camino Mozárabe* for this *donativo* albergue completes the third phase on this Camino route between Granada and Almeria. The project is proposed by a very active, strong association and is supported by the community, which donated the building in Alboloduy to the Association. This route is gaining in popularity, especially among the Spanish. The Association has completed the renovation of the building for an albergue and this grant provides funding for furnishings and cooking and eating utensils, which frequently are not found in *donativo* albergues. In 2017, a \$6,000 grant was made for a new albergue

in Alboloduy, and in 2016, \$6,000 was granted for 70 granite guide posts on the Camino Mozárabe (plus a washing machine for the albergue in Huenénja).

Camino del Norte

\$6,000 was granted to the *Asociación Jacobea Irun Bidasoa Jacobi* to convert a shuttered school building given to the association by the town into a new, renovated albergue. This project is in Irún, the start of the increasingly popular Camino del Norte. The current albergue, which accommodates 50 pilgrims and is in a very old building, has just two showers and toilets, and accommodated 7,300 pilgrims in 2017. The new albergue will accommodate 60 pilgrims, with capability to expand to 80 in the future, and will have seven toilets and showers. (According to 2017 Pilgrim Office statistics, it is now the third most traveled Camino after the *francés* and *portugués*.) In addition to our grant, they have two others pending with the regional and provincial governments, and they have already raised about half of the total project cost.

Camino portugués

\$4,000 was granted to the *Asociación Zamorana* and its *donativo* Albergue de Almendra located approximately 20 kilometers from Zamora. This grant supports the roof repair of the building. There is currently no albergue for 50 kms after Zamora on this spur of the Camino *portugués*. This route of the Camino has a long history but has largely been forgotten. It passes through two parks and a biosphere reserve and is a unique “bi-national” Camino. Improving the infrastructure on this lesser used Camino will help alleviate the overcrowding of other Caminos. This *Avocation* has received support from many different organizations and has a strong volunteer base.

\$3,800 was granted to *Asociación Barcelos* support four distinct projects: installation of handicapped accessible bathrooms, solar panels, recycling facilities and energy efficient lighting. While the number of pilgrims doing the Camino with accessibility issues, such as using a wheelchair, is small, this is an initiative that reflects the values of American Pilgrims on the Camino and we are pleased to be able to support these projects, and the spirit of “*Um Caminho para Todos*” (A “Camino” for All).