

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Blue & You Foundation awards \$2.6 million in grants to improve health

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (November 21, 2014) – From walking trails, to food pantries to training first responders, the Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas touches the lives of all Arkansans. The Foundation recently awarded a total of \$2,674,119 in grants to 35 health improvement programs in Arkansas.

“Our grants this year went to programs across the state that address such issues as nutrition and exercise, dental and mental health, and medical professional education,” said Patrick O’Sullivan, executive director of the Blue & You Foundation.

Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield established the Blue & You Foundation in 2001 as a charitable foundation to promote better health in Arkansas. The Blue & You Foundation awards grants annually to non-profit or governmental organizations and programs that positively affect the health of Arkansans.

In its 13 years of operation, the Blue & You Foundation has awarded nearly \$22 million to 584 health improvement programs in Arkansas.

The grants awarded for 2015 are:

Arkansas Children's Hospital Foundation, Little Rock (\$150,000) - *GoNoodle* facilitates physical activity while promoting classroom engagement and learning. Funding is for 1,515 licenses for GoNoodle Plus physical activity breaks for Arkansas public school K-5 teachers, reaching approximately 38,000 children.

Arkansas Trauma Education and Research Foundation, Inc., Little Rock (\$150,000) - *ATERF* will conduct research on the costs of caring for trauma patients, trauma center verification and response. The project will analyze and interpret data to provide information in the areas of efficiency and cost-effectiveness between the Arkansas trauma centers. It will also identify the primary cost drivers for the various forms and extent of trauma, so that proper funding of trauma care can be ensured.

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Augusta First United Methodist Church, Augusta (\$2,400) - *Community Food Pantry* will help feed the citizens of the Augusta and Woodruff County area. Funding will be for restocking the food pantry monthly.

Baptist Health Foundation, Little Rock (\$60,000) - *Breastfeeding Telephone/Telehealth Triage Program* will help 1,000 new mothers and their infants in counties with low breastfeeding rates with access to lactation consulting. The project will provide training in basic breastfeeding management to healthcare professionals around the state.

Baxter Regional Medical Center, Mountain Home (\$149,900) – *BRMC Community Paramedics Pilot Program* will fill preventive, health-care gaps for an estimated 800-1,000 Baxter and Marion County patients having a history of early re-admissions, frequent falls and overuse of ambulance (911) and Emergency Department services. The project will provide medical assessments, fall-prevention support, treatment and social services by paramedics.

City of Cave Springs (\$30,000) - *Cave Springs Walking Trail* will build a new walking trail to replace an existing one that does not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

City of Fairfield Bay (\$33,000) - *Rambling Cove Exercise Trail* will install nine outdoor exercise stations along the Rambling Cove Trail, to offer exercise opportunities for citizens of Fairfield Bay and the surrounding area.

City of Gosnell (\$100,000) - *Walking Trail Project* will extend the city's existing walking trail, providing exercise opportunities for the citizens of Gosnell and the surrounding areas.

City of Greenland (\$100,000) - *Exercise Trail Project* will provide a trail and exercise stations for the citizens of Greenland and the surrounding areas.

City of Jonesboro (\$145,030) - *Craighead Forest Park Trail Fitness Project* will increase awareness of health by adding 12 workout stations on a 3.2 mile walking/running trail being constructed by the City of Jonesboro.

City of Lake Village (\$149,698) - *City of Lake Village Health and Wellness Improvement Plan: Phase 1* seeks to expand walking trails, add fitness stations to the parks, improve the farmers market and add showers and lockers to the free fitness center to promote healthy living for the citizens of Lake Village.

City of Portland (\$72,000) - *Portland Trail for Life Project* will construct a walking trail in the local park to provide exercise opportunities to the citizens of Portland.

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Faulkner County Council on Aging, Inc., Conway (\$13,500) - *Faulkner County SHAPE (Senior Health and Physical Exercise) Program* promotes health and exercise for approximately 1,000 senior adults by providing full-time professional trainer in a fully equipped fitness facility.

Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas, Inc., Jonesboro (\$24,574) - *Backpack Program* provides backpacks with snacks for school children enrolled in the program to take home on the weekends. Funds will be used to purchase no-sugar-added fruit juices and lite/no-sugar-added fruit cups in the backpacks of 595 children enrolled in the program.

Greater Delta Alliance for Health, Inc., DeWitt (\$126,400) – *Health Education for Local Providers (HELP)-OB Simulation Project* provides on-site OB simulation training to rural health hospital teams in 10 participating hospitals throughout the Arkansas Delta region. Funds will be used to purchase a birthing simulator.

Healthy Connections, Inc., Mena (\$54,618) - *Emergency Dental Care Fridays Program* provides emergency dental care and dental education on Fridays for up to 128 patients in west central Arkansas without dental insurance.

Jasper Elementary School, Jasper (\$148,000) - *Elementary/Community Playground Program* will improve community health by providing a place where families in Newton County can have fun and exercise together. Funds will be used to build a walking track and play area.

