



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Blue & You Foundation awards third round of Rapid-Response COVID-19 Relief grants

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (May 7, 2020) – The Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas has awarded seven additional grants in its Rapid-Response COVID-19 Relief program, which now has funded \$1.7 million in grants to organizations in Arkansas working to prevent the spread of coronavirus or helping communities deal with its effects.

New Rapid-Response COVID-19 Relief grants were awarded to:

- **Conway Regional Health Foundation (\$150,000)** – to provide lifesaving treatment, protect the system's healthcare workers and minimize community risk by creating a 26-bed critical care unit with 24 isolation rooms installed with new air-filtration systems and cameras.
- **Mercy Health Foundation, Fort Smith (\$145,714)** – to purchase two ventilators and lab equipment to provide fast and reliable testing, so patients with the virus in western Arkansas can receive the medical care they need.
- **Drew Memorial Hospital, Monticello (\$139,900)** – to provide on-site rapid-response testing in southeast Arkansas, with a goal of producing results for attending physicians within 45 minutes.
- **Centers for Youth and Families, Little Rock (\$90,000)** – to provide comprehensive behavioral health services to up to 300 uninsured or underinsured Arkansans who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and are struggling with the pandemic's economic consequences.
- **City of Eureka Springs (\$44,188)** – to provide hand-sanitizing stations throughout Eureka Springs and in high-traffic public areas and equip frontline city workers, law enforcement personnel and emergency responders with no-touch, digital forehead thermometers.
- **Madison County Medical Group, Huntsville (\$38,153)** – to increase COVID-19 testing and telemedicine patient visits in rural areas, especially among seniors, uninsured people and the Hispanic and Marshallese communities.

- **Nevada County, Prescott (\$7,988)** – to purchase personal protective equipment for frontline law enforcement personnel who work in Nevada County and in the county’s jails.

Any 501(c)(3) public charity, public school, governmental agency (city, county, state), nonprofit hospital or church in Arkansas is eligible to apply. Grants are not made to individuals. Applications must be submitted online at BlueAndYouFoundationArkansas.org. Applicants may request a grant ranging from \$5,000 to \$150,000. The Foundation will review applications and make funding decisions weekly. Pending grant requests will be held for consideration until final decisions are made.

“We are seeing a diverse range in the applications for the Rapid-Response COVID-19 Relief grants and are working to address as many needs as possible,” said Patrick O’Sullivan, executive director of the Blue & You Foundation. “The one thing that ties them all together is that these communities want to do everything they can to protect their citizens, and we are doing what we can to help.”

“The communities of Arkansas have always been resilient, but we know these are difficult times,” said Curtis Barnett, Arkansas Blue Cross president and chief executive officer. “We will continue to support our neighbors and our state.”

– 30 –

The Blue & You Foundation, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, serves the state of Arkansas and is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. In its 19 years of operation, the Blue & You Foundation has awarded more than \$36 million to more than 1,900 health-improvement programs in Arkansas. Founded in 1948, Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, is the largest health insurer in Arkansas. Arkansas Blue Cross and its affiliates have more than 3,000 employees. The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association is comprised of 36 independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans that collectively provide healthcare coverage for nearly 106 million members – one in three Americans.