

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Community Foundations Jointly Award \$490,000 from the Michigan Health Endowment Healthy Ottawa Fund

The health of Ottawa County youth and seniors just got a much-needed shot in the arm. The Grand Haven Area Community Foundation (GHACF), in partnership with the Community Foundation for the Holland/Zeeland Area (CFHZ), has awarded grants totaling \$490,000 from the Michigan Health Endowment Healthy Ottawa Fund (MHEHOF) to organizations whose programs focus on youth, seniors, and other high-need populations.

The projects and programs that were awarded funding demonstrated the most potential for advancing the three most critical needs identified within Ottawa County's 2015 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP): mental health, access to health care, and promoting healthy behaviors around nutrition and exercise.

Grants awarded:

- \$40,000 to the Wayne Elhart be nice. Memorial Fund to provide matching funds for schools within the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District to offer the "be nice." education program on mental illness awareness and suicide prevention.
- \$55,000 to Holland Community Hospital to expand the School Nursing Program to the high school level in Holland Public Schools.
- \$70,000 to TCM Counseling to extend counseling and school services to the Holland/Zeland area and to increase counseling and psychiatric services in the Tri-Cities.
- \$75,000 to Love INC of the Tri-Cities to expand the hours of the Free Health Clinic to more broadly meet the needs of the community.
- \$100,000 to the Ottawa County Food Policy Council to expand Project Fresh for seniors, grow the Meet Up and Eat Up Summer Meal program for low-income children, increase access to Community Supported Agriculture, and launch the Prescription for Health program to increase fruit and vegetable consumption.
- \$150,000 to the Ottawa County Department of Public Health to launch Pathways to Better Health, an evidence-based community health worker model that has been proven to reduce health care costs while improving health outcomes for patients.

"This re-granting opportunity made possible by the Michigan Health Endowment Fund will help our community make meaningful progress on our highest priority health issues," said Holly Johnson, President of GHACF. "Joining hands with Holland/Zeeland on this initiative gives us the ability to have Countywide impact towards solving some of our most complex public health issues."

“Our local health organizations worked hard to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) with strong data and resident input,” said Mike Goorhouse, President/CEO of CFHZ. “It is exciting that the Healthy Ottawa Fund allows us to invest significant resources to transform this plan into action for our community. That we were able to do this as a collaboration between the two community foundations was an added benefit. We were certainly able to do more together.”

“On behalf of our collaborative partners and our community members, I am sincerely thankful to the foundations for the Pathways to Better Health Community Health Worker project grant award,” said Lisa Stefanovsky from the Ottawa County Department of Public Health. “This project grew out of the 2015 Ottawa County Health Needs Assessment and planning process, which informed a large group of community partners that there are many challenges for people in accessing health services and achieving better health. This award will enable us to build the Pathways to Better Health model and move our community toward greater health and wellbeing.”

The MHEHOF is a three year re-granting initiative made possible by a grant from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund (MHEF) and leveraged funds from both community foundations. \$330,000 of the grants came from the MHEF, with an additional \$80,000 each from GHACF and CFHZ.

Applicants were prioritized according to the following criterion:

- Programming that is new or expanded to serve a larger geographic area
- Focuses impact on youth, seniors, or other high-need populations
- Includes collaborative partnerships across multiple organizations
- Is being led by a nonprofit with a high organizational and financial capacity with a past track record of leading successful programs

The review committee included representatives from both community foundations’ Grants Distribution Committees and Youth Advisory Committees.

The Grand Haven Area Community Foundation is a public, charitable organization serving the Tri-Cities community since 1971. It encourages philanthropy by individuals, families, companies and organizations, and serves as a steward of charitable funds and legacies. In addition to grants, the Foundation offers technical and management support to nonprofits, convenes nonprofit leaders on issues of importance, and engages in advocacy work with nonprofits primarily focused on the needs of the most vulnerable members of the Tri-Cities community. For more information, or to give a tax-deductible gift to the Greatest Needs Fund at the Foundation, visit ghacf.org or follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/grandhavenareacomunityfoundation.

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