Northwest Arkansas Children's Shelter, Bentonville (\$9,212) - *Trauma-Informed Training* provides behavioral management training for up to 100 staff who care for 500-600 abused and neglected children annually.

Northwest Arkansas Free Health Center, Fayetteville (\$33,160) – *Putting the Smile Back* will increase the number of patients who can receive dental care at the Northwest Arkansas Free Health Center. Funds will be used to provide extraction services, oral health education and dentures.

Our Lady of Good Hope Catholic Church, Hope (\$5,000) - The *Food Pantry Program* provides food assistance to 4,500 individuals, primarily from the Hope/Hempstead County area.

Ozarka College, Melbourne (\$46,909) – *Comprehensive Health and Safety Program* will implement a Quick Response Health Care Initiative, initiate a Cardio Wellness and Fitness Challenge and establish a Safety in the Workplace Initiative, all to make a safer campus for students, administration and faculty.

Piggott Community Hospital, Piggott (\$110,000) - *Using Telemedicine to Increase Access to Physician Specialists in Northeast Arkansas* will implement telemedicine services at several different locations to aid in patient care. Funds will be used to purchase telemedicine equipment.

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Piggott Parks and Recreation, Piggott (\$10,000) - Piggott Parks and Recreation will construct *Heritage Park Nature Trail* in Heritage Park to be used by the Piggott community for exercise.

Prairie Grove Schools, Prairie Grove (\$5,000) - Prairie Grove Schools will use the *Time for a SPARK Program* PE curriculum to improve physical activity for students.

Project HOPE Foodbank, Hot Springs (\$9,000) – *Emergency Food Box Program* provides food for families in food crisis in Garland County.

Searcy County, Marshall (\$25,000) - *Searcy County Walking Trail Project* will complete a portion of the existing walking trail that is in disrepair, add handicapped accessibility to the trail and add sidewalks, picnic tables and parking.

Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia (\$149,128) - *SAU Regional Simulation and Training Center* will purchase equipment to furnish the first rural regional simulation and training center to address the critical need for a rural, simulation-based health-care education facility.

Texarkana Arkansas Police Department, Texarkana (\$61,500) - The *Healthy & Safe Southwest Arkansas Project* supports risk factor education and behavioral modification through direct training programs for at least 2,980 youth and 300 adults in southwest Arkansas.

UAMS, Little Rock (\$150,000) - *Dental Student Enrichment Program – Year 2* will continue the externship program for 90 University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center (UTHSC) dental students to introduce them to practice opportunities in Arkansas.

UAMS, Little Rock (\$150,000) - *Transforming Healthcare through Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice* will expose, immerse, and demonstrate competence for learners from all six colleges at UAMS, using interprofessional education and collaborative practice principles to improve the patient care experience, improve the population health and decrease the cost of health care.

Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services, Monticello (\$60,320) - *Improving Fitness and Nutrition for Children and Youth in Foster Care* will improve physical fitness and nutrition for up to 150 youth in foster care at the children's home in Monticello. Funding will be used for cooking supplies, athletic shoes, playground equipment and health educators.

Washington Regional Medical Foundation, Fayetteville (\$150,000) - *Washington Regional Palliative Care Program* offers palliative care services to 350 patients who are dealing with serious illnesses by focusing on providing patients with relief from the symptoms, pain and stress of their illness. Funding will be used for staff, conferences, educational materials and supplies.

White River Health System, Inc., Batesville (\$25,270) - *Simulation-Based Team Training in Obstetric Emergencies* seeks to reduce infant/mother mortality and injury during delivery by training emergency personnel, physicians, nurses and first responders in north central Arkansas. Funding will be used for the mobile obstetric emergency simulator and to cover costs associated with instructor training for the Simulation-Based Crisis Team Training Program.

Woodlawn School District, Rison (\$150,000) - *Outdoor Fitness Trail* will increase physical fitness, reduce obesity and provide education for a healthier lifestyle for the residents of Woodlawn. Funding will be used for construction of the trail and purchase of the exercise stations.

Yellville-Summit School District, Yellville (\$15,500) - *Growing Healthy Students Initiative* seeks to positively impact the health of more than 800 students and their families in the Yellville-Summit School District by maintaining the existing vegetable garden, conducting community outreach, expanding the garden-to-cafeteria program and expanding garden-based education to the elementary school.

The Blue & You Foundation received 202 grant applications requesting \$14 million in support. The 2015 grant selections were made by Blue & You Foundation board members: Carolyn Blakely, Ph.D., Pine Bluff; Robert D. Cabe, chairman of the board, Little Rock; Mahlon Maris, M.D., Harrison; J. Thomas May, Chairman and CEO, Simmons First Foundation, Pine Bluff; George K. Mitchell, M.D., Little Rock; Marla Johnson, CEO, Aristotle Inc., Little Rock; and Sherman Tate, President and CEO, HT & Associates, Little Rock.

The application deadline for the foundation's next funding cycle is Jul. 15, 2015. For more information about the grant application process, visit the foundation Web site at www.BlueAndYouFoundationArkansas.org.

The foundation is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association and serves the state of Arkansas. The foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization.