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Six projects tackling food insecurity in the Mat-Su Borough receive support

Wasilla, Alaska — A Wasilla ministry will stock its pantry to serve vulnerable low-income individuals. Chickaloon Village Traditional council was awarded support to provide meals to youth. A high school will lead a community effort to provide food to students from various schools.

Those are among the six projects that recently received support from the Mat-Su Health Foundation, totaling \$104,000 in grants to help efforts tackling food insecurity across the Matanuska-Susitna Borough in August and September 2023 and part of the more than \$1.9 million in grants awarded in that time period.

According to the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment, more than 11% of Matanuska-Susitna residents currently experience food insecurity while households with incomes under \$50,000 were more likely to indicate in the household survey that they or someone in their household did not have enough food to eat (16% vs. 4% overall).

Blood-N-Fire Ministry of Alaska in was awarded \$45,000 to help stock their pantry, a facility that primarily serves vulnerable low-income individuals in the Meadow Lakes, Houston, Big Lake, Wasilla, and KGB areas of the Mat-Su Borough. The food pantry needs to purchase additional bulk food items to help keep shelves full and provide clients with healthy food options.

Chickaloon Village Traditional Council was awarded \$20,000 to support efforts to provide breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks to Mat-Su children attending the Ya Ne Dah Ah school, any younger siblings they have, and any other children in the area considered a Mat-Su resident.

Palmer High School was awarded \$15,000 to continue funding the Sandwich Project, which provides food over the weekend to students from eight schools in the greater Palmer area. Students who experience food insecurity are offered a bag of food, so they have enough to eat at home. Last year, the community effort gave more than 5,000 bags.

Other projects and programs receiving support to tackle food insecurity include supporting food needs for Mat-Su youth in respite or foster care; a pilot project focused on providing meals during holiday breaks for three Mat-Su elementary schools; and a pantry providing bags of food to youth during weekends and holiday breaks.





We work to improve the health and wellness of Alaskans living in the Mat-Su.

Information about all Mat-Su Health Foundation grant programs is available at healthymatsu.org. Applications for all grants are open and can be submitted online throughout the year.

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About the Foundation

Mat-Su Health Foundation (MSHF) is the official business name of Valley Hospital Association, Inc., which shares ownership in Mat-Su Regional Medical Center. In this capacity, MSHF board members and representatives actively participate in the governance of Mat-Su's community hospital to protect the community's interest in this important healthcare institution. The MSHF mission is to improve the health and wellness of Alaskans living in the Mat-Su and the tools it uses include grantmaking, convening of local partners, and policy change. The foundation's work has resulted in significant improvements in systems that support the health of Mat-Su residents in areas such as behavioral health, child welfare, crisis response, community connections, workforce development, transportation, housing, and senior services. More information is available at healthymatsu.org.