

For immediate release: October 25, 2023
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From building affordable workforce housing to making health resources accessible, Mat-Su Health Foundation awards \$1.9 million

Wasilla, Alaska — As part of its ongoing commitment to creating a community where all persons have the opportunity for a healthy life, the Mat-Su Health Foundation (MSHF) awarded 27 grants to local nonprofit organizations that support the multitude of factors that contribute to individual and community health in August and September 2023. These organizations serve a variety of needs in our community, such as addressing food insecurity with Mat-Su youth, bringing health fairs to residents living in the Upper Su and Wasilla, and building affordable workforce housing. All the grants will support their work in creating a healthier Mat-Su.

In the months of August and September, grant awards totaled \$1,968,143. This brings total grantmaking for this year to \$9,394,578.28.



- Alaska Family Services Inc.: \$50,000 to support the Special Santa Workshop project, which provides Christmas presents to families in need in the Mat-Su Borough.
- Alaska Farmland Trust: \$37,612 to support the Trust's capacity-building efforts and to enable the conservation of farmlands in Mat-Su Borough.

- Alaska Legal Services Corporation: \$100,000 to host an attorney at their office in the MSHF building to assist eligible households presenting with critical civil legal problems.
- Alaska Peace Officers Association: \$15,000 to support the startup of Mat-Su Law Enforcement Explorer Post 400, which is part of the Explorers education program, an affiliate of Boy Scouts of America. The Post is a mentoring opportunity for youth ages 14 to 20 to foster healthy decision-making skills, build self-confidence and provide community service.
- Beacon Hill: \$6,000 to support food needs for Mat-Su children in respite or foster care.
- Best Beginnings: \$40,000 to manage the Mat-Su Imagination Library and its monthly book deliveries from the national Imagination Library to enrolled children under 5 years old.
- Blood-N-Fire Ministry of Alaska: \$45,000 to support stocking food for Blood-n-Fire's pantry, a facility that primarily serves vulnerable low-income people in the Meadow Lakes, Houston, Big Lake, Wasilla and KGB areas of the Mat-Su Borough.
- Chickaloon Village Traditional Council: \$20,000 to feed Mat-Su youth.
- Euthus Ministries: \$10,000 to replace washers and dryers for the Euthus House, a Christ-centered residential safe and sober house that endeavors to empower men to create a productive future and develop a new perspective on life built on faith and character development through a safe and sober living environment.
- Friends of the Sutton Library: \$5,500 to support the Sutton Youth Arts & Wellness Program, designed for local youth ages 11-16, which combines healthy living ideals with community engagement, volunteerism, arts, crafts and cultural activities.
- Frontline Mission: \$6,000 to support a pilot program for giving food during two holiday breaks to 250 children in need from three Mat-Su elementary schools.
- Hope Community Resources Inc.: \$277,400 to support emergency preparedness with the installation of a standby generator in five assisted living homes in Mat-Su and renovation of one assisted living home for accessibility, health and safety, and energy efficiency.
- LINKS Mat-Su Parent Resource Center: \$187,000 to partially fund the cost of the Mat-Su Aging and Disability Resource Center, which provides free information and referral services for individuals with disabilities, seniors and vulnerable adults by connecting them to quality services and supports that foster independence, personal choice and dignity.
- Meadow Lakes Community Development Inc.: \$10,000 to engage middle and high school students in developing new recyclable products using materials currently collected by Valley Community for Recycling Solutions or materials such as glass or rubber.
- NAMI Alaska: \$5,000 to fund NAMI Provider Education program, which offers the tools healthcare professionals need to combine the medical and recovery models of care to better serve patients to enhance relationships with the patient and their family members.
- Nine Star Enterprises Inc.: \$4,590 to collaborate with The Foraker Group for fund development coaching on strategies and tactics relevant to Nine Star's current funding situation.
- Northgate Alaska: \$15,000 to fund iAMSOMEBODY and assist with developing strong organizational processes, safeguards and documentation so they can continue building up the program with continuity and excellence.
- Palmer Community Foundation: \$15,000 to support long-term sustainability.
- Palmer High School: \$15,000 to fund the Sandwich Project, which will provide food over the weekend to students from eight schools in the greater Palmer area. Students who experience food insecurity are provided the option of taking home a bag of food, so they have enough food to eat at home. Last year, the project gave more than 5,000 bags.
- Postpartum Support, International: \$15,000 to send 13 Mat-Su providers to the Perinatal Mood Disorder Training in 2024, which will include two days of basic education for providers on perinatal mental health disorders, including screening, assessment and treatment.

- Sunshine Community Health Center: \$7,725 to fund three health fairs in Talkeetna, Willow and Trapper Creek for residents in the Upper Su, which are held in coordination with Alaska Health Fair Blood Testing and Education to provide discounted labs, health education and additional health resources.
- Sunshine Community Health Center \$468,516 to provide therapeutic services for the Behavioral Health in Schools program for students in specified schools within the Mat-Su Borough throughout school year 2023-2024.
- Sunshine Transit: \$170,000 to provide local match funding for use in obtaining state and federal transit funds.
- TransformED: \$174,300 to partner with Wild Energized Life to deliver the Extra-Toughs program for survivors of gynecologic and breast cancer for Mat-Su women to reclaim a healthier future through holistic and targeted interventions.
- Valley Residential Services: \$6,500 to support the 2023 Fall Community Health Fair at Wasilla Area Seniors, Inc., which provides a one-day, one-stop location for Mat-Su community members.
- Valley Residential Services: \$250,000 to help fund 16 units of affordable workforce housing in the Palmer area.
- Willow Food Pantry, UMC: \$12,000 to provide food for youth who otherwise would not receive enough to eat.

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